

ENEMIES IN THE REAR

OR



A
GOLDEN CIRCLE
SQUARED

BY

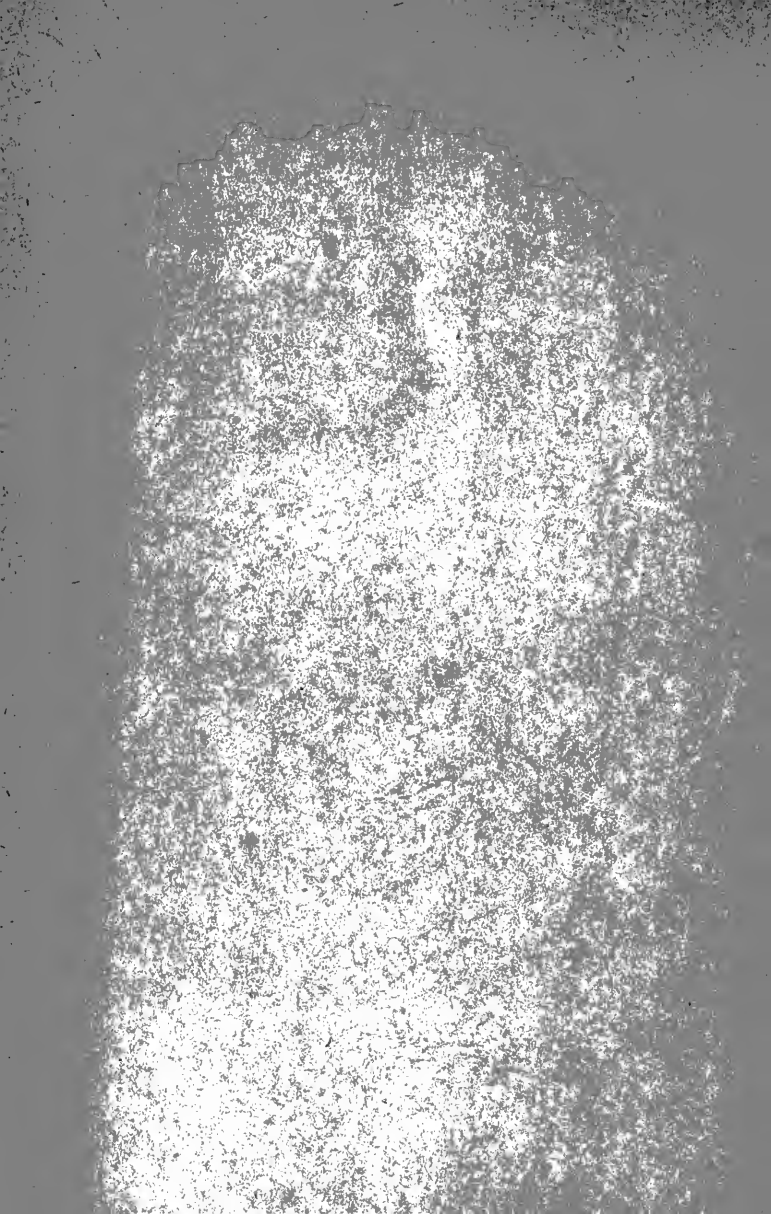
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ENEMIES IN THE REAR;

OR,

A GOLDEN CIRCLE SQUARED.

*A STORY OF SOUTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA IN THE
TIME OF OUR CIVIL WAR.*

BY

FRANCIS T. HOOVER.



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PREFACE.

To square the circle, that is, to determine its exact contents in square measure, has generally been held to be impossible; but, as herein appears, the national government solved the famous problem perfectly, at least so far as it related to the Golden Circle of Knights in southeastern Pennsylvania. And the solution showed the exact contents of this particular Circle to be an admixture, in about equal parts, of ignorance, hypocrisy and treason.

To say that a book has been written from patriotic, unselfish motives is not always to give a sufficient reason for its being; nevertheless this plea is respectfully offered on behalf of this semi-historical story. For everything connected however remotely with the stupendous conflict through which the United States passed from 1861-5 is of interest to every true American, and all agencies—fiction being by no means the most insignificant—that throw light on any phase of the struggle made by this great Nation for its life, must be regarded as legitimate and helpful to all lovers of their country.

One object of this book then is to deepen the interest of the present generation in the history of the greatest

of all our wars, and thus to strengthen their patriotism and their appreciation of the deeds brave men and women did, and of the sufferings they bore, in that decisive period of our national existence.

The ocean, when acted upon by a strong wind, rolls its waters in mighty waves, and these in turn produce smaller waves in the inlets and retired coves where the wind itself may be felt but little, if at all. So during the war the agitation and conflict were not all confined to the army and navy, the capital and the great cities. Remote districts and obscure country places also felt the great movements and were stirred, though of course in a smaller degree. And that in such localities many thrilling episodes occurred we can readily believe if we will but remember that in those days there were enrolling officers, drafts, and Knights of the Golden Circle.

What the side-shows are to the main exhibition were some of the incidents happening in neighborhoods remote from the seat of war to the greater conflict itself; and even as in the side-shows queerer objects are often to be seen than in the main exhibition, so perhaps in these incidents stranger phases of character and modes of thought and action were manifested than in the principal drama.

As illustrative of these observations the march of the "Copton Brigade" may be cited. What more ridiculous yet more strongly indicative of the sentiment of multitudes of people in certain parts of the North at that period than that famous expedition? Thus while we

should give our first attention to the great historic facts of the rebellion, we should also study the minor events transpiring away from the scene of actual conflict. The lesser will often shed much light on the greater.

Another object of this story is to present the Pennsylvania Dutch,* or German, character, and to illustrate some of the customs, manners and superstitions still prevailing in many parts of the territory occupied by this singular people.

Although the Pennsylvania Dutch are known of in New York and New England, it is usually only by name, or as possessed of unlimited prejudice against Yankees and the English language, an inextinguishable determination to continue voting for Andrew Jackson, and a gigantic predilection for schweitzer-kaes, sourkrout and leberwurst.

From childhood up into manhood I was familiar with the Pennsylvania Germans, socially, religiously and politically, and in every instance the descriptions of customs, etc., are faithful to life, and the sentiments expressed by the various characters in this work are such as were heard in those days in the community in which the scene is laid. No injustice has been done any individual or class of individuals. I have carefully sought to give the Pennsylvania Dutch credit for their

* I am well aware that many Pennsylvania Germans object to the word *Dutch* as applied to them, inasmuch as their fathers were Germans and not Hollanders; but I am equally well aware that it is the usage of the best writers — and in literature such usage makes law — to employ the terms *German* and *Dutch* synonymously in this connection, and I simply follow them.

many virtues ; I have not glossed their faults and foibles. To do the one and not the other is only just.

The difficulties of language involved in the production of a narrative whose characters are mostly members of this race, have not been forgotten. Southeastern Pennsylvania was settled principally by the English, Dutch and Germans. The language spoken by the Pennsylvania Dutch is the natural product growing out of the intercourse of the Germans with other settlers speaking English or Dutch. It is a mixture of English, Dutch and German words, the last being largely preponderant, — sadly corrupted in most instances as to form and pronunciation, but the sentences retaining the German idiom. The result is a dialect, or *patois*, such as the human tongue seldom twists itself to utter.

Owing to the conservative character of those who speak it, this dialect is very tenacious of life. In spite of its great limitations, of the many years elapsed since the Germans first settled here, of the vast influx of Scotch and Irish, and of the aggressiveness of English as the national language, Pennsylvania Dutch has not only survived until this day, but is almost as hardy as ever ; and although it must necessarily die out, yet this happy consummation will not be reached until after a long period. Even now there are whole neighborhoods in which very few families can speak anything save this *patois*, though all can understand, and most can read, pure German ; and for multitudes of school children in the remoter districts the English primer they study con-

tains a dead language. The common-school and intermarriage with descendants of English-speaking nationalities are, however, slowly working a change.

Now many of the characters introduced in these pages ordinarily spoke Pennsylvania Dutch. To permit them to do so all through this book would, it need not be said, defeat everything. It has therefore been discarded, except that here and there the peculiar idiomatic construction has been retained, and characteristic words and expressions have been employed.

In view of these things there has been little room for conversation in dialect, but I am sure this will not detract from the value of the work in the public estimation.

I desire in this place to acknowledge the courtesy of the Hon. Samuel L. Young, United States Commissioner at Reading, Pa., in furnishing me with certain facts relative to the draft of 1862.

Rushville, N. Y.



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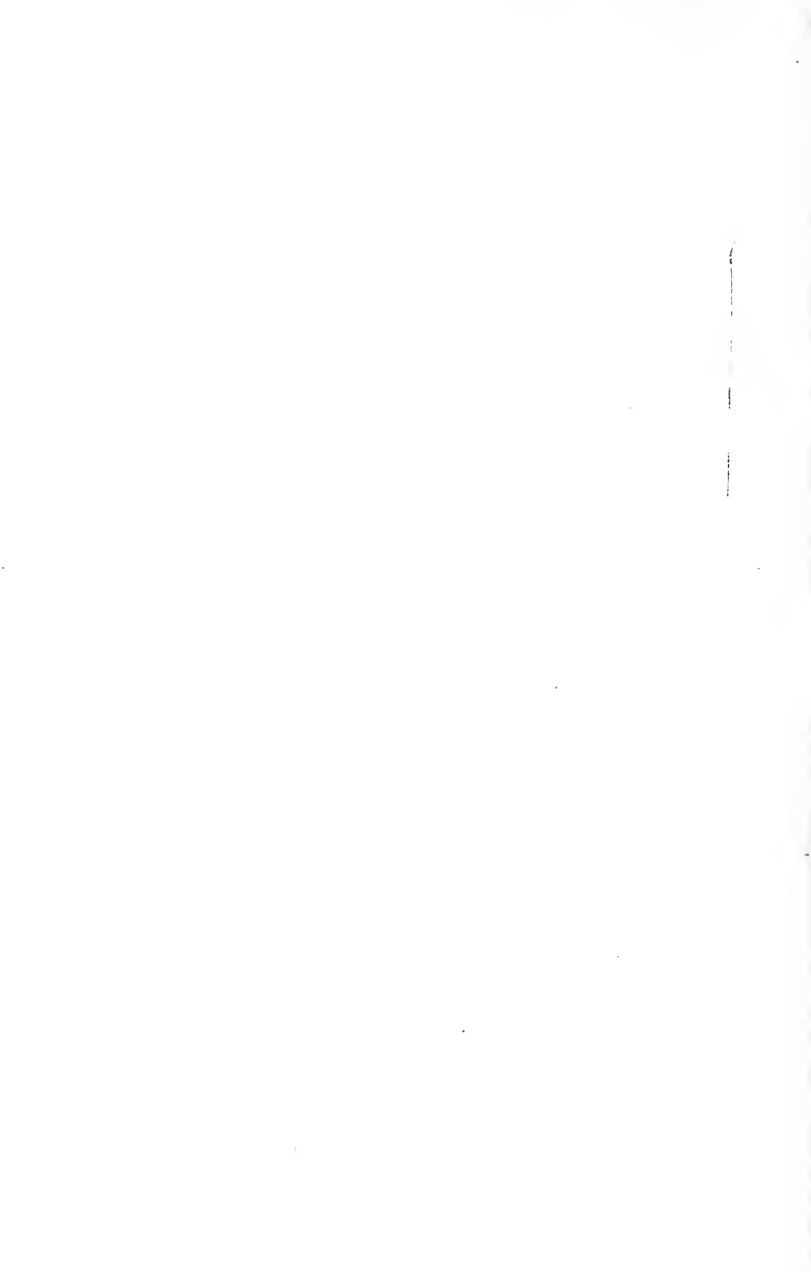
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CHAPTER I.

A CLOUD RISES.

On a warm evening about the middle of August, 1860, three men stood in the door yard of a farm house not far from the pretty village of Haltfest in Berks County, Pennsylvania. One of the little group was Frederick Ruthvon, a well-preserved farmer of fifty-five years of age, the owner of the premises. The second was Doctor Henry Helfer, the village physician; and the youngest was Charles Ruthvon, the only son of Frederick Ruthvon.

Doctor Helfer was a fine young fellow physically and intellectually, with an experience of three years in his chosen profession. Blunt in the expression of his opinions, decisive in manner, vigorous and courageous, he possessed withal a keen sense of humor, and his heartiness and fund of good nature made him a favorite with many even of those who differed widely with him politically.

This evening he had driven over from the village to see Mr. Ruthvon in reference to the purchase of some hay, but hardly had the usual greeting been exchanged before the two were engaged in a hot discussion of slavery and the pending presidential election.

“You Abolitionists are bound to destroy the country

our fathers left us," said Mr. Ruthvon in response to a remark by the doctor; "for you are bringing on war just as fast as you can, and war will ruin everything."

"How so? We're not going to make war; if it must come, we'll let the South begin it."

"That's just it, doctor, you're not going to begin war; oh, no, to be sure not! But you're exasperating the South with all your anti-slavery nonsense, and above all by nominating for President a man who is known for nothing except cracking low jokes and hating slavery."

"And laying out Stephen A. Douglas, your 'Little Giant,'" added the doctor with a humorous twinkle in his eye. "No, Ruthvon; Abraham Lincoln, if elected, will not do anything to violate the constitution."

"But didn't he say the Nation couldn't exist half slave, half free?" asked Mr. Ruthvon eagerly, advancing closer to his opponent. "Didn't he introduce resolutions in Congress to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, and say somewhere that it was the duty of Congress to abolish it altogether?"

Doctor Helfer had a wonderful way of using the interjection "Ho!" at the beginning of his remarks when he was amused or deeply interested. He would open his mouth — which was naturally large — very wide, and then, raising his voice to a high pitch, bring out the word with a vim almost startling in its effect. Just now he was a trifle nonplused by Mr. Ruthvon's questions.

“Ho!” he exclaimed, dwelling on the vowel longer than usual to gain a little time, “but when a man becomes President he is such for all the people; besides, he doesn’t make the laws, but simply executes them.”

“But such a man isn’t to be trusted; he’ll do anything to further his selfish ends,” retorted Ruthvon.

“While Lincoln hates slavery,” said Helfer, “he’s an honest man and won’t do anything unconstitutional to get rid of it. He said so in one of his speeches — didn’t he, Charlie?”

“I think he did, since his nomination,” answered young Ruthvon, who was quietly but closely listening to the conversation.

“Well, you black snakes can go ahead,” said the elder Ruthvon; “I believe Breckenridge will get in, but, mark it, doctor — just as sure as Abe Lincoln is elected the South will secede, either peaceably or by force.”

“Ho! let the South dare try it, and, by the great Eulenspiegel! just as sure as the apples on yonder tree are going to ripen slavery will die, as it should have done long ago.”

“That’s what you fellows are at,” said Frederick Ruthvon, shaking his finger at the doctor; “you are an honest man, I believe, Doctor Helfer, but abolitionism blinds you completely to the rights of the Southern people. The slaves are their lawful property — theirs by the highest law of the land, the Constitution; theirs by the highest law of all, the Bible.”

“I believe that in so far as the Constitution sanctions

slavery it is an agreement with hell, just as Garrison said," answered the doctor, fanning himself vigorously with his broad-brimmed straw hat ; "as to the Bible, I don't pretend to know much about it, but I don't believe it upholds slavery, unless you push it and twist it as Pete Prantman did the other night at Baltzer's."

"How was that?" asked Charles.

"He said the leopard couldn't change his spots, and had always been hunted and destroyed ; and as the Ethiopian — meaning the nigger of course — couldn't change his skin, it was a sure sign he was always to be a slave ! — How's that for wresting Scripture ?"

"I don't believe in Pete Prantman's ability to explain the Bible," answered Ruthvon, senior, "but slavery was allowed by the Old Testament and is not forbidden in the New."

"But you forget about the provision of the year of Jubilee, when slaves went free, and that bondmen were to be treated kindly," responded Helfer ; "and if I understand it, not one of the inhuman features of American slavery existed under the Jewish system. Besides, Ruthvon, the whole accursed thing is contrary to the spirit of the religion you profess."

"I believe there is — is — a — something in the New Testament about sanctioning slavery ; it is in — in — I declare I can't recall the place now," said Mr. Ruthvon, turning an inquiring look to his son, who however dropped his eyes to the ground.

"Ho !" exclaimed the doctor mischievously, prolong-

ing the word with great unction, "I'm sure I can't either. I had a talk with Yankee Chetwynde the other day on this very point. He is well posted in the Bible and he says it's an anti-slavery book, and his pretty daughter says so too, and she is even better posted than the old man; and, by henker, I don't believe Charlie here will dispute her opinion a minute,—eh, Charlie?"

Charles blushed at this allusion and appeal, and tried to say something fitting. But his father was angry, for the name of Jabez Chetwynde when mentioned in connection with politics acted on Frederick Ruthvon much as a red cloth is said to do on a wild steer.

"Chetwynde to be sure!" he broke in scornfully and with some difficulty repressing his anger; — "Chetwynde to be sure! A Yankee who despises us Pennsylvania Dutch as much as he hates the Southern people. He must needs tell us what the Bible teaches and what is right and wrong. He thinks nobody is right but Yankees, and his daughter — well, she is a mere child yet."

"Ho! I haven't any special love for Yankees," said the doctor laughing heartily, "but I tell you Yankee Chetwynde is a rouser on politics and Scripture — eh, Charlie? — Say, Ruthvon," he continued, seeing the latter was eager to reply, "it's awful hot this evening and I must go, for it's nearly dark. How about that hay?"

"You can have all the hay you want, doctor, and without being charged Yankee prices for it either. It's

good Pennsylvania Dutch hay, made right here, where no Abolitionist ever lived, and where none ever will."

"Don't be too sure about that," said Helfer, smiling and looking at Charles. "Your hay is all right, Ruthvon, and so is the price. Come out to the Lincoln meeting at the lower tavern next Monday night. We're going to have Van Reed and Richards and other good speakers there. It's only fair to hear both sides, you know."

"In this thing there is but one side, doctor," answered Mr. Ruthvon.

"Well, come anyhow and see whether it isn't our side," replied the doctor laughing good-naturedly; "good night, Ruthvon; good night, Charlie."

In spite of their political differences, Doctor Helfer and Frederick Ruthvon had been excellent friends ever since the former settled in Haltfest two years before; but on this occasion Ruthvon felt that the doctor had got the better of him in the discussion and that his son was in part to blame. So when his good-humored adversary was gone, the farmer was not in a very amiable mood. He turned abruptly to Charles.

"Why didn't you second me better?" said he. "You let that young ketter go away crowing over me, because he happened to remember Scripture better at the time. Why didn't you remind him of what Paul says about — about — oh, that slave? — You know whom I mean."

"Onesimus?" suggested Charles interrogatively.

“Yes, of course,—about Onesimus, to — to ——”

“Philemon?” again suggested Charles.

“Yes, to Philemon. Why am I such a dumb-head to-night?—Paul writes to Philemon about Onesimus, a slave, who had run away from his master and come to Paul:—‘whom I have sent again: thou therefore receive him,’—I say, Charles why did you not bring up that?”

“For one thing, I did not happen to think of it,” answered the son, speaking slowly and with evident embarrassment, “but even if I had, I fear I should not have mentioned it.”

“Why not?” asked Mr. Ruthvon hastily.

“Because I am not at all certain that that little letter of the New Testament upholds slavery,” answered Charles in a very deferential tone.

Mr. Ruthvon started, looked hard at his son, but said nothing. After a moment he turned and walked slowly to the stoop and sat down on the steps. Charles followed and sat down by him. Then Mr. Ruthvon said:

“Well, and what more?”

Charles observed even in the gathering twilight a cloud on his father’s countenance; he knew, moreover, that sooner or later the fact that he was harboring strange political doctrines must become known to his parent. Indeed, for some time he had reproached himself for playing what seemed to him a double part, but fear of his father’s displeasure had hitherto restrained him from revealing his sentiments. Now, however, he resolved to speak at all hazards.

“Paul tells Philemon to receive the slave,” said he in a very respectful manner, “not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved.” He pleads for Onesimus, and hints at his emancipation. I am quite sure that our system of slavery, under which the slave is sold on the auction-block like an ox and separated from his wife and children — treated as if God had given him no rights his master was bound to respect, — is entirely opposed to the spirit of the New Testament. — I am sorry to speak so, for I know you will not agree with me. I know some of the Abolitionists are hypocrites, but surely some of them are sincere, and there is much truth on their side.”

Had the stars which by this time studded the summer evening sky dropped all at once to earth, Frederick Ruthvon could hardly have been more astonished than he was at this speech of his son, whom he had taught to cheer for Cass and Butler when but eight years old, and who, timid as he then was, had called Doctor Goettman “a dirty Whig,” in the Scott-Pierce campaign to the great amusement of his father and all the bystanders. Charles even had a scuffle with an older lad who, four years later, had the temerity to shout for Fremont and Dayton in that community, and thus far he certainly had given no token pointing to political apostasy. But now he had ventured to apologize for abolition sentiments, and to question the righteousness of slavery! Could it be possible that Charles was forsaking the political principles which the Ruthvons had cher-

ished since the foundation of the government, and embracing the pernicious teachings of Garrison and Phillips?

What, thought Mr. Ruthvon as he sat there that summer night, could have wrought such a change in the lad by his side, whom he had actually sent to college from the township of Copton, and of whom he entertained such high hopes of being some day a great farmer-statesman. Influences hitherto unrecognized had been at work.

For a number of years Charles had been a good deal with Jabez Chetwynde, and from him learned something of New England customs and opinions, and unconsciously received lasting impressions. The latter were deepened by reading, and by his subsequent intercourse at college with young men coming from other atmospheres and holding opposite political views. But he was yet very young, and to differ with his father politically — that would have been unfilial, and thus far had never entered his mind. A circumstance presently occurred however that supplied what was lacking to bring into life and action the impressions already made.

In May, preceding the time when our story opens, the venerable President of a neighboring college was invited to deliver an address before the literary society with which young Ruthvon was connected at Pennbrook College, and on the day following, which was the Sabbath, to preach to the students in the college chapel.

Neither the address nor the sermon had any direct relation to slavery, but in the "long prayer" on Sabbath, the President in simple, pathetic language, besought God to look in pity upon the poor slave, who though made in the divine image, even as his master, was deprived of his birthright of liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The effect of this prayer on the young man's mind was powerful and almost instantaneous, and from that day a change appeared in Charles Ruthvon.

During the seven weeks elapsed since the close of the college year, it had not, however, become apparent to his father, except that the latter now remembered that if Charles happened to be present when he and Doctor Helfer engaged in political discussion, his son usually remained a quiet listener, and that the enthusiasm with which he used to show his knowledge of history, to his father's great delight, was wanting.

For some minutes after Charles ceased speaking, Mr. Ruthvon continued in deep thought. A light seemed to dawn upon him. Feeling at last that he might trust himself to speak, he addressed his son in a calm tone not without a strong tinge of sadness.

"Charlie," said he, "I see you've been turning your face too much toward New England, where the Yankees think wisdom was born, and where it will finally die. Don't forget, my boy, that you are a Pennsylvania German; don't forsake the principles of your fathers, all of whom were honest men and among whom no fool was

ever found. If you do, it will be a sad day both for you and your parents. Our ancestors worshiped in the old church on the hill, Charlie, for almost a century, and before that in an older building on the same spot. In the graveyard hard by they lie buried. There your mother and I have worshiped for fifty years, and there" — here he stopped a moment, his voice choked with emotion — "we'll be buried. The old forms, the old doctrines, were good enough for them, and nobody has ever yet made an improvement in these things.—My father and I went to the polls side by side, the fall I had my first vote, and both voted for Andrew Jackson. I'm proud of that, Charlie. Whiggery was only another name for folly, and abolitionism, its natural fruit, is now poisoning the country. Slavery is right, in spite of that Yankee of a Chetwynde, by Schinnerhannes! The agitation of the slavery question is wrong and Abolitionists are enemies to the country's peace.—No, Charlie, not now" — noticing in the starlight that his son was eager to speak, — "we'll say no more on these matters to-night, lest we say what we might regret. Think it all over carefully, and remember that no Ruthvon, and so far as I know, no Volz either, was ever known to change his religion or his politics. Remember, too, that there were men of sense and wisdom in Copton township long before Pennbrook College was heard of, or New England represented in our neighborhood."

Charles was deeply grieved at his father's allusion to

Jabez Chetwynde, yet he was forced to acknowledge to himself that the insinuation as to the Yankee's influence over him was nearer the mark than he could have believed. Nevertheless he was persuaded that the political views he had begun to espouse were in the main correct, but he knew that his father's prejudices were so strong that argument with him at present would only make matters worse. He did indeed desire to say that he meant no disrespect in what he had said, but his father had not permitted him. And so parent and son separated for the night, each with feelings never experienced before.

CHAPTER II.

A GOODLY LAND AND ITS CHIEF OWNERS.

“ A land flowing with milk and honey. ”

In varied scenery, fertility of soil and richness of valuable minerals, no part of our wide domain excels that portion of the State of Pennsylvania lying south of the Kittatinny or Blue Mountains, and between the Delaware and the Susquehanna rivers. It is traversed in a southwesterly direction by the romantic South Mountain range, and from north to south by the beautiful Schuylkill, which with its numerous tributaries — the Tulpehocken, the Ontelaunee, the Wyomissing, the Manatawny, the Perkiomen, the Wissahickon — affords drainage and abundant water power.

Within this territory lie the famous Chester, Conestoga, Lebanon, and Schuylkill valleys. To say nothing of the inexhaustible deposits of iron it contains, this section of the Keystone State comprises an agricultural region surpassed by none in the world, unequaled by any in the extent and perfection of its farm buildings, and approached in these respects only by the Connecticut valley and by Niagara and a few other counties of New York.

To visit a farming district like southeastern Pennsylvania in the summer or autumn is a delightful privilege.

In the former season the visitor will see fields of wheat and rye the like of which he probably never saw anywhere else, and in the latter his vision will be greeted with acres of corn of a size unknown to New York and New England ; with orchards of luscious apples bringing promise of cider and apple-butter ; with vast fields of cabbage gently hinting of sauerkraut ; and with herds of cattle unsurpassed in beauty. At all seasons there are many homes in which he will find cordial welcome and experience unbounded hospitality.

Should he be inclined to test his skill in catching the shy trout or the gamy bass, or in hunting the wily fox, here are the lovely streams and the picturesque mountains, ready to furnish him abundant scope for its exercise, and perchance also for that of his patience. If fond of viewing an extensive and magnificent landscape — and who is not ? — the Welsh Mountain, Neversink, Cushion Hill, Mount Penn, the Eagle's Head and numerous other peaks will yield him his desire.

And now, while Frederick Ruthvon and his son are lost in sleep or meditating on the events of the evening, let us ascertain by whom the major portion of this rich and diversified region is inhabited, and inquire into the character of the people. Then when we meet Mr. Ruthvon and Charles and Doctor Helfer again, we shall take a fresh interest in them and understand their words and actions and those of their neighbors better than before.

With the acquisition of New Netherlands — now New York — from the Dutch, in 1664, the part of Pennsylvania in question also passed into the possession of the English, who settled Philadelphia and the more immediate vicinity. But about the year 1725 a great influx of Germans into the colony began. With the eagerness for the acquirement of desirable material things so characteristic of the race, these, under the liberal policy of the colony toward non-English settlers, soon possessed themselves of some of the finest lands in what are now Northampton, Lehigh, Berks, Lebanon, Lancaster, Montgomery and Chester, Counties. Their descendants, the Pennsylvania Germans, or Dutch, have held them ever since, and comprise one of the most substantial elements of the population of the great Keystone State, but at the same time beyond all peradventure, in political, educational and religious affairs, the least progressive.

The Pennsylvania German* has long possessed his beautiful heritage, but the conservative spirit and stolid immobility of his ancestors have descended to him as a part of his inheritance. His conservatism, which — like conservatism the world over — is but too often only another name for a compound of ignorance, prejudice and stubbornness, with a little religion thrown in to give it a good flavor, leads him largely to act on the retardative principle that what was good enough for his father is good enough for him and his children, and that what

*The characterization of an individual representing a people can never, it should be remembered, include all the individuals of that people, nor, indeed, all the peculiar features in the character of any particular individual.

his father held and did he and his children ought to hold and do.

If, therefore, his father was a Democrat, so is he ; if a Whig, he is a Republican.

For a long time he cared little for an education beyond the simplest rudiments. If his daughters could read the Psalter and the New Testament, and his sons, in addition to this, write and cipher a little, — that was all he got, and it was enough for them. Even now in many districts he keeps open the common school but five months in the year, and “is too frequently inclined practically to maintain that as the father lived and made money without education, so may the son ; and to regard a liberal education as being rather the accomplishment of a rogue than the necessary qualification of a useful citizen.”

Of his religious faith he has often been heard to sing, when certain zealots have sought to win him to their way of thinking : —

“ It was good for our fathers,
It was good for our mothers,
And it 's good enough for me.”

He hates innovation always, but especially when it hails, as it so often does, from New England. If he finally accepts it, it is only after at least the partial loss of ability longer to resist and much strong protestation that the times are sadly out of joint. Thus, while he is a long way in advance of his forefathers — has colleges, better schools, more books and newspapers, and some-

what more refinement of manner,—yet in many things he is very far behind his fellow-citizens of Irish, Scotch, or English descent.

He is shrewd. In a trade he is not a whit behind his wide-awake Yankee neighbor whom he so cordially despises; but while the shrewdness of the New Englander is open and aggressive, his is defensive and veiled with stolidity.

Moreover, he is thrifty. He has the best farms, the fattest oxen, the finest horses, the biggest cabbages. His thrift is largely of a material nature and too frequently is the child of penuriousness. Very often his fine barns, good stock and broad acres have been acquired at the expense of home comforts and the education of his children. The large, well-planned out-buildings come first; the dwelling-house to correspond must wait and come later, if it comes at all. For his æsthetic taste is quite weak. He has small faith in bric-a-brac and broken china. He prefers things whole. Oscar Wilde he despises, and if he raises sunflowers, it is simply that his chickens and turkeys may grow fatter. He is just as fond of deutscher-kaes, pretzel, sauerkraut and leberwurst, as were his ancestors before him.

Honest and truthful is he likewise. Exacting from you the last cent due him, he will to the last cent render you your dues. His word, once pledged, will be sacredly kept. He engages little in speculation; he is essentially an agriculturist. Seldom is he known as a defaulter or as the wrecker of a railroad. Less pushing

than his neighbors, he has also avoided some of their vices. He is slow, but tolerably sure. While others run, he walks, and thus falls less frequently. The integrity of character proverbial of the German race has descended to him.

And he is religious, too. He has in his house, if no other books, the Bible, hymn-book, catechism, Psalter, and Arndt's "True Christianity." His children are in most cases sent for months to catechetical instruction by the pastor, and then received into full membership in the church by confirmation. Seldom indeed will you find that he is not a member of some Christian society; more infrequently still that he is an open unbeliever. He is in his place in church very regularly. He may be somewhat formal and perfunctory in the discharge of his religious duties, and his liberality in the support and spread of the Gospel has not thus far become proverbial; nevertheless with scrupulous conscientiousness he pays his pastor a fee whenever a member of his household is baptized, confirmed or buried. His religion is neither ostentatious nor aggressive. He loves and will have religious freedom for himself, for to escape religious persecution many of his ancestors crossed the wide sea and braved the dangers of a wilderness; but neither will he interfere with that of others.

Finally, the Pennsylvania Dutchman in his peculiar way is kind and hospitable. The manner of his kindness and hospitality is hearty yet undemonstrative. No trouble is too great for him, no hour too unseasonable,

no time too precious, where the sick and the needy are concerned. In his dwelling you may often see the "Rumlafer's Bett" — the tramp's bed, — specially set apart for needy wayfarers who may apply for a night's lodging. None are more willing than he to lend or to help a neighbor.

- If you happen to be an Englishman or a Yankee and are unable to speak his language or to understand him when he speaks it, he will look at you very suspiciously, and at first probably show you but scant courtesy; but if you can converse with him a little in his tongue, will fall in with his ways, and by your general appearance and manner convince him that you are an honest individual, he will give you hearty welcome to his home — always provided you are not a book-agent!

In his house you will three times a day sit down at a table covered with such a profusion of food as would have delighted the heart of Athelstane of Coningsburgh, and will almost startle you. At the beginning of the meal your host will probably simply say: "Now help yourself." This he will mean literally, for usually at his table all — children and servants, host and guest — help themselves, asking only for such dishes as happen to be out of immediate reach when desired. If, therefore, you wait, expecting to be helped, you will be reminded that you are at a Pennsylvania Dutch table and must largely serve yourself; and if you are still bashful, you will likely leave the bountiful board somewhat hungry. The

better you "help yourself," the better your host will like you.

This hard-handed, stolid race has furnished some eminent men. It gave Pennsylvania at least six of her Governors. It contributed the Muhlenbergs, the Heisters, the Clymers, to politics; Rittenhouse, Haldeman, Gross, to science; Harbaugh, Krauth, Schaeffer, to theology. It has borne an important part in the settlement of the great West, and the impress it has made on the Nation at large has been good.

When, however, the war of secession broke out, the Pennsylvania Dutch were much divided in their attitude toward the national government. The majority of them could not understand the purpose of the rebellion, and utterly failed to apprehend the foundation principles on which the conflict was waged on the part of the North and the motives actuating Lincoln and his compatriots. Mistaught by some of their political leaders and clergy, they had the most absurd notions about these things. They saw in the war a cunning scheme, whereby certain classes North and South sought to enrich themselves by the blood and treasure of others. They remembered, moreover, the tales of their forefathers of war's devastation and horror in the old country. Thus it came to pass that in many ways they bitterly opposed the government in its efforts to subdue the rebellion.

But, be it said, a large minority — (among whom, though, were numbers, as for example, the Mennonites

and the Dunkers, who could not take up arms in defence of the Nation on account of religious scruples) — had clearer views of the principles involved in the war, and of the duty of a faithful citizen to his government in the great crisis. In many cases they detested slavery as the source of numerous ills, not only to the slave, but to the master and to the entire people.

From this portion of the Pennsylvania Germans, the calls of the President for troops received generous response. One of the first companies — it is claimed, indeed, the very first * — to answer his call of April 15th, 1861, for 75,000 troops, was largely Pennsylvania German. Voluntarily and eagerly, animated by the highest patriotism, there went forth from among these people, thousands of brave men and youth to do battle for their country. They did not shrink from the places of danger; they were in the front ranks; they did nobly, none more so. They died on the field and in the hospital, and many bear on their persons the scars of honorable warfare.

In consequence of the division of sentiment spoken of, bitter feuds and animosities were engendered, often resulting in the breaking up of families and the friendships of a life-time, and not infrequently culminating in the destruction of property, and even in the shedding of human blood. There were conspiracies, plots and counterplots, turmoil and hurrying to and fro — hard

* The Ringgold light artillery of Reading, Berks Co., Pa., which left that city for the South, April 16th, the day after the call was issued.

to understand of a people so phlegmatic, unless we remember that those of such temperament when once fully aroused are the most active, and do with their might what they undertake.

Let us now return to the Ruthvons and resume the thread of our story.

CHAPTER III.

THE RUTHVON FAMILY.

Frederick Ruthvon retired to rest after the conversation with his son with conflicting emotions. On the one hand was his affection, on the other what he regarded as his sense of duty. The next morning he repeated to his wife what had occurred.

“I fear Charlie is going square against everything the Ruthvons always believed and acted on,” he said in conclusion. “Next, Maria, he’ll be a long-faced Congregationalist most likely, and before long I think he’ll exhort me to farm as they do up in Connecticut, where they live on baked beans, maple sugar and molasses bread.”

“Be patient,” she gently replied; “Charlie is a good boy, and his love for us will keep him from going very far wrong. Don’t be angry with him, but wait and see.”

“It was desperately hard to hear him talk the way he did, and I now see that Doctor Helfer understood him better than I did, from the way he teased him about Yankee Chetwynde’s daughter.—If Charlie persists,” he continued, speaking with sudden energy, “I will disinherit him.”

“Fred, Fred, don’t talk like that,” exclaimed Mrs.

Ruthvon ; “after all the boy said nothing very bad — only a word for the slave.”

Mr. Ruthvon readily saw that if he persisted, he would quickly raise up a second advocate for abolition sentiments in his household ; so he wisely said nothing more, and left the house.

That Frederick Ruthvon was proud of his name and ancestry need not be said, and in some respects his pride was certainly just. Johannes Ruthvon, his great-grandfather, had left his home in the Palatinate in Germany early in the previous century, on account of religious persecution, and crossed the ocean to seek freedom of worship, and a new home for himself and his family in the forests of Pennsylvania. Arriving at Philadelphia, he made his way toward the north, took the oath of allegiance to Great Britain under the laws of the colony, and purchased for a nominal price, a large tract of land a short distance south of where Haltfest now stands, and about a mile north of the foot of the South Mountain. On this tract he settled, many other Germans settling all around him about the same time. With his older sons he attacked the primitive forest and soon cleared ground enough to raise bread for the family. After a life of excessive labor, Johannes Ruthvon died, leaving the inheritance to his sons. Toiling day and night, these continued to improve the tract, and in a comparatively short period what had been a wild waste was converted into fields of waving wheat and corn.

In the course of years the original purchase was

divided into three parts, one considerably larger than either of the others. This part fell to the lot of Frederick Ruthvon, and he was reputed one of the wealthiest men in Copton township.

Scarcely less proud than of his name and ancestry was Mr. Ruthvon of the old family mansion. It stood on his portion of the original estate and was occupied by him. True, his barn was of immense size, with walls of pure, blue limestone; but he had erected that, whereas the house had been built by his grandfather. In that early period it was considered large and grand. It was two stories high, with an exceeding steep roof. Its walls were of a red sandstone found on the South Mountain. On a great stone just above the principal entrance was cut in large letters the legend

IN CHRISTI NOMINE

and underneath this the date of erection :

MDCXCIII.

together with the name of the builder and proprietor.

On the first floor was a large hall from which a flight of stairs led into the second story. To the left of the hall was the parlor, and on the right a sitting-room, two small schlof-kaemmer or sleeping-chambers, and, in the rear of these, the great old-fashioned Pennsylvania Dutch kitchen, which, as usual, served also as the dining-room. One kammer was especially set apart for

the use of Mr. Ruthvon's mother, who at a great age lived with her son and was tenderly cared for by him. In the parlor which was seldom used save on "state occasions," few in number, were a rag-carpet, half a dozen common chairs, a few other articles of furniture and on the walls two or three cheap colored prints in stained pine frames. The sitting-room contained, among other things, the inevitable high Dutch clock,—brought in this instance from the fatherland by Johannes Ruthvon,—an antiquated piano, and a book-case containing, besides the usual religious books before mentioned, a goodly number of schoolbooks, biographies and histories.

On the entire premises were evidences of care and economy. The philosophy contained in the divine command—"Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost"—was evidently practiced here. Not a bread-crust, an apple, a potato, a pumpkin, was permitted to go to waste, not a chip of wood was allowed to rot. Every tool and utensil had its place, and there when not in use it was found.

From what we have seen of him, it can be readily imagined that Frederick Ruthvon was a man of strong dislikes; let it be said that his likes were still stronger and that at the bottom of his inherited conservatism lay much good sense. In all the region there was not a kinder or more truthful man than he, or one more generally respected. In early life he had married, for pure love, a neighbor's daughter. Maria Volz was one of

the excellent of the earth. She proved a true helpmeet and smoothed down the rougher edges in her husband's character. She had a kind word for every one in distress, and many a night "the tramp's bed" contained an occupant. She did not merely say "Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled," but gave what was needful for the body. She was esteemed by all her neighbors, and was looked up to for wisdom. Her own inheritance, by no means inconsiderable, she added to that of her spouse. They lived happily together, though thus far their life had been one of severe toil. A trip to Reading during fair-week, a day at Schnarrarfelsscheddel to view the battalion-drill and an annual journey to Kutztown to visit relatives for a few days, were the principal relaxations they allowed themselves.

This worthy couple had three children. Their first-born died in infancy. Two years later Charles was born, and the third child, now twelve years of age, was added to the family when the former was eight years old. Between parents and children a deep affection existed, though on the father's part it manifested itself very quietly.

Catharine was the darling of the household. Golden haired, with blue eyes, chubby cheeks, a prattling tongue—to her parents she was as the apple of their eyes and to the brother as his own life. Petted, she was not spoiled. She could wash dishes and had made her first attempt at milking a cow.

As a boy Charles had been of a timid, retiring dis-

position. A severe attack of scarlet fever when quite young left him much prostrated, and for several years his condition gave his parents much anxiety; but as he grew older his system rallied, he became strong and hardy and less timid and shy. When he attained manhood he was physically well-favored and somewhat above medium height, while in manner modest yet frank, graceful and winning. His grey eyes sparkled with intelligence, and when he came home from college in vacation the neighbors said he was the handsomest young man in the vicinity, and envious tongues were busy.

“He is proud,” said Hans Prantman; “Fred Ruthvon is making an ink-licker* of his boy instead of bringing him up to the plow as I’m my Pete. He might spend his money much better than in sending him away to boarding-school. It only makes him stuck up and feel above us, and fit for nothing but acting the gentleman, by my sex.”

Charles disarmed the prejudice of a good many however by being the same genial, obliging young man he had always been. He greeted the people in the old, hearty way, and in conversation without any show of obtruding his superior knowledge would generally be so entertaining as to win to him any who might dislike him and compel them to admit to themselves that going to college had not made him proud. And what was

*A person who makes his living in some other way than by manual labor,—more particularly a lawyer, an agent of any kind, or a clerk.

perhaps more convincing than anything else, he took his usual place in the field during the summer vacation — swung the cradle, pitched hay and held the plow,— not disdaining even to wrestle, or to run a foot-race with such of the young men as might be so inclined.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SHADOW OF WAR.

Through the few remaining weeks of the long vacation nothing was said about politics in the Ruthvon home. Mrs. Ruthvon like a wise wife and loving mother, was careful not to say anything that might bring on argument between her husband and her boy. But Mr. Ruthvon chafed under the restraint, for in the last presidential contest one of his great delights had been to talk on political matters with his intelligent son, of whom he was very proud. Charles would be the inheritor of the family name and of the old estate.

“He will take my place in the church and in township affairs, and will carry on the farm just as I did,” said he to his wife one day; “and,—who knows, Maria?—he may get into the Assembly sometime, or even into Congress.”

But the conversation of that August evening had revealed that which seemed to strike a deadly blow at all the fond hopes so long cherished. Nevertheless, he treated Charles kindly, the days passed quickly away and the student returned to college. When the Christmas vacation came the political battle was over, and in spite of the fact that Charles' visits at Mr. Chetwynde's house were rather more frequent than usual, the family

spent the gladdest season of all the year very pleasantly.

Meanwhile the ominous rumbling of the chariots of war was heard afar off. In the South, discussion had given way already to action portending the awful struggle. South Carolina seceded from the Union December 20th, 1860, and was presently followed by six other Southern states; and when Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated President of the United States, March 4th, 1861, a hostile government with Jeff Davis at its head sat at Montgomery, Alabama. April 12th, Fort Sumter was fired upon. This was quickly succeeded by its surrender and evacuation and by the President's call for 75,000 volunteers for three months. The shadow of war was over the land.

The roar of the cannon at Sumter was heard all over the North, and even the most sluggish and indifferent were aroused thereby. In the most retired hamlets and remotest farmhouses, the one absorbing topic was the fall of Sumter and the consequences that must follow.

Pennbrook College was in great commotion during those April days. The students marched, drilled, made grandiloquent speeches, raised a beautiful Union flag over the principal building, and mobbed three of their number who had dared lift up their voices for secession. When the news came that several regiments of volunteers had already reached Washington, and that the Massachusetts 6th had been attacked in Baltimore by secession sympathizers, they became fairly wild

with excitement. Some of them started for their homes, from which they had just returned after the Easter vacation, for the purpose of enlisting under the call for troops. Among these was Charles Ruthvon, who despite his Pennsylvania Dutch blood, was deeply stirred. His father was surprised to see him, and astonished when the object of his return from school was made known.

Grandmother Ruthvon was present. She was in her dotage and loved to indulge in reminiscence. Moreover, she had numerous omens, signs and dreams, in all of which she had perfect faith.

Many of the neighbors believed her to possess "the gift of healing," and frequently children were brought to "Aunty" Ruthvon to be "touched." She was treated with the greatest kindness and deference by the entire household. No matter how long her stories were or how untimely her interruption of the discourse, she was always allowed to proceed to the end of her remarks before anyone spoke, and at least the semblance of attention was given her.

When her grandson, to whom she was very strongly attached, made known his desire to enlist, she lifted up her hands in horror.

"I knew something bad was going to happen," she exclaimed; "every day last week it seemed to me to be Saturday, and when Saturday came it didn't seem like Saturday at all, but like Sunday; and every time that is so something bad is surely going to happen, and

here it is again. Now it is war, and Charlie will go. Oh, thou beloved ground, thou beloved ground ! ”

Charles watched his father's countenance while his grandmother was speaking, and he saw tokens of anger there ; but the old lady's interruption gave Mr. Ruthvon time to collect his thoughts and to put a bridle on his tongue.

“ I told Doctor Helfer last summer what would happen if Abe Lincoln was elected,” said he after his mother had ended. “ The South feels that it has no longer any security in the Union for its rights. Still, it isn't yet in dead earnest about secession ; it only wishes to show what it can and will do if its rights are not respected. It is like a nest of bumble-bees that has been disturbed, and if regiment after regiment of abolition soldiers is sent down there singing that song about that old John Brown's abominable body lying mouldering in the grave, then, by Schinnerhannes, there'll be war in earnest sure ! Therefore every man who enlists only helps to make things worse, and, Charlie, I'm not willing that you should be one of these. The Ruthvons always had a just idea of property rights, and no soldier who goes to free niggers has.”

He went on more earnestly : — “ We haven't talked politics since last August ; I wanted to give you time to set yourself right, but I see you haven't, and I might as well talk plain now so that we may understand each other. Your notions about slavery have no foundation at all, and were put into your head by that Yankee of a

Chetwynde, who never had any business to settle here among honest Pennsylvania German people and introduce notions as hateful to us as they were to our fathers. And Charlie," he concluded with great emphasis and warmth, "I tell you once for all, I shall never give my consent to your going into this war. You will be of age July 21st next: if you enlist before that time, I'll strike you out of my will, for you'll be unworthy to succeed to the old estate. Your place will then be either among the niggers or the Yankees."

Never before had Mr. Ruthvon spoken in this tone to his son, and the latter was touched to the quick, especially by those portions of his father's remarks relating to Jabez Chetwynde's supposed influence over him, a point on which he had somehow recently become very sensitive. He was tempted to make an unfilial, defiant reply, but his affection for his father and his habitual deference to his authority, as well as his mother's silent weeping, stood him in good stead.

"Father," said he calmly but with eyes filled with tears, "I so much wished to enlist and go with the fellows, but I never thought of doing so before I was my own master, without getting your consent and mother's. It will be hard to go back to college now, and if you agree, I will not at present. But I must tell you honestly that if the war goes on and I continue to hold my present views of secession," —

"And slavery," interrupted his father.

Charles reddened, but finished without heeding the

interruption —“ I shall probably enlist as soon as I come of age.”

Grandmother Ruthvon got up and hobbled out of the room to her kammer ejaculating: “ Now there’ll be war, and Charles is going ! Oh, dear land, dear land.”

Mr. Ruthvon was affected by his son’s ready submission to his authority, and could not but admire the young man’s frankness.

“ Well,” said he in a calmer tone after his mother had disappeared, “ I’m glad that in your misguided eagerness to fight the South and help rob people of their lawful property, you have nevertheless not entirely forgotten your duty to your parents.”

“ And, Fred, Charlie never will,” said his wife gently.

Charles gave his mother a grateful look.

“ I know it Maria, if he’s just let alone,” answered Mr. Ruthvon.

“ If I ceased to respect you, father,” said Charles, “ I should of course cease to respect myself, but the same thing would surely follow were I to act otherwise than in accordance with my convictions of duty. I wish you could know how it pains me to differ with you even in thought.”

“ Our words and acts should correspond with our convictions,” responded his father with dignity, “ and all the more sorry am I that your ideas about our national troubles are so erroneous. But, my boy, we won’t quarrel. Promise me that you will not enlist

before you are of age, and that between now and that day you will think this whole matter over once more carefully, unbiased by the opinions of your college professors or that Yankee over there, but according to home-made, common sense, Pennsylvania Dutch principles."

"The first I have already as good as promised, and I promise the second also," answered Charles.

"Very well; that leaves things plain between us until then," said Mr. Ruthvon. "I hope you will see your error and be kept from doing what would bring reproach upon our name, and your father and mother in sorrow to the grave. Good night."

Charles had arrived at home in the evening, and it was now quite late. They all retired to rest, the parents sorrowfully reflecting on what the near future might bring them. The mother dreamed that her boy had been brought home from the field of battle wounded and dying, and that she and his father wept over him.

The young man sat in his arm-chair in his room until near morning. He was deeply disappointed by his father's decision, yet was very thoughtful too. He went to bed at last, to dream that the fellows laughed at him, and taunted him with cowardice as they proudly marched away in answer to their country's call.

CHAPTER V.

A YANKEE IN A STRANGE LAND.

“Mr. Chetwynde, if it’s a fair question, how did you ever happen to get all the way from Connecticut into this Dutch neighborhood and settle down here?”

The questioner was Doctor Helfer, one morning in April, just before the attack on Sumter. He and Jabez Chetwynde had become very good friends since the former’s coming to Haltfest, owing no doubt in part to the fact that the doctor spoke English well, and in part to the further fact that their political views were practically identical. This morning Jabez was plowing corn-stubble, and when Helfer drove by, the farmer hailed him, and they were soon engaged in discussing the state of the country. After an hour thus spent Mr. Chetwynde thanked his companion for stopping and remarked that he so seldom had an opportunity to talk politics with his neighbors on account of their language, that when he did get a chance he enjoyed and made the most of it. It was this remark that led the doctor to ask the question with which the chapter begins.

“Well,” said Chetwynde smiling and getting on the fence again, “I reckon I came here for about the same reason that brought you — I thought I could make some money. It is all simple enough when you come to

understand it, doctor. Although I was originally a farmer, I engaged a number of years in mining iron-ore in the vicinity of Kent up in old Connecticut. It's just nine years since I heard of rich deposits of ore in this town. I at once came to inspect them, and finding reports true, leased lands, moved my family and began operations. After a couple of years a difficulty arose about the ownership of the land which involved my leases and compelled me to suspend work until the trouble could be adjusted by the courts, and it isn't settled yet. Meanwhile I found this place for sale — it's a part of the old Ruthvon tract and belonged to Fred Ruthvon's brother who went to Iowa — and bought it.— I like farming, but at first our surroundings were not pleasant. However, we Yankees penetrate into every part of the country and soon adapt ourselves to the surroundings, if the surroundings refuse to adapt themselves to us. Nearly everyone spoke a language of which we knew nothing, and I declare though we've lived here so long, I can't talk it yet, though I can understand some of it, and the boys can speak it pretty well and Blanche a little.—One of our greatest trials is that we have scarcely any church privileges, all services being conducted in German. We are Congregationalists and I believe there is no church of our denomination nearer than Philadelphia. Being from New England, many at first looked upon us with suspicion and we felt a good deal like the cat in the strange garret, but they are gradually getting over that, since they find that we have

neither hoofs nor horns and try to do what is right. Of course some don't like us yet and never will, I reckon. We don't observe Ascension-day nor Good Friday, and make little of Christmas. The Prantmans are horrified because we work on Good Friday and because the women folks sew on Ascension-day!—And then, to be sure, Yankee women don't do any milking or churning or pig-slopping, and that has scandalized some of the people and made us unpopular, to say nothing of my politics, you know. Several hired men left me because I insisted on their doing the milking and every one who agreed to do it had to learn how of me. It's too funny sometimes. Our neighbors never heard of a Congregationalist society, and at first some said our religion was a sort of heathen religion and that it forbade the women to milk and to do that kind of work.—But, doctor, I'm making a little money, and after all we're pretty happy here."

"Ho!" exclaimed Helfer, laughing heartily when the Yankee had finished his account, "some of your neighbors like you all pretty well too, I may say. I must go. Old Mrs. Shiffler is very low. Good morning, Mr. Chetwynde."

Jabez Chetwynde was a man of fifty years, a typical Yankee in physique, shrewdness, intelligence, patriotism and industry. He was long and lean, knew a dollar when he saw it and usually got it; he was painstaking in his farming, and his store of knowledge of political, religious and social topics corresponded with his well-

chosen little library, and with the numerous papers and magazines that came to his house regularly. His wife was a fitting helpmeet, proud of her Mayflower ancestry.

Of children this couple had three. Frank was now fourteen years of age; Clinton, just twenty; and Blanche, eighteen. Clinton was a bright lad, inheriting the best traits of his New England ancestry. He was very intelligent concerning current political events and an enthusiastic admirer of Abraham Lincoln. More than once this latter fact had brought him into serious conflict with lads of opposite political views. His sister often chid him and he would respond in a brother's usual way — a kiss, and the remark that she was a girl and did not know about these things.

Blanche was of medium height, well formed, with fair complexion, brown eyes and dark hair. During the last few years she had been away at school in her native state. When at home she mingled but little with the young women of the neighborhood. Many of them did not like her; they called her proud, and her superior accomplishments made them envious. But the one thing which more than any other rendered her unpopular with a certain class was that she was afraid of cows and never had milked one in her life!

“There comes that Yankee girl,” snarled Margaret Prantman to Sallie Vonneida, Mr. Ruthvon's hired girl, one Sunday in church before service began; “I just wonder she isn't too proud to come to our Dutch church,

and she told me the other day she hadn't learned to milk a cow yet, and her eighteen years old. I wonder whether they have to feed her with a spoon like a baby? What does the women do anyhow up there in 'Neticut where she comes from?"

"Mrs. Ruthvon says she's a real nice housekeeper," responded Sallie, who was inclined to be conservative where Margaret was radical, and *vice versa*.

"A nice housekeeper indeed, when the men must milk the cows and feed the pigs after working hard in the fields all day. Go away!"

"They are awful people," she continued when Miss Vonneida vouchsafed no reply to her contemptuous remark; "why, the old man plowed last Friday — Good Friday! My! If that oats ever gets into his barn before some one dies in the family, the barn will surely burn down."

"Don't talk so loud," said Sallie, nudging Miss Prantman.

"Look at her," continued the latter, but in a lower tone; "she thinks she's handsome, and they say she puts sugar in her coffee and uses two or three different plates at dinner, and puts a cloth on her lap. It'll be a long time before she gets a beau around here, I think, by my sex."

"Don't you be too sure," said Sallie, smiling pleasantly; "they say C. R. is going there in earnest now, since Blanche is eighteen and is allowed to have beaux."

“C. R.?” said Margaret sharply and rather louder than the surroundings, if not her feelings, warranted; “C. R.? You mean Charlie Ruthvon. I don’t believe he is such a fool; I believe he is looking in another direction.”

“In yours maybe?” rejoined Sallie, sarcastically, for Miss Prantman was anything but comely and sweet.

It was well that the entrance of the minister and the organist just then hushed all voices, else loud whispers might readily have grown into something unseemly. Margaret hissed “You’ll see” into Sallie’s ear and then leaned back in the pew her face puckered as if she had eaten green persimmons.

Blanche Chetwynde had one intimate female friend, however, besides her mother—Susie Zweispringer, Squire Zweispringer’s daughter, in Haltfest. Susie was two years older than Blanche and like the latter had been for some time at a boarding-school. The two were very congenial and visited each other frequently.

And there was a second person who came often to Mr. Chetwynde’s house. Charles Ruthvon was but twelve years old when the Yankee arrived in Copton township. One day not long afterward moved by curiosity to see a Yankee, he shyly ventured to the newcomer’s house. Mr. Chetwynde greeted him very cordially, chatted with him and invited him to come again. This invitation the lad was not slow to accept, and as he could speak English—though with a strong Pennsylvania Dutch accent,—and was of an inquiring

turn, Jabez took a great fancy to him and liked to talk to him about New England and other topics new to Charles.

By and by Mr. Chetwynde moved on the farm and became near neighbor to the Ruthvons. Charles and Clinton soon were bosom friends, and the Yankee and his family found in young Ruthvon a warm advocate among those who ignorantly aspersed them. Naturally Charles was thrown much into Blanche's company. As children they played together in field and wood. After awhile both went away to school, and they saw less of each other. But vacation-time came around regularly and as regularly found them at home. It is not hard to believe that while at first the father possessed the greater interest for the lad, the daughter soon supplanted him completely. When, then, the Christmas holidays of 1860 came and found Charles at the Chetwynde residence he could indeed still talk politics with Mr. Chetwynde, but presently he would be quietly engaged in conversation with Blanche about a book or some kindred topic.

So time went on, and soon the exciting days of April, 1861, arrived. On the day following the interview with his father narrated in the previous chapter, Charles Ruthvon found his way to the house of Mr. Chetwynde, where he received his usual hearty welcome.

"Charlie, what's the matter?" asked Jabez after the customary greetings were exchanged. "You're home unexpectedly, and seem as downcast as if your dearest

friends were dead, whereas you ought to be as mad as a hornet."

"I do feel sad, Mr. Chetwynde," responded Charles.

"Sad!" exploded the Yankee. "Do you think the Union dead because an irresistible force of unhung rebels has taken a fort with only a handful of brave men to defend it? The South is now finding out that it has stirred up a power which will crush it in three months. I wish I weren't too old to go. I'd go just as soon as I could get ready. If Clint here —"

"I'll go to-morrow, father, if you'll let me," said Clinton with the ardor of unthinking youth. "I wish I could have been with the Massachusetts 6th at Baltimore, or gone with the Ringgolds of Reading," he exclaimed enthusiastically.

"Mr. Chetwynde, that is just the point," said Charles; "I am neither too old nor too young to go to my country's defence. I came home yesterday to enlist, but my father refused his consent. I am not quite of age and I feel that it would be wrong to disregard his wishes."

"Your father is sadly prejudiced, I must say Charlie. Still, I admire your regard for his authority."

"I thank you for saying so, and I told him if the war continued and I held the same views, I should probably enlist as soon as I came of age, three months from now."

"Give me your hand on that, my boy," said Chetwynde heartily; "and Clint can go with you, if the

thing lasts that long. With such boys to defend her our country need not fear," and he sang with patriotic enthusiasm :

“And the star spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!”

“And then it will be truly ‘the land of the *free*,’” he continued. “Lincoln well said that this country cannot exist half slave, half free, and it will now be *all* free. The first shot on Sumter sounded the knell of slavery. The issue had to come, and it might as well be fought out now as later, and I envy you young men who can help do it. Slavery could not always exist in a Nation of freemen. Freedom and slavery are opposites, and there is an irrepressible conflict between them. There will be first hatred, then friction and finally open war.”

“The seeds of civil war between the states of our Republic,” he continued more earnestly, “were planted at the moment when human slavery was established within its borders, before the Nation as such was born. Long they lay dormant, but they were not dead. The conditions necessary to their growth soon developed; then they germinated and sprung up, and are now producing their dread crop — wounds and death. They germinated when slavery sought to extend itself into Kansas and the Northwest; the ugly plant appeared above ground when the fugitive slave law was ordained; the blade grew rapidly when the South vigorously tried to enforce it; the ear appeared when the property of

the United States was stolen by Floyd, and secession proclaimed ; and the harvest was ripe and the reaping began with the firing on Sumter. It is an ugly crop, and a little time, and some blood and money, will be required to reap it, but when it is reaped and destroyed the field will be forever cleared, and then unhindered will grow the glad harvest of universal freedom."

In his enthusiasm Chetwynde became eloquent. Clinton was much excited.

"I'm old enough to go," he cried ; "I read of boys much younger than I going. I want to go now, father."

"When Charlie goes you can go," replied his father.

"But it may be all over then, and I want to have part in it," persisted Clinton.

Mrs. Chetwynde, who was a deeply interested listener but thus far had said nothing, now interposed.

"Clinton, Clinton, the President's call for 75,000 soldiers is being responded to by far more men than can be taken. The whole North is rising up and boys as young as you will not be needed."

"They aren't all rising up, mother," said Frank who had been quietly listening to the conversation ; "I heard Pete Prantman say at Baltzer's yesterday that the nigger-worshippers would now get what they deserved, and that several had already found their deserts in Baltimore."

"The big coward," exclaimed Charles Ruthvon angrily.

“I called him a traitor on the spot,” said Frank proudly,” and I reckon if Tom Hartnagel — and, say, Clint, Tom is going to enlist this very week! — if he hadn’t been present, Pete would have hit me. Tom yelled ‘Bully for you, young Yankee,’ and Pete said ‘the young Abolitionist would be caught alone some day and then he’d catch what he deserved.’ I told him he’d likely catch what he’d like to let go, but couldn’t.”

Frank received a round of applause for his courage and wit. Clinton was in great spirits at the prospect of being a soldier in a few months. Charles Ruthvon tried hard to be cheerful and Mr. Chetwynde seconded his efforts, but the interview of the previous evening would obtrude itself and he soon returned home, down-hearted and moody.

CHAPTER VI.

THE OLD, OLD STORY.

A week later Charles Ruthvon and Blanche Chetwynde sat together under an oak in the lane leading from the Chetwynde place through the fields to the "back" road. It was a delightful spring afternoon at the close of April. At that time of the year, in that latitude and longitude the fruit trees are in blossom, the bees hum and the leaves appear on the forest trees. But while nature's glad anthem sounded forth, there entered into its grand harmony discordant notes — the blast of trumpet and beat of drum calling to arms in the North and the South. The flowers were sweet as ever, the grass as green, the woods as vocal, but a hushed feeling of expectation was over the community.

The youthful couple under the tree partook of it. They admired the dandelions shining like stars in a cushion of green, they listened to the robins and the blackbirds, but these things did not seem as in other years. The young man thought of his fair companion. He had often done so before, but in some way he now linked her closely with himself, and both with the stirring events so sure to follow the fall of Sumter. They had spoken of many things — the excitement at Pennbrook College, the call for troops, the uprising in the North.

“Blanche,” said Charles after a silence of some minutes, looking wistfully into his companion’s face, “would you care if Charlie Ruthvon went away to war, perhaps never to come back again?”

Blanche blushed, timidly plucked a dandelion and for a moment gave no reply.

“You have been a dear friend of our family for so many years in a neighborhood where many dislike us and few care for us,” she at length said with a faltering voice, “and I would be ungrateful indeed if I did not care.”

“I feel certain that after a few brief weeks duty will call me to my country’s defence, and I cannot go and leave unspoken that which my heart is so full of.”

“You remember,” he continued, encouraged by her silence, “that when I first saw you a little girl I admired you; as you grew older my admiration increased, and for a long time I have done what your heart surely told you, and what I hope it has not despised—I have loved you, and I love you now.”

He took her hand as he spoke, and as many maidens have been wont to do under like interesting circumstances, Blanche hung her head and blushed but said nothing.

“And I am trying to be unselfish,” he went on; “I want to make you happy, if you will let me try, and protect you from danger, if there should be any,”

“Charles, I believe in your sincerity,” she returned, disengaging her hand. “I have known your feelings

and will tell you all my heart, for between dear friends there should be no dissimulation ; but there is a difficulty in the way."

"You do not love me, then," he said sadly, "or perhaps there is some one whom you love better."

"Charlie! you do me wrong," she exclaimed looking up and speaking almost angrily ; "on the contrary, my" — she hesitated and blushed deeply — "my heart responds to yours, and — wait," she said as he attempted to fold her in his arms, — "wait, and hear me out."

"Speak, Blanche ; but you have put the cup of happiness to my lips, and I beg of you do not dash it to the ground before I even taste it."

"Listen calmly, Charlie ; my parents esteem you most highly and I am sure that on their part there would be no objection to your suit. But I do know your father's sentiments, for you have often told me of them."

"But he never said a disparaging word of you, except that you couldn't milk a cow," replied the young man eagerly, "and in my eyes that is not a serious defect ; on the other hand, he has often admired your beauty and spoken of your intelligence."

"If my inability to milk a cow were the only difficulty, I could soon remove it," she said smiling, "but it is not. You know his aversion to my father and my father's anti-slavery views, and I am certain that the marriage of his only son to a Yankee girl would make

him very unhappy, and I should feel that I was not welcome in his family. And, Charlie," she continued with great spirit, "I will never go into a family as a bride where I would not be loved by its head."

"But my father loves me," pleaded the lover, "and when he learns that my happiness is involved he will offer no further objections."

"I am sure he will. In this I, a woman, know him better than you do. But even if he did not because he loves you, he would only tolerate me, and the very fact that he loves you would increase his unhappiness. Were we to live away from your family, it might do, but your father's desire is that you are always to remain on the old homestead. This idea he has long cherished."

"But my father already admires you and in time he would love you as a daughter," urged Charles; "besides you have secured a warm place already in my mother's heart. Anyhow, is it right that we should permit our happiness to be blighted because my father may at first object to our union?"

Blanche was much moved by this appeal, but after a moment she said with a firm voice:

"Let us wait and hope. Even you are not of age yet, and troublous times seem close at hand."

"But should I go away and never return, would you not bitterly regret your refusal after the admission you have made?" he asked, loth to give up his suit.

“Well, Charlie, you are not gone yet,” said she evasively, trying to speak gaily and failing wretchedly.

“But duty will call me.”

“Care taken now before speaking words that cannot be recalled may save many a heartache hereafter,” she responded, rising.

“After our mutual confessions of love heartaches will surely come if our love is thwarted,” said Charles as they walked slowly and sadly up the lane toward home.

“I know it, oh! I know it!” she replied sobbing bitterly; “and I give you my promise that whenever your father can receive me into his home not only because he loves you but also because he loves me, I will forget his feelings toward my father and be yours, forever yours. Yes, Charlie,” she said as if moved by a sudden impulse, “if you can assure me to-morrow that he regards me with favor and will approve your choice, I will seal our betrothal with a kiss.”

“Look for me to-morrow,” he cried impetuously, but remembering his father’s prejudices, he added in a low tone: “but if I fail, dearest Blanche, I will trust you as you do me.”

Our hero returned home with mingled feelings of anxiety and hope, but Blanche Chetwynde with her own lips had made a confession of love, and though his father disliked Mr. Chetwynde, surely he could have no serious objection to his daughter.

“I shall be able to-morrow to go back to Blanche

and triumphantly meet her condition of acceptance," said he to himself.

When Catharine and grandmother had retired he laid aside the book he had unsuccessfully tried to read, and sought an opportunity to introduce the subject nearest his heart. His mother was busy sewing, and with the old instinct softly crooned a lullaby as she plied her needle. His father was in an unfortunate mood for the matter in hand, but Charles did not know it.

It so happened that Mr. Ruthvon was engaged in reading the *Reading Adler*, or *Eagle*. Now, the *Eagle* was a weekly German newspaper with a very large circulation among the country Pennsylvania Dutch. Into many a home no other print ever went. Next after the Bible it was held in highest esteem. Indeed, it was extensively known as the "Berks County Bible." It need hardly be said that this paper wielded a tremendous influence among these unsophisticated folk. If a dispute arose about anything in the heavens above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth, and either disputant could show that the *Eagle* was on his side, the question was usually considered settled in his favor.

Doctor Helfer—who was much prejudiced however—said that it should have been called the *Buzzard* instead of the *Eagle*.

"Why do you take it any longer?" he asked Squire Zweispringer one day. "I wonder at you, Look at it! It glories in its shame and in one way and another

it's the cause of much of the trouble in this part of the country at present. Doesn't it do all in its power, so far as it safely can, to hinder the government in its awful struggle? Doesn't it teach the people to hate the President? And don't they believe every word it says just as much as they believe old Dox or young Heimer? I wonder at you."

It is very certain that the *Eagle* opposed the war and that to a large degree it shaped the political opinions of Copton township and the country round about. No less true is it that Frederick Ruthvon was almost entirely guided by it. Something that he was reading when his son entered the room this evening excited him but, as was generally the case, he kept his feelings so well concealed that Charles was not aware of his excitement.

"Please excuse me for interrupting you," Charles began, "but I have something of importance to us all about which I should like to speak to you and mother this evening."

Mrs. Ruthvon ceased her crooning and the rapid movements of her right hand and looked up from her work. Mr. Ruthvon merely said, "Indeed, by Schinnerhannes!" and glanced inquiringly at his son. Observing how anxious the latter seemed, he said hastily: — "You haven't enlisted have you? You remember your promise."

"And shall keep it."

"I'm glad to hear it, for this cursed abolition busi-

ness seems to make men forget their word and everything else that ought to be sacred. I tell you Charlie, these confounded New Englanders are a nuisance. If they had minded their own business and let alone that of the Southern people, we would not have the trouble that is now upon the country, and the *Eagle* agrees with me."

Charles readily saw that if his father once began to discuss political matters, there would be little wisdom in broaching a topic so closely related to their Yankee neighbor as the one of which he wished to speak. So he began at once.

"You know that Blanche Chetwynde and I have been together a good deal for years," he said with faltering voice, "and you know all about her. You say I am to occupy the old home some day. Would you object to have Blanche come here as your daughter?"

"The longer the worse," exclaimed Mr. Ruthvon, rising up and walking the floor. "Wife, here is our only son" — and the father's voice trembled for a moment — "for whom we have done so much. He sides with the niggers and Doctor Helfer, all through that infernal Yankee, and now he must ask besides to bring the daughter into our home. Everything that the Ruthvons held dear goes to the ground. She can't talk Dutch, she can't milk, and she's an Abolitionist. Wouldn't Charlie look nice milking the cows and feeding the pigs, while his wife sat in the house rocking herself or playing the piano? Ha! ha! Go away!"

Charles writhed while his father was speaking, and with difficulty restrained himself from interrupting him.

“But she” — he began, rising up flushed and angry.

“Never mind,” said Mr. Ruthvon impetuously, stopping in his walking and turning on his son; “such a match would never be a happy one, and you yourself would deeply regret the step when forever too late.— There is no need, Charlie,” he continued in a calmer and more conciliatory tone, “of your going to New England for a wife. Dutch girls are plenty. Don’t, don’t! You’re soon of age; then you can do as you will, but I tell you that I will never consent to your marrying the Yankee’s daughter.”

Charles had time to reflect on what was at stake, and was thus enabled to control his grief and anger.

“But Blanche can work and is intelligent, truthful and religious,” said he with outward calmness.

“Never mind,” exclaimed Mr. Ruthvon, his Pennsylvania Dutch stubbornness now thoroughly aroused; “I have nothing against the girl’s character, but my whole soul rebels against the idea of your marrying a Yankee woman, and I’m afraid that if you did so, great-grandfather Johannes Ruthvon would turn over in his coffin.”

Great-grandfather Ruthvon would do nothing of the kind. No! The simple truth is that the grandfathers and the grandmothers who have gone hence do not allow themselves to be as easily disturbed by the

changes we make in our creeds and customs, and our breaking away from old traditions and superstitions, as we, with Frederick Ruthvon, sometimes imagine. Their bodies continue to sleep calmly, and their rest in heaven is not interrupted by such bagatelles.

So far as is known this thought did not at the time pass through Charles Ruthvon's mind, but a question formulated itself there and found quick expression.

"How would Ret Prantman do?" he asked sarcastically; "they say she wouldn't object to milking our cows and feeding our pigs."

"She would at least be in sympathy with our ways and wouldn't think herself above us," retorted the father.

"And we would all be truly happy, including brother-in-law Pete," said Charles.

"And I think," said Ruthvon, senior, interrogatively and drawing out his words as one might a rubber band, "that the Yankee's daughter is quite eager to become the wife of a Pennsylvania Dutchman and to come to our Dutch home? Say once, you?"

"On the contrary," answered Charles, not heeding his father's taunt, "though I know she loves me, yet she refuses even to engage herself to me unless she is assured that you will receive and love her as a daughter."

"Well! After all that girl has sense, by Schinnerhannes!" exclaimed Mr. Ruthvon sitting down and looking much relieved. "She'll soon see that it's far

better for you both that you should have nothing more to say to each other on such things."

Charles perceived that he must return to Blanche unable to say that her one condition was met.

"You are prejudiced and cruel, father," he said angrily, and the next moment he had vanished from the room.

"Fred, I said nothing at all while you and Charlie were speaking," said Mrs. Ruthvon in her quiet way after Charles had gone. "Let us be very careful in this thing, lest we do what may bring years of regret. By opposing Charlie, may not still worse things follow than his marrying Blanche Chetwynde? He is your son, and if he is persevering in what he has set his heart on, remember that he inherited a good share of his nature from the Ruthvons."

"There you are again, Maria! apologizing for him in his opposition to my wishes," said her husband with a degree of impatience unusual for him where she was concerned.

"I'm only asking a question, Fred, that will bear thinking, over," she softly replied and then left the apartment. A moment later she entered her boy's room. He sat on the edge of his bed disappointed and gloomy.

"Be patient, Charlie; the dear Lord God will bring it all right," she said soothingly."

"Mother," he said taking her hand and looking intently at her, "you like Blanche, don't you? and you won't oppose me, will you?"

She simply gave him a look of motherly affection and smiled. He understood her and pressed her hand.

“Good night,” she said, and imprinted upon his forehead such a kiss as only a mother can give, remembered and felt when the head has grown gray and the eye dim.

CHAPTER VII.

TIDINGS OF A GREAT BATTLE REACH "THE PEOPLE'S HOTEL."

Dan Baltzer's tavern in Haltfest was the principal one of three public establishments of its kind in that notable village. It was dignified by the name of "The People's Hotel," painted in large, fiery letters on the signboard that swung on the high post before the door. The name indicated that there was nothing narrow about this particular tavern whatever might be true of its rivals. Not only were the villagers welcome within its walls but also the inhabitants of the whole township of Copton and all the region round about.

Here was entertainment for man and beast, that for the former consisting quite largely of whiskey and lager-beer. Freedom from restraint was found at this public also. The lounge could sit in one chair and put his feet on two more; he could expectorate without regard to the cuspidor, talk as loud as he chose, swear, swagger and utter any sentiment whatever, without any rebuke from the stolid, beer-soaked proprietor or his subordinate behind the bar. Nay, he could even step into the latter sacred precinct itself if the bartender were very busy at the time, and pick out of the pile his copy of the *Reading Adler*.

Of an evening the village philosophers, the beer-drinkers, the gossips, the seekers after news, gathered here. Since the rumors of war began to be heard the number of visitors had increased largely. War measures were discussed, and more plans than one whereby all national troubles might readily be healed were proposed by as many different wiseacres.

The particular time when the reader is introduced into this hostelry is Monday evening, July 22, 1861. For several days previous the weather had been excessively hot, but to-night it was much cooler — just such a summer night as the tavern lounge would wish for. The large bar-room was half full of men, and numbers sat on the long bench on the hotel-stoop. Some were smoking, others drinking and munching pretzels. As usual, some feature of the war was the chief topic of conversation among the various groups. Even the oats crop and cards received small attention.

Doctor Helfer stood leaning with his elbow on the bar conversing with four or five men. Despite the fact that his political views differed so widely from those of the great majority of the community, he was commonly listened to with attention when he spoke of matters relating to the war. Indeed his opinion carried weight and was often sought, and in hearing him with deference his opponents simply paid the tribute which superior knowledge is sure to receive from the uneducated and poorly informed.

“The war will probably soon be over,” said he

rather oracularly in answer to a question by one of the group.

“Is that now your opinion, doctor, clean down?” asked an old man by the name of Stettler.

“It certainly is,” replied the doctor very complacently, “and I’ll tell you why, Christopher. It’s less than two months since General McClellan went into the western part of Virginia with his troops, and yet he has already cleaned out the rebels pretty well there. Only the battle of Big Bethel was lost, and it didn’t amount to much. At this rate Virginia will soon be rid of secesh, and with Virginia lost the South must soon give up.”

“Say now, doctor, tell me how this here thing began anyhow. What was the cause of all this blamed fuss? I’ll be hanged if I can understand it.”

Christopher Stettler was again the speaker, and he looked very much as if none but the simplest subjects were comprehensible by him.

“You’re a dumb-head, that’s what you are; anybody ought to know that there!”

The last speaker was a middle-aged man bearing the euphonious name of Sparger — Ad Sparger. Ad was nearly always a little under the influence of liquor, and very much so when not a little. His eyes were small and watery, and he had a habit of winking in a slow, weak sort of way with the left one when he thought he was saying something unusually good, his body meanwhile swaying gently backward and forward. His ears

were very large, as if nature had sought to make up in the size of these organs for the smallness of his eyes. On one side of his head, resting on a big ear and shading his little flat nose, sat an old, battered "stove-pipe" hat that had belonged to his grandfather in the prosperous days of the family. He wore a threadbare blue swallow-tailed coat, and short, shabby pantaloons in the pockets of which he generally had his hands. His shoes corresponded with the rest of his attire.

Men knew where Ad lived, but few seemed to know or care how. Most of his time indeed was spent at "The People's Hotel," where he was tolerated because he was inoffensive and good-natured, but more especially because when anyone stood treat "all around" he counted one, and thus put the price of a drink into Baltzer's till. His panacea, in things bodily and spiritual, was whiskey. It cooled him when hot, warmed him when cold, made him joyful when sad, and when merry made him merrier still. His strong expression on all occasions was "Let's drink one" — the "one" meaning a glass of the panacea aforesaid, and the whole being a gentle hint to any one inclined to treat. It never meant that he wished to treat, for, alas! —

On the present occasion he stood in his favorite attitude on the edge of the group to which Helfer was talking, and when he rebuked Stettler's ignorance he gave his weak wink at the doctor.

"Is that so?" said the latter; "suppose, Ad, you explain this thing to Stettler and the rest of us now."

This was not what the loafer expected when he interrupted the conversation, and he looked foolishly around on the company that had by this time gathered about the speakers. Suddenly, as if a happy thought had struck him, he exclaimed:—

“Say, doctor, let’s drink one!”

“Ho! that wouldn’t do,” said Helfer winking at the crowd; “you oughtn’t to call a man a dumb-head and then not tell him what he wants to know when you have the information at your tongue’s end. — No telling though, Ad, what may happen if you speak up like a man now.”

This delicate hint at the forthcoming of more panacea spurred up Sparger wonderfully.

“Well,” he began after sputtering and gulping a moment, “it was just this here way: you see the Democrats had a convention some time ago; something displeased the New England States, and so they began to shoot into the Baltimore platform, and they all began to fight through each other, and there’s no telling where it’ll end, and that’s the clean down honest truth!” *

Sparger’s explanation was greeted with a shout of laughter.

“Jack Bunsby himself couldn’t beat that, Ad,” said the doctor as soon as he could control his merriment. “You are not far wrong though; you only got mixed a

* This explanation of the origin of the war was actually made by one Pennsylvania German to another, as overheard by an intimate friend of the author.

bit in regard to the secession of a part of the Democratic convention at Charleston, in May of last year, which had a good deal to do with the beginning of this trouble."

"You dumb-heads, you can laugh if it pleases you," said Sparger, raised from his crestfallen condition by the doctor's words and looking around triumphantly; "but I came a mighty piece nearer the mark than any of you could have done.— Doctor, let's drink one!"

"Ad, you richly deserve a *schmaler** after such an effort," said Helfer.

"Then give me my deserts," retorted the loafer with ready wit.

"Ho! I'm afraid in that case, Ad, you'd get more than you want, but you shall have the *schmaler* to begin on anyhow."

"Will the war be over by winter?" asked a man by the name of Hahn after they had watched Sparger drink his liquor. "They say the Southerners are terrible fighters, particular them that's coming up now from Louisiana."

"It's a little like a man with remittent fever," replied the doctor with the air which a man acquires who is listened to much as an oracle would be; "you can't tell just what day he's going to take hold of the plow-handles again, but at present it looks as if by winter Uncle Sam would be master in every part of the Union once more. I think by the time the snow-geese fly

*Drink of liquor.

south our boys will all come north. The Southerners are finding out in western Virginia that instead of each one of them being a match for three Northerners, as they used to boast, he is not a match even for one. They can't stand up before our troops, and I venture to say that the Tammany regiment which passed through here two weeks ago is able to whip any two regiments that the Southerners " —

Just then Davy Rauhzahn, the doctor's office-boy, came into the room. He went quickly up to the doctor and in a low voice asked him to step outside. The people thought it only meant a patient needing the physician's instant attention, and paid no more heed to them. When the boy had led his employer out of ear-shot he said excitedly :

" It's all up, doctor ! "

" What's all up, Davy ? Is old Mrs. Shiffler dead at last ? I thought " —

" Oh, no, " interrupted Davy : " worse than ten Mrs. Shifflers. The Union men's licked awful. "

" Licked, Davy ? Tell about it quick ! "

" I was at the depot when the late train went up, to get a paper as you told me to, but I couldn't get one, but a man from Reading got off the cars and he said to Ike Warzenluft that the Unions under McDevil and the rebels had an awful fight yesterday sometime at a place called Molasses Johnson not far from Washington and that our men was all smashed, and nearly the whole of the Tammany regiment that stopped here two weeks

ago was killed,— I wonder whether the colonel's horse you admired so much and called a nice *cheval* was shot, too?" —

"Never mind the horse; what more did the man say?" interrupted the doctor impatiently.

"That likely by this time Congress, which turned out to see the fight, was took, and maybe Washington too."

"This is awful," said Helfer much excited. "Was any one else by when this man spoke to the ticket-agent?"

"Yes, Jake Zellon was, and he tied his horse loose and rode away like wild in the dark across the railroad,— to Prantman's I think, for he had their roan horse."

The doctor ran over to the depot and there learned from Warzenluft that the man who had brought the ill news had gone for the night to the lower hotel. There was no telegraph office at Haltfest in those days and Helfer concluded to seek out the traveler, and at once did so. From him he learned in addition to what Davy Rauh Zahn had already substantially communicated that rumors were abroad in Reading that by to-morrow the President would call on all able-bodied men to turn out at a moment's notice. He hurried back to his office and thought the matter over hastily.

"Come with me," said he to the lad, who had returned to the office and awaited his coming. "I am going back to the tavern. They haven't got the news there yet, and after all I said there this evening it'll be

easier for me to break it to them than to have them break it to me. I can stand it better."

But he was anticipated. Before he and Davy got quite to the hotel they saw Pete Prantman and Jake Zellon pass through the lamp-light on the stoop into the bar-room. Zellon was a low-browed, black-whiskered, heavy-built, wiry fellow of about twenty-five years of age.

He was feared by many people because he had been several times in trouble on account of his lawlessness and was believed to be capable of almost any villanous deed. He had come into the community about two years before, no one seemed to know exactly whence ; sometimes he worked at Mehlhuber's mill and part of the time for Hans Prantman. He seemed to be somewhat attached to Pete, likely on the birds-of-a-feather principle, though in the matter of courage at least the two were quite unlike. There is no doubt that to-night he had carried to Pete the news of the Union defeat, and they now came back to hear what would be said and enjoy themselves over the sad reverse of the loyal forces.

When Doctor Helfer saw them enter the tavern a thrill of anger passed through him, because he knew they and many of those within would glory in the rebel victory. He quickly followed.

" Well, I think the nigger-lovers is getting more than they bargained for," were the words he heard as he and Davy entered the bar-room.

" How's that, Pete ? " asked a chorus of voices.

“The black Abolitionists and the Southerners had a big fight yesterday somewhere down in Virginny,” he replied greatly pleased at being the first to tell the news, “and the Lincolners was whipped, and by this time old Abe himself is no doubt caught and on his way to Richmond where he wanted to go so awful bad.”

“Where did you hear this?” asked the chorus eagerly pressing about him.

“Just heard it from a man at the depot, and he said Lincoln and Seward and old Simon Cameron was last seen riding on horses as hard as they could go, each of them carrying in front of him a bag of gold grabbed out of the treasury, and that they was coming up this way to get to Cameron’s house behind Lancaster.”

There was great excitement when Pete ended and a babel of voices.

“The man said nothing of the kind,” broke in Davy Rauh Zahn, in his shrill boy tones.

“Donnerwetter! he did, I tell you,” shouted Pete turning fiercely upon Davy and seizing him by the arm.

“Take your hand off Davy, Pete,” said Helfer coolly. “How was it, Davy?”

“The man didn’t say what Pete says he did and Pete wasn’t there at all,” replied the lad boldly; “nobody heard the man speak except Ike Warzenluft and myself, and may be Jake Zellon, who was around there.

“That’s so; it’s straight as Davy says it, lean on that,” said Warzenluft who came in while Davy was speaking.

“How’s this, Pete?” asked Hahn.

“I met peddler Yorim as I came along and he said the same thing as the man at the depot, and Doctor Helfer, Warzenluft and this here dirty little Rauh Zahn is all liars, that’s what they are.”

Liquor had been freely drunk and the excitement ran high. Several of the rougher spirits, always ready for a fight, cried :

“Let yourself in now, Pete, and show your spunk once.”

Ad Sparger, who always adopted the course of action he thought most likely to procure him a drink of his favorite beverage, now bethought himself of the panacea as the best thing to bring into requisition to settle the difficulty.

“Both are right,” said he pushing into the crowd ; “it’s only a misunderstanding. — Let’s drink one, doctor.”

“Pete, it’s easy to say ‘liar’ when you’re cornered,” said Helfer, not heeding Sparger, “and you’re not worth answering, but I will say, you people, that any man who talks about the President as Pete Prantman has done here to-night and glories in the defeat of the army of his country is a coward ; and I say more,” he continued in a louder tone as Pete and his satellite came threateningly near, — “that the government will recover from this blow and that Pete and traitors like him will soon feel its power if they don’t look out, mind that now.”

“And I say, if you mean me,” exclaimed Zellon doub-

ling his fist, "that there is two parties to this here thing, and some others may feel something they won't like too, the devil take it!"

"You're right, Zellon," answered the doctor, unmoved by the ruffian's threatening looks and gestures, "and I'm inclined to think you'll be one of them. I've seen the man who brought the news of the battle. His name is Leonine, and he says that by to-morrow there will be orders from Washington for every able-bodied man to be ready to march at short notice."

"Donnerwetter!" exclaimed Pete, starting and turning pale.

"We ain't going to do it for no nigger President," shouted Zellon.

"That's so," came from all parts of the room.

"Ho! you Zellon may sometimes be able to bully a crowd, but it will be worth your while, and every other man's to think twice, or even three times before you defy the government."

"Doctor Helfer, you'd better go home," said a respectable middle-aged farmer by the name of Schlapphammel. "I advise you as a friend. I dont want you to get hurt."

Schlapphammel had thus far taken no part in the controversy, and he came close up to the doctor and spoke in a low, calm voice. But Helfer's blood was up and he was about to answer excitedly when, perhaps fortunately for him, a buggy drove rapidly up to the hitching-post before the door, and a moment later Squire

Zweispringer walked into the bar-room. The squire was the village Justice of the Peace, a very cautious, conservative citizen, who in politics was inclined to be neutral and, as frequently happens in such cases, by his neutrality sometimes fell into the very difficulties he wished to avoid thereby.

“Any news, squire?” asked the chorus.

“Yes, much; and some might call it bad news,” he slowly answered, as if afraid he might commit himself. “I just came from Reading, and there is great excitement, for news has come of a great battle at Manassas Junction.”

“So we’ve heard; tell us how it was,” demanded the crowd eagerly.

“From all accounts the Northern army was badly defeated, but owing to the presence of a few regiments of regular troops a stand was made and the Southern army was not able to follow up its advantage. Washington is safe enough, but the last thing I heard was that by to-morrow officers would be around to force all able-bodied men into the army.”

“Did you hear that, clean down?” asked Pete Prantman anxiously pressing up to Zweispringer.

“Certainly,” answered the squire smiling at Pete’s evident fear, and it is possible that he merely played on the fellow’s cowardice when he added — “and I heard an officer say that any man heard talking against the President or the government would be put in jail and fined one thousand dollars.”

Doctor Helfer listened with keen attention while the squire spoke.

“Zellon, remember what I told you,” said he with a triumphant air.

“I don’t believe a word of it; but anyhow if it’s true, I know a thing or two,” answered Jake, but in a far less belligerent manner.

“One had better be careful in these times,” said Zweispringer as he called for a glass of sarsaparilla, eyed wistfully the while by Sparger. “I was told that men were enlisting by the hundred at Reading, and I met Yankee Chetwynde who said his son Clint and Charlie Ruthvon were going too, and that it is reported that Tom Hartnagel was killed in the fight yesterday but not before he had shot down the colonel of a Southern regiment.”

“You don’t say! Tom Hartnagel dead? Poor, brave Tom!” exclaimed Doctor Helfer.

“By my sex,” said Davy Rauhzahn, unable to repress his anger and grief, “he was worth a hundred Pete Prantman’s,” and the lad burst into a passionate flood of tears.

“Don’t you dare, you coward,” said Helfer hastily interposing as Pete rushed up to Davy; “he speaks the truth and I take it up, and when such news comes I’m in no mood for fooling, mind now, Pete.”

“You people, this is no time for quarreling,” said the squire stepping between the two men just as Pete lifted his fist to strike the doctor; “trouble has come and

more is coming. — Don't, Pete! be quiet, Doctor Helfer! — If I'm not wrong to-morrow we'll see in this very township some things we never saw before. Like good citizens it seems to me we'd better all go home now."

You're right too, squire," said Sparger giving his weak wink laboriously, "but before we go let's drink one!"

But no one was ready to stand treat and Ad's appeal was again unheeded. The shadow of the yet strong arm of the government seemed all at once to have fallen on the company, the clamor and noise were hushed, and within ten minutes after the squire had spoken, the last man left the room.

Pete Prantman was still angry and in his heart vowed vengeance upon Doctor Helfer and Davy Rauh-zahn. Yet he felt glad too as he and Zellon left the tavern. Charles Ruthvon was going to war! How he exulted over that. His excited fancy, ordinarily slow and dull, called up indeed the image of the officer who might come to-morrow, but this was quickly blotted out by the stronger picture in which his old school-mate lay dead among heaps of slain on the field of battle.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE COUNTRY'S CALL FOR HELP.

The North was shocked at the news from Bull Run, but it was not disheartened. In many Northern homes were pale cheeks and sad hearts on the day when the ominous tidings came from the capital, but stern resolves were formed that boded ill to the hosts of treason, and would bring to remembrance the warning of Doctor Helfer.

Jabez Chetwynde came home from Reading this Monday night with the air of a man who has fought and been whipped but is ready to renew the encounter. His family sat on the stoop in the moonlight awaiting his coming. As if danger lurked outside, he at once requested them to go into the sitting-room.

“Bad news; our troops have been defeated,” he said laconically as soon as all were within doors, and then related what he knew. Rising and rapidly walking the floor, he continued: “It will turn out for the best yet. We have underestimated the strength of the South, as they have ours; the contest will be prolonged by this defeat, but treason must die, and slavery with it.—Here, Clinton, my son, come here.”

Mr. Chetwynde had stopped walking now and stood by the table where the lamp was. Clinton went up to

him not understanding what was to follow. Laying his right hand on his son's head, the father said with a voice that faltered at first: "You are our first born, well-beloved, but our country calls for help. I here dedicate you to her service, and may the God of battles keep you in safety."

"And may a mother's blessing rest upon you!" added Mrs. Chetwynde embracing Clinton and weeping on his shoulder. After a moment she went on firmly: "The Nation founded by those who were borne hither by that vessel" — pointing to a picture of the Mayflower, — "the blood of one of whom flows in your veins, must not perish, my son. God will bring you back to us; if not, His will be done."

Blanche wept silently during this scene, and Frank, not fully comprehending its nature, looked on in quiet wonder. Clinton was deeply affected; he felt that in a sense the honor of the family was entrusted to him.

"Father," said he, proudly, yet with a tinge of boyish sadness — for after all he was yet a boy, — "I will try to do my duty; and if I should not get back and see you and mother and Blanche — and — and — Fr" — the boy was stronger than the man, and the tears that came drowned the rest of the sentence.

"And, Clinton, you will have good company," said Mr. Chetwynde after a short pause in which he subdued his emotion.

"Is Charlie Ruthvon going?" asked Clinton eagerly.

"He is; I met him to-night on my way home and he

told me he was going to enlist in a Reading company next Saturday, if he could get ready in time. He'll be over to-morrow."

"He was twenty-one yesterday and needn't ask his father's consent any more, and I'm so glad he's going," said Clinton gleefully, his tears all gone.

"I wonder what his father will say," said Blanche hastily, and then, recollecting herself, blushed scarlet.

"He's more stubborn than ever, child," replied her father not seeming to notice her confusion. "If Charlie enlists, he will incur his father's deep displeasure. Mr. Ruthvon said so to Doctor Helfer last week."

"Oh, he's a Dutch Bourbon and can't learn anything new," exclaimed Mrs. Chetwynde indignantly.

"Yes, as the doctor tells me, he's more bitter toward us than ever," said Jabez; "he says we've led his son wrong and broken up the happiness of his home. He blames all of us as having a share in it."

"Serious charges, truly," answered his wife, "but instead he ought to be proud of his son's patriotism, and thank us for helping him into the right way."

"I fear he'll never forgive us," said Mr. Chetwynde. — "And, by the way, I heard too that Martin Hartnagel's son Tom — his that lives up near the forge — is among the wounded or dead."

"The fellow who took Frank's part last spring, you remember, against Pete Prantman at the tavern — wasn't it Frank?" exclaimed Clinton.

"The country can't spare such brave young men as

Tom Hartnagel at this time, and I do hope the report is not true," said Mr. Chetwynde.

"And Charlie says that Tom is engaged to Sallie Vonneida," said Blanche. "Poor Sallie !"

"Yes, and Pete Prantman said he wished Tom would be killed," said Clinton, "as all abolition soldiers ought to be."

Could they have seen the two figures that awhile later passed along the highway in front of the house — the lowering faces and the fists shaken threateningly toward the dwelling ; — could they have heard one voice say, "We'll make it hot now for the black Yankee," and a second voice reply, "Hush, Jake, not yet ; I'll see his proud daughter once more, and if she don't come around, then we'll settle with him for his impudence and make him wish he was in 'Neticut and hadn't left it," — they might not have gone to their repose quite as calmly as they did.

On this same Monday evening Charles Ruthvon returned home late from Reading whither he had gone on an errand for his father. All the family had retired except Sallie Vonneida, who sat in the kitchen preparing vegetables for next day. With the freedom allowed hired help in Pennsylvania Dutch agricultural communities, Sallie was not long asking the young man for the latest war news,—something in which she was deeply interested.

"Well, Sallie, it isn't very good news I have heard to-day," said he gravely in response to her question.

“Is that so?” she said stopping in her work.

“Yes, Sallie; a good many poor fellows who were strong and hearty yesterday are dead to-night, and many others are in agony.”

“Has there been another battle?” she asked hastily.

“Yes, Sallie, there has been,” answered Charles gently, “and our army was not as fortunate as at Romney, where Tom Hartnagel distinguished himself.”

Sallie’s senses were very acute now.

“But Tom’s time expired last Saturday, the 20th, for he was one of the first that went to war,” she said speaking rapidly and looking closely at Charles; “and so he was not in this fight. How was it anyhow?”

“Tom didn’t insist on being discharged because his time was out, like some of the rest; he is too brave for that. He remained; at any rate — Sallie, I might as well tell you” —

“Charlie Ruthvon, is Tom Hartnagel dead?” said she with startling energy rising from her chair and spilling the vegetables over the floor.

“His name is on the list of the wounded, for I saw it myself, but in the confusion of such a rout as our army met with yesterday it would be very easy to make mistakes, and so you know it may not be correct at all.”

“Poor Tom, poor Tom, poor Tom!” cried the stricken girl sinking into her chair again, her voice rising higher and becoming shriller at each repetition of her lover’s name.

“Hush! you will wake up the folks, and besides Tom is not dead, Sallie, and may not be wounded even.”

But, like Rachel of old, Sallie Vonneida would not be comforted, but continued to cry, “Poor Tom, poor Tom, poor Tom!”

Mr. and Mrs. Ruthvon, aroused by the noise, presently came into the kitchen and Charles explained the cause of Miss Vonneida’s lamentation.

“So it goes, so it goes,” said Mr. Ruthvon dolefully; “blood, death, sorrow — all because men refuse to regard the Constitution of the land. What a load Abe Lincoln will have to carry at the Youngest Day!” *

Grandmother Ruthvon was also awakened from her sleep by Sallie’s clamor, and at this point came hobbling out of her kammer into the kitchen. She of course did not know what had occurred, but as Sallie was lamenting, it must be something bad, and that was enough.

“I knew something awful would happen,” she began, “for last night I dreamed I was crossing a broad, swollen stream of dark water on a white horse, and that’s a sure sign, especially when the water gets too deep. I had the same dream eleven years ago, just before the big Schuylkill flood of ’50, and again a year later when the seventeen-year locusts came; and two years ago I was right in the middle of the very same dream when you called me and said the moon was getting black! It never misses, never.”

On this occasion it required all the patience the fam-

*Day of Judgment.

ily possessed to pay the usual deference to the old lady, for every heart was full.

“Do you think Tom will be sent home?” queried Sallie as soon as she had spoken the last word.

“No; most likely he is in some hospital,” answered Charles. “I will write to the head surgeon at Washington and we may soon hear.— Be patient,” he continued as she wept afresh, “all will come out right yet.”

“And there is that thick-headed Pete Prantman said he wished Tom would be killed,” said Sallie, her eyes flashing in spite of her tears as she looked from one to another; “just wait—I shall have something to say to the big heart-coward, by my sex!—And his sister Ret as good as said to me that you was looking her way, and I’d see that you was.”

Even Mr. Ruthvon could not help smiling at Sallie’s earnestness.

“Oh, fie, fie, Sallie,” said Charles laughing in spite of his vexation; “when you see the Mohammedan’s sign of the Youngest Day, then you may see me looking that way, but not before then.”

It must be reluctantly recorded that Miss Vonneida did not like Miss Prantman, and even in her sorrow she was eager to secure the means of vexing the latter.

“But I don’t know what that sign is; tell me once, so that I can look out for it,” she said.

“The sure sign of the Youngest Day is this,” interrupted grandmother:—“the chickens all go to roost at nine o’clock in the morning, and at the same hour the

cows will come running home from the pasture to be milked."

"A very good sign, grandmother," said Charles, "for darkness will probably precede its coming, but it is not the Mohammedan's sign. According to his belief the sun will rise in the west on the morning of that day."

"Judgment will come on Pete Prantman a good while before that happens, if I ain't wrong," said Miss Vonneida viciously.

"Children, it is very late now," said Mrs. Ruthvon; "let us all go to bed and put away these troubles until a new day comes. The dear Lord God reigns above us and He will watch over us all."

Next morning after breakfast Charles had another interview with his parents in reference to his enlisting. He said that no matter which side was at fault, the South would push the advantage gained in Sunday's battle, that in consequence the whole country was in danger, and that it was the first duty of all who could to help remove this danger.

"But let them who brought on the trouble go and do the fighting," objected Mr. Ruthvon.

"It has very often happened in the world's history, that those who had the very least to do with bringing on trouble, were obliged to do most of the fighting when that was to be done, and it may be so in this case," answered Charles pleasantly.

"It would be a blessing," responded the father, "if Abe Lincoln and Seward and old Simon Cameron, and

maybe Jefferson Davis, could all be put in the front ranks when the next fight comes. It would never be fought, and the war would be over right away."

"But I fear we must take things as they are. It has become a matter of self-preservation, and under these circumstances I feel that I ought to do what I can. I shall enlist as soon as I learn that more troops are wanted. I am of age but nevertheless I very much want your approval."

"Oh, Charlie, Charlie, don't go; you will be killed in this awful war," said his sister, who had come into the room during the conversation, throwing her arms about his neck.

"But our country calls," he answered with emotion.

"Oh, yes," said the elder Ruthvon, "this craziness destroys all brotherly love and breaks up the peace of families. — Charles," he continued in a hoarse voice, "you are of age, as you say, and don't need my consent now, and you have kept your promise too, I must say; but this is an unholy cause and if you go into the abolition army, it will be without my consent, and if you should be crippled, you can have no claim on me."

"The country will take care of its soldiers, and" —

"Then look to it, and not to me if you come home with an arm or a leg off," interrupted his father angrily, and left the room.

"My son, if go you must, you shall at least go with your mother's blessing," said his mother, the tears streaming down her face.

“It’s too bad,” he said embracing her ; “I do think that if I were enlisting into the secession army, father would give his consent freely.”

“Oh, no, Charles, not that,” she responded ; “be patient : your father loves you, and it will all come right yet, my child.”

“I hope it will not be too late then,” he replied sadly.

Toward noon he went over to Mr. Chetwynde’s house. Blanche felt embarrassed when she saw him, for she felt sure that her lover would again urge his suit now that he was going to the wars. Yet in view of Charles’ failure to meet her condition of accepting his proposal only three months ago, and of what her father had last night said regarding Frederick Ruthvon’s opinion of their family, she was more firmly resolved than ever not to bind herself irrevocably to Charles, even though her heart broke. It was clear to her that consent to his wishes would, under the circumstances, be doing a wrong to herself and to his parents and taking an unjust advantage of his love. In this resolution her parents, whom, in view of what would probably occur, she had that morning consulted, entirely agreed with her.

She was not wrong in her surmises regarding Charles’ intentions, for after some conversation with the family he asked for an interview with her. He pleaded his cause as only a true lover can, but was unable to shake her resolution. He returned home sad and almost reckless. He felt that Blanche was cruel and unreasonable.

But, in accordance with her request, he resolved to consider her objections once more and soon became master of himself again.

The July acts of Congress regarding the enrollment of troops were now promulgated and in every large city of the North the recruiting offices were besieged by men and youth ready to volunteer for the defence of the country. At one of these, in the city of Reading, Charles Ruthvon and Clinton Chetwynde presented themselves, the latter armed with a letter from his father written in a bold hand, giving hearty consent to the enlistment of his son. Both were duly accepted as volunteers in the —rd regiment Pennsylvania infantry for three years or during the war. Not alone, however, did they go forth. Through their influence and that of Jabez Chetwynde two other brave lads from that neighborhood also donned the blue and entered the same company.

The young volunteers were given a furlough of five days before beginning active duty. These they spent in making final preparations for a long absence. Charles had several interviews with Blanche, and though he again sought to win a promise from her to be his wife on his return from the war regardless of his father's wishes and dislikes, she remained firm. She was very sad when he said his final good-bye, but was quite sure it was better so than to do what conscience would not approve.

Clinton bore up under the trying ordeal of parting from the loved ones like the brave lad he was.

"I reckon, mother, we'll all be home by Christmas," said he trying to laugh. He made a special visit to Squire Zweispringer's house to say good-bye to Susie.

A motley crowd gathered at the Haltfest depot that early August evening when the four volunteers took the train for Philadelphia to join their regiment. A few wished them well and gave them a hearty "God bless you!" Among these of course was Doctor Helfer.

"Ho!" he exclaimed, not without a suspicious moisture in his eyes notwithstanding his assumed brusqueness, "any one of you can whip two rebels any day in the week including Sunday, even if they do their dirty best, and I have no doubt but that every one of you will come back with shoulder-straps!"

Even Dan Baltzer had a kind word for them.

"When you come back, boys," said he aside in a sort of hoarse whisper, "come around to 'The People's Hotel' and make yourselves at home."

Squire Zweispringer was also on hand.

"I advise you, young men," were his parting words, "to take care of yourselves and not get into trouble. Mind your own business and keep out of danger."

Ad Sparger seconded this sage counsel by telling them always to "Drink one" when invited, even if the invitation came from a rebel. "For I've been told," he went on "that they make famous whiskey in the South."

Most of the people, however, said nothing at all to the brave boys. They looked upon their enlistment as

a piece of foolishness at the very best. Pete Prantman and Jake Zellon stood on the edge of the depot platform, looked at them askance and every now and then whispered to each other and laughed. Presently the train rushed around the curve in the cut above and was at the station ; a moment later Charles Ruthvon and his gallant comrades were speeding on their way to the defence of their country's flag, leaving behind them many sad hearts in the dark and dismal night.

CHAPTER IX.

PETE PRANTMAN WOORES, BUT FAILS TO WIN.

A short mile southwest of Mr. Chetwynde's house, near the road running along the foot of the South Mountain, lived Hans Prantman, a well-to-do farmer who had emigrated from Northampton county in 1831, and settled on the farm he now owned and occupied. He was intensely selfish. His selfishness was equaled only by his ignorance and superstition, and surpassed alone by his prejudices and dislikes. He was a strong pro-slavery man, but unable to give a single reason for the fact beyond the very orthodox Pennsylvania Dutch one, that his father had been a pro-slavery man.

When the war broke out his utterances were simply treasonable. He gave comfort to the enemy and had there been opportunity, he probably would have given a little aid too, provided by so doing he could have spited an Abolitionist. He would have turned a distressed Union soldier from his door as he would a strange dog and gloried in the act. Where an increased tax-rate was concerned his country's honor counted for nothing. He wanted good markets; the country might take care of itself for him.

He hated Yankee Chetwynde with a perfect hatred;

neither did he like Frederick Ruthvon for the latter had bought a piano for his children.

“Let once a piano get into a house,” said he to Christian Mehlhuber, the miller, one day, “and then everything goes to the ground. The girls won’t feed a pig, nor work on the field in haymaking and harvest any more, and think themselves even above milking a cow — go away now once! A piano shouldn’t be allowed to come into a Pennsylvania Dutch house but be left to the black Yankees.”

This likely citizen had three children, and had also — strange to say! — adopted the only son of a neighbor who had met a violent death some years before. Amos was about thirty years old, inoffensive and weak-minded. Pete — “My Pete,” as his father often called him when speaking of him — was twenty-one, and their sister Margaret, or Ret, as she was commonly named, was four years older than Pete and, if that were possible, more vicious than he by that much. The foster son retained his father’s name of Fetzer and was a little younger than Pete.

From the very first there was a lack of congeniality between Charles Ruthvon and Pete Prantman, who, except in physical courage, was his father over again. As boys they both attended the district school situated midway between their homes. Charles was timid, retiring and generous; Pete was a great overgrown boorish lad, and soon became the tyrant of the school. To Charles he had a special aversion, for the former was

quick to learn English and in all his classes, save only mental arithmetic, which about that period was the great hobby in the common schools of Pennsylvania, stood far above Pete. Growing out of the effects of his illness, Charles began to resist young Prantman's tyranny, and one day when the bully was unusually vicious, he fell upon the latter suddenly, sent him to the ground and beat him until he cried for mercy, to the great delight of all the smaller boys and girls. Pete's power was broken and he became a laughing-stock, but his dislike for his school-mate suddenly began to grow into undisguised hate.

After the Chetwyndes had been in the neighborhood a number of years a new element was added to the discord between the boys. For though Pete was taught by precept and example to hate the Yankees, yet Blanche Chetwynde had that in her face and manner which attracted the rude fellow; and after awhile he discovered too that her father had broad acres. It was natural for her to favor Charles and avoid Pete, but the latter could not understand it at all; and when the friendship between her and Charles manifestly grew warmer and her aversion for himself more marked, he resolved that in some way his successful rival in study and love should be made to feel his vengeance. Hence he secretly exulted on the night when young Ruthvon and his comrades left for the army. What was now to hinder him from pushing his designs in reference to Blanche, or from gratifying his malice in case she rejected him?

That he hoped to win the girl, knowing her dislike, can be explained only on the ground that he gauged others largely by himself and had no understanding of the heart of a refined young woman. He harbored a hazy notion that perhaps after all Charles Ruthvon was not entrenched in Blanche's affections, that judging from the abject manner in which the younger boys used to court his favor at school, fear would go a great way and that a sudden onslaught, backed by ample promises, would probably carry the day.

He now watched every opportunity to secure a private interview with Blanche. He went to church regularly every Sunday on which services were held, loitered in the roads and lanes in the vicinity of her home and even ventured to the house on pretended errands several times. But for many weeks he was unsuccessful. However, late in October, near the close of a beautiful day, Blanche strolled down the lane to the old oak tree, now so dear to her because of its associations. She had come hither often since Charles went away, but usually her brother Frank was with her or hovering near at hand. This evening she was alone, and as she stood under the tree thinking of her absent lover and wrestling with doubts that she had believed were settled forever, suddenly Pete Prantman appeared before her.

She was somewhat alarmed and her first impulse was to call for Frank and run up the lane, but a hasty second thought made her resolve to stand her ground and appear as calm as possible.

Pete had on a coat — unusual for him. It was of blue jean and had long tails ; his pantaloons, of the same materials, were much too short, and his shoes very large and heavy. On his head was his last summer's straw hat, at the extreme end of its usefulness, and on his face a mixture of shame, fear and insolence.

“ Good evening,” he said after staring at Blanche a moment, with a smile which he meant to be very gracious, but which made his countenance more forbidding than usual.

“ Good evening, Mr. Prantman,” she responded without moving.

“ Call me Pete, or Peter. We Pennsylvania Dutch doesn't like to be called ‘ mister.’ It's too proud.”

“ But I've been taught that it is not polite to call people by their first names, unless one is somewhat familiar with them, and we are no longer school children.”

“ Yes, but you're among the Pennsylvania Dutch, and ought to do as them ; besides we went to school together and are bad . good acquainted, ain't we are ? — Say, Blanche,” he continued, coming close up to her, “ do you know my pap is bad rich ? ”

“ It may be so, but I am sure your father's affairs do not concern me.”

She began to move up the lane slowly while speaking ; he followed her closely.

“ He is indeed quite bad rich,” he persisted ; “ he has twenty cows, eleven horses, fifty-one pigs, and lots of

money besides our big farm. And there is only three children and Jim, and Amos isn't quite right and pap won't give him much, and Ret is a girl and she'll get only a small share, and Jim'll get only a hundred dollars, and so I, Peter Prantman, will get it 'most all. — Now Blanche," — coming closer still to her and getting very confidential — "if I had you for my wife, I'd always keep a girl, at least in summer, to do all the milking and feeding the pigs, at least most of the time, and" —

"Mr. Prantman, you must not talk to me so," exclaimed Blanche stopping and turning on him indignantly; — "go away, and don't speak to me again in this way; you have no right to."

"No right," he said angrily, still keeping close up to her as she now walked rapidly onward; "what's to hinder me, huh? Is it because you are a Yankee?"

"Mr. Prantman, if you are a gentleman, stop speaking to me; it is very unpleasant to me," she said, now thoroughly frightened.

"But I ain't a gentleman. I am a Pennsylvania Dutchman," he retorted.

"That shouldn't hinder you from being a gentleman," she said trying to gain time; "I'm sure most Pennsylvania Germans are."

"Especially Charlie Ruthvon that's now gone to fight for the niggers, huh?" he snarled. "He and all these fellows will now get made dead and will never come back, and so you had better be my wife."

As he uttered the last sentence he laid his hand on her arm and stopped her.

“Let go my arm, or it will be the worse for you,” she said trembling in every limb with fear and anger.

“I will when I’m ready,” he replied, wrinkling up his nose and showing his big teeth as a vicious dog might, “but I’m not” —

Just then Frank Chetwynde and Davy Rauh Zahn appeared in the upper end of the lane. Davy had with him Doctor Helfer’s dog, a black Newfoundland of great size bearing the pleasant and suggestive name of Schnapps, and endowed with canine intelligence far above the average. The sight of the two boys and the dog gave Blanche intense relief.

“Frank, Frank, come here quick!” she called with all her might.

Frank heard her and came on the run, followed by Davy and Schnapps. When Pete saw them coming he let go Blanche’s arm but stood still in the road, while she ran to meet her brother.

“What’s the matter, Blanche?” cried the latter. She was pale and too excited to be able to answer at once.

“What’s the matter?” he repeated; “has Prantman been frightening you?”

“Yes, he spoke very insolently to me,” she said regaining her voice.

Young as he was Frank was brave as a soldier and strong for his age. He idolized his sister and instantly

anger and resentment controlled him. Without hesitating a moment or calculating the odds between him and his burly antagonist he ran toward Pete as fast as he could. Picking up a cobble-stone as he went, he hurled it at Pete, who remained standing in the middle of the lane leering at them, and as it chanced hit him on the left leg below the knee. The next moment he threw himself on him with all his force. The stone and Frank's furious charge were too much for the moment, and Pete measured his length on the ground. With a yell and an oath he sprung to his feet, seized Frank, struck him a blow on the head with his fist, and thrust him violently away. The brave lad was dazed for a moment, but recovered himself and was about to renew the unequal conflict when a new champion appeared on the field. It was Schnapps, of whom Davy had perfect control.

"Stop, Frank," cried Davy as the former was again rushing upon Pete; "Schnapps has a word to say now, I think!"

By this time Blanche returned; she begged the boys to come away.

"He has insulted you and must make it good," said Davy with great emphasis.

There they were in the lane with the light of the setting sun falling on them. On one side stood Frank, Davy, Blanche and Schnapps, the last ready to do his master's bidding instantly; on the other was Pete, who kept his eye on the dog, not removing it even for an

instant when he stooped, as he frequently did, to rub the sore spot the stone had made.

Dogs sometimes have an instinctive dislike to certain individuals. Pete and Schnapps had never been friends. Schnapps did not regard Pete as a good citizen, and on several occasions had manifested a decided disposition to be actively hostile. Pete remembered this and knew it would be unsafe to turn his back and run, much as he was inclined to do so. Hence he sullenly stood his ground. But Davy Rauh Zahn quickly brought matters to an issue. Believing Pete to be unarmed and knowing him to be a coward, he felt certain they were more than a match for him.

“Frank,—just a moment, Blanche, and we’ll all go with you,—Frank, what must he do? He must do what you say, or I’ll set Schnapps on him, and you know, Pete,”—addressing that individual, whose teeth chattered for fear,—“that he’ll take the skin off you in ninety seconds, clean down honest.”

“I’ll arrest you all for setting a dog on me,” whimpered Pete.

“Yes, and then maybe we’ll see about your stopping people against their will, you heart-coward,” replied Davy imitating the bully’s whining tone. “What must he do, Frank?”

“He must get down on his knees and beg Blanche’s pardon,” said Frank.

“What do you say, Blanche?” inquired Davy further.

“Oh, Frank dear, Davy, don't. Let him go this time. I believe he'll never trouble me again.”

“The court holds that won't do,” answered Davy. “He must beg your pardon and also take the oath to Abraham Lincoln and the United States government. Ain't he must, Schnapps?”

The dog responded by giving a gleeful bark, as if to say:—“The idea is a capital one and meets my full approval!” Pete was afraid to stir; hate and fear were depicted on his face.

“Get down on your knees, you ketzer you,” cried Davy.

“I'll send you the sheriff for this,” said Pete with trembling voice.

“On your knees quick,” cried his tormentor again, “for if I say the word, Schnapps will be on you.”

“I'll be plagued if I don't arrest you for this,” said Pete. But the dog looked fierce and down on his knees went the frightened fellow.

“Listen now, and repeat after me word for word,” said Davy. Then with mock solemnity he imitated a form he had often heard in Squire Zweispringer's office. He would say half a dozen words at a time and then stop until Prantman could repeat them —

“I, Peter Prantman, kneeling in the middle of this lane in Copton township, in the county of Berks, in the presence of Blanche Chetwynde,” —

“Oh, Davy, don't,” interrupted Blanche pleadingly.

— “Frank Chetwynde,” he went on, not heeding her,

“David Rauh Zahn and Schnapps Helfer, do make good* my insolence to the aforesaid Blanche Chetwynde ; and I do solemnly swear that from this day forth and forever I will cheer and pray for the Union and Abraham Lincoln ” ——

“Donnerwetter ! I can't ” ——

“Hurry up,— here, Schnapps — that's it ; now where was I ? Oh, yes — you needn't say these last words, Pete,— that I will never say nothing against the Union soldiers ; and also I do swear — hurry yourself Pete, and don't stutter so — that I will never again make Blanche Chetwynde afraid or molest her in any shape, manner or form. So help me Eulenspiegel, Abraham Lincoln, Simon Cam ” ——

“What does all this mean, Frank, Davy ? ” said a voice behind them sharply.

Startled, they turned, and there stood Jabez Chetwynde. When evening fell he had grown uneasy at Blanche's prolonged absence and came down the lane to look for her. Pete was too much absorbed in watching the dog and Davy to see Jabez until the latter was close at hand, but the moment the attention of his enemies was withdrawn he sprung to his feet and ran down the lane like a hunted deer. But Schnapps deemed it his duty to stop the fugitive and started after him. Davy refused to call the dog off. Had Pete been a runner in the Olympian races and gone at the same speed, he would have won immortality. In a moment he was hat-

*Apologize for.

less, his long, blue coat-tails flew in the wind, his yellow hair stood toward all points of the compass, his arms sawed the air, his heavy cow-hide shoes struck the ground like great sledge-hammers, and his legs looked like big fat right-angles as he fairly flew over the ground. He heard the dog and knew the animal was gaining on him. This lent speed to his flight. The wicked flee indeed when no man pursues, but it adds considerably to the swiftness of their flight if they know something is after them.

Peter Prantman was literally a flying Dutchman. In his agony he yelled "Donnerwetter" several times and Schnapps promptly responded each time with a bark. Just as the dog was on the point of putting a period to Pete's career, Davy called to him, when he instantly, though reluctantly, turned back to his master. Pete emerged into the main road, but kept on his way some distance farther. Finding that Schnapps was no longer at his heels, he halted and looked across the corner of the field toward the place where Mr. Chetwynde and the rest stood watching him. In the gathering twilight they could see him wildly gesticulating and shaking his fist at them. He spoke loudly, but all they could make out at that distance was "Donnerwetter — Yankees — revenge — soon." Presently he went on up the road and disappeared from view.

Blanche and the boys related the whole adventure to Mr. Chetwynde as they walked up the lane. Schnapps was the silent partner of the company, and seemed to

look disappointed. Jabez was amused at the narrative but was serious too.

“I did not want the boys to do what they did, and I am very sorry it happened,” said Blanche. “It was wrong for me to remain, but I was so excited that I hardly knew what I was doing.”

“The boys went a trifle too far in their fun,” said Mr. Chetwynde, “but Pete brought it on and I reckon he’ll get over it in time.”

“Of course he will, and I don’t believe either that he’ll keep his oath at all, by my sex,” said Davy.

“I don’t reckon it was quite as binding as Squire Zweispringer’s,” replied Mr. Chetwynde laughing.

That same evening Frank wrote a full account of the affair in the lane to his brother Clinton.

CHAPTER X.

A WOMAN WITH A FAMILIAR SPIRIT SOUGHT OUT.

Early in November, a week or so after Pete Prantman had taken the oath of allegiance as described in the preceding chapter, that young man and his sister were one afternoon engaged in drawing cornfodder into their father's barn. Pete pitched the sheaves and Ret "loaded" them on the big ladder-wagon.

"Nigger Ruthvon I heard at Baltzer's last evening has been in several fights and didn't get hurt at all," said the brother stopping in his work; "and they say he captured two Southern soldiers and will soon be put up to captain."

"If that's so, and he ever gets back, you wont have any chance at all with the proud Yankee girl, Pete," answered the sister looking down from her high perch.

"I think you'll be out too, Ret, but they ain't got each other yet, and they never will, if I can help it."

"And how they're making fun of you, Pete, about something. Sal Vonneida says that Davy Rauh Zahn's big black dog has a piece of your coat in his teeth, and she told me a long row about your taking an oath in Chetwynde's lane to shout for Abe Lincoln and the niggers, and then she laughed until she nearly choked — I wish she had, the carrion!"

At this moment Pete gave the horses several fearful blows with his fork-handle, causing the animals to start so quickly that Ret came very near being thrown to the ground.

“Don’t hit the horses, you dumb-head ; hit somebody else!” she shouted recovering herself.

“Donnerwetter ! I will,” he answered, laying uncommon stress on his favorite exclamation and grinding his teeth in a way that showed he meant what he said.

“And Yorim was at the house this morning and he said that Tom Hartnagel was seen in Reading yesterday, and I believe Sal knew something about it when I saw her yesterday, because she said before long somebody would come home and then somebody would get paid in full for his good wishes about somebody.”

“Say, Ret, this is only Tuesday,” said Pete, so much excited that he threw several sheaves entirely over the high load, “what’s the use of waiting till Saturday night before we go to see Katrina?”

“Well, you know pap and mam don’t want us to spend money on that ink-licker, and besides she says the books don’t show up as well on any night as on Saturday or Sunday night.”

“We’ll go to-night anyhow. Ruthvon’s have their apple-peeling match and we can make pap and mam believe we’re going there, for Amos daren’t tell on us.”

Ret agreed, and shortly after nightfall the two started on their way on foot to the habitation of Katrina Galsch.

The superstition of the Pennsylvania Dutch is pro-

verbial. Their conservative spirit has led them to cling with remarkable tenacity to the old-world ideas of their German ancestors. Farmers plant into this sign and that sign of the Zodiac rather than into the soil and believe their crops will be largely governed by the character of the sign. For instance, if corn is planted in Gemini, the crop will be double; if in Cancer, backward; if in Aquarius or Pisces, it will likely be drowned; if in Sagittarius, the ears will shoot big but will not fill out well.

Again, if potatoes are planted when the moon waxes — “im Uebergehenden,” — the crop will be large, if Gemini has been at the same time the zodiacal sign; and if planted in the waning of the moon — “im Untergehenden,” — the tubers will be small and lie deep in the soil. Even in farming districts near large cities the weather predictions in the German Almanac issued from the office of the *Reading Adler*, are far more frequently consulted than the bulletins sent out by the weather bureau at Washington — which is not, however, to be regarded as very singular perhaps.

In the back districts, notably in those lying among the ridges of the South Mountain, the old German superstitions still have full sway. There the saying of spells — “brauchen,” — a kind of pow-wow-ing minus its noise and dancing, — over wounds and the sick among both men and animals is common enough. Horseshoes and toads' feet nailed over stable-doors, house-doors and even bedsteads, to keep off witches, are

frequently seen ; and the belief in the power of witches and evil spirits to cause cows to give bloody milk, make horses baulk, keep hens from laying, and to do other mischief, is prevalent.

Witch-doctors, who are believed to have the power of breaking the spells of witches, make thieves stand still, discover stolen goods and reveal hid treasures, are in good demand, and gather in a rich crop of modern U. S. dollars. Numerous persons who believe themselves bewitched consult one or more of the famous witch-doctors of Reading, the capital of Berks county, and scrupulously follow the ridiculous directions for taking their nostrums.

It is not surprising that in such neighborhoods fortune-tellers are also in demand ; it goes without saying that the supply is quite equal to it. But in a wide range of country south of Haltfest during the war-times one gained the preëminence, and for the time drove all competitors from the field. It was she to whose house Pete Prantman and his sister were making their way this bleak November evening. As she plays an important part in this narrative, a brief sketch of her life will be of interest at this point.

Katrina Galsch was German by birth. She was well educated, for her father was wealthy in his native land, and an office-holder in his own city of Carlsruhe. Reduced in circumstances through prolonged litigations arising from certain irregularities on the part of a subordinate, he emigrated to the United States in the

hope of repairing his broken fortunes. Like many other Germans he sought a mountainous region because in such a one lands were cheaper. He had a few hundred dollars when he arrived, and with this sum purchased a large tract of unimproved ground on the South Mountain, about four miles nearly due south of Haltfest and a mile or two west of Outlook Hill. He soon brought several acres of rough soil under cultivation, and built a rude dwelling of unhewn stone.

Katrina was his only living child, and his wife died on the voyage over and was buried at sea. So father and daughter led a lonely life, but he at least cared little for his kind, his contentions at law and his pecuniary losses having soured him against humanity. After living in his new home ten years and beginning to thrive, he died. Though left alone in the world, Katrina was not dismayed. She had indeed been brought up tenderly but in the years in the new home she had accustomed herself to her changed surroundings and was able now to perform labor and endure fatigue such as few save German and Pennsylvania Dutch females can. She kept a large flock of common barnyard fowls and cultivated fruits and vegetables. She went abroad only when necessary, which was seldom. Her neighbors were few and even these visited her only at rare intervals.

On one occasion when several gossips called on her the Bible happened to become a topic of conversation. She showed a remarkable acquaintance with the letter

of the sacred writings and with the interpretations and doctrines of the Mystics. She knew the philosophy of the Gnostics. She had in her great oaken chest "The Life of Peter as written by John," "The Book of Nicodemus," four additional "Books of Moses," one of which contained the wisdom of the Egyptians in which Moses was learned; moreover, "The Arts of Jannes and Jambres who withstood Moses before King Pharaoh, as they fell into the hands of the Lawgiver during the prevalence of the Seventh Plague," and numerous other apocryphal books.

Of these volumes, brought from Germany, she was careful to show only the titles to her visitors, but she talked glibly about Jesus' childhood, the conversation of Jesus with Peter at their interview after the resurrection of the former, and many other things which curiosity would be glad to know but on which God's word sheds little or no light. Her simple-minded hearers, ignorant and superstitious, listened with open-mouthed wonder, and the impression made was all the stronger because she was a foreigner, lived in seclusion, and spiced her discourse with Latin phrases. Curiosity at once developed into unwholesome respect and fear. Quickly she took the hint. To subsequent visitors she threw out intimations of knowledge of futurity and it was not long before rumors were abroad as to Katrina Galsch's wonderful ken of the past and the future of individuals. Soon lovelorn swains, the defrauded, the bewitched, the hated, the hating, came to consult her.

She settled down into a fortune-teller. She told the fortunes of her patrons — not by means of coffee-dregs, cards, lines in the hands or any such like vulgar agencies of the ordinary fortune-teller, but by the Bible, her other sacred books, and, as she plainly declared, by direct communication with spirits good and evil.

Her purse grew fat, for he who could without a price read his fortune very clearly in such verses of the Scriptures as Luke 13: 5, refused and willingly paid this sibyl a dollar to tell what none but God could reveal.

At the time when she is introduced to the reader she was seventy-five years old, as nearly as was known, for she never spoke of her age. She had little of the external appearance of the regulation member of her order — coarse grey, disheveled hair, wrinkled face, hooked nose, toothless mouth, claw-like fingers and bent form; — on the contrary, in spite of her years and the hardships she had experienced, her hair was dark, her eyes sparkled, her form was erect, her steps sprightly, her teeth almost perfect, her voice distinct. She had an open look and the general appearance of a person engaged in the pursuit of a most laudable calling. Moreover, there was that in her manner well calculated to awe those who came to consult her.

This woman delighted in her occupation — partly because it brought her gain and partly because it afforded her opportunity to witness human emotions under peculiar circumstances. She was not naturally hard-hearted or cruel and possessed a strong sense of grat-

itude to any who might befriend her. Nevertheless, as was inevitable, her calling made her year by year more selfish.

In plying her trade Katrina Galsch had an indispensable auxiliary. This was a lad of some fourteen years known as Scharf Billy, that is, Sharp Billy. His real name was William Puterberg, and his nickname was given him in view of the extraordinary sharpness of his features, more specially his nose, to which acuteness his intellect and tongue corresponded perfectly. He was rather small for his age, but wiry and lithe and active as a wild cat. In cold weather he wore a long, antiquated coat brought from the old country by Fritz Galsch. His hat was always too small for him, which circumstance made his face seem all the more acute in its outline. He had a queer, loping gait, which he kept up for miles without seeming to tire.

Sharp Billy was very fond of music. He had a fife and played it well, and he could sing all the Pennsylvania German ditties and frolic songs to say nothing of sacred hymns learned at church, and *Trinklieder* or German drinking songs taught him by his guardian. Of his parentage little was known. Katrina Galsch saw the lad when he was quite young and observed his shrewdness, which even then already manifested itself in the numerous and pointed questions he asked her. She perceived in the child a valuable ally and resolved to secure him. To do this she had little trouble. His parents were very poor and she was believed to be

rich, and when she promised to make him her heir in case he proved faithful they eagerly consented to give him up. She adopted him and soon he was known the country over as old fortune-teller Galsch's Sharp Billy, or the witch's boy.

The attachment which these diverse beings had for each other was remarkable. Katrina loved the lad as an own son. Any affront offered him was as to herself; any kindness to him was kindness to her. He fully reciprocated her affection and in time almost forgot his parents. He was ubiquitous. He picked the berries and other fruits and marketed them at Haltfest, bought and brought home the necessary provision and ran errands of all kinds. And all the while he gathered news. There was hardly a frolic, apple-butter bee, or meeting of any kind for miles around, whether held by day or by night, but Sharp Billy was present; and all he saw and heard was faithfully reported at home. No secret was ever divulged without permission of his foster-mother.

Thus by means of this lad, by consulting the newspapers regularly and by asking questions of her patrons, added to her native shrewdness and correct knowledge of motives, Katrina Galsch was able to tell many things relative to the past of individuals and to make some very good guesses concerning their future.

Among her patrons were Pete and Ret Prantman, for when malice and ignorance enter into partnership they frequently take in superstition as a third party to the

compact. At present an important question was agitating the minds of this brother and sister:—whether Pete's vision of a certain brave soldier lying dead on the field of battle was coming true or not. That the brother desired it realized need not be repeated, and that the sister was animated with the same wish is no less certainly true. For she had long since learned from Sallie Vonneida that Charles Ruthvon was "not looking her way" and would not until a certain sign were seen in the heavens, and her love had been transmuted into the hate which, if the poet speaks the truth, only a woman scorned can feel. To know whether their mutual desire would come was worth a dollar. Katrina Galsch could tell them, and she must.

This was the errand the pair was on to-night. After reaching the crest of the mountain they still had over a mile of very rough road to walk. The hooting of an owl close by accelerated their steps and a little after eight o'clock they reached the rude habitation of the sibyl. She was alone and sat by a wood-fire blazing on the broad hearth reading in a large volume that lay on her knees. They entered the door without knocking, for the latter was a refinement even now unknown among the common people of those regions. She manifested neither surprise nor alarm when they stood before her. In a dignified tone, but without rising, she said "Peace be with you" and bade them be seated. She was well acquainted with both, and as they came on an unusual evening she was sure they desired information

regarding something of more than common importance to them.

Instantly she was on the alert. Of Pete's recent humiliating adventure she knew all the particulars, for the very next day Davy Rauh Zahn had communicated them to Sharp Billy. She was also cognizant of his aspiration to the favor of Blanche Chetwynde and of Ret's hate. Hence even before Pete had made known his errand the cunning fortune-teller was pretty well satisfied as to its nature. To make her visitors nervous and thus bring them more fully under her influence, was her first object. Pete hitched his chair uneasily several times and cleared his throat.

"Katrina, how are the books to-night?" he asked at last.

"The books are all right," she responded watching him closely, "only they are not as clear on Tuesday night as on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday, for reasons any one who has read the last chapters of the Gospels ought to understand; and two of my Holy Books I wouldn't consult at any time but Sunday night between eleven and twelve on grounds that would make your hair stand on end if I mentioned them."

The brother and sister looked around them with dilated eyes, as if they expected a demon to present himself before them at once. Keenly enjoying the effect of her words but without manifesting it in her countenance, Katrina closed the book and carefully placed it in the oaken chest. Then she returned and sat down

closer by them. Speaking in that low, tremulous tone which of a dark night when danger is supposed to be near causes the flesh to creep and the senses to become tense, she asked —

“Did you hear a sound like the wailing of an owl when you came by the Cross-rock between here and the upper turn of the road, where old Fetzner was murdered in 1851?”

“We did indeed!” they both exclaimed.

“We knew it was only an owl,” Pete continued, trying to look unconcerned, “but it was so near that it scared us a little.”

“You knew it was only an owl,” she replied in well-assumed tones of contempt; “how did you know it was only an owl? Things, children, are not always what they seem. How often did you hear the sound?”

“Three times!” they said with bated breath.

“I knew it,” cried the sibyl triumphantly, drawing up still closer to them, the fire meanwhile throwing weird shadows upon the walls,— “I knew it, and I know you are about to ask me a question therefore that concerns the life of an individual.”

“I wouldn’t kill nobody,” said Pete hastily, misapprehending her words.

“Oh, no, of course you wouldn’t, Prantman, by the great Eulenspiegel!” said she sarcastically. “Tell me then what you do want; a great many are losing their lives now down there,” pointing over her left shoulder toward the south.

“And by my soul, about one of them that’s gone down there we want to know,” exclaimed Pete eagerly, his eyes twice their ordinary size. Katrina gave a quick nod but said nothing.

“You old witch, tell us whether that Ruthvon is coming home alive and well,” said Pete irritably after a pause.

“Yes, that there,” added Ret.

“But the ‘old witch’ couldn’t think of prying into so dreadful a thing as that on a Tuesday night — except on Tuesday night before Ash Wednesday — for less than four dollars,” responded the sibyl as if vexed, but really much amused.

“Donnerwetter!” shouted Pete, “I haven’t got so much in the world, for pap never gives me more than ten cents at a time.”

“But you can get it, or its value in something else. I’ll take your word and you know what I can do if you don’t keep it.”

“Say, Galsch, you old hex,” said Pete squirming, “don’t you go and make our cows give bloody milk. Bodie says you done that with his cows because they broke into your lot, and he says he isn’t afraid of any witch and will switch you out of the township, old as you are, if it happens again.”

Katrina was somewhat disturbed by this remark, for Bodie, who was her nearest neighbor, was a rough fellow who neither feared God nor much regarded man. She professed to be a fortune-teller only, but a fortune-teller

and a witch were own cousins in the public estimation, and she had done too much boasting to make a defence when accused of mischief. Ret quickly saw what would have escaped her duller brother's notice.

"Call it two dollars," said she.

"Your cows won't be disturbed, Pete," said Galsch. "We're friends. Give me a dollar in cash, and bring me three dollars in corn."

They assented, and Pete counted out one hundred cents, after which the sibyl proceeded to solve the weighty problem proposed to her. First she lifted a human skull out of her strong box, lighted a taper and placed it within, and then set this illuminated relic of mortality on the rough table. Her patrons looked at it and shuddered. They never had seen its like before, and all the uncanny things they ever had heard of this woman rushed to their minds. How they wished themselves at home!

Next the fortune-teller took out of the same box a ponderous, heavy-backed tome, laid it by the skull, opened it, and soon seemed deeply absorbed in its pages. After turning many leaves as though looking for a particular passage, she arose and retired to a small, dark chamber adjoining, lifting a forefinger and laying it on her lips as she entered in token of silence on their part. She remained away a long time, and the visitors could hear nothing but the ticking of the great Dutch clock, the flickering of the flames on the hearth and the sough of the wind among the trees without.

Suddenly a great black cat jumped into the room through a broken window-light, and seeing strangers ran into the apartment that Galsch had entered. From thence at the same moment issued groans as of one accursed and a plaintive voice cried "Ach Gott, ach Gott!" Terrified by what they saw and heard, Pete and his sister leaped up and ran to the outer door; but hearing Katrina call to them, they stopped. She said it was all right now, and bade them sit down again and not fear.

"I wish on such an awful matter you had come on Sunday, for I could have given you a clearer answer to your question. Still, the record of the sacred book and its interpretation I have received—get back, Gewitter, you black satan," she cried as the cat put its head through the door between the two apartments, "you always make mischief.—I can tell you people that Charlie Ruthvon is in danger now and may be hurt bad, and perhaps killed, inside of three months."

"By Schinner!" exclaimed Pete much excited, "and say, you old—Galsch, who will Blanche Chetwynde marry? You'll answer that yet under the four dollar contract, won't you?"

"Certainly, Prantman, as you're so poor and it was revealed to me in part at the same interview," she replied with a faint smile.—"Well, she won't marry for some time yet, and when she does it will be a young farmer in Copton township not far from your place. There are beautiful girls in the South, some white and some black, and Charlie has seen one of them, as my

signs clearly show. His father is against the Yankee match bad, sure as the world stands!"

"Sapperlotte! Galsch!" cried Pete in an ecstasy; "when I bring the corn I will certainly throw in a big head of cabbage, by the henker, I will!—Let's go, Ret, it's getting close to midnight."

"And the night is dark," said Katrina solemnly by way of impressing the interview on their minds still more; "and if you had to-night seen what I saw, you wouldn't feel so comfortable."

"Say, Galsch, is there any danger?" asked Pete nervously.

"Not much. Look out though at the Cross-rock. Nothing will hurt you, but you, Pete, might be scared if you were not so brave."

When they were leaving she said, "Peace be with you. Should anything unearthly appear, say to it '*Alle gute Geister loben den Herrn,*' and no harm will come to you. *Pax vobiscum.*"

After they were fairly gone she laughed heartily.

"You Gewitter, you," she said addressing the cat, "you came in at a good time. Didn't we scare them? And what fun there'll be when Pete tries his luck at Chetwynde's again!—The silly, shallow fools."

Katrina Galsch was not slow to conclude, judging from the result of the uprising in her native land in 1848 and from the earnestness and superior resources of the North, that the Union cause would probably speedily triumph. She took her course accordingly and was

friendly to Charles Ruthvon, Doctor Helfer and the rest, while for her own ends she at the same time simulated friendship toward Prantman, Zellon and others of like sympathies. Moreover, she and Billy were under great obligation to Doctor Helfer, for one day the lad fell off a chestnut tree and broke his leg. The doctor happened to find him and by the exercise of care and skill probably saved his life. Neither Billy nor his foster-mother forgot his kindness.

After leaving the dwelling of the fortune-teller Pete and Ret went on their way home with mingled feelings; they were pleased with the result of their interview but their fears obtruded themselves. The pines on either side of the road made the darkness dense, and after what Galsch had said they dared not go past the Cross-rock but made a detour that led them through a number of very stony fields in which certain painful falls and bruises caused the brother to use his harmless expletive frequently. Just as they again struck the road they were startled by a noise in the bushes by the way-side. Pete quickly began to say the fortune-teller's formula and had pronounced the first three words—*“Alle gute Geister”*—when a human form emerged into the road and a boyish voice interrupted his adjuration.

“Hollo, Pete; hollo, Ret! That you? I'm not a good spirit or any other kind. Being only a boy and sure a Schnapphans was coming, I stepped into the bushes a moment to avoid losing my pocket-book; but I

know the voice of honest people when I hear it, and stepped out again."

"You young Teufelsdreck, you ought to be switched for being out this time of the night and scaring honest people," snarled Ret in her harshest tones.

"No doubt," responded Sharp Billy, for he it was "but some people ought never to be scared, for they needn't fear they'll ever meet anyone uglier than themselves. Eh, Ret?"

Ret, like some other maidens, had great readiness in jumping at conclusions. She made a dash at Billy in the dark, but he easily eluded her and laughed gleefully.

"I'll be even with you, you ketzer, just wait," exclaimed the damsel wrathfully, and there is no doubt that if she had succeeded in catching him, she would presently have been considerably more than even with him. As it was, however, she merely afforded him a little amusement. Pete's awe of the fortune-teller would shield him from the brother and Ret could not catch him. So he ran a few steps and stopped.

"All right," he cried; "I'll wait with great impatience till you do."

He was off in the dark and in a few moments they heard him sing as he went up the hill —

"Oh, yes, Dutch company is the best company,
When shall we meet again,
Oh, when?"

which he followed in shrill notes with the old Pennsylvania Dutch frolic-song —

“ Oh, Susie Owl, I wish 'twas night
That I might fly to my heart's delight.”

“ That one will be hung yet, and if I live, I'm going to see the sight,” said Ret spitefully. We will still hope for a better end for you, Billy.

CHAPTER XI.

SUSIE ZWEISPRINGER EXPRESSES HER VIEWS.

Toward the end of November Blanche Chetwynde one day visited her friend, Susie Zweispringer. Visits were exchanged frequently, but this particular visit concerns this narrative and hence is mentioned.

Susie was unlike her father in many things. She had far more decision, and was just as outspoken as he was cautious and conservative. Her willowy form, blonde complexion, mild grey eye, sweet expression and quiet movement, would never have indicated the decisive way she had of declaring herself, or her firmness in pursuing a course of action she deemed necessary and right. She was motherless and her father's only living child. He loved her tenderly and doted on her, though she sometimes startled him by her brusque way of speaking when deeply interested.

"Susie, we must be careful," he would say, "else we might get into trouble in these evil days of war."

To-day Susie was unusually glad to see her friend, for had she not just received a letter from Clinton Chetwynde? So Blanche scarcely had time to admire the few late chrysanthemums in the flower-bed by the yard path, and to pet the dog which came to give her a friendly greeting, before Susie said "Clinton is well. I

had a letter from him at noon—and by the way it should have been here two days ago. His regiment is near Washington and there is no movement in the army now. He thinks they may lie idle all winter.”

“I’ve had about the same news,” said Blanche slightly flushing, “though not quite from the same source, and” — with a pleased look — “the additional news that Charles Ruthvon is now *Captain* Ruthvon.”

“Is that rumor true?” asked Susie eagerly.

“It is. The captain of the company resigned and the lieutenants died in the hospital. Charlie was very brave in a skirmish with the rebels near Dranesville and successfully led a scouting party, the result of it all being his promotion to a captaincy a few days ago.”

“I am proud, Blanche,” cried Susie enthusiastically, waving a little flag that lay on the centre-table, “that so gallant a Union soldier hails from such a treason-stricken township as Copton. His father—wonder what old Ruthvon thinks of this?”

“I don’t know,” replied Blanche in an absent-minded way turning the leaves of ‘Lives of Great Heroes’ which she had picked up from the melodeon; “he seems more distant than ever toward us.”

“He ought to be ashamed of himself,” said Susie with snapping eyes. “What heroes these young men will be when they come home after putting down the rebellion,” she went on as she placed the flag in her hair, “and I do wish I had a brother to send to this war seeing I can’t go myself. Look at Tom Hartnagel. His wound

will always be a badge of honor, and his escape from the rebels after being a prisoner for more than two months will be a topic to dwell upon as long as he lives. . What a grand fellow he is ! No wonder Sallie Vonneida fairly idolizes him and that so many of the girls are jealous of her."

Some moments passed in silence during which the thoughts of each were in the army.

"Susie," said Blanche, half hesitating, "do you know I came over to say good-bye to you?"

"To say good-bye to me?" exclaimed her friend in great surprise. "Are you going to enlist and join Captain Ruthvon's company? You are joking, ain't you, Blanche?"

"No, I'm going away very unexpectedly. You see, grandmother Chetwynde, who lives with uncle Silas Chetwynde, is quite ill. Uncle and grandmother both want me to come and stay with them this winter, and as aunt is not strong either, papa and mamma think I had better do so, though they can hardly spare me. So tomorrow morning I am off for Connecticut."

"What a dreary winter is before me! What shall I do without you?" said Susie ruefully. Blanche remained awhile longer and the usual vows of eternal friendship were made. The final good-byes were said next morning at the depot and in due time Miss Chetwynde arrived in Kent, where she received an affectionate welcome and settled down for a long stay.

In December she received a letter from Susie Zwei-

springer. After much solicitation she agreed to permit the readers of this history to have a copy thereof. It ran as follows:—

“HALTFEST, PA., Dec.—, 1861.

“DEAREST BLANCHE:—I wrote you only the day before yesterday, but I must write you again to-day or die, and I much prefer doing the former as I am too happy to do the latter just yet.

“The very train that took my letter brought me one from Clinton Chetwynde, and I know you will be neither surprised nor angry when I tell you that he asked me a very pertinent question in it. I showed the letter to my dear papa and he said it was a very important matter and that one ought to be very careful in such things, that he knew nothing but good about Clinton, that I was his darling girl who every day looked more like her dear, dead mamma, and that I might answer the question as I thought best. I hugged him and then sat down and answered it—‘Yes!’ I am free to say Clinton would have got the same answer before he went away, if he had had the courage to ask the question. We girls must be terrible things!—He says he could not wait until he comes back and that if I will be his, he will be so happy and be able to fight his country’s battles so much better, I hope he has my answer by this time. Oh, if it should be lost!

“I am so happy, and so proud of my hero. I know he is a little younger than I and that we are both very young, but if everybody whom it concerns is satisfied,

none of the rest need find fault, and if any one does, we don't care. I pray for him every night, that no harm may come near him.

“And, Blanche, dear, old Ruthvon — I like Mrs. Ruthvon very much, but I am almost getting to hate Mr. Ruthvon. He is an old curmudgeon, as Prof. Buchstecher at the seminary used to say. Instead of being proud of his son's promotion, he says he is so sorry that Charlie is engaged in the unholy task of taking people's lawful property from them and shooting down men who are only resisting a tyrannical government. What do you think? He says you are a sensible girl. And why? Because you didn't encourage Charlie when you found that he (Mr. Ruthvon, senior), did not like his son to marry a Yankee girl! He said this to papa, a few days ago.

“I think I oughtn't to tell you all this, and I couldn't bring myself to it in my last letter; but now I must tell it, for it concerns us so much, and I am real angry, too. I did not know things had gone so far between you and Charlie, for you, bad girl, did not tell me about it; but after this, as we are to be sisters — won't that be nice seeing neither of us ever had a sister of her own! — we will tell each other everything, won't we? And I am making a real good beginning, ain't I, dear Blanche?

“Let's see, where was I? Oh, yes, — I am real angry, not only with old Ruthvon, but with you, too, my love. The idea of rejecting poor Charlie because his father

doesn't like Yankees! I'm astonished, Blanche Chetwynde! If you loved him, why didn't you accept him, and let the old fellow sulk, if he wants to be silly? Suppose Charlie should be—I cannot write the awful word, on Clinton's account, too—if anything should happen to him, how would you feel then? I believe you made a mistake.

“And then about that Prantman. He tells around that you only let on being scared last fall down in the lane and that you think a good deal of him; that if your brother Frank and Davy Rauh Zahn had minded their own business, it would have been all right. He says too—so the talk goes—that when you come home it will be all right yet, because old Ruthvon does not want his son to have you, and that he—I mean Pete—knows Charlie Ruthvon will never get you, for he—I mean Pete again—has been told so by somebody who knows everything. He has also been circulating a rumor that Charlie has found a girl in the South and has given you up for good to please his father. Pete ought to be stopped. He is a coward himself, but he shields himself behind that fellow they call Zellon, who is at Prantman's now nearly all the time and goes with Pete almost everywhere.

“Tom Hartnagel is still somewhat lame but is in very good spirits.

“Time moves slowly enough here, but what with taking care of papa, writing to Clinton and you, reading his letters and yours, watching the newspapers—papa still

lets that rebel sheet, the *Reading Eagle*, come to the house,—and now and then going to a spelling-match (you Yankees call them *bees*, though bees have nothing to do with them so far as I know) at our school-house, where a nice young man named Hinton from Chester county teaches this winter—I am kept well engaged most of the time.

“Of course we go to church every two weeks in the morning, but old Mr. Dox is rather a dull preacher. The other Sunday Deacon Fettig went to sleep under his preaching, which was nothing new for Fettig; but this time he actually didn't wake up until after the benediction was pronounced and the people were dispersing! It was too funny for anything, and Sharp Billy said that Mr. Dox could make his fortune going around among the dentists and preaching to people who were getting their teeth fixed.

“And writing about church matters, dear Blanche, reminds me of something that happened last week which would be a good deal funnier than Fettig's going to sleep if it were not so bad as almost to disgust a body with the church and everything belonging to it. Imagine such a thing occurring up in staid Connecticut, the land of wooden — beg pardon, my love! But you ask impatiently what it was. I will tell you. Young Dubbskraut met papa on the street and said to him: ‘To-day something is going on that will make a bad uproar if Mr. Dox finds it out.’

“‘What's that?’ inquired papa.

“ ‘Why, as usual deacon Fettig went to Reading to get the communion wine. He took it up to the church on his return and found the other deacons there making some repairs preparatory to the communion next Sunday. They all began to sample the communion wine and now they are all up there in the church drunk.’ ”

“ Papa was surprised but on inquiry found Dubbskraut's report only too true. Hans Prantman was one of the deacons. The communion was held as usual last Sunday and Fettig and all the other deacons were in their places. The ‘uproar’ Dubbskraut predicted might occur has not yet been heard of. I presume good Mr. Dox did not get to hear of the conduct of his deacons and so of course nothing will ever be done about it. It is no wonder though that the ‘sects,’ against whom our dear old minister and Mr. Ruthvon and the rest have so much to say, are making inroads among the people. I sometimes think we are dead here in religion and that these sectarian preachers will by and by cause the old church to wake up. And when I hear you talk about the Sunday schools and other religious societies up in Connecticut, and then think that we haven't even a Sunday school in our church and that these same deacons who got drunk on the communion wine would never so far permit one to be held in our church even if persons able and willing to carry one on could be found,— why, then I begin to feel that I should like to leave the place of my birth forever! —

“But what a letter I am writing. To come back to

first principles again — another of Prof. Buchstecher's expressions, — don't be silly, dear, dear Blanche, and entertain such high notions about things that in themselves amount to nothing yet concern your happiness so nearly. It is all right to have a very delicate sense of propriety but I am sure so long as Clinton Chetwynde loved me and I loved him, I wouldn't care what your father might say. But of course you will reply that it is easy for me to say this, because I think your papa rather likes me a little. But — well, no matter, you think it all over, and meanwhile let me plead for Charlie with you. His crusty old parent will yet learn to appreciate him even though it may be when it is too late.

“O, Blanche! Papa has just brought me another letter from Clinton. It says that contrary to all expectation, there is a good deal of movement among the troops and that a battle may soon occur. Of course he hadn't yet received my letter with the answer, and now he may not get it at all. What anxious times these are for all who have dear ones in the army! And yet many of the clodhoppers around here exult when things go wrong with our troops. Just wait — the war will come home to them yet!

“Write soon, dear sister, and let me know all your heart. I must get a couple more stamps as this silly letter is far over weight. At any rate I know that it is heavily freighted with love from

Your affectionate friend,

SUSIE ZWEISPRINGER.”

“P. S. A merry Christmas! But you don't keep Christmas in Connecticut.

S. Z.”

“I open this letter again to say that Doctor Helfer just called. He wishes to be remembered to you. What a nice fellow and good Union man he is!

S. Z.”

To this effusion of enthusiasm and love a reply came in due season. Though Blanche did not make any promises, yet to Susie there seemed to be a wavering of her resolution.

“She is careful, Susie, and that is best,” said the squire as he gently smoothed his daughter's hair after hearing portions of Blanche's letter. “Young people will often save trouble if they regard the feelings of their elders.”

Susie made no reply to this sage remark but looked very much as though not quite convinced.

Meanwhile time did as it always has done since it began, and as it will continue to do until the angel shall proclaim that it is no longer — whether there is peace or war, plenty or famine, sunshine or storm, joy or sorrow, life coming or life going — as if there were no millions of human beings with their high hopes and petty fears, their noble aspirations and sordid ambitions — time sped on, evenly, calmly, regardless alike of him who, impatient to attain the ends it is to bring him,

would fain hurry its flight, and of him who, fearing its revelations, would stop the wheels of its chariot.

So the winter of 1861-2 wore away, adding its record to the sum of human history. For some months nothing occurred very materially affecting the fortunes of any of the people with whom this history has thus far dealt, save that one of the young men who went out with Charles Ruthvon took ill with a fever and died in a hospital in Washington.

In the battle of Dranesville, occurring only about twenty miles from Washington, December 20, 1861, and resulting in a victory for the Union forces, the regiment to which the boys from Copton township were attached took no part, coming up just as the rebels were beginning to retreat; and during the first months of 1862 it lay in close winter quarters near the Capital. Charles Ruthvon and Clinton Chetwynde wrote cheerful letters home at brief intervals, but those of the former to his father found but an indifferent reception. Frederick Ruthvon said little to his wife or daughter in reference to the absent son and brother. He seemed to grow gloomy and was somewhat distant even to them.

Doctor Helfer bore up bravely under the fire of railery to which he was sometimes subjected at "The People's Hotel," and seldom lost his temper.

"Ho! my turn will come," he would exclaim like a man biding his time. "In the spring Uncle Sam will take a fresh hold on the throat of rebellion and choke it to death. Then some of you fellows will, let us hope,

be ashamed of yourselves and wish you'd never been born!"

Ad Sparger was a daily visitor at the chief Haltfest public; he got many a drink of his panacea from benevolently inclined tavern-haunters, and went steadily on in his downward career.

Pete Prantman was seldom seen at Baltzer's this winter, and when he did appear there was always accompanied by Jake Zellon or James Fetzer. He had a wholesome fear of Tom Hartnagel and carefully avoided him.

CHAPTER XII.

A PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH VENDUE.

“Squire, go along up to the vendue at Yokkle Shifler’s this afternoon. I’ve got one or two patients to look after in that vicinity and you can ride with me just as well as not. Tom Hartnagel and Pete Prantman are going to settle off and I want to see the traitor get his deserts from a Union soldier.”

The speaker was Doctor Helfer, and he whom he addressed was Squire Samuel Zweispringer. They had met in front of “The People’s Hotel.”

“Solomon was a pretty wise man,” answered the squire, “and he said that ‘he that meddleth with strife belonging not to him is like one that taketh a dog by the ears.’”

“I agree, squire, and I’ll be plagued if I meddle with this strife; but I do want to see Hartnagel take the Prantman dog by the ears and pinch them till he yelps for mercy. Besides, if any bones get broken, I will be on hand to set them.”

“Well, doctor, I had some notion of going before you spoke, and as I see that I may be of some use in the way of keeping you out of trouble, I’ll ride up with you.”

“All right, squire; I’ll be at your door at twelve sharp.”

Accordingly at that hour the two friends left the village. It was early in March, 1862, and the air was raw. Still, the snow was melting fast and there was plenty of tough limestone mud.

“It’s going to be a big vendue, squire,” remarked Helfer, as they jogged along. “You see Yokkle’s wife was sick very long and after she died he seemed to lose heart, and so he’s going to quit farming and is selling off everything.”

The sale included all the live stock and agricultural implements usually found on a first-class Pennsylvania Dutch farm, besides a quantity of grain and some household goods. It was, in the phrase of the country, “a big vendue.” And among the Pennsylvania Dutch of South-eastern Pennsylvania such an one is not the tame, milk-and-water affair that one sees, for example, in New York State. Oh, no! Thousands of people gather from far and near—not only men and boys, but girls also, and women of all ages. Frequently the school in the neighborhood is compelled to close up in the afternoon for lack of pupils, as John Hinton’s at Haltfest did this very day.

Hucksters to the number of a dozen or more often attend, and vend not only candies, oysters, cakes, cigars and soft drinks, but whiskey and other intoxicants. Numbers of women—very respectable women too—can always be seen on such occasions soliciting their male friends and acquaintances to treat them to candy, ground-nuts and moshey; and the popularity of these

women is supposed to be in direct proportion to the size of the bag of sweetmeats and peanuts they have in this way secured.

In the barnyard is always scattered a liberal quantity of straw over a wide space, and on this the lads and young men play games of ball, wrestle, jump and throw somersaults. Not seldom, too, after the liquor has been circulating pretty freely, there are rough-and-tumble fights. Often indeed these are preconcerted affairs. Young men having difficulties requiring settlement by the exercise of brute force, adjourn such adjustment to a prominent country sale and thus make sure of having a cloud of witnesses to their prowess, if not their victory. In such cases it is known for miles around who are to settle differences and where it is to be done. Sometimes the principal encounter will, as it were, lead up to one or two spontaneous ones, enlivening matters, especially the sale of liquors, very much.

When Doctor Helfer and Squire Zweispringer reached the top of the hill overlooking the valley in which the Shiffler place was located, they saw that an unusual number of people were gathered around the buildings.

“Ho!” exclaimed the doctor; “what a crowd! Half of them have come on account of the expected scrimmage between Hartnagel and Prantman.”

“It’s bad,” said the squire, “and it seems strange that so many persons who are commonly so law-abiding should countenance these things.”

“Like you and me, for instance,” answered Helfer laughing and nudging the squire with his elbow. In due time they reached their destination and mingled with the crowd. Hucksters were present in abundance and found plenty of customers. The sale had begun and the auctioneer was now disposing of the wagons and sleds.

An auctioneer is expected to be witty and his jokes are laughed at and applauded more than those of the clown at a circus. The presiding genius at this sale was famous in his calling and deserves special mention. His name was Rex—Abraham Rex. He stood six feet two in his stockings and his voice was as his height. His jokes were considered remarkably good. He knew everybody and secured higher prices for his goods than any other auctioneer in the country.

To-day he wore a great fur cap, top-boots and long overcoat, and at the moment he is introduced to the reader he was standing on the wagon about to be sold, in the middle of the big barn-floor. The crowd stood on the floor and the hay in the mows on either side of him. His eyes seemed to be in every place. He repeated the bids both in English and Pennsylvania German and the glibness of his tongue was simply amazing. Pen cannot describe it. Alfred Jingle would have stood dumb in his presence!

“You good people,” he began, raising his stentorian voice and looking around with a sort of comical leer, “what is bid for this here first-class wagon? wie feel?”

is two hundred dollars? zwe hunnert? it's cheap at three hundred — cost more — new last year ; wie feel is gebote ? — fifty dollars, by half a dozen—fifty—fuf-zig—sixty — sechzig — siewezig — seventy — eighty — achzig — ninety dollars, ollars, ollars — n-i-n-e-t-y dollars on — *ly* — all done at ninety? — take a five dollar bid — finf daler gebot — finf — und — neunzig — ninety-five — throw in that whiskey-jug over there, that'll make Sparger there bid! — (great laughter at Ad's expense) — zu wolfel — last a hundred years yet if you don't use it! — a hunnert daler — one hundred — a hunnert daler, aler, aler, gebote — take a one dollar bid and throw in Rex in the bargain and he's worth half a dollar for he's a King — one hundred and one, by six — a hunnert un anes — its all good, better than Baltzer's whiskey and that's bad good — one hundred and two — three — four — a hunnert un finf — keep it up — why this wagon's a self-oiler — nemm en fufzig cent gebot now — one hundred five fifty — fufzig — fifty — it goes almost of itself — Wolfenbittler's mule could draw it up Outlook Hill easy — (great laughter, for the animal in question was a mere skeleton) — I'm a man of truth and won't be laughed at by nobody — (a voice : 'Go it, Rex!') — going — going — one hundred and four dollars — just in time, as the man said when the locomotive ran over him — one hundred four fifty, by three — you begin to see the worth of this here wagon — take twenty-five cent bid if you hurry yourselves — one hundred four seventy-five — can't dwell, as the elephant said when

he fell on the little boy — a hunnert finf daler — I'll say it over again, like Mr. Dox his text — one hundred five — big enough for Zweispringer there to hold court in — a hunnert finf un a fertel — fertel, ertel, ertel — bid, you Undertaker Schmucker here, it'll hold all Doctor Helfer's dead patients — one hundred five fifty — drei fertel — drei fertel — what a tongue it's got, a good, tough, long tongue, like a woman's — (great laughter) — all fertig? — all done at one hundred and five dollars seventy-five cents? — all fertig? — fair notice a - n - d fair s - a - l - e — going — go - *ing* — once — and twice — un drei mohl — g - o - n - e — to Mike Hahn!”

At this point there was a great commotion among the crowd on the straw in front of the barn, and voices, boisterous enough for some time already, suddenly grew very loud. Pete Prantman and Jake Zellon had come to the sale early, and the former actually treated Sparger and several other loafers to drinks — the first time he was ever known to manifest such liberality. But Hartnagel did not come. The afternoon was beginning to wear away, and still he did not appear. In consequence Pete was in high feather and became quite boastful. He took part in the wrestling bouts, and easily threw every fellow venturesome enough to try conclusions with him. This superiority soon led those who did not like him and were jealous of his supremacy to make exasperating remarks.

“Say once, Davy, has Schnapps got all of Pete’s coat out of his throat yet?” cried one bold spirit to Doctor Helfer’s lad.

“Just got the last of it out yesterday,” replied Davy, relying for safety on the fact that he was only a boy; “he’s had fits of choking since last October, but the doctor gave him an emetic, and that fixed him all right. Isn’t that so, Schnapps?”

The dog, who was nearly always with his younger master, wagged his tail and barked an affirmative, at the same time looking as if he would like to finish the work begun some months ago.

“Shout for Abe Lincoln and the niggers, Pete; you took an oath you would,” came another voice, causing much amusement.

Pete turned toward the speaker, and then another tormentor behind him yelled: “Let’s see, was Tom Hartnagel made dead in the war?”

“I think not; I saw him and Sallie together at Halt-fest last evening,” some one responded.

“Pete,” said another on the outer edge of the crowd, “I think you’d better once a little go up in the barn to your pap.”

Pete was like a wild animal at bay and Zellon for the moment was not there to help him. He glared on his tormentors but knew that if he attacked one, a dozen would run to the rescue. He was fairly desperate. He was set at naught and realized that something bold must be done at once. In an unlucky moment he re-

solved to try the virtue of brave words and trust to good fortune to help him through.

“A lot of lies has been told about me by nigger-worshippers like Charlie Ruthvon,” he yelled hotly, “and you fellows ought to be ashamed of yourselves to repeat them and encourage black Abolitionists like that Yankee of a Chetwynde. Sal Vonneida,” he went on raising his voice still higher, “made up a good many of them, and Tom Hartnagel repeated them, and he was afraid to come here to-day, and if he had come and sauced me, he would have learned something he would n’t have liked. Sacrament once more!”

“There he comes! There comes Tom Hartnagel!” shouted the crowd gleefully. Tom came through the orchard back of the barn and hence was not discovered until he emerged from behind the angle of the building and was close by. He was as good-natured a young fellow as lived, and was belligerent only where his friends or the Union cause was concerned. He was broad-shouldered, strongly built and stood a little above medium height; he had a fair complexion, blue eyes and a square, firm chin; he was fearless, and when very attentive or in a hostile mood had the habit of folding his brawny arms on his ample chest. Except for his politics he would have been popular, and even as it was he had warm friends among his political opponents. Having been wounded in battle and a prisoner, and being the first returned soldier, he was something of a hero and the story of his adventures was listened to with great attention.

He stopped under the "overshoot" of the big Schweitzer barn and in a pleasant way began to converse with Doctor Helfer and Squire Zweispringer.

"I had the misfortune to stub my foot against a stone this morning," said he, "and it made my old wound feel so sore that for awhile I thought I must give up coming, but that rebel over there—what are they shouting about?"

"Better not mind him, else both the doctor here and I may have something to do before it's all over," said the prudent squire. At this moment an officious young man came running up to Hartnagel.

"Pete Prantman over there wants to learn you something you don't know," said he.

Tom gave no heed to this speech, for Sallie Vonneida, who had looked rather lonely in her lover's absence, now came up, greeted him with a smile, then frowned and whispered something in his ear.

"I'll learn him to call you a liar!" exclaimed Tom angrily; "Sallie, just stay here a few minutes and when I come back I'll buy a whole peck of ground-nuts of Moddle," saying which he left his sweetheart and made his way through the crowd toward Pete Prantman.

"Stand your ground," whispered Zellon who by this time had returned to the side of his principal, "and if I see you're getting the worst of it, I'll show them a trick."

Pete felt like a general who is afraid to fight but knows that retreat means disgrace. He was possessed with the courage born of desperation and with ashen

face awaited the approach of his adversary. In size and strength the advantage was decidedly with him, but Tom was older and heavier, and moreover had the serene confidence resulting from true courage and the conviction of right.

“Pete,” said Tom stepping in front of his enemy and squaring his arms in his favorite fashion after throwing away his hat, coat and vest, “I expect to be near neighbor to you after April 1st, and so we had better settle our differences now. Then we can be good friends after I go to Yankee Chetwynde’s place. You wished me dead, but I’m here alive and hearty, only a bit lame, and so I forgive you that ; you talked rebel, but two boys and a dog settled with you for that and some other things too and we’ll call that square ; but you talked about a young lady whose brother isn’t here to defend her, and you just now called another girl, who I’m here to speak for, a liar, and if you don’t take it all back here and now, by my sex one of us must take a licking. Be quick, Pete, and talk up like a man ! ”

“Go and let yourself in, Pete ; don’t let the nigger-soldier scare you,” cried several voices. Pete had more than the average amount of race inertia. If he had had time for a few moments’ thought, he probably would have complied with Hartnagel’s humiliating terms, but as it was he could not make any movement either of assent or refusal and simply stared blankly at his adversary. The latter construed this as sullen defiance and acted accordingly.

In spite of the pain the effort cost him he sprung at Prantman's throat. Missing that, he seized him by the shoulders and in a moment the two combatants were engaged in a fierce struggle. Tom succeeded in winning the fall but Pete's superior strength enabled him to turn his enemy over in a twinkling. The crowd surged around, hissed on the fighters, exhorted them to "let themselves in," and threw out like encouraging phrases. Over and over the champions rolled, first one then the other uppermost, and the issue seemed doubtful indeed. So rapid were their movements and so much occupied their hands that for some time neither was able to strike an effective blow; but, permitting Tom to exert his force in turning him over without resistance and thus releasing his own hands, Pete succeeded in hitting his opponent heavily on the face. Tom was so confused for a moment that some shouted, "Pete's got him now; Tom's a goner this time!" Even Sallie Vonneida, who with a bevy of her female friends stood under the "overshoot" of the barn, and who had unlimited confidence in her lover's strength and prowess, looked very anxious.

But a man who had fought rebels and given and received blows without flinching, was not to be conquered easily. Recovering himself as Pete was in the act of again turning him over, Tom clutched Pete's throat fairly and held on despite blows and struggles. It was very evident that in a few moments Pete would be obliged to surrender. The excitement was at its height

when suddenly the startling cry of *fire* was raised. In that part of the barnyard farthest from the buildings the straw was in a blaze and the flames were rapidly spreading. Instantly a rush was made to put out the fire and the belligerents were trampled upon in the confusion, but Hartnagel held on to his adversary and called on him to say, "Enough." Pete nodded an affirmative as well as he could, when Tom at once let go and got up, paying no further attention to him.

Fortunately what little air was stirring was away from the buildings, and by means of damp straw, of which there was an abundance, the fire was extinguished in a very short time. But when the excitement was over Pete Prantman and Jake Zellon both had disappeared from the scene. By common consent the contest was decided to be a draw, for no one save Tom had witnessed Pete's acknowledgment of defeat. Hartnagel himself was so lame that Doctor Helfer kindly volunteered to carry him home in his buggy, hardly giving Ad Sparger time to say to his patron: "Let's drink one."

The next day Tom was quite ill, and for many days the doctor had occasion to visit him professionally at his father's house, Squire Zweispringer's prophecy being thus in part verified.

Sharp Billy and another lad declared that Jake Zellon dropped a lighted match into the straw when all eyes were, as he supposed, turned away from him, but in view of the fact that one or two men and boys were smoking at different times it might have been difficult to

prove that he set the fire ; and inasmuch as no damage was done except that the auctioneer and the bidders were disturbed for a time, the matter was not investigated. But Zellon heard of rumors of prosecution and deemed it wise to go away for a time. The day following the sale at Shiffler's he disappeared, and for many days was not seen in the neighborhood.

CHAPTER XIII.

AN OLD MILL, AND SOMETHING THAT OCCURRED THERE.

In a solitary defile of the South Mountain some three miles south-west of Haltfest and more than a mile from the open, stood Christian Mehlhuber's gristmill. It was located on a small mountain stream, which at this point was quite rapid and thus afforded ample power to drive the machinery without involving much labor and expense to direct it to its work. This fact had probably decided the site of the mill in the first place.

The building was an old-fashioned stone structure of medium size, with walls of immense thickness and timbers of corresponding weight and quality. On the ground floor were the great boxes that received the crushed grain, the sifters, and the sacks containing the flour and "chop". A dark apartment on the same floor, but a little lower, held the wheels and belts that moved the millstones and the other machinery. On the second story was laid the grain when brought to the mill, and here also the "mill-room," as it is called by the Pennsylvania Germans, was located. It was simply a small apartment roughly partitioned off from the rest of the space, containing a stove, a rude writing desk, a ruder bed for the miller's apprentice, two guns, a few broken chairs and stools and some smaller articles.

The mill was a custom-mill, that is, farmers brought their grain to be ground and for pay the miller retained a tenth of every bushel, the portion thus taken being called toll. Some of its patrons lived in the valley beyond the opening of the defile, but the majority were dwellers on the mountain. These were contemptuously called "Bergknibbel" — mountain-lubbers — by the inhabitants of the valley, on account of their greater simplicity and more primitive manners. When custom was plenty the mill would often grind until far into the night, and, the master having retired, the apprentice was glad to have company to keep him awake and help while away the intervals when not engaged in attending to the grinding. Thus it happened that of an evening the little mill-room became the gathering-place for certain choice spirits of the vicinity who did not have the comforts of even a grocery or a tavern handier than Halt-fest. Here they played cards, smoked, drank apple-jack and discussed politics, religion, agriculture and a host of other topics relating to things above and things below. Questions which the learned world has held as beyond solution and others that have engaged the keenest intellects for ages, were solved in this humble apartment of the mountain mill by these Solons with a celerity that would have filled with amazement the learned societies of Boston, to say nothing of those of New York.

For instance, on a certain Sunday the Rev. Ortho Dox preached on the Fall of Man, and on the following night the mill-room philosophers tackled the interesting

question of what language Adam and Eve spoke in the garden of Eden.

“What language, you dumb-heads?” said a great, robust young fellow by the name of Pfannkuchen; “what language are we talking now, I wonder? What language would they talk but German and Pennsylvania Dutch?”

“But how can you prove it?” asked a doubting Thomas.

“Prove it, indeed!” retorted the oracle contemptuously as he sent up clouds of smoke from his corn-cob pipe. “Of course you can’t read else you wouldn’t ask such a dumb question. — Rambentel, hand me that German Bible which you have here to keep ghosts and witches off. Now look once here: — here in the First Book of Moses in the third chapter and the twelfth verse Adam says” — and he read slowly and with much difficulty, spelling out a word every now and then: — ‘*Das Weib das du mir zugesellet hast, gab mir von dem Baum, und ich asz;*’ and in the very next verse Eve says: — ‘*Die Schlange betrog mich also, dasz ich asz,*’ and isn’t that German? And of course as they both were talking to the Lord we would expect they’d use high German, but when they spoke just with each other they simply used Pennsylvania Dutch, even as preachers who use high German in the pulpit often speak Pennsylvania Dutch when they’re out of it. What other language was there for them to speak, I’d like to know? Isn’t Pennsylvania Dutch *the* language?”

And as the speaker at the end of his remarks looked

around on the company with that hard, decisive stare which is equal to a dozen periods in punctuation and, when backed by plenty of willing muscle, as in the present instance, more powerful than argument, the momentous question was regarded as closed and the disputants all believed that Eve went up to Adam saying: — “Do, Adam, is en ferchterlicher shaner Appel, — nem'mohl en Schtick!”*

When the war-cloud arose and began to grow, however, and the harsh growling of the war-god was heard in the distance, the more usual topics of discussion were the chances of war, the methods of conducting one and the results. The horrors of the battlefield and the ravages of a lawless soldiery were depicted by an old German soldier who sometimes formed one of the company. And when war actually began, when one whom nearly all of them knew personally came home with a wound upon his person received in deadly conflict, and when later a draft was spoken of not only as a remote possibility but as a near probability, an indescribable feeling of dread and insecurity crept over these mountain philosophers.

On Friday night, July 4th, 1862, the mill-room contained eight or ten of its usual visitors. Several sat on William Rambeutel's, Mehlhuber's apprentice's, bed and the rest on stools. Some were smoking, and apple-jack was not lacking. The weather was very warm, and the door, with the two little windows looking out

* “ Here, Adam, is an awful nice apple, — take once a slice ! ”

on the tail-race and the grove below the mill, was open.

“I was down in Reading to-day to hear the cannons shoot” said Andrew Pfannkuchen, “and they say that black Abe is calling for yet more soldiers.”

“Is that clean down honest true now?” asked another young fellow whose name was Kleinkammer, giving a tremendous pull at his pipe.

“Verily just as sure as you go to see Betsy Braummiller,” responded Andrew; “and they said too that McClellan was getting thrashed ugly at Richmond and that his soldiers was killed by thousands and the rest wounded, or dying like flies from fever in the swamps. It’s bad.”

“Boy’s, make yourselves ready, we’ll all have to go,” said a third speaker.

“And if we must,” added a fourth, “we’ll put in Rambeutel as our captain and then we’ll soon take Richmond, by Schinner!”

This remark, made just as the apprentice came in from changing grists, caused loud laughter, for William was known to be afraid of his own shadow; but they noticed at once that his hands trembled and that his face was white as the dust on his garments, and their merriment quickly ceased.

“What’s wrong? Did you see something?” they asked excitedly.

“Look here, boys,” he said in a hoarse whisper looking around to see who was present, “we’re all friends

and I want you to stand by me now. I had just shoveled the last "chop" into the bag when I saw by the light of the lamp on the wall somebody with a gun dodge behind the bags around the big centre-post."

"Do you know who it was?" they asked in low tones.

"I'm not sure, and why he should be sneaking around here I don't know," replied Rambeutel.

"Was it the witch's boy?" inquired Pfannkuchen.

"I say nothing," answered William.

"If it was you needn't wonder," said the other, "for he's everywhere like the devil himself, and you'd better look out, for he's up to nothing good, not handy."

"Did you see which way he went?" asked Kleinkammer.

"I'm not sure, but I think toward the little door of the wheel-room."

"I think you didn't wait long to look, the light was too bad," said Kleinkammer sneeringly.

"Say, boys," said Pfannkuchen getting up from the bed where he had been lounging, and speaking in a whisper, "here's a chance for us to practice catching rebels. If what Rambeutel says he saw is in the wheel-room, we can catch it may be. Let's do it!"

Andrew had his own suspicions as to whom Rambeutel had seen, and here was an opportunity to win a reputation for courage. In his way he was bold enough, and an adventure of this kind just suited him. His companions would gladly have dissented but the fear of ridicule restrained them.

“Rambentel is the one to have the benefit, and he must go first, or we’ll go home and leave him alone,” said Pfannkuchen. So a procession was formed, the apprentice very reluctantly going before. Unarmed they went down the steps in the dim light to the lower floor, only to find a large turkey gobbler sitting on the bags of “chop” by the centre-post. The bird had no doubt wandered into the mill about twilight to seek food, and becoming bewildered concluded to tarry there during the night. Boisterous laughter greeted the discovery. Rambentel stopped the mill and pretended to be very busy. When the machinery ceased moving their laughter sounded unearthly in the quiet building and to their great alarm they were joined in their mirth by some one evidently hidden in the wheel-room. Instant silence followed and each face bore the peculiar look which under such circumstances says as plainly as words — “I ain’t afraid; are you?”

“I told you so,” said the apprentice in a low whisper.

“Wait,” said Andrew, “we are ten of us and it would be a shame to run. I think it’s nothing that’ll hurt us, not handy!—Give me once your lantern, Will.”

He went to the door leading into the radkammer, opened it and shouted “Halloo” twice, but there was no response. Only the gentle murmur of the water flowing in the tail-race could be heard. He held his lantern down into the wheel-room and then beckoning to Kleinkammer the two descended to its floor at the edge of the wheels. They peered all around but could see

nothing unusual and soon returned. In close procession the whole company went back to the mill-room, to the great relief of the gobbler which did not understand this intrusion on its repose.

"I think it was only imagination after all," said Pfannkuchen when they were all safe in the room again.

"No, it was too plain," answered Rambeutel.

"Yes, like the turkey," retorted Andrew.

"Well, you fellows can laugh if you want to," rejoined the apprentice, "but these are evil times. Is it any wonder if unusual things is seen and heard when men's killed like cattle and one doesn't know what minute his own turn may come. This war is the devil's work and if he shows himself in certain ways, we needn't be surprised."

"Say, may be that's the devil down there on them bags," said one of the company desirous to show his courage; "shall I bring him up here?"

But no one felt like laughing at such an ill-timed joke, and just then a loud, penetrating "Ya-hoo, y-a-h-o-o-o," was heard up the mountain side, the sound gradually dying away like a sad cry. They looked at each other in alarm and even Pfannkuchen was startled.

"It's the Indian," said he, "his grave is up at Brett-schneider's cave."

"Yes, you know he was heard just before Fetzer was murdered in 1851," said Kleinkammer; "they say he is never heard except when something bad is going to happen in the neighborhood," and the speaker's voice

trembled as if the calamity were already close at hand.

“Make that door shut,” said he who wanted to bring up the turkey.

“I tell you, boys,” said Pfannkuchen after they all had taken a drink of apple-jack out of a large black jug, “evil is coming to some one we know, take care now! Yankee Chetwynde’s daughter is home again and they say Charlie Ruthvon is coming home on furlough soon too, and I’ve been told he wrote to Tom Hartnagel that he’ll shoot Pete Prantman for his nonsense with Blanche Chetwynde last fall.”

At that moment who should rush into the room, covered with perspiration and out of breath, but Pete himself!

“You run in here as if a dog or something was after you,” said the nervous apprentice unwittingly making a most unfortunate allusion.

“You take care or somebody will be after you,” exclaimed Pete flaring up in a moment.

“What’s the matter anyhow, Pete, did you hear anything?” asked Pfannkuchen.

“I took a cow we sold up to Brettschneider’s,” replied, Pete sitting down on the bed. “I was delayed by it’s stubbornness, and coming down the hill just now I heard the Indian.—My! but it’s hot!”

They all looked at each other significantly and Andrew winked.

“This is just the second time I heard him,” continued

Pete; "the first time was eleven years ago just before that Fetzter thief was murdered and old people says he never gives the whoop except before something bad happens."

"That's what I've just been telling them," said Kleinkammer shivering. He had barely spoken the last word when clearer than before "Ya-hoo, y-a-h-o-o, y-a-h-o-o-o!" rang down the mountain side. They all huddled close together and for a long time sat perfectly silent. It was now midnight and the moon had gone down.

"He was closer this time," whispered Pfannkuchen at last; "look out, boys."

Andrew was braver than his comrades, but no less superstitious.

"Pete," he resumed after another long silence, "this is bad for somebody. Do you know Charlie Ruthvon is coming home soon?"

"Donnerwetter!" shouted Pete, his anger overcoming his fear; "I'll be ready to meet him and make it hotter than the Southern soldiers ever did; and he'll never get Blanche Chetwynde and he knows it, and they say he's took up with a Southern girl — may be a nigger, because he likes them so good. Rambeutel, let that jug grow this way and then let's go home."

He was in the act of raising the vessel to his lips when a noise as of a grain of corn crushed under the heel of a shoe just outside the mill-room door startled the company. They all rushed out and by the dim

light of the old lard-lamp burning on the wall they saw a form sliding like a flash down the rope in the hoist-way. Led by Pfannkuchen, they ran down the stairs. All was quiet there, and the turkey was still peacefully reposing on the bags.

“Jimminy cross! it had horns,” said Kleinkammer with chattering teeth. With rapid steps they ascended to the mill-room again.

“Let’s go home” said Prantman; “what with the Indian out, and we know not who spying around, home’s the best place for honest people.”

With alacrity they all agreed to this and in a moment were gone. The poor apprentice was in an agony of fear. Hastily he bolted the outer door and then the door of the mill-room. He determined to sit up the remainder of the night, gun in hand.

Taking down both guns from the wall, he laid one on the bed’s foot and with the other cocked sat down on a stool. His eyes were starting from his head and his lips were slightly apart to assist his hearing. The light noise made by a rat running over the floor outside frightened him still more, and so great was his alarm at last that he resolved to call Mehlhuber on the plea that there were thieves lurking about the premises. But in the act of undoing the door he heard a low whistle under the windows, followed by a soft call of “Rambeutel, say, Rambeutel!” He at once recognized the voice.

“Is that you, Jake?” he asked, putting his head partly out of one of the windows.

“Yes, let me in,” came the reply.

Rambeutel went down cautiously, watching lest some awful form might wither him by its look, and let in Jake Zellon. The request of the latter to be permitted to remain until morning was gladly granted.

“Where do you come from?” asked William after they reached the mill-room.

“I find,” answered Zellon, “that the talk about the fire at Shiffler’s has all blown over and so I came back again.—Say, have you any juice left, Rambeutel?”

“Not much; some fellows was in awhile. Here’s the jug.”

“You pig,” said Jake shaking the vessel, “there’s enough for one, and I think I’ll be the one,” and suiting the action to the word, he took a long draught. Once started, it was easy for the ruffian to continue, and drink followed drink. Looseness of tongue and a strong tendency to bestow confidence were natural results.

“Pete’s figure is home again,” said he. “I saw her to-night, though she didn’t see me.”

A few grains of corn fell on the floor through a crack above.

“Listen! What’s that?” exclaimed Rambeutel jumping up.

“Nothing, only a rat,” said Zellon, disdainfully. “I see you are afraid as much as ever.”

“Well, if you’d” — the apprentice began and then checked himself.—“Yes,” he resumed, “I heard she is back from Connecticut. What of it?”

“Only that Pete’s going to let himself in there again, clean down honest,” answered Zellon laughing, “and he’s going to win this time too, or there’ll be a big misery.”

He lay down on the bed but after a moment rose up again and took another drink from the jug.

“Say, Rambeutel, you pig-dog you,” he continued in a confidential tone, “may be I can make twenty-five dollars in one night soon.”

“How so?”

“If Pete fails,” he replied in tones plainly indicating that apple-jack, like some other liquids, has a decided tendency to tangle up the tongue as well as the feet, — “if Pete fails with that Yankee of a Chetwynde girl, and he gives me the word, it’ll be made light and hot somewhere before long now once! — Let that jug grow this way a little.”

“Better take care, Jake; that’s state’s prison business,” said the apprentice handing the jug.

“Look here, you Rambeutel,” exclaimed Zellon fiercely, “none of your talk about prison business. You and me come from the same neighborhood and I know that you broke your engagement with Vickey Hauser without cause and that she’s anxiously looking for you. If I say ‘peep’ as to where you are, you’ll have a visitor after you right soon and there’ll either be a wed-

ding or else more prison business ; — none of your prison business with me ! ”

William Rambeutel was much alarmed, for Zellon’s statement was true.

“Zellon, you trust me and I’ll trust you,” said he in a conciliatory tone.

“All right, by Schinner!” replied Zellon with a drunken laugh ; “the juice is all gone and I’ll go to bed,” saying which he lay down on the bed, boots and all, and in a few moments was snoring heavily. Rambeutel, now feeling secure, also lay down.

Shortly after all had become quiet, a slight but very active form emerged from the archway through which the water flowed from the wheel-race.

“Gosh! I came near getting fetched by keeping my shoes on the first time and going into the corn-grinding business,” soliloquized Sharp Billy, sitting down on a stone some distance from the mill and putting on his shoes. “I knew better the second time. But if they’d caught me on the spot, I could n’t have helped laughing loud out at Rambeutel’s scare at the turkey and me. But he was too scared to know me, and all the rest when I slid down the rope, and I’m safe. And what fun there’ll be now again with that Prantman!”

His feet being shod by this time, the fortune teller’s boy went on his way up the mountain road singing in a low tone :—

“When you think you have an angel,
You shall disappointed be;
Trust him not, he loves you not,
As you right soon shall see!”

He reached home at daybreak and at once recounted the adventures of the night to his foster mother, and by her direction he next day communicated to Tom Hartnagel those parts which related to the Chetwyndes and Captain Ruthvon.

CHAPTER XIV.

TWO FAILURES AND A SUCCESS.

A few weeks after the incidents narrated in the last chapter, Doctor Helfer met Pete Prantman one morning on the "back" road.

"Pete, why don't you enlist?" said he. "Uncle Sam is hard pushed, and wants 300,000 more of his boys to come and help him."

"I ain't Uncle Sam's boy; I'm a Democrat," replied Pete petulantly.

"If you ain't Uncle Sam's boy you ain't a good Democrat. Every true man is Uncle Sam's boy, and hundreds of Democrats all over the North are enlisting."

"You ought to be careful, you doctor," said Pete angrily; "you get nearly all your practice from Democrats, because they are four to one of you black ones, by henker, and"—grinning hatefully,— "if you are so anxious about Uncle Sam, why don't you go and enlist yourself?"

"Ho! Pete, that's a fair question once, anyhow," said Helfer, laughing;—"well, I'm the only doctor within three miles and can't be spared very well. If I went away, who'd take care of you fellows when you have toothache, or a swollen face, or a dog-bite, or"—

"Look! I haven't got time to fool around here

any longer," interrupted Pete hastily, and away he strode up the lane toward Chetwynde's house, and as he said "Donnerwetter" several times, unpleasant recollections of his adventure in that very lane had no doubt arisen.

It was the period between wheat harvest and oats harvest, during which there is in these parts a lull of a few days in the work of the farmers. Of this Pete took advantage. Every morning he walked to the village on some real or pretended errand. His object was to gain another private interview with Blanche Chetwynde. He had such faith in Katrina Galsch's powers that he was sure Captain Ruthvon had ceased to be a suitor for Blanche's hand. The great difficulty lay in getting to see her alone.

On this particular morning he had gone to the village as usual. To his great delight he found Mr. and Mrs. Chetwynde and Frank all at the depot waiting for the train to Reading, and at once turned away from the village. He knew that Mr. Chetwynde's hired girl had gone home quite ill a few days before, and Tom Hartnagel he saw busy on one of the back lots as he came along. The way seemed clear.

He bore Doctor Helfer's untimely interruption impatiently, and was glad when the latter's allusion to unpleasant matters gave him a pretext for hurrying away. When he approached Chetwynde's barn he saw Yorim, the peddler, drive away from the house, and stepped behind an angle of the barn until the itinerant

merchant was gone. Then he went to the kitchen door and walked in without knocking. Finding no one there, he took up a poker and rapped on the stove, and in response Blanche appeared in the dining-room door. She was more beautiful than ever. In her light summer dress, with her hair flowing over her shoulders and back she seemed very charming indeed, even to Pete's dull apprehension. She was startled on seeing her unexpected visitor, and her impulse was to retreat. She quickly resolved, however, to ascertain what he wanted, and remained standing in the door, ready to flee if he moved toward her.

"What do you wish, Mr. Prantman?" she asked, as calmly as she could after her first surprise was over. "Do you wish to see my father?"

Pete stood in the middle of the floor. With his hat on his head, his thin blue vest, his short nether garment, his heavy shoes, his awkward hands and his countenance moved alternately by shame and audacity, he certainly would not have answered as a model for an Adonis.

"No," said he in reply to Blanche's last question, "but I came over to say that I'm very sorry for what did happen last fall."

"It might have been worse if Schnapps had caught you," she replied, unable to resist the temptation to twit her admirer.

"I don't mean that," he said hastily, flushing; "I mean I'm sorry I spoke to you the way I did."

“So am I, Mr. Prantman, and I hope you’ll never do it again.”

Pete thought she did not seem a bit cross. He felt elated and concluded he might safely venture to say a very gallant thing.

“Blanche, you look so nice!” he exclaimed, changing his weight from one foot to the other and then back again as though he stood on a hot griddle; “you are nicer than one of mam’s big sunflowers!”

“Now, Mr. Prantman, you are forgetting yourself again,” she said, ready to laugh in spite of her vexation; “you must not speak like that to me.”

“But we went to school together, and a body may speak the truth, not?” he persisted.

“It isn’t always best to tell what we think even if it’s true, for it may not be pleasant,” she answered.

“Blanche,” he said not heeding her and advancing a single step, “I’ve got a friend who knows everything and she told me that Charlie Ruthvon will never marry you because his pap is opposed to it, and so he’s taken up with a girl in the South and maybe he has married her by this time, and so” — he spoke very fast now, for Blanche seemed on the point of going and he might never have another chance like this — “won’t you be my wife once? I’ll be so good, you shan’t never milk a cow in winter or put your hands in cold water, and I’ll take you to the fair every year, and I’ll” —

Blanche was so overcome with a mixture of fear, anger and an inclination to laugh that she could not

find words to interrupt Pete in his declaration thus far, but she now spoke with spirit.

“Stop, Mr. Prantman, for somebody has surely been making fun of you, and if you’ll go away now, I’ll not be angry with you. But if you persist in talking so, I’ll call Tom Hartnagel whom I see at the barn.”

“So you won’t have me?” said her suitor angrily.

“No, never; don’t ever think so and never trouble me again,” answered the girl trying to make her words as impressive as possible.

“Donnerwetter!” he cried fiercely, “I’ll show you proud Yankees that the Pennsylvania Dutch are just much better than you are. You are proud,” he continued, growing angrier as he proceeded, “but” —

He took several steps forward and there is no telling what he might have said and done had not at that moment Mr. Chetwynde himself entered the kitchen. Jabez wondered to find Pete there, but in his usual tone requested his daughter to open the front door and admit Mr. Schramm, explaining in a word that just before the train came that gentleman had entered the depot and requested an immediate interview on business relating to the old iron ore leases, and that in consequence he had returned with Mr. Schramm, but that Mrs. Chetwynde and Frank went on to the city. He then turned to Pete and asked to what he owed this visit from him, and Pete simply replied with the Pennsylvania Dutch interrogative, “Huh?”

Mr. Chetwynde asked what he could do for him?

"Nothing," replied Pete much abashed.

"Blanche," said Mr. Chetwynde turning to his daughter, who had at once returned after showing Mr. Schramm into the parlor and handing him a fan, "has Mr. Prantman made known his wishes to you?"

"Yes, father," she replied slightly shaking her head to indicate that it were better not to pursue the inquiry at present. But Mr. Chetwynde began to surmise the nature of Pete's visit and would not take her hint. He resolved, in view of the fellow's bad conduct on former occasions, to teach him a lesson he would not soon forget.

"Blanche, has this young man been annoying you again?" he inquired.

"I'm in hopes he will not trouble me any more after what I told him," she replied rather evasively.

"Prantman, this must be stopped," said Mr. Chetwynde with much emphasis, "and I'm sorry to be obliged to do what I never did before in my life, but I must ask you to leave my house and never to enter it again until you have learned to behave like a gentleman. Never molest my daughter any more; if you do, I will not answer for the consequences."

Pete was only too glad to get off so easily, yet to be ordered to leave the house was galling even to him. It added to his disappointment and made him furious. Once safely outside the house, he indulged in fearful threats and then went down the lane. Tom Hartnagel overheard him in part, and Sharp Billy, to whom Tom

related the matter in the evening, remarked that Pete was going into the hemp business strong.

“Pete’s a coward, you know.” said he, “but,” he added significantly, “Jake Zellon isn’t. Keep both eyes wide open and both fists well oiled.”

The next morning but one Mr. Chetwynde found a note under the kitchen door. It read as follows :—

“ TO YANKEE CHETWYNDE :

Some of your property is in danger. Keep a sharp watch on your barn for a time. Do not try to find out who wrote this. Heed its warning. The writer is

A FRIEND.”

This mysterious communication created some anxiety in the family, and for about a week Jabez and Tom Hartnagel kept diligent watch at night but no one was seen around the premises. Mr. Chetwynde remarked at the end of that time that the note had probably been sent by some well-meaning but misinformed friend, or perhaps even by an enemy, who hoped in this way to cause them concern and alarm. In his opinion there was no need for further watching. Hartnagel however told him what Sharp Billy had said and kept up the watch several nights longer. But finally he too began to think there was no more need for vigilance.

Tom was wrong this time though. The very next night after the watch ceased Doctor Helfer returned home late from the bedside of a patient living at the foot of

Outlook Hill. He had reached a point in the road not far from where Chetwynde's lane entered it when his buggy struck a large stone, in consequence of which a trace was broken and he was obliged to alight to mend the harness. While thus engaged a man came running across the field in the dark, mounted the fence and leaped down into the ditch by the road. The doctor's horse started, and ran, the doctor himself was thrown down and both wheels of the buggy passed over him.

Fortunately he was not much hurt, and jumping up he heard an oath and a groan and indistinctly saw a man limp away in the opposite direction. Leaving his horse and wagon to take their chances, he ran up to the individual who had been the cause of the accident and asked who he was and whether he was hurt. Another oath and groan were the only response, but in a moment more the night was illumined by a great sheet of flame leaping up from Chetwynde's barn, and the dark features of Jake Zellon were revealed.

"Jake, you've done that business yonder and you'll pay for it," exclaimed Helfer and then ran up the lane toward the burning building. The family were already alarmed, and engaged in securing the safety of the house. Fortunately the horses and cattle were in the pasture-lot. A few wagons and harnesses were saved, but the fire destroyed everything else including the bulk of the year's crop of hay, wheat and rye. By the time the flames had done their work a great crowd of people

had gathered, and as is common on such occasions, speculation was rife as to the origin of the fire. All sorts of theories were advanced and discussed.

“ Well,” said Ad Sparger, who saw the fire on his way home from “ The People’s Hotel,” “ I’ve heard that Yankee Chetwynde had put a big lot of rye in the barn very green, and they say sometimes it’ll take fire of itself.”

“ Ho !” said Helfer with uncommon emphasis and adding a strong expletive besides, “ when the rye has been made into whiskey and a man for years drinks too much of it and gets soaked through with it, it does now and then get on fire of itself and burns up the man, and you’d better look out, Ad, else you’ll burn up some day like this barn here ; but by the great Rinaldo Rinaldini, you people, I’m sure this building never took fire of itself.”

“ How do you mean it caught fire ?” asked our old friend Christopher Stettler, once more in search of information.

“ A man’s hand put the fire to it on purpose, Stettler,” answered Helfer.

“ Who do you think it was ?” queried Christopher again.

“ Perhaps you’ll see later on,” was all the doctor vouchsafed him.

Sharp Billy was present and his nose looked sharper than ever in the weird light of the smouldering ruins. When the doctor made the last remark Billy came close

up to him and said in a whisper, "Maybe I'll see you to-morrow." The doctor looked at the bright lad and nodded "All right, Billy."

"Halloo, Fetzer, you here? Where's Pete?" he asked of Hans Prantman's foster son.

"He's home, I think; he said there wasn't any use coming as nothing could be saved anyhow," responded Fetzer.

"Anyhow it was only Yankee Chetwynde's barn," said Billy sarcastically, "and its awful warm weather and there wasn't any use of his coming here and getting warmer yet."

"I think it might be good for Pete and one or two others to continue to remain home nights," said Helfer joining in the laugh which followed Billy's sally.— "Billy, you go home now, and I'll hunt up my horse and buggy as I go along."

By this time day began to break and the people dispersed. Toward noon Sharp Billy entered Doctor Helfer's office at Haltfest and was cordially greeted.

"See here, doctor, here's a letter for you, clean down honest," said Billy winking. "I called for letters about two o'clock last night as I generally do. The post-master called out the window that it was a trifle early, but that seeing it was me and my mail was important, why, he'd come down and give it to me! I think he had sand in his eyes yet, for the letter he gave me isn't directed to me, and so I took it to mam and she said it wasn't hers either and must be yours. She told me to bring it to you and here it is."

The doctor laughed heartily at Billy's humor but the lad did not move a muscle of his features. The letter was addressed to "Jacob Zellon." It was from Zellon's mother and was poorly written. It simply said that she was pretty well and that as she depended on him she hoped he would not get into trouble again soon.

"Where was the postmaster when he gave you this letter, you young Schwernoether?" asked Helfer after reading the letter and looking at the address again.

"By the bars between the barnyard and the lane at Chetwynde's," answered Billy readily.

"Keep quiet now, Billy, and may be it will be hot for somebody soon."

"To make the fire burn well when you start it, mam says I may help to work the bellows at Reading."

"All right, Billy; be a very good boy," and with mutual admiration the two friends separated.

Great was the sensation in Copton township on the third day after the fire when it transpired that Pete Prantman and Jake Zellon had that morning been arrested on the charge of maliciously setting fire to Jabez Chetwynde's barn, the former as an accessory before the fact. Pete was released on bail, but Zellon could procure none and once more found himself in jail.

At the August term of court these men were tried. Doctor Helfer was one of the principal witnesses against them and his testimony was important. On cross-

examination he admitted that he was politically strongly opposed to the prisoners at the bar. On a hint from Katrina Galsch through Sharp Billy to Mr. Chetwynde, William Rambeutel was also called as a witness, but his testimony lost weight by his admission that he had drunk apple-jack a number of times on the night when Zellon gave him his confidence, and that he was under the influence of fear previous to Zellon's coming into the mill-room.

Sharp Billy took the witness stand in his sprightly way and was not a whit discomposed by the august presence of the judge and his associates, the jurors, the lawyers and the concourse of people. Asked as to the finding of the letter, and what he heard at Mehlhuber's mill on the night of July 4th, he answered promptly, and when the prisoners scowled at him he scowled back, grimace for grimace, to the amusement of the lawyers and spectators. When cross-examined he admitted that no one saw him pick up the letter at the fire. Then followed a question he had not anticipated—why he was in the mill and listening at the mill-room door so late at night. He winced a little but replied smiling that Katrina Galsch had sent him for flour needed next morning and that hearing Rambeutel and another man, whom by his voice he knew to be Zellon, talking inside, he stopped and listened. From this explanation he would not swerve. His testimony gave Rambeutel, Pfannkuchen and the rest much light on the events of July 4th at the old mill.

The letter, as to the address, was put in evidence also.

The defence brought Hans Prantman and his wife and James Fetzer to prove that Pete had been at home during the entire night of the fire. Several frequenters of "The People's Hotel" swore they believed they saw Zellon at the inn when the fire was first seen. Witnesses to prove the unfriendly temper of Chetwynde, Doctor Helfer and Sharp Billy toward the accused, were also produced.

The counsel on both sides were then heard, and after a very fair and impartial statement of the evidence and of the law by the able jurist who then graced the bench of Berks County, the cause went into the hands of the jury for final decision. Both prisoners were acquitted, but not until the jury had been out twenty-four hours. One juror it seems held out a long time against eleven for a verdict of guilty but finally yielded his convictions. Two of the eleven, who lived in Copton township, were angry with their colleague for being so stubborn in so clear a case, and another, hailing from the adjoining township of Rattleton, was afterwards heard to say: "By henker, I'll get the plagues if I ever go in to give a verdict on such evidence as that when a nigger-loving Yankee like that there Chetwynde is to have the benefit of it, and a man like Pete Prantman, who at least isn't ashamed of being a good Democrat and a Pennsylvania Dutchman, is to suffer by it!"

Alas, how sadly the appellation *Democrat* was misused

in those days — retained by men who by their words and acts brought reproach upon the name borne by Jefferson and Jackson, even as a man who gets drunk and falls into the gutter soils the goodly garments he may be wearing.

CHAPTER XV.

UNCLE SAM PAYS SOME OF HIS NEPHEWS A VISIT.

Not long after his acquittal Pete Prantman and his father were one afternoon busily engaged in plowing oats-stubble.

“Now, Pete, you are safe out of this barn-burning scrape and I want you to stay out of scrapes,” said the latter impressively during a brief rest in the shade; “they come high and the ink-lickers gets the money. And I’ll give you a cow if you’ll promise to let the Yankee girl alone. She can’t even talk Dutch and will be much fitter for an ink-licker like ” ——

“Pap, I’m never,” — broke in Pete impatiently — “say, there comes another ink-licker, sure.”

The last remark was called forth by the approach of a stranger with a book under his arm.

“Good day,” said the gentleman pleasantly as he came near; “you are very busy and I’m sorry to interrupt you, but it’ll be pleasant to stay in this nice shade a few moments longer.”

Pete started at this address, for aside from his other troubles he had been in dread ever since the draft for 300,000 men for nine months from the militia of the different states was ordered August 4th. After the first surprise both father and son stared suspiciously at the speaker.

“My name is Elijah Belsnickel,” said the visitor opening his book; “I’m the enrolling officer for this district and am engaged in enrolling all citizens therein liable to military service under the law and notifying them of their liability.—Mr. Prantman, you are over forty-five years old and are exempt. What is your son’s full name and his age?”

“Oh, he’s not quite nineteen yet,” answered Hans promptly.

“Mr. Prantman,” said the deputy, “remember that if any one claims exemption for any reason, such as being outside the age limits, religious scruples, mental derangement or bodily ailments, his claim will be heard on a day appointed by the Commissioner for that purpose, as the notice will tell you. So you needn’t be afraid to answer my question truthfully.”

“It’s a shame for Abe Lincoln to send you ink-lickers around here to take away a body’s boys and make them fight to free a lot of lazy niggers, and you ought to be whipped out of the township,” said Hans Prantman in great wrath.

“I have no time to argue with you,” answered the officer very coolly. “Your son is over age and if he refuses to answer my questions, he makes himself liable to a fine, and I’m allowed to use my own judgment in regard to his age.”

“I’m opposed to war and so is my Peter there and Amos too; we can’t with a good conscience take part in this here war. So strike them off as exempt.”

“If they have that ground, their claim will be heard by the Commissioner. Now, Peter, are you going to answer me ?”

“What do you and Abe Lincoln get apiece for enrolling honest people anyhow ?” asked Pete not heeding the marshal. “About ten dollars, I think, huh ?”

“I put you down, Peter, at twenty-five years,” said Belsnickel writing.

“Nix !” exclaimed Pete, “I’m not twenty-five ; I’m only twenty”——

“Hold your mouth, you dumb-head !” interrupted Hans angrily.

“Too late, Peter,” said the officer blandly. “You should have told me you’re only twenty something. It’s down at twenty-five now. Here’s your notice.”

He handed Pete a paper. It read as follows :—

“OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES DEPUTY MARSHAL
FOR THE COUNTY OF BERKS, AT ——, PA.

To Peter Prantman :— AUGUST 25, 1862.

TAKE NOTICE,—That you have been enrolled as a citizen within the township of Copton in the said County, liable to Military Service. If you claim exemption from any cause, the claim will be received and determined by the Commissioner to be appointed for that purpose for this County, at such time and place as he shall specify, by hand-bills to be posted in said Township.

ELIJAH BELSNICKEL,
Deputy Marshal.”

Pete took the document very reluctantly.

"I won't go anyhow, if I am drafted," said he, his teeth chattering as if the paper had suddenly given him ague.

"All right, Peter; I don't care for that," answered Belsnickel putting up his book and papers.

"No, of course not," said the newly enrolled citizen in words meant to be very biting indeed, but the effect of which was sadly marred by the chattering teeth and by the whining tone in which they were uttered; "all you black Lincoln ink-lickers care for is your ten dollars, for which we poor farmers must plague ourselves day after day."

"Now there is one question more," said the officer, who had already become accustomed to abuse like this, "are there any other people of military age besides Amos, who have their home with you?"

"I'm not going to answer any more of your saucy questions, except you pay," shouted the elder Prantman starting for his team, — "Git ep, Lincoln, you lazy black rascal! Gee, whoa!"

"For instance, a man by the name of Zellon, and another named Fetzer?" continued Belsnickel turning to Pete.

"You did come to him down there, and you must go and find out for yourself; I've no more time to fool," answered Pete, impudently

"Come to work, Pete," called Hans in a loud voice to the embryo soldier; "if you're drafted, you can buy

yourself off for ten dollars with any of these Lincoln worshippers, and if it's necessary no doubt that black Yankee of a Chetwynde will buy you off because his daughter likes you so well, sure as the world stands."

This remark would stimulate Pete's spite greatly, which was what his father had in view. "Donnerwetter! pap, can't you hold your mouth?" shouted the son. "I hope Zellon will shoot the ink-licker, if he does get hung for it."

By this time Belsnickel was on his way to the Prantman residence. On the way he met and enrolled Amos. The latter answered all questions promptly and took his notice with something akin to the pleasure a child shows when getting a new toy.

"You needn't go to war, Amos," said the officer noticing the young man's mental condition. "Good-bye."

Arrived at the house, Belsnickel rapped at the kitchen door. It was opened by Ret Prantman, who remarked with much acerbity that he might have walked in without making all that noise at the door, like the Yankees with their newfangled, proud notions.

"Is James Fetzer here?" he asked without heeding her remark.

"What do you want with him?" she asked snappishly in return. But just then James made his appearance at the well in the yard.

"Is your name James Fetzer?" asked the official pleasantly.

"That's what they call me."

“I’m the enrolling officer and must ask your age, if you will be so good.”

“What’s that for?”

“Well, maybe there will be a draft,” said Belsnickel suavely, “and of course we have to see who is liable to military service. If you claim exemption for any reason, your claim will be heard by” —

“Oh, I’m almost twenty-one,” broke in Fetzter, “but you can strike me off because I lost four teeth and have other bad ones and can’t chew well.”

“I can’t strike you off, James, but your claim will be heard. Here is your notice; it will tell you how it is done.”

At this moment Ret appeared in the door with a pail of boiling water and threw it straight at the marshal shouting: “Take that, you Deihenker you!”

So quick was her movement that he had barely time to save his face from the hot bath by dodging. As it was, some drops of the water struck his neck and hands and some got into his shoes. These he had off in a moment, but by that time the termagant appeared with a second pail and prepared to repeat the operation, but Belsnickel quickly jerked the vessel from her hand and held her arms so firmly that she writhed with pain.

“If you were not a woman, I’d arrest you on the spot,” he said; “but if you show your face outside the door while I’m here, I’ll shoot you,” and releasing her, he closed the door. She screamed like a crazy woman

but feared to open the door lest he might make good his threat.

Fetzer stood by the well during this scene so surprised that he could not interfere one way or the other, but Jake Zellon, hearing Ret's cries as he approached the house on his way back from Haltfest, now came running into the yard.

"How are you, Mr. Jones?" said Belsnickel turning to the new-comer.

"My name ain't Jones, you dumb-head," snarled Zellon; "I'm Jake Zellon and I think you're a cheating Yankee peddler, frightening the women, and you'd better go off before you get hurt."

"Oh, yes, 'Zellon,'" said the marshal, who still stood in his stockings and every now and then blew his hands where the hot water had touched them and meanwhile kept an eye on the kitchen-door too,—"'Zellon,' I remember. I heard them speak of you as being twenty-nine years old last March."

"They lied, and I know who it was too," retorted Jake. "I'm twenty-six and I don't care a devil who knows it too."

"That's the way to say it" remarked the officer writing rapidly.

"You fool," yelled Ret through the window, "don't answer him nothing. Don't you know that he's"——

"Now, woman, if you don't keep quiet, I'll arrest you," interrupted Belsnickel.—"Here, Mr. Zellon, please accept this."

Zellon took his notice, but no sooner had he glanced at it than he tore it in pieces and made a rush for the marshal. But the latter had probably anticipated some such demonstration. Stepping back quickly he drew a revolver and presented it square at Zellon.

“Zellon, I am a United States officer and if you assault me I’ll shoot you on the spot,” said he very quietly. The ruffian was cowed by the resolute manner of Belsnickel and the dangerous weapon he held in his hand. He stopped instantly.

“You can go into the bushes for all I care,” he sullenly said. “If I am drafted you’ll never get me, and you men would better look out else one of these days you’ll get what you won’t like.”

“And, Zellon, as a friend let me tell you that some things are very dangerous and had better be let alone.”

Having put on his shoes, the enrolling officer gathered up his books and left these inhospitable premises. In the course of a few days his work took him into the homes of the mountain philosophers. His coming created no little consternation and although he had two assistants in this part of the township, his life and person were in constant danger. Once he was shot at from an ambush, the bullet piercing his hat.

By and by the home of Andrew Pfannkuchen was reached. When Mrs. Pfannkuchen heard of the claims for exemption from military service she at once began to set forth all her boy’s ailments, though he was a giant and at present the picture of health and vigorous life.

“I’m sorry that your son is so sadly afflicted,” interrupted Belsnickel gravely, though secretly much amused, “but you see I’m not allowed to take his name off the roll, Mrs. Pfannkuchen. His claim will however be heard in due time, if he presents it.”

“Oh, mam, they only want to scare people,” said Andrew with a wise air; “the draft will never be made. Pete Prantman said last night at the mill we’d each put in five dollars and it would be done for because these here fellows only wanted money and Abe Lincoln would get half.”

“The mill? Do you mean Mehlhuber’s mill?” asked the marshal.

“Yes,” replied Andrew grinning; “and you don’t want to miss Rambeutel there. They say the constable from Cold Spring township over the Blue Mountain in Lebanon county is coming for him one of these days and so he may be gone soon. Don’t speak rough to him else he’ll go into fits; he’s an awful heart-coward.”

And in very truth William Rambeutel was frightened when Belsnickel called on him, and his first impulse was to run into the wheel-room and hide. The timid young man was beset with troubles on every hand. He had incurred Zellon’s ill-will by the testimony he could not help giving against him, and Jake, to revenge himself, had informed certain parties of William’s whereabouts. So the apprentice, having a suspicion that he was betrayed, was in constant fear of being visited by an officer from his old home and in consequence had become

so nervous that he started at his own shadow and suffered the awful torture of fear every night in the old mill. When, then, the enrolling officer appeared he at first thought the visitor was from beyond the Blue Mountains, and when the latter made known his errand, poor William saw simply an additional enemy to his peace.

“I’m my old mother’s only support, and if I went to war and anything happened to me, she’d die,” said he pitifully; “and besides, to tell the truth, I never fired a gun in my life and can’t fight at all.”

“Why, I see two guns here and I rather think you’d be a dangerous man to molest at night. Be of good cheer, Mr. Rambeutel. After all a man’s chances to escape being drafted are pretty good, and I don’t believe you’ll be called.”

This speech raised Rambeutel’s spirits somewhat.

Doctor Helfer received his notice very philosophically.

“Ho!” he exclaimed, though not quite as heartily as common, “Providence knows I’m needed at home and I’m sure I won’t draw a prize from the wheel.”

But even the most loyal winced a little when Uncle Sam visited them in so unusual a guise. Some persons when in the hands of the dentist have their wills under such perfect control that not a groan escapes them; but they feel the pain just as keenly as those who scream, and, however courageous, they cannot prevent contortion of the face. So when the enrolling officer came patriots as well as the disloyal were somewhat disturbed even

though they approved of his work and were ready to accept whatever the draft, if one were made, might bring them.

Under our wonderful system the strong arm of the government is ordinarily invisible. But the draft of 1862, together with the preparation for it, brought directly home to that generation the fact that though so seldom manifested as to be well nigh forgotten, tremendous powers lie dormant even in a government so mild as ours. No wonder, then, that these things were discussed everywhere and by all classes and by none with more anxiety than by the Pennsylvania Germans, naturally so conservative and suspicious.

No doubt, either, that in consequence of the discussion of these topics all over the North, certain men were led in the following year to organize the National Reform Association, which embraces one of the most patriotic and intelligent bodies of citizens in the Nation, and for thirty years has been diligently striving to secure the incorporation of an amendment into the national Constitution recognizing God as the ultimate source of all authority and Jesus Christ as the Ruler of Nations,

It was seen then if never before that it is of the first importance to every citizen, whether a believer or an unbeliever, that the power which can take any man's property and appropriate it to its own uses without saying "By your leave," levy a tax on his income, demand admittance to any home in the land and take from it the father, the son, and put them to the most hazardous

service, shall be a righteous power, exercising its functions in accordance with the beneficent teachings of the Prince of Peace.

And it was claimed then, and is now, that we have no assurance that the authority of our government will be righteously exercised unless He be formally acknowledged in the organic law of the land. Such recognition, say the advocates of this movement, is, aside from its intrinsic importance, only just, because Christians and adherents of the Christian religion settled the country, organized the government and still form the large majority of the population.

These views are worthy of serious consideration at least. It will do no harm; it may do good. Meanwhile let us sincerely hope that Uncle Sam need never again visit his nephews in the unwelcome manner in which he visited Doctor Helfer, Pete Prantman and thousands of others.

CHAPTER XVI.

A FURLOUGH.

Uncle Sam is a much more pleasant looking gentleman in the Postoffice Department than in the Department of War. In the former he seems like a good-natured old uncle indeed, while in the latter he appears very like a grim, cross step-father or hard-hearted guardian. We may therefore rejoice that we often see him as a postmaster, seldom as a commander of soldiers. He is naturally benevolent. He loves peace much better than war. He would rather smile than frown,—carry letters laden with love and friendship than call to strife.

Hence when he had summoned many of his nephews to the army, he frequently visited them in the pleasant garb of a bearer of messages from home. They were always glad to see him, for letters were very precious to them. Frequently a dozen battle-scarred veterans would gather around a comrade to hear him read one just received from home, and even while they listened all were back in spirit whence they had gone forth at their country's call.

But most letters could not be read thus publicly. They were meant for one only and to have read them to others would have been sacrilege. Such commonly were

those received by Clinton Chetwynde. His sister, brother and parents wrote him often, but Susie Zweispringer oftener still. The warmest letters Captain Ruthvon received were from his mother and Catharine. Blanche Chetwynde and he corresponded 'tis true, but the warmth of his letters was not equaled by that of her replies, for reasons well known to the reader. His father seldom wrote him, and when he did it was in the briefest possible way; but, overlooking this, Charles wrote long letters descriptive of his army life, and not devoid of many marks of affection.

Of Pete Prantman's first interview with Blanche he heard through Clinton Chetwynde. Both he and Clinton naturally were very indignant at the fellow, but the amusing features of the adventure mollified their feelings considerably. In reference to Pete's recent insolence the captain had a full account from Tom Hartnagel and likewise Susie Zweispringer, who was not so deeply absorbed in her own love affairs as to be unable to manifest considerable interest in those of Charles and Blanche besides. When these letters were quickly followed by others conveying the news of the burning of Mr. Chetwynde's barn and the strong suspicion that Pete was an agent in the calamity, he determined on a visit home if a furlough could be secured.

Moreover, more than a year had gone by since he had enlisted and for some little time past, owing probably to constant exposure incident to the very hard service of this summer's campaign, his health had given tokens of

declining. And might not his presence cause Blanche Chetwynde to waver in a resolution which in his lover's eye still seemed unreasonable? All this increased his eagerness to return for a few months. He did not forget Clinton nor how hard it would be for the poor fellow to remain behind when he himself was going home. When therefore he applied for his own furlough he sought to secure one for his comrade also; but while he had no difficulty in getting one for himself, he failed in his effort on Clinton's behalf.

"*Your* furlough is granted you on the ground of a failure of your health because of hard and faithful service," was the brief reply vouchsafed him.

"I'm so sorry for you, Clint," said Captain Ruthvon when communicating to his friend the news of his failure.

"So am I, captain," said the brave young man trying to smile; "but you will go as my substitute to our folks and Susie."

"I fear I shall be a poor one, Clint, but I will do the best I can, I'm sure," responded the captain.

"And, captain, if the occasion arises," said Clinton when Charles was about to leave, "you can say to Blanche that nothing would please her soldier-brother better than to see her some day the wife of my dearest friend, Captain Ruthvon."

"Thank you, Clint," said the captain as they shook hands warmly; "if your desire is not realized in good time, I sincerely trust the fault shall not be mine.—"

And, Clint," continued Charles smiling archly, "as your substitute I presume I shall be obliged to kiss Susie once or twice, eh?"

"Certainly," responded Clinton heartily; "and don't you fail to discharge that part of your duty!"

"It shall be faithfully performed!—And now God bless you, Clint! In sixty days I'll be back if all goes well, and tell you all the news."

Something that would have "washed away the stain of powder" might have been seen on the brave lad's cheek when the friends parted. Away with the idea that tears are a sign of weakness and a lack of manliness! The Son of God was the Perfect Man and He shed tears. Rather were they in the young soldier under the circumstances the index of true affection and a noble young manhood. Of sincere tears the bravest and strongest have not been, and need not be, ashamed.

A few days before leaving his command Captain Ruthvon had written home that he would probably come on a brief visit before long. Susie Zweispringer was hopeful that her lover would come with Charles, for the former had hinted to her that it was just possible. She forthwith visited Blanche to discuss the chances of his coming and if possible to advance in her wise way what she deemed the best interests of her friend.

"I think they'll let him come too," said she; "at any rate there's no reason why they shouldn't.—"

But Blanche Chetwynde," she continued starting from the reverie into which she had fallen, "Charlie Ruthvon is a jewel and I do hope you 'll be wise."

"Susie, do you think I am without feeling?" said Blanche with a trace of indignation in her voice and manner. "No sincerer prayer than mine ever goes up to heaven for his safety, not even from the heart of his own mother, and I do love him. But look at it with my eyes if you can. His father is unhappy because he went to war and seldom mentions his name even at home. Catharine told me so not long since and cried bitterly. He does not now recognize father at all and barely nods when he meets me. He holds us as the cause of all his family troubles, and it would be wrong, much as I try to persuade myself to the contrary, to do anything that will alienate him still more from Charles whom he once loved so tenderly.—Susie Zweispringer, you may call me hard-hearted and foolish, but it would be wrong and I will not do it, though I am the greatest sufferer," and she burst into tears.

"Well, I see, Blanche, you are bound to torture yourself because you believe you are right," said Susie after her friend's grief had spent itself somewhat. "I admire your heroism, but you will pardon me for saying that it seems to me Charlie's feelings ought to be consulted as well as his stubborn father's, who is blind, dear Blanche," — and she fondly embraced her, — "to beauty and goodness."

"Surely, I do consider them," said Blanche, "and I

will do anything but wrong to make him happy, but his father has the first claim."

"But Mrs. Ruthvon and Catharine would receive you with open arms," answered Susie eagerly.

"I know it," said Blanche sadly, "but if Mr. Ruthvon is unhappy, all are unhappy, and I believe if Charlie were to tell his father that he is willing to give me up entirely, the latter would forgive Charlie for differing with him in politics and for going into the Union army; and I sometimes think it is my duty to tell Charlie to do so, and"—

"Blanche Chetwynde, you'll do nothing of the kind, I tell you," interrupted Susie impetuously, "you've gone just far enough in your self-imposed martyrdom and you have no right to make a martyr of Charlie too.— Dear Blanche," she continued, turning suddenly very grave and speaking with a quavering voice, "how soon both he and another who is dear to me as my own life may be martyrs on the sacred altar of our country. Remember this, won't you? and be very kind to him during the few weeks he has to stay."

And the two friends wept together.

Blanche's resolution was sorely tried by Susie's appeal and the vision called up by her words, but she made no reply.

"Blanche, you will yet be happy, I know," resumed Susie, when they had regained a degree of composure. "Mr. Ruthvon *must* see he is wrong before long," and she emphasized the last words with a tap,

a decisive, firm tap, too, of her little foot on the floor.

“When that time comes Charlie need not ask me a second time,” replied Blanche, smiling through her tears; “but,” she added, growing grave again, “I fear it never will.”

“It will, it must, and I shall see it too,” said Miss Zweispringer, with another emphatic tap on the floor.

“If I were a Methodist, I would say ‘Amen,’” said Blanche, amused in spite of herself at her friend’s earnestness, “but as I’m a Congregationalist I simply say I pray you may prove to be right!”

“And I am neither a Methodist nor a Congregationalist, but German Reformed,” answered Susie, “but nevertheless I say ‘Amen,’ and will say it again. How glad I am that my dear papa and yours are men of sense, who see that when the character of the parties is good and families are respectable, this thing of Congregationalist and German Reformed, Democrat and Republican, Pennsylvania Dutch and Yankee, has no business to come between lovers. There now!” And there was a third tap on the floor, and all we, whether Methodists or not, say “Amen” to Susie Zweispringer’s sentiments, tap and all!

Susie returned home that bright summer day happy in the consciousness that she had performed an important duty and might hope for good results.

Tom Hartnagel was in great spirits in anticipation of Captain Ruthvon’s visit home, and as Sallie Vonneida

was almost as much interested in the captain's suit as Susie Zweispringer was, Tom naturally was also greatly concerned.

"Sallie," said the gallant ex-soldier one day in a confidential tone to his betrothed, "if it would bring them two together, I'd even be willing to shake up old Ruthvon a little and put some sense into his head, by Schinner!"

"Yes, and spoil everything, Tom," she replied laughing. "You wait once until I tell you to go ahead."

"I will, Sallie, never fear," he replied, but still had an ill-defined notion that "shaking up" Mr. Ruthvon, senior, would in some way help matters along between the lovers.

But there were anxious hearts too in view of Charles Ruthvon's home-coming.

CHAPTER XVII.

A SOLDIER AT "THE PEOPLE'S HOTEL."

It is the evening of the 8th of September, 1862. There is a larger number of people than usual gathered at "The People's Hotel" in Haltfest and there is much commotion among them. A rumor was current at church on the preceding day that the rebels had invaded Maryland and were seriously threatening Pennsylvania. This rumor is fully confirmed to-night and men have gathered at the inn to get the latest particulars and discuss the situation.

The hostelry has much the same appearance as in July of the preceding year when the news of Bull Run came. Dan Baltzer, a trifle stouter, especially about the face, a little more rubicund and stolid, is still master of the premises. Hen Weinmiller presides at the bar now as then. Some new faces appear among the visitors and some of the old are absent, but, no doubt by the operation of that splendid law discovered by modern philosophers — the survival of the fittest,— the large majority might have been seen here several evenings every week since the war began, drinking whiskey and munching pretzels.

"Is it true, doctor, that the rebels are behind Womelsdorf?" asked Christopher Stettler, still in quest of information.

“No, Stettler; somebody has been trying to scare you,” answered Doctor Helfer, who had come into the bar-room after getting his mail.

“Well, Jake Zellon said yesterday at church they was coming, and to-night he told me they was near to the side of Womelsdorf,” rejoined Stettler.

“They ain’t in Pennsylvania at all yet. I suppose Zellon just said what he wished was true.”

“How’s that there?” asked Zellon, hearing his name as he and Pete Prantman entered the room.

“Stettler here tells me that you said the rebels are near Womelsdorf, and I only remarked that I thought you wished it was true, that’s all,” answered Helfer, with an air of scorn.

“Stettler lied,” said Zellon, walking up to the old man, who was leaning against the bar, and frowning on him much as a big dog, conscious of his superior strength, might look at a small cur cowering before him.

“Zellon, it is easy to call a weak old man a liar, but not very nice,” said Helfer.

“He lied, I say,” repeated Jake, who evidently was in an ugly mood, “but I wish what he said I said was true, I do, Doctor Helfer,”

“Yes, and so do I,” added Prantman.

“And I too,” chimed in Andrew Pfannkuchen, who with some other, “Bergknibbel” had neglected his old haunt at the mill to-night and come to the village to get the latest war news.

“And I, sure as the world stands!” said Mike

Hahn; "we'll all be drafted and killed anyhow or robbed by Abe Lincoln and his soldiers, and I believe the Southerners would treat us much better."

By this time most of those present had crowded round the speakers and were listening to the conversation eagerly, for many people debated with themselves in those days whether it were not better to let the South go and thus stop the war. Tom Hartnagel at this point came in from the post-office, listened a moment to what was said and passed out again.

"Treat you better, by the great Eulenspiegel," said Helfer with a sneer of contempt, in answer to Hahn's observation; "treat you better, to be sure! Why, they'll strip you of all you've got and make you give a note for what you haven't got into the bargain. You'll find out, Hahn, if they come."

"No doubt when they come they'll take everything from you blacksnakes that's trying to rob them of their honest property," Pete Prantman broke in; "it'll serve you right, but they know their friends, and, if they come, I know something that some people don't know. We won't lose nothing on our place when the Southerners come. I tell these cursed Lincoln-worshippers that a power will soon be put in operation here and all over the North that'll put an end to these men who'll jump at a five-cent piece as long as there is one in the treasury, and also a stop to the war."

"I know the power," said our old acquaintance, Ad Sparger, who thus far had sat in a corner half stupefied

with drink, but now caught part of Pete's words and at once bethought himself of the panacea; — "I know the power — it's good rye whiskey! It's the best thing made for anything bad. Let's once drink one!"

This raised a loud laugh and relaxed the tension of feeling somewhat; but it failed to produce the result Sparger had hoped for, every one being too eager to hear of this new agency before which the government was so soon to succumb.

"I tell you people," persisted the loafer, rising from his chair and winking on the company, "if they did send a barrel of good whiskey to Abe Lincoln, Jeff Davis and all them other fellows, they'd shake hands and make it up in ten days." I say, doctor, let's drink one!"

"Give him a *schmaler*, Weinmiller, and let him be quiet, though for that matter his talk is less harmful than that of some others," said Helfer.

"What is this here power you speak of?" asked Hahn and two or three more, as soon as Ad was quieted.

"I won't say nothing just now," answered Pete; "there is some here who'd sell us all if they could at a dollar apiece into the slavery they want to free the niggers from, but when the time comes they'll find out a thing they don't know yet."

"Now, look once here, you people," said Helfer sitting down and lighting a cigar, "let's glance at this thing a little bit. This government is protecting every one of you and has never interfered with or denied one

of you a single religious, social or civil right belonging to you. Many of you have accumulated property under it, and to-day you are getting bigger prices than you ever did in your lives for all you can raise on your farms. Now I ask, is it fair that we should talk and act against this government at a time when it has its hands full in defending itself against those who are trying to destroy its life? Would it not be ugly to assail a man who had been good to you?"

Most of these men had never looked at the matter in this plain way, and a few acknowledged that these views seemed fair.

"I say he's right," said Sparger, rousing up again at this point; "how would it sound if I was to talk against Doctor Helfer here after he's stood treat and will do it again? It wouldn't be at all nice."

"You hold your mouth," said Pete Prantman angrily, "you'd sell your soul for a couple of drinks of Baltzer's whiskey, by henker."

"Yes, and you'd buy it, Pete, and get what you ain't got now," retorted Sparger winking as hard as the watery state of his eyes would permit. A roar of laughter followed this palpable hit. Pete's anger nearly choked him, but again the laugh was against him. However, he remembered Doctor Helfer's prophecy about the speedy conquest of the rebellion, of which he had been told.

"Say once, you doctor, your three months is nearly up and Abe Lincoln and his nigger-kissers haven't

quite whipped the South yet," said he in the most sarcastic tone of which he was capable. "How soon do you think the war will be over now? Three months, huh?"

"Not until you and some other cowardly traitors have been hung up," answered Helfer coolly.

"And no doubt you'd like to assist in the job?" said Prantman.

"Ho! I would, and then sell their skeletons to the doctors as about the best thing they'd be fit for."

While the doctor was speaking a young man very quietly entered, and without attracting the attention of any one sat down in a far corner of the room.

"But if the Southerners gets here, this thing of hanging may work the other way and some of us honest men may get a chance to try our hands at that kind of thing on some fellows I know of," said Pete.

"But Pete Prantman," in his hearty way broke in Tom Hartnagel who had returned by this time, "the rebels — let's call them by their right names and be honest about it — ain't here yet, and except they come as prisoners, which is likely, it'll be hotter than Yankee Chetwynde's barn before they do,—for them and for some of their friends here in the North, lean on that now.

"What do you mean?" asked Pete, starting when Tom spoke, but now putting on a show of bravado.

"Just what I say. Us old soldiers, who bear on our bodies the marks of your friends' bullets, and the loyal

people of the North will stop them beyond the Susquehanna and attend to their friends up here, too."

"Isn't it true, then, sure, that the Southerners are behind Womelsdorf, as — as I was told?" asked Stettler, anxiously.

"No," answered Hartnagel, folding his arms on his chest, "and the man who told you so lied and said what was dangerous."

"Who are you talking to?" asked Zellon, coming close up to Tom.

"I was just now answering the old man's question, as you could hear quite plain," replied Tom very calmly.

"And you'd help these Lincolners rob and kill your neighbors, would you?" asked Pete, pressing up close and trying to make Tom say something unpopular.

"I didn't say that, for our government don't do them things, but I do say that it can't afford to let traitors attack it in the rear, and them that does will find out they'd better not done it."

"Ho! bravo, Tom," shouted Helfer.

"And I say again, that a power will soon appear that will put an end to this here persecution and robbery of honest people," said Pete, keeping close to Zellon; — "yes, you look, Tom Hartnagel, but you may. I say if all good neighbors who are tired of drinking Lincoln coffee* will come over to our place next Saturday after-

*A substitute for coffee made of browned rye, used by many Pennsylvania Dutch families during the war, after coffee had become very dear. It was termed Lincoln coffee to reproach the President.

noon at two o'clock they'll meet somebody who'll tell them something they didn't know."

"Who is it?" asked a dozen voices.

"You'll see," answered Pete, knowingly; "and he'll tell you just what ought to be done now when they threaten to draft us all."

"I'm out," said Christopher Stettler. "I'm told they don't take anybody over seventy-five years old, and if I live I'll be seventy-six on Second Christmas."

"Not over forty-five, Stettler," said James Fetzer quickly, eager to show his knowledge.

"It makes nothing out," said Pete; "we'll show them something new. They daren't carry on the draft after getting whipped again at Bull Run, and the Southern soldiers on the way to Pennsylvania, and the election only a month off, and this new power coming up, too. If they try it on they'll find it's easier to draft people than to get them into the army. It would take two soldiers to hunt up every man drafted."

"That's so," said a chorus of voices.

"They put off the draft twelve days, until next Monday, the 15th," resumed Pete, much encouraged. "They said they wasn't ready last Wednesday, but Hautnehmer is afraid to begin, and when Monday comes you'll see it'll be put off again for some other reason. It'll never be made, and so it doesn't matter, Stettler, whether you're a hundred or only twenty-one."

"I think it's best for all citizens to be careful what they say and do in these dangerous times," remarked

Squire Zweispringer, who had arrived a few moments previously and listened to Pete's oracular utterance.

"Yes, of course," said Pete, sarcastically, "if this here war isn't stopped, we can't even take a drink of Lincoln coffee after awhile without asking some abolition soldier for permission."

"Ho! you'll probably soon have a chance to ask one, Pete, if you think it's necessary."

"How so, huh?" asked Pete.

"Why, Charlie Ruthvon is expected home before long," replied the doctor.

"They say that rumor is false," said Andrew Pfannkuchen; "somebody said at the mill the other night that his pap is harder against him than ever and that he's given up the Yankee girl and took up with a girl South; may be a nigger girl."

"And I know the man who raised that story about the girl in the South and he'd better take care," exclaimed Tom Hartnagel angrily, his arms still folded on his chest. There was much suppressed excitement in the room.

"Donnerwetter once more!" Pete exploded, "you mean me, and I won't hold my mouth for all the nigger-worshippers here, and if that college-mule comes back he'll find out he can't step around and order people about even if he has black Abe's unicorn on."

"Not handy," added Pfannkuchen.

"And I would advise you not to repeat that story about Ruthvon and the Southern girl," said Tom, whose

object evidently was to irritate Prantman as much as possible, "for if you do you won't have a whole skin if Charlie ever gets home again."

"I say once more, sapperlotte! that I won't hold my mouth for no black-snake," shouted Pete, walking to the bar and calling for a drink. "I did hear that the band-box fellow had took up with a girl living South, and Blanche Chetwynde and her folks is too good for common white people around here, and no doubt since she can't get the college-mule she'll take some other nigger-worshiper, or may be one of Sam Barbour's"——

At this point the young man who had sat so quietly in the far corner of the room jumped to his feet, and in the twinkling of an eye rushed upon Pete. He had drawn a rawhide from his coat pocket and rained fearful blows on the face and neck and arms of the blustering coward. Zellon aimed a blow with his fist at the stranger, but Tom Hartnagel caught his wrist and frustrated his purpose, and a stinging stroke of the whip across his face at the same moment rewarded the bully's zeal. Shouts and curses filled the room. In the uproar poor Sparger was thrown down and trampled upon, and for once called for mercy instead of whiskey.

Several besides Zellon were inclined to help Prantman, but Doctor Helfer mounted a chair and shouted: "Fair play, you people! Don't you know Charlie Ruthvon? Let them have it out."

"It's Charlie, clean down," cried some. Pete Prantman was far from popular and Charles Ruthvon was

still liked by a good many of those present. Besides, the notion prevailed that to assault a soldier involved a heavy fine. At any rate no one except Zellon tried to interfere further with the captain. Prantman tried to shield himself from the vigorous blows of his angry antagonist, but in vain. He called for his lieutenant, but Hartnagel and others were in the way of that individual. His only refuge was the floor, and to that, face down, he went.

“Do you confess you lied? do you apologize? do you promise to behave yourself?” came in rapid succession from Ruthvon as blow followed blow.

“Yes! yes! donnerwetter! yes!” yelled Pete after each question.

“Then I have nothing more to say,” said the captain, sinking white and breathless into the arm-chair which Doctor Helfer set for him.

“Welcome home, Charlie! How are you? I didn’t know you at first, you look so pale,” cried the doctor in his hearty way. About half a dozen of the men—mostly those who kept Zellon away from the combatants—came up to the young officer and shook hands with him heartily, but the majority shrunk from him and the remark was heard that he would have a big bill to pay.

“Baltzer, how d’ye do?” said Ruthvon, paying no heed to these remarks. “I’ve accepted your invitation to make myself at home when I came back, you see.”

“It’s right so,” answered the landlord stupidly, and

turned away to wait on customers, for trade was brisk now that hostilities had ceased.

Pete Prantman got up from the floor and his face looked like the furrowed millstone.

"You'll pay for this, you black Ruthvon you," he yelled when he reached the door, shaking his fist at the captain. "I'll spend my best cow at law to have you punished, you Lincoln nigger. I'll get even with you some way. Ain't we will, Jake?"

"We will, holy cross!" said Zellon fiercely. "Do you see this, Ruthvon?" he continued, pointing to the welt the rawhide had made on his face. "You'll feel my hand for that."

Captain Ruthvon paid no attention to the pair and they left the house. To his friends he explained his unexpected presence by saying that he had arrived at Reading a day earlier than anticipated, and that, falling in with Hartnagel on Penn street, he concluded to ride home with him instead of taking the evening train to Haltfest.

"This gave me a good opportunity to learn how matters around here stood," said he. "When we got to the village, Tom went into the post-office to get the mail, and likewise into the bar-room a moment, and hearing what the nature of the conversatien in the latter place was, he suggested on coming out that it might be interesting for me quietly to slip into the room and listen unobserved to what might be said about the war. The suggestion pleased my fancy, and I at once acted on it. My light

overcoat hid my uniform and I drew no attention to myself. I admit that I provided the rawhide for such an emergency as arose."

"And you used it to good purpose," said Helfer, laughing.

"Every one should be careful in these days," remarked Squire Zweispringer in stereotyped phrase. "In speech you were careful, captain, for you said almost nothing, and whilst your action was a trifle violent, I commend it highly and I don't care who hears me say so. I'm not an Abolitionist," he went on, suddenly warming up and speaking faster and louder with every succeeding sentence, "— I'm not an Abolitionist, never have been, didn't vote for Abe Lincoln and don't like niggers more than the law allows, but, by the great Eulenspiegel! any citizen who talks and acts as Pete Prantman has been doing ever since the war began, deserves all you gave him," and the conservative, peaceful squire trembled with passion. — "I'ts time to go home," he added in a calmer tone. "Will you go home with me, Charlie? Susie will be so glad to see you."

But the captain declined, pleading that he must at once get into his mother's care. There was a tremor in his voice as he spoke, and after exchanging a few more remarks with Doctor Helfer he and Tom Hartnagel left the hotel.

Meanwhile Pete Prantman and Jake Zellon went on their way on foot toward home. They spoke but little until they were passing Frederick Ruthvon's house.

Then Pete hissed to his companion: "They're next, Jake. We made it hot for that cursed Yankee Abolitionist over there, but we'll make it yet a great deal hotter for one of these here, ain't we will?"

"Holy cross, yes! See our faces," exclaimed Zellon with a horrible imprecation, his eyes gleaming in the calm moonlight like those of an angry, venomous serpent ready to strike its deadly fangs into its victim.

A slight rustling in the bushes by the wayside startled them. They relapsed into silence and hurried on, seeming in strange and unpleasant contrast with the pure light of the September full moon and the lovely landscape through which their way led.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A GOLDEN CIRCLE OF MEAN COMPOSITION.

“Honestly now, what’s the reason so very many of the Pennsylvania Germans oppose the war? I can’t quite comprehend it. Isn’t there somebody to blame?”

The speaker was Jabez Chetwynde; the person addressed, Doctor Helfer; the place, the pleasant residence of the former; the time, a few days after the rencounter at Baltzer’s tavern.

“I asked you a question some time ago and you answered it very satisfactorily, and I will try to return the compliment,” replied the doctor. “Being a Pennsylvania German myself, I can probably give your question a tolerably correct answer.—Our people don’t care for the South particularly, for socially and religiously it and they have nothing in common; but most of them believe slavery right and that the war is unjustly disturbing it. Then they are naturally a peaceful folk and opposed to war; besides I am sorry to say many of them are just about as selfish and earthy as any you can find, and the war costs money and increases taxes. But, Mr. Chetwynde, aside from all this, for the unfortunate attitude of the majority of our Pennsylvania Dutch people here toward the government at this time their political leaders and newspapers are very largely respon-

sible. Even Fred Ruthvon has been led wrong in this very way, and is so bitter that he barely admitted Charlie into the house last Monday night, and I have learned there was a sad scene. Only Mrs. Ruthvon's good sense and affection prevented Charlie from going away again, sick as he was. Schinnerhannes!"

"Somebody to blame, do you ask?" he continued, puffing his cigar vigorously. "When our own Congressman denounces the government in Congress and out; when a lawyer like Jerry Strohdach teaches that the ultimate object of the government leaders is to take the people's property from them, to rob them of the privilege of holding public meetings and to keep them from voting; when another lawyer like Jesse Geehawler tells them that the negro is an inferior being to be kept in perpetual slavery; when disloyal papers like the *Eagle* constantly abuse President Lincoln and say all that can be said on the safe side of the treason line; and when you remember that our people are very far behind in education and must depend upon their leaders instead of thinking for themselves;—can you wonder, Jabez Chetwynde, that many men who under better guidance would be patriotic are traitors in sentiment if not in act?"

Mr. Chetwynde was a deeply interested listener.

"I see," said he; "ignorance, selfishness and demagogism have a good deal to do in the matter."

"Certainly," replied Helfer. "But, remember, many of our people are brave and loyal and a better era is

dawning upon us. Up in New England they used to go wrong too before they had reached their present stage of advancement in education and general intelligence. They not only apologized for slavery but burned witches, which last is something we never were guilty of, although we still believe in them and pay witch-doctors well for cheating us."

Jabez was much amused at these concluding remarks.

"I am much obliged to you, doctor," said he, "I now understand some things better than I did before.—But what is this I hear about a meeting of some kind over to Prantman's to-morrow afternoon? Tom Hartnagel speaks about it, and Sharp Billy passed this morning and said something to the effect that Pete Prantman was going into more hemp-growing business to-morrow afternoon, and on asking him what he meant he replied there was to be a meeting at Prantman's, at which we would all be taught free of charge in one lesson how to get into jail."

"Yes," said Helfer looking out of the window,— "good afternoon, Miss Blanche,—Mr. Chetwynde, no wonder Charlie Ruthvon is—well, as I was saying," he resumed, noticing a slight deprecatory gesture,— "Billy is a bright boy. I've got my suspicions about that meeting. I think it means Knights of the Golden Circle. I'm going over and will take Zweispringer with me. The squire is getting to be a good war Democrat. You should have heard him last Monday night after Charlie cowhided that Prantman traitor! But I must

go and see Charlie right away. He's badly run down, but between me and his mother and — and you, we'll get him out again."

The events of August, and of September thus far, helped to develop very rapidly the discontent of many of the Pennsylvania Germans and to intensify their opposition to the war. The year 1862 was undoubtedly the dark year of our great conflict. It opened auspiciously, but recently battle after battle had been lost. McClellan's forces were decimated by war and disease. Lee with his victorious troops was again on the way to Pennsylvania, and only the day before the conversation between Doctor Helfer and Mr. Chetwynde, Andrew G. Curtin, the Governor of that state, had issued an order directing all able-bodied men to hold themselves in readiness to march to the defence of the commonwealth at an hour's notice, which was followed twenty-four hours later by a call for 50,000 men for the emergency that had arisen so suddenly. And in three days the awful draft was surely to begin.

Things were rapidly going from bad to worse, these people said. They were being robbed by high taxes, their children taken from them, their friends killed. It could not be worse if the South were quietly permitted to go; it would win at any rate, for God seemed with it. Let it go then before it overran the North and put itself in a position to demand and exact heavy indemnity. But the government did not seem inclined to do this. On the contrary it was about to make a draft to fill up

the ranks of the army. The government must be wrong. If possible the draft should be prevented. Then the rebellious states would probably have to be allowed to withdraw from the Union in peace. At the same time safety from plunder should the rebels in the meantime come North must also be secured. But how could all this be accomplished?

One fair day the news had been borne to the township of Copton, and to many other townships besides, that out in Indiana an organization had arisen called the Knights of the Golden Circle, or Sons of Liberty. The objects of this body, among others, were said to be to resist all drafts, to discourage volunteering, to sow dissensions among Union officers, to change the administration of the government; to return negroes to slavery, to encourage desertions from the Union army, to assist deserters to hide away from the officers sent to arrest them, to help rebel prisoners to escape, to abduct President Lincoln if deemed necessary, and carry him South or into Canada, to assist the rebel emissaries, if thought wise, in the destruction of Northern cities and villages, and to give the enemy information concerning the movements of the Union armies, etc., etc.

At once the merits of the Golden Circle were eagerly canvassed in the township of Copton. Men stood in groups here and there and whispered mysteriously to each other. Was not this just the thing needed at present? Who could give further information about it? Hence, when Pete Prantman at "The People's

Hotel" hinted at a power which would soon manifest itself in the North, and later in the evening openly and incautiously announced a meeting at which some one would be introduced who would instruct the people in certain matters concerning which they had been in ignorance hitherto, great interest was aroused, which was increased by the exciting events of the next few days. The result was that when Saturday came the gathering at Prantman's had been advertised far beyond the confines of the township.

Katrina Galsch was deeply interested in this new movement, and was anxious to learn all she could about the meeting on Saturday. She caused Sharp Billy to attend and exhorted him to keep his eyes and ears open and his mouth shut.

"Be very careful, my boy," she said, "for Pete Prantman suspects you of double dealing since you gave your testimony about the fire."

Through him she sent Tom Hartnagel word that she would be glad if he would keep an eye on the lad at the meeting, and that if he would come to her place Sunday night at nine o'clock she might be able to tell him something that concerned him and his friend Captain Ruthvon.

It need hardly be said that Captain Ruthvon, Tom Hartnagel, Doctor Helfer and Jabez Chetwynde were greatly concerned about the proposed meeting. They had heard of the Knights of the Golden Circle and wondered what shape their practices would assume in

the township of Copton. They resolved that if treason were being hatched in the community, they would know the fact, and if possible thwart the plans of the conspirators.

“We are very busy, Tom,” said Mr. Chetwynde to his hired man, Friday evening.” The hill field ought to be sowed this week, but you can go to the meeting to-morrow anyhow. The grain will grow all the faster next week if we do something for our country this week.”

“All right, Mr. Chetwynde, though it looks bad just now as if we might be needed some other place next week.”

“Very well. If the country perishes we might as well perish with it. So let the sowing take care of itself for a few days.”

CHAPTER XIX.

THE PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH APOSTLE OF AN IGNOBLE GOSPEL.

Philip Huber was the unpretending name borne by the leader of the Knights of the Golden Circle among the Pennsylvania Dutch in Southeastern Pennsylvania, and his person and general appearance were as little knightly as his name. He was born not far from the once famous Black Horse Tavern in Lancaster County. There he lived until the breaking out of the war, quietly pursuing the occupation of a farmer, and apparently without any ambition for notoriety. He was then about thirty-two years of age. He was of medium size, with a florid complexion, sandy hair and bright blue eyes. He had a keener scent for dollars and cents than Yankee Chetwynde ever possessed. His command of the Pennsylvania German *patois* was perfect and he could very clearly state what he wished to convey to his auditors. Besides, he knew his people thoroughly and was thus enabled to gain their confidence and to wield a tremendous influence among them. That many of them held him in high esteem was indubitably shown by subsequent events.

Regarding his motives there has been much difference of opinion. Some have believed him perfectly sincere ;

others have attributed his entire course to greed. Probably the truth lies somewhere between these extreme views. Sincere in the beginning, perhaps, it is likely that later on in his career as a leader of the Knights gain was much stronger as a controlling element in his actions than his mistaken views of duty in reference to the war. That for a time he made a good deal of money out of the formation of lodges of Knights is unquestioned.

Sometime in the summer of 1862 Huber made a journey to the State of Indiana and was there initiated into all the dread mysteries of the Golden Circle. Then back he hurried to his native state to tell of the body which numbered over a million of members, had already in good part wrought out the political salvation of the Hoosier State and would surely do no less for the old Keystone State.

Riding upon a steed which would well have become a monk under a vow of perpetual poverty, this redoubtable Knight one day entered the territory of Copton township in the interest of Golden Circleism. The fame of Pete Prantman as an Irreconcilable had been blown to his ears and he at once sought out that individual. A comparatively short interview convinced him that Pete was just the man he wanted for his purpose,—possessing spite, zeal, cupidity, pig-headedness and, judging from his words, great physical courage. To him Huber imparted enough information to inflate his vanity and to show him that from **behind** the Golden Circle as a

shield, plenty of opportunity would be afforded to gratify his hate of certain individuals.

“We’re going to stop the draft, Prantman,” said he. “We’ll employ lawyers and show that it’s illegal and by means of salt and some harder substances thrown at the enrolling officers and others in a certain way”—imitating the aiming and firing of a gun—“we’ll make them glad to let people alone and to mind their own business.”

“Sapperlotte!” exclaimed Pete grinning viciously, “won’t we give it to Ruthvon if he comes home, and Hartnagel. I’ll tell Zellon”—

“Be careful, Prantman,” interrupted Huber. “Now you appoint the meeting very quietly and I’ll be there. Don’t let any nigger-worshippers know if you can help it. We don’t want them; only honest white men.”

As we have seen, Pete made the appointment but, anger and eagerness being stronger than caution, by no means as discreetly as advised to do.

Saturday, September 13th, was a warm, lovely day, and busy as was the season, when two o’clock came over three hundred persons, mostly farmers, had gathered in the orchard back of Hans Prantman’s barn. Sympathizers with the rebellion were in a large majority and their minds were in a state of receptivity. They were ready to believe anything the glib-tongued Huber might say, to do any dangerous acts he might advise them to perform, and even to contribute of their treasure. But here and there stern, determined faces might

be seen in the throng evidently not in accord with the objects of the meeting.

Tom Hartnagel stood near the outer edge of the crowd, his jaw set and his arms folded on his chest. His whole appearance was that of a man to whom it were best not to say much at present. Around him were grouped five or six young men whom, with a number of others, he had drilled in military rudiments in the village almost every evening for the last two weeks and who admired him greatly. Doctor Helfer and Squire Zweispringer were also present and conversed pleasantly with those about them. Ad Sparger moved among the people, his eyes weaker than usual, and Jake Zellon and Andrew Pfannkuchen, who were much together recently, were talking to each other and now and then nodded toward Hartnagel.

But all eyes frequently turned toward the house, to which Huber had repaired immediately on his arrival. To almost all present he was an entire stranger. Promptly at the appointed hour, accompanied by Hans Prantman and Pete, he came into the orchard and stepped upon the little platform provided for him. Pete looked very proud and self-conscious and at once introduced the speaker of the day by saying "Here is a man who will tell us something and even Radicals can learn something from him."

"That one knows much, mind that there," said Christopher Stettler referring to Huber.

"He looks as if he could drink one and stand

treat if one got him at the right time," responded Sparger.

"Yes, but he'll get the money to do it with out of these honest farmers first," whispered Sharp Billy.

"It's Huber sure," said Doctor Helfer. "I've seen him. I'm sorry my native county — the county of Thad Stevens — has produced such a raw jewel. Why wasn't he born in Berks County?"

Without removing his hat the subject of these comments began his harangue immediately.

"These are evil times that have come over us," said he stretching out his right hand as if to grasp something. "Who knows but this may be the very last time you will be permitted to gather as freemen. Who'll forbid you? Abe Lincoln and his hirelings. Here you've got nice horses and cattle, but how do you know you'll have them to-morrow? Who'll take them? Abe Lincoln, — the cattle to feed his hirelings and the horses for the niggers to ride on. Here are your strong, healthy sons, but a week from now they may be down South starving. Who'll take them from you? Abe Lincoln. He's ordered the draft to come before the election and all of your boys will be compelled to free niggers and can't vote on the second Tuesday of October."

The audience was much moved by these words. Teeth were set and fists clenched. Hartnagel was with difficulty restrained by Doctor Helfer from saying something violent. Huber quickly perceived that his open-

ing words had made a favorable impression upon the majority of his hearers and went on with great animation.

“Your daughters are your pride. None can work better than they and none are handsomer. But what will their fate be unless something is done very soon? Who’ll harm them? Abe Lincoln is bound to free all the niggers in spite of the Bible and the Constitution. There are ten millions of these awful people — little better than your hogs. If they are made free, they will come up here in big swarms and then you may know what will become of your daughters.”

“We’ll kill them all first; we won’t stand it,” fiercely cried Hans Prantman and many others.

“Keep quiet, Tom,” Doctor Helfer whispered to Hartnagel as the latter was about to speak. “Let the fool go on; he’s hooking himself fast enough.”

“All right, doctor, but I’ll get the plagues if an old soldier can stand such talk much longer,” hissed Tom.

Pete Prantman saw the two men whisper and, as if to vex them, grinned at them spitefully.

“But, my friends, it’s better to stop this thing before it gets so far,” Huber continued, “and that is what we’ve come together to consider, and may be I can point out a remedy to you.”

“That’s just straight what we want to know,” said several voices.

“Now he’ll tell them how to get to jail,” whispered Sharp Billy to one of Hartnagel’s young men.

“You see the draft has been put off from the 15th to the 25th,” resumed Huber, “on the ground that they are not ready to go on, but I think it’s because the Southern soldiers are so handy by. Now it’s important that we hold big conventions all over the country and get good speakers to address the people. These conventions must pass strong resolutions of censure of the authorities. We must also get big lawyers to give their opinions on the unconstitutionality of the draft act and the draft.”

“That’s first-rate, clean down,” said Mike Hahn.

“Now, I believe in free speech for all men,” Huber proceeded. “It’s better than Lincoln coffee any day, and so if there is any one here who would like to ask questions before we go on further, let him do so and I’ll try to answer them.”

Ad Sparger promptly availed himself of the privilege and inquired whether freeing the slaves would put up the price of whiskey to twenty-five cents a drink as he had been told it would.

“I’ve no doubt of it,” answered Huber gravely amid shouts of laughter, “for the demand would be so much bigger.”

“Mr. Huber,” said Doctor Helfer when the merriment had subsided, “you say that conventions are to be held, and so on; but the government may not care for any of these things and go right ahead in spite of them. Now I want to know, and of course we all would like to know, whether in that case you’d advise the use of other and stronger remedies?”

“Hem,” stammered Huber, “let’s see, your name — hem! — is” —

“Ho! My name is Henry Helfer — Doctor Helfer — and I ain’t at all ashamed of it, Mr. Huber. I live at Haltfest over there.”

“Bully for you, doctor, give it to him again,” said Hartnagel in a loud voice.

“Oh, yes, ‘Doctor Helfer,’ yes,” said Huber. “I should have known you to be sure. We’ve heard of you over in Lancaster County.”

“Glad of it. I was born there,” retorted Helfer.

“In answer to your question, Doctor Helfer,” said Huber, “I would make reply that if the administration will not listen to the people, much stronger measures will probably be recommended and used.”

“And what might those measures be?” again asked Helfer. “We’re all interested to know.”

“Doctor Helfer, I’ve been told that you’re not a friend of the people,” said Huber evidently vexed, “and I” —

“I *am* a friend of the people and it may be that in this I have the advantage of you, Mr. Huber,” interrupted Helfer boldly. “At any rate I’m here by invitation, for all honest men were invited.”

“Very well, Doctor Helfer; men have a right to differ,” answered the Knight, “and so I differ with you as to your friendliness and will say that some things are told only certain true men.”

“Who are they?” asked Hartnagel quickly.

“My friend, all in good time, as the hangman said,” replied Huber suavely. A laugh followed at Tom’s expense. He relished it poorly and only for Helfer would have spoken roughly.

“Now, Mr. Huber, I would like to ask a serious question, one that concerns us all, and especially me as a justice of the peace,” said Squire Zweispringer.

“Go ahead,” answered Huber, starting a little.

“We understand that you come in the interest of the Golden Circle,” said Zweispringer. “We want peace in our neighborhood, and I ask whether the whole township may not be put under a heavy fine if we have anything to do with this thing?”

Every one listened attentively to the squire and Huber’s reply was eagerly awaited. The Knight lost his cool manner and replied impetuously.

“Who says I come in the interest of the Golden Circle? No one does, but I will say that Abe Lincoln hasn’t dared to interfere with the Knights in Indiana. They’re entirely too numerous to be trifled with.”

“And another thing concerns us very much to-day,” said Doctor Helfer. “A constable can call on all of us to help him make an arrest of a lawbreaker if he is unable to execute his warrant alone. The government of this state, in the person of Governor Curtin, has just called for 50,000 men to defend the commonwealth against invasion. Has he a right to do this? Has a government the right to compel citizens to help it arrest those who trouble it?”

Philip Huber had hardly anticipated such questions when he made his generous offer and was evidently fast losing his temper. His floridity suddenly became very pronounced.

“If the cause of the government is just, then I say yes,” he answered hotly, “but if it is unjust, then I say no, a thousand times no. Our forefathers rebelled against England for the reason they were treated bad, and our government is no longer from God but is given over to the devil.”

“He’s got you now, doctor,” said Christopher Stettler. There was much excitement and the crowd pressed closer up to the platform.

“Be quiet a moment, I’ll give him one now,” whispered Helfer to Tom Hartnagel.

“Do you say then?” — the doctor began.

“Hold your mouth,” yelled Pete Prantman.

“Let him speak,” said Huber to his lieutenant. “Free speech; no Lincoln business here.”

“Pete, let me give you a fresh plaster for your face,” said Helfer. “It looks bad yet. — Mr. Huber, I was going to ask whether you say that the cause of the government of the United States is unjust in the present difficulties?”

“I do,” answered the Knight promptly. Perhaps by such as were able logically to link this and that together a great arm might have been seen slowly to arise and begin to reach out toward him. But it was not visible at that moment and so the doctor pushed Huber most cruelly with another question still.

“And that therefore we ought not to respond when the government calls for help and should keep others from responding?”

“I do,” again answered Huber; and the arm came closer.

“And you make yourself the judge?” quickly asked Helfer.

“With the other people, yes.”

“Huber, let me tell you in all kindness that you are using dangerous language and are engaged in dangerous business,” said Helfer, pale but calm.

“And let me tell you, Doctor Helfer,” retorted Huber excitedly, “that when I want your opinion I’ll let you know. Until then keep it to yourself.”

“Very well. Perhaps though you may need my help sooner than you think for.”

And he did.

“You people, you see what it’s coming to,” said the Knight addressing the crowd again. “You’re in danger of being dragged from your homes to-night and being taken to Harrisburg by Lincoln hirelings who want to make money out of you. And here we’re threatened by men who are no doubt pushed on by others simply because we express our honest opinions in a public meeting. They’re sent here to catch us with their questions. Alas! thou beloved ground!” exclaimed the orator lugubriously lifting his eyes and hands toward the heavens though addressing the earth, “what shall we do? If this persecution doesn’t stop, we must rise in

our might," he cried with sudden vehemence, "and sweep the ape in the White House and all who sympathize with him"—looking significantly at Doctor Helfer—"from the face of the earth."

Hartnagel could be restrained no longer.

"You're a confounded traitor and ink-licker," he shouted at the top of his voice, clenching his fist and shaking it at Huber, "and I'm ready to lead a company of men against you and your crowd if you dare show your cowardly faces."

The words were barely spoken before Pete Prantman, Zellon and Pfannkuchen, who had been waiting for this opportunity, rushed toward the brave ex-soldier. Zellon was foremost and Tom knew his man. Calling on his boys to stand by him he concentrated all his strength to meet the ruffian. Avoiding a furious blow by a quick movement, before Zellon could recover himself he seized him around the body and hurled him with such force upon a rude bench that happened to be standing near as to knock him senseless. Tom's companions kept off Pete and his party for a time, but blood was now up and it was a question of a few moments only when Tom and his friends would be overpowered. Zellon soon regained consciousness. He drew a revolver and was in the act of discharging it point-blank at Hartnagel when Doctor Helfer knocked the weapon out of his hand, and the ball buried itself in the ground.

Tom was again rushing upon Zellon and a general conflict seemed imminent, but Huber interposed. The

Knight saw that if the quarrel were not stopped at once, his cause would suffer grave injury in these parts. So he ran into the throng of combatants and by word and action urged his friends to desist.

“Let these men talk,” he cried; “if you beat them, it’ll be made an excuse for Lincoln hirelings to arrest and imprison some of us.”

But Tom Hartnagel was now fully aroused and with an oath he made a rush at Huber himself.

“You dirty traitor, you’re the cause of the whole trouble,” he exclaimed, at the same time aiming a blow at the Golden Circle orator. Fortunately Pfannkuchen succeeded in partly turning aside the stroke, but in dodging to avoid it Huber struck his forehead very hard against an old, gnarled apple tree. A large patch of skin was peeled off and for a short time the wound bled profusely. Doctor Helfer, who during the *melée* had been hustled around rather unceremoniously though no one had ventured to strike him, was now loudly called for.

“Ho!” he exclaimed good-naturedly, “it’s never quite safe to abuse the doctor too freely or to declare yourself independent of him. — Take him to the house and I’ll make a good soldier of him yet. He isn’t hurt very much, but, by the great Schinnerhannes! if that blow of Tom Hartnagel’s had hit him fair — whew!” and he gave a long whistle. “I tell you Tom is a rouser,” he continued; “Tom Hyer and Yankee Sullivan would be mere children before him. — Zellon, you

can thank me for knocking the pistol out of your hand. I saved you from the gallows. Be careful now once."

In reply Jake scowled darkly and hobbled away.

Hostilities ceased when Huber was hurt and the meeting came abruptly to an end. Another, to be held at Mike Hahn's two weeks later, was however appointed by the young man who accompanied the Knight in his travels as a sort of esquire, and "only lovers of the white race" were invited to attend it. The majority of those present were delighted with Huber. He was surely the Messiah who would bring deliverance from the threatened bondage of Abe Lincoln.

"I wish Charlie could have heard this man," said Frederick Ruthvon to a friend. "But no," he added sadly, "he would only have mocked him and perhaps have helped that Hartnagel to beat him."

"I wonder whether Hartnagel can't be prosecuted for his assault on you?" Hans Prantman asked Huber.

"No, let him go," replied Philip looking humble enough with his bandaged head. "We can't afford to have the attention of the government turned toward us at all at present. When the Knights are once as strong here as they are in Indiana, then we'll talk Dutch to Abe Lincoln. There's a good time coming fast."

"It would come to-night if I had my way," said Margaret Prantman viciously.

Philip Huber nursed his hurt and braced himself for the work of the evening. What that was let the next chapter tell.

CHAPTER XX.

HUBER ORGANIZES A LODGE OF KNIGHTS OF THE GOLDEN CIRCLE.

Tom Hartnagel was on his way home from the meeting in the orchard when suddenly Sharp Billy emerged from the high corn by the wayside and looked up and down the road.

“Come a little into the corn, Tom,” said he all out of breath “I want to see you — something to tell you.”

Tom complied wondering what was the matter. Having gone some distance among the corn, Billy in a sort of half-whisper told Hartnagel that he had seen Jim Fetzer and Yonie Zwiwwelberg, both before and since the meeting, go around among the people and quietly whisper to this one and that one. Several times they nodded toward the barn and by dint of sharp listening he had caught the words “lodge,” “barn,” “to-night.” Pete Prantman had also called him “That witch’s boy” and threatened dire things if he didn’t go about his business.

“I’m sure,” said Billy in conclusion, “they’re going to give another lesson in that barn to-night on going to jail.”

“Oho! Billy, you’re right,” exclaimed Tom. “I noticed Yonie myself sneaking around. Now hold your

mouth and keep out of the way, for Pete'll half kill you if he finds you around their place."

"Oh, I like Pete first rate and I hope he'll learn his lessons well. Now you stay here until I get away. See you to-morrow — if not sooner," he added in a lower tone with his right hand placed to his mouth like a speaking-trumpet. He then cautiously approached the fence, and again looked up and down the road. Seeing no one, he jumped into the highway, and the need of prudence having ceased, he sped toward home in the setting sun, singing

"O-hi-ó, O-hi-ó, oh, this pleasant O-hi-ó,
With my love I'm sailing down on this pleasant O-hi-o-o-o-o!"

prolonging the final vowel until his breath was completely exhausted.

Tom hurried home and asked his employer's permission to be absent until the following morning, at the same time throwing out a hint as to his mission. He then ate a hasty supper after which he called on Captain Ruthvon and communicated his suspicions.

"And if a lodge of Knights of the Golden Circle is to be started," said he, "I'm bound to know the secrets without taking the oath," with which he unfolded a plan of procedure he had hastily conceived.

"Capital!" said the captain. "Find out all you can about Huber's doings. It concerns the government much to know what he is up to. And I am sure that nothing you do in the way of exposing him will be left unrewarded by Uncle Sam."

“Reward! I want no better reward than to see Huber hanged,” replied Hartnagel.

“I wish I could go with you, Tom, but I must positively rest a few days longer before I stir out, else I’ll be laid up entirely, Doctor Helfer says.”

“Good night, captain. I hear your father coming and he doesn’t like me, besides I’ve got to hurry. I’ll see you to-morrow I think.”

“Good night, Tom. Be very careful, and mind, if there is trouble of any kind, communicate with me just as soon as possible.”

Night had hardly fairly fallen over the earth when the ex-soldier cautiously entered the fodder-gangway of Prantman’s barn. He ascended the ladder in the “hay-hole” and found himself in the hay-mow. Thence he climbed up a second ladder into the loft of the Schweitzer barn. This loft in these barns is over the great threshing floor, or “dresh-den,” and there the oats are usually deposited when drawn in from the field. Tom found the loft, or “ober-den,” filled with sheaves almost to the comb of the roof, but he burrowed among them and hid himself snugly near the edge, so that his head was free and he could readily hear what might be said in an ordinary tone of voice on the floor below, where he rightly surmised Huber would hold his meeting.

He had barely stowed himself away before he heard Pete Prantman’s voice and presently its owner and Jake Zellon entered with several lanterns. The floor had

been swept and the platform carried in from the orchard together with some chairs and benches.

“If that Ruthvon nigger and Hartnagel and them fellows knew what was going on, they’d be wild to get in,” said Pete to his companion.

“Pete, look once here,” replied Zellon, showing a pistol. “Maybe I won’t miss next time.”

“Maybe I wouldn’t miss either, you dumb-headed traitor you,” muttered Hartnagel in his hiding-place.

Quietly one by one those who had been notified by Jim Fetzer and Yonie Zwiwwelberg in the afternoon dropped in until about thirty-five or forty men were gathered on the threshing floor. Then Philip Huber and Hans Prantman came in together, the former still wearing a bandage around his head to protect the sore spot made by the apple tree. He gave directions to have all the doors and the small window carefully closed to prevent the light from being seen by any one outside, and ordered two young men to stand guard back of the barn. Fortunately for Tom Hartnagel the building was not searched. Later in the history of the Knights they became very wary, looking through their meeting-places diligently for spies before commencing proceedings, placing sentries and requiring pass-words from all who approached. But none save friends knew of the meeting to-night, Huber thought, and hence a preliminary search was needless and two guards were amply sufficient.

Philip Huber was not devoid of personal vanity and delighted, as most men do, in the sense of power which

his position gave him, and in the admiration with which so many viewed him. He was in his glory to-night. When all was ready he mounted the platform and began a harangue in which, as usual, he appealed to the selfishness and political prejudices of his hearers. Then he asked whether all present, without exception, were ready to join the lodge of Sons of Liberty, which he had come to organize then and there. All answered in the affirmative except Carl Schlapphammel, son of Muhlenberg Schlapphammel. Carl was much frightened by the question and said he had not understood Yonie Zwiwwelberg properly as to the nature of the meeting else he would not have come, for he had heard that any one taking the oath required to join would, if found out, forfeit to the government all he had and be put in the army.

“Who told you such nonsense?” demanded Huber sharply.

“It was somebody who finds out about everything,” Carl answered. Questioned further he very reluctantly admitted that it was Katrina Galsch’s boy, Sharp Billy.

At this point Tom Hartnagel was startled by a slight rustling in the straw not far away and the sound as of a noise made when one holds his nose and his breath to prevent laughter and is not quite successful. But the spy did not dare to move for fear of discovery. Hearing nothing more just then, he persuaded himself that a rat or a mouse had made the noise. But on the floor below a difficulty arose. Huber tried to show Carl Schlapphammel that Billy had imposed on his credulity and

that it was perfectly safe to take the obligation of a Knight, but all in vain.

“ I don't do it; my father might lose his farm,” he protested with Pennsylvania Dutch stubbornness.

“ We'll make him take the obligation whether he wants to or not,” said Jake Zellon with a terrible oath.

“ You may do with me what you will but I won't join,” said Carl, pale as death, but with stolid resoluteness.

There was considerable rustling among the sheaves overhead, but not enough to attract attention.

“ You must swear not to say anything to any one about our meeting here,” Huber said to the young man after considering a moment. But Carl made a dash for liberty like a flash. Before any one could stop him he had reached the “ hay-hole ” through the narrow side-door. In a moment, dark as it was inside, he was down in the fodder-gangway and out in the barnyard.

Above him in the straw Tom Hartnagel again heard the sound of suppressed laughter, and was now sure that some one was in hiding with him. On the threshing floor there was confusion, not to say consternation.

“ He daren't say anything ; we'll kill him if he does,” said Andrew Pfannkuchen.

“ It's to be regretted that you people weren't more careful in selecting, but after all he knows nothing and we're gathered in lawful meeting,” said the leader with a look of vexation. Two more men were however sent out to act as guards at the lower approach to the barn,

after which, though there was visible uneasiness among the men because of Schlapphannel's defection and escape, Huber proceeded with his labors.

"Friends," he began, again stretching forth his hand as if to lay hold on something, "I say once more that we are gathered in defence of our persons, our homes and our liberties. We dare do this, for the immortal Declaration of Independence, written by Jefferson Da — I mean by Andrew Jackson, guarantees us the right of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Our liberties are in danger and so are our lives, in order that niggers may be set free! We want to protect ourselves against Abe Lincoln and those who in our midst sympathize with him and his hirelings, and also to make sure that when the Southern soldiers come we will not be disturbed."

"Clean down honest that is good," exclaimed a chorus of embryo Knights.

"Hurrah for Jeff Davis," shouted Jake Zellon.

"Of course before I could explain more about the Sons of Liberty to you, I had to ask you whether you were all willing to join them," resumed Knight Huber, "and you all now see how necessary that was. Now I will tell you a little more about them. They are called Sons of Liberty, after the brave men in the Revolutionary War who strove against the tyranny of Great Britain. Sometimes they are called Knights of the Golden Circle, because every member loves liberty and is true as gold. You have all heard of them. Alto-

gether in Kentucky, Missouri, Ohio and Indiana, they number over a million of members and many are joining every day. Men like C. L. Vallandigham, Dan Voorhees, A. E. Stevenson and numerous others are behind it, and Governor Morton of Indiana is afraid of them and only sits and watches them. If we are careful, we can soon be as strong here as they are there. Then we can protect ourselves and stop all drafts. Now, I was initiated last summer in all the mysteries of the order, and am a member in full and regular standing. I am authorized to organize lodges in six counties here in Pennsylvania, Berks being one of them. You have all agreed to join this great order. You will therefore take off your hats, lift up your right hand to heaven and put your left hand on your bosom. So.”

When all had placed themselves in the required position, Huber repeated the following form in the deepest and most solemn tones at his command :

“ You do solemnly swear in the presence of Almighty God and of the lodge that you will never, except when properly authorized, reveal the secrets of the order of the Sons of Liberty, known also as Knights of the Golden Circle, of which you herewith become a member, whether these pertain to the signs, grips or pass-words of the same, or to any of their acts ; and that you will to the best of your ability promote all its objects and interests. So help you God ! ”

All assented by bowing their heads, and Huber proceeded :—

“I ask you :

1. Are you in favor of resisting by all proper means in your power the act called the Draft Act, according to the oath you have just taken ?

2. According to the same oath, are you in favor of abducting, and if called upon for that purpose, will you help to abduct, Abraham Lincoln, the so-called President of the United States, if this becomes necessary to stop this unholy war ?

3. Will you protect deserters from the army so far as lies in your power, and will you also help those who, if drafted, refuse to report to the Lincoln officers ?

4. Will you help to return all runaway slaves to their lawful owners ?”

To each of these questions an emphatic affirmative was given by all the new Knights.

“Now,” said Huber, “you will come forward and sign the constitution and by-laws, which you can read afterwards. You will also pay the initiation fee, which as you all know, is one dollar.”

“Thou ground !” exclaimed Pete Prantman, “I haven’t got any money with me.”

“Hold your mouth,” said his father wrathfully ; “we’ll fix all that with Huber afterwards, for of course he’ll pay for his board and so on.”

There was considerable snickering among the younger men at this thrifty remark, and Tom Hartnagel, who was getting so cramped up that his bones ached from lying so long in one position, and who was wishing some

rumpus might occur below to enable him safely to change his position, again heard the sound of smothered laughter among the sheaves.

“I am now ready to communicate the grips and signs to you,” said the leader of the Knights when all but the two Prantmans had paid their initiation fee. “I have not time to give them all to-night. You will learn them gradually at later meetings. And, first, as to the grip.”

Every one watched and listened eagerly, and no ear was sharper than Tom Hartnagel’s up in his hiding-place.

“When a man gives you the grip,” continued Huber, “he does it by giving you the first finger of his right hand and touching your wrist with the second finger, and of course you do the same way to him. So! Look!” giving it to Frederick Ruthvon.

“The grip, remember, is to be given only for purposes of recognition. For example, you meet a man and would like to know whether he is a member of our order. In a careless way — so — you say to him ‘R. D.’, which means *Royal Democrat*. If now he answers ‘H. O.’, which means *Hands Off* and is taken from the motto on one of the early flags of our country — ‘*Don’t tread on me*’; — if he answers ‘H. O.’, then you ask him whether he knows anything about a grip, and if in response he gives you the grip in the manner I have described it to you, you may be very sure he is a Knight and need not be afraid to talk to him.”

Looks of wonder were exchanged.

“Let me next instruct you in the sign of fellowship. It is very simple and is given when there is danger and no time for ceremony. You take your right hand and raise up your hat or cap three times, or your hand alone if you have nothing on your head at the time — so. Look once! Remember that we have thousands of members in both armies. If, therefore, either of them should come to your farm or place of business, you have only to give this sign and your person and your property will be perfectly safe.”

“Well now, who would have thought this?” whispered the men to each other. “This here one knows much,” and then a shout went up — “Hurrah for the Huber!”

“We have a pass-word when you wish to come into a lodge in session and so on,” resumed Philip with proud self-consciousness when the applause had subsided. “This is of course changed every month. This month it is *Jackson*, and next month it will be something else.”

He now ordered the guards to be relieved, and when they came in he went over the whole ground again, after which he invited all to ask questions. No one thought of any just then.

“Now I would like to address a few more words to you, if you are not too tired,” said Huber.

Oh, no, they replied. Let him go ahead. They could listen to him all night.

“But though the cause is good,” said Hartnagel to

himself among the oats, "by the great Schinnerhannes, I can't stand this thing all night!"

"Yet, friends, to-morrow is Sunday," answered Huber, unconscious of the last part of the conversation, "and it would not be right to stay here after midnight."

"That's certainly true; besides we couldn't keep awake in church either," said Frederick Ruthvon.

"Therefore I will speak only a few words more," said Huber. "I want to tell you one or two things which of course I could not mention this afternoon where so many Radicals were present. And don't forget that all that is said and done here is under the oath you have taken. — You remember that your Doctor Helfer — who seems to have turned against those he gets his living from — asked me whether stronger measures would be recommended if the government failed to listen to our resolutions, and that I answered that much stronger ones would in that case probably be brought forward and used, but refused to tell him what they would be because he was not a friend of the people. Now I say to you that you must use stronger remedies right away."

Closer the new Knights pressed around their leader. Savage and weird they looked in the dim lantern-light. Dangerous enough they were too though usually so peaceable, even as a gentle dog becomes fierce when it imagines itself in danger of losing the bone it is gnawing.

Watching them closely to note the effect of his words, Huber continued: — "You want to make it hot for the

enrolling officers if they come around again. Get behind trees and fences where you cannot be seen, and when these devils who would sell you for a dollar while they are crying over the imaginary wrongs of niggers, come along give them a dose of good coarse salt in the calves of their legs, or if you think they are worth it, of fine shot!"

The initiates approved these sentiments by word and look, and waxing bold the leader went on with increased animation:—"And if the draft comes off, we will all stand together. Get out your guns and pistols and buy new ones besides, and defend yourselves, and if that fails we will have still stronger remedies. Meanwhile if you are enrolled and have a bodily disability, I advise you to attend exemption day at Reading on the 22nd. You will get off, and it will throw the rascals off their guard and make them less watchful. Our next meeting will be in Mike Hahn's barn two weeks from to-night. Hunt up good men and bring them with you for initiation. Come to the afternoon meeting also, and be ready to meet at my call at any time."

Steadily the great arm was coming closer.

Tom Hartnagel gnashed his teeth and took advantage of the applause that followed the close of Huber's remarks to change his position. As soon as he could make himself heard Pete Prantman asked whether the salt and the shot remedies might not also be tried on other Lincoln hirelings, and especially on Lincoln spies, as well as on enrolling officers?

“Not unless they make themselves very offensive, for we would soon get into trouble,” replied Huber.

“There’s three men in this neighborhood bad offensive to every honest man,” said Pete. “One is a fellow who came here from another state and hates us and says we’re only Dutch dumb-heads. The second one has been in the Lincoln army and Huber there knows how he acted this afternoon; and the other wears the nigger unicorn now and abuses honest men than himself and” — with an insulting look at Ruthvon, senior, — “is a disgrace to his parents.”

An angry flush passed over the countenance of the latter.

“Pete Prantman,” said he in a calm tone but with suppressed emotion, “these men are better than you and I warn you to give care, else you’ll get your skin full sooner than you’ll wish, now!”

“Will you break your oath?” said Pete in great excitement.

“I ain’t breaking it and won’t, but I’ll say right here that I ’m ashamed I belong to the same society you do,” retorted Ruthvon.

“Friends, don’t forget yourselves,” interposed Huber. “Be careful how you use your guns. Let us now go home. I bid you all good night.”

The first meeting of Knights in the township of Copton was over. It was almost midnight. Several offers of hospitality were made Knight Huber, but he declined them all on the plea that he must journey homeward that night.

When at last all were gone and everything was quiet in the barn Hartnagel slowly and cautiously, and not without a good deal of pain, crept out of his hiding-place and stretched himself. He started when a hand was laid on his leg and a voice said "R. D.!"

"By my sex," he exclaimed, "it's as dark as three bags here, but is that you, Billy?"

"That's me, clean down, and like yourself I've been stealing," answered the hopeful youth.

"You young hex you, why didn't you tell me you was going to hide in the barn? You came near spoiling everything," said Tom.

"Because you didn't tell me you was going to hide either," Billy responded laughing, "and I thought one of us ought to be present without being initiated; you know Carl Schlapphammel wouldn't stay. I came near laughing loud out when he ran off."

"Yes, and if you had, both of us might have got killed and all our plans would have been spoiled. I could hear you, but they didn't, and we've got the traitors now. Let's go, Billy."

Carefully they descended to the fodder-gangway and soon were safely out of the building and in the highway.

"Good night, Billy. Nothing to nobody now except your mam, until I see Captain Ruthvon," said Tom.

"You know me, Tom," replied the lad. "Nothing to nobody except mam until I see you again," and Billy would have yielded up life sooner than to have broken

his pledge to Tom Hartnagel. He reached home long after midnight, but weary as he was he rehearsed all the night's adventures to his foster-mother. She made his task easy by providing him a good supper and praising him for his wit and courage.

"Mam," said he as he climbed into his loft, "I'm so tired that I'm bad afraid I won't get to church to hear Mr. Dox to-day!"

Early Sunday morning Tom Hartnagel called on Captain Ruthvon and related what he had learned.

"Did my father join?" asked Charles Ruthvon anxiously.

"He did," replied Tom very reluctantly.

A look of pain passed over the captain's face.

"The organization of this lodge is a serious matter," said he. "I wish I had not come home."

CHAPTER XXI.

THE FORTUNE-TELLER HAS VISITORS AGAIN.

Promptly at nine o'clock on Sunday evening Tom Hartnagel entered the dwelling of the fortune-teller on the mountain. He had little superstition in his composition and less faith in Katrina Galsch's powers. He knew very well, however, that by means not at all supernatural, she was well acquainted with the private affairs and secrets of numerous individuals. He was persuaded that for some reason she was friendly to the Union cause and also to him and Captain Ruthvon personally. If there was any plot on foot to injure either, she would likely know it. He remembered what was said in the barn on the previous night, but perhaps Katrina had some definite information. Hence, when she invited him to her habitation and hinted that she might be able to tell him something that concerned him and Charles Ruthvon, he at once resolved to accept her invitation.

She was waiting for him, though he had sent no word of his coming. She knew human nature well enough to believe he would come. She sat in her rocking chair reading a ponderous board-backed German Bible. On the hearth a few sticks of wood were blazing, for the evening was damp and chilly. According to custom he sat down without waiting to be invited.

“You received my word, I see,” she said, fixing her dark eyes upon him. “Will you mind telling me what occurred at the barn last night? I want to see how good my Billy’s memory is.”

Hartnagel briefly rehearsed the events of the evening.

“That was good, ach Gott!” said the sibyl when he had concluded, and both had a hearty laugh.

“Now, you are a friend to Billy,” she continued, rising and bolting the door, “Zellon and Prantman are not, and Pete puts up Bodie to annoy me, the gallows-bird! So I’ll do you a good turn if I can. Do you know, Tom Hartnagel, that these two carrion crows would murder you and Charlie Ruthvon if they could safely do it?”

Then she proceeded to tell him that on the preceding Monday she had sent Billy to Reading on errands and that he came home late. When near Ruthvon’s house he heard two men behind him and stepped into the bushes by the road. The men were Zellon and Prantman on their way home from “The People’s Hotel,” and as they passed him Billy overheard what is already known to the reader.

“They’ll be emboldened in their designs,” she concluded, “because Huber encouraged them indirectly last night, and because they got out of the barn-burning scrape so well.”

“They certainly have some cause for spite against us,” said Tom, after musing a moment.

“And do you know that Prantman is urged on by

that lovely sister of his? Ach Gott! her hate is consuming her."

"Of course," said Tom, rising up and walking the floor. "What a difference between her and Sallie Vonneida."

"Hartnagel, don't you tell Sallie about what you heard last night. You know how we women are,— we can't keep a secret. Ha! ha! — Say!" she exclaimed, noticing that Tom cast his look to the floor, "have you told her already, you ketzer?"

"Do you think," he replied in a tone of great contempt, "that a girl like Sallie would blab anything out that I tell her? I have only to say, 'Sallie, nothing of this out,' and it's nailed up like a coffin."

"So you've told her?" persisted Katrina,

"It's none of your business, now, and I'm not a fortune-teller," retorted Tom somewhat warmly.

"All right, Tom Hartnagel, but I know you want to expose Huber, and you can easy see there'll be less chance to do it and to defeat Pete Prantman's plans about you and the captain if this thing gets out, for they'll all be more on their guard."

"That's so. I see that, clean down, and I'll tell Sal — it won't get out."

"And it's likely I can this very night furnish you more proof of the enmity of the two men we've mentioned. I'm going to do what I very seldom do — permit you as one patron to hear what another patron tells me in confidence."

“But I’m no patron of yours and you know I have no faith in your power to tell fortunes, Katrina,” said Tom, stopping in his walking and looking at the sibyl. “I’m going for the emergency to-morrow, but you don’t know any more than I do myself whether I shall come back alive or not.”

“Faith or none,” she replied returning his gaze, “I believe you are a true man and that I can trust you.”

“Of course you can trust me,” said he, “and therefore will you tell me why you pretend to do things no human being can do?”

“People want to ask questions, and I might as well answer them myself as to leave the job to some one else,” she replied. “I usually give comfort and satisfaction and that is a good work,” with which she arose and proceeded to get the skull out of her strong box. She placed it on the table and lighted the taper within.

“Ain’t you afraid that our Lord God will punish you before your time by permitting the devil some night to come and wring your neck or carry you off?” Tom asked as he watched her in her work. He noticed that a shudder passed through her frame.

“Tom Hartnagel, I don’t fear God,” she answered hoarsely but looking straight at her visitor, “for I don’t believe that He is; and the devil is a creature invented by priests to get money out of people, with whom we now frighten children and dupe fools and villains. The spirit that dwelt in the body of which this skull was a part is as dead as the skull itself.”

The strong ex-soldier shuddered in turn in spite of himself.

“Katrina Galsch, it is right that one of your trade should hold such awful views,” he said.

She walked to the door and listened.

“I may be worse than the devil you believe in,” she said in a low voice, “yet I sometimes do people a little good. — Quiet!” she whispered as a footstep was heard approaching the house. “Get in there quick and be perfectly still whatever you may hear. Sit on my bed there, and if I come in, don’t say a word. You can easily hear all that’s said in this room,” and she motioned him toward the little chamber to which she went on the occasion of Pete Prantman’s visit. — “Yes,” she said in response to a loud knocking at the door and an angry voice demanding admittance. “I’m coming; I can’t always leave the door unfastened.”

Earlier this same evening in the mill-room of Christian Mehlhuber’s mill sat two men in earnest conference. One was Pete Prantman, the other Jake Zellon. A few days before, William Rambeutel had had a visitor in the person of a constable from Cold Spring township, Lebanon County, it may safely be predicted on information furnished by Zellon. The official insisted on taking William with him, on the ground that Vickey Hauser wanted an immediate arrangement made about the engagement which the former had broken. As Zellon was a good miller Mehlhuber had hired him to help run the

mill until Rambeutel's return from his enforced visit beyond Second Mountain. Pete had come to-night to confer with his lieutenant on matters of importance to both.

"I tell you, Jake, if it could — but we daren't do *that* yet."

"Do what, you Prantman pig? Speak out," said Zellon irritably.

"You know well enough what I do mean without that I say it."

"Maybe and maybe not, but I know if Hartnagel or Ruthvon was in my power in the wheel-room just now, I'd" —

"Hush!" said Pete nervously; "don't talk so loud, you Schwernoether! Don't you remember what happened here once before?"

"Well, then, what do you want?" asked Jake impatiently.

"Look at our faces, Jake. We're bound to have revenge on the man who done that. But he's going back to the army and as long as there's so good a chance of his running in the way of a Southern bullet or bayonet, or getting sick and dying, it's foolish to go too far, ain't it? But while he's home we can make his life and Hartnagel's miserable and get some revenge and satisfaction at once."

"How?" inquired Zellon eagerly.

"You know what Huber said last night," answered Pete, "and how could these two rascals be more offen-

sive than they are, I'd like to know? Let's use the means he said we might in such cases, and if the shot turns out to be a little coarse, why so much the better, huh?"

"Go ahead, Pete. You and me'll hang together yet!— Wait, let's have a good pull at the juice."

"Now," said Pete after they had taken a drink of apple-jack out of the black jug, "to-morrow night there's to be a sort of party — something new, and too good for common people — at Squire Zweispringer's house. I hear that a lot of people from Womelsdorf and Reading is to be there, and of course the Yankee's daughter and that Ruthvon too, for he's out again I think. Now, when he's on his way home from there how would it be to try Huber's medicine on him once?"

"That's bully!" exclaimed Zellon with an oath. "Here, Pete, let the juice grow this way again. Here, G'sundheit!— But hold on, Pete, we can't do it," he added after drinking.

"Why not?"

"Because the Yankee's daughter might be with him in spite of what Galsch has said about a Southern girl, you know, and to shoot at Ruthvon in the dark when she is with him in the carriage would be ticklish business. I might easy hit the wrong one. My mother has often told me I'll surely hang some day, but if I must, I want to hang for Hartnagel, for I'll never forgive him till I stand over the dog's dead body."

"Donnerwetter!" said Pete with great emphasis, "if

I thought she wouldn't come around yet, I'd say shoot anyhow."

"But you'll have to do the shooting then," said Zellon sullenly.

"But what'll we do, Jake?"

"Why, we'll shoot his horse instead. I believe it'll scare him from the neighborhood, for he'll think he may be killed any day."

"That's so," assented Pete, his face looking a trifle meditative for a moment. "But all depends on what Galsch says. We must see the witch to-night yet. She'll be waiting for us — for you, — for I told her you'd be there at half eleven o'clock about. This is prison business and I'll do nothing without consulting her. If she says 'No,' then hands off, for she says it on Sunday night. All you need ask her is whether what you're going to do to-morrow night'll succeed."

"You're very free making engagements for me," replied Zellon, "but I'll go, for I'd rather have her opinion than Glancy Jones,' though he done well for us, you know. All she's told us so far has come out to a hair."

"That's so," said Pete with much animation. "Come, Jake, it's getting late and it'll take us near an hour to get to her hut."

Having taken another drink from the jug, the two conspirators left the mill and were on their way to the fortune-teller's. The road led up the mountain in a south-easterly direction. The track was rough and the

region was very wild and desolate. The baying of Bodie's hound and the hooting of an owl, with the consciousness of the errand they were on, made the night seem doubly dark and weird to Pete and kept him nervous. Only his thirst for revenge could have impelled him to make a journey like the present. Though he said nothing he was very glad when he saw the moon rising over the eastern hills. Zellon apparently took no note of the "voices of the night," but trudged rapidly and silently on.

"Wait, Zellon," said Pete when they had reached a large rock about two hundred yards from the sibyl's place. "I'll stay here for you. Go, and don't let the old hex get too much out of you."

"Go yourself, then," snarled Jake. "What's the use of trying to keep anything from her? She knows it all anyhow. The devil serves her faithfully but he'll get his reward. They say he came to take her one night, but he couldn't because she happened to have the Bible on her lap."

"Hold your mouth and go," said Pete shivering and looking over his shoulder. Zellon left his companion and in a few minutes reached Galsch's door. He lifted the latch but found the door fastened.

"The old devil's servant has her door locked to-night," he growled, "but that wouldn't keep her master out I think.—Halloo! there, Galsch, let me in."

Galsch gave Tom Hartnagel plenty of time to hide away and then slowly undid the fastenings and admitted

Zellon, whose voice she easily recognized. He came in swearing at her tardiness and blinked a good deal under the light. He started back a few steps when he saw the skull staring at him from the table.

“Is this your Sunday evening God-service?” said he sitting down on a stool by the fire. “The devil is the preacher, I think?”

“Yes,” she replied in the same vein, “and sometimes he preaches better sermons than old Dox. Would you like to hear one?”

“God defend us, no!” he exclaimed; — “say, is that a cat coming out of the kammer or is it?” —

“Oh, that’s only Gewitter, my black cat,” interrupted Galsch, smiling. But when Gewitter passed back of him he turned on the stool and kept his eye on the huge *felis* until it had quietly disposed itself on an old rug by the hearth.

“Zellon, I was looking for you to-night,” said the sibyl when Jake once more turned toward her. “Is there somewhat that I can do for you?”

“Now, look here once,” he replied moving up closer to her, “are you sure that young gallows-rope is not around here? Or is he in bed and fast at sleeping?”

“The poor boy went to Reading this morning on a Sunday errand for me and hasn’t come home yet,” she replied readily.

“But I don’t trust ‘the poor boy,’ and you know right well too why,” he said angrily. “Why did you let him give witness about the fire?”

“How could I help it?” she retorted. “Boys will talk, you know, and he had said something that gave the Yankee the hint, and lawyer Richards of course got it all out of him. Besides, I knew you’d get clear and told you so.”

“I don’t trust him, I tell you, and if I catch him, watching us, I’ll turn his neck around.”

“No, Jake Zellon, you won’t,” said the sibyl, her dark eyes suddenly sparkling like an angry serpent’s. “If you hurt him, it won’t go good with you. Don’t venture it!”

Zellon would have fought Tom Hartnagel bravely, but he was actually cowed before the anger of this woman of darkness.

“Then keep him from spying around,” he said after a moment but in a tone unusually humble for him.

“Now, what do you want, you gallows-rope?” she said. “It’s getting late and Billy may be home any time.”

“I want to ask a question.”

“To-night I answer no question under two dollars.”

“Here, you screw,” said Jake handing her the money Pete had given him for the purpose.

“This is the night when the soul of St. Augustine passed from purgatory into heaven, and on that night the revelations are always very full and clear,” said the sibyl, taking the money.

“It’s a jail matter,” said he, “and so I’m anxious to know whether I can do it without getting into trouble,

You've told so many things true that I know you can tell this too."

She arose from her chair and laid her hand on his shoulder.

"In spite of all I can tell you, you will take your own way," she said, with inborn dignity and with a tinge of sadness in her voice, "for you are impelled to your doom by a power you cannot resist."

"I know I'll be hanged, for my mother has often told me so," he replied with a shudder.

"Look! It's drawing toward midnight. We've no time to lose," said Galsch pointing at the clock.

"See here, you witch," exclaimed the ruffian regaining his reckless manner, "everything people tells you is in the strictest confidence, ain't it?"

"Sure as the world stands," she answered reproachfully, lowering her chin and wrinkling her brow. "Do you think Katrina Galsch would betray the confidence given her by any one?"

"All right then," said he. "To-morrow night I want to scare Charlie Ruthvon a little."

Somebody listened sharply in the chamber and Galsch gave a hasty glance in that direction as though she knew the manner of the listener and would give him warning to keep quiet.

"That is, Pete Prantman does, and you are to do the scaring," she remarked coolly in answer to her visitor's statement.

"I told Pete there wasn't any use trying to hide any-

thing from you," said the conspirator rising up, "and I might as well tell you all."

And he did, just as he and Pete had planned it awhile before, a pair of ears in the kammer catching all he said.

"Don't tell Pete I told you," he said in conclusion.

"All in confidence," she replied, secretly pleased with his acknowledgment of her power;—"I will answer your question truly."

She bolted the outer door carefully and then proceeded to renew the taper in the skull, an operation which Jake watched with a deep interest, but not so intently that he could not every now and then bestow a glance on the quietly sleeping cat, as if not yet quite sure that it was not his dark majesty in disguise. The great Dutch clock indicated that midnight had almost come. Katrina hastily produced a zodiacal chart and consulted it a moment.

"It seems good so," she said, as if to herself; "but he will get her yet."

"Who'll get who yet?" asked Zellon quickly.

"Quiet, you!" she said sharply. She then walked toward the apartment where Tom was concealed, saying in a low voice to Zellon: "Don't stir, whatever you hear or see. I'm going to consult—never mind!" and lifting a finger to her lips she disappeared within the door.

While Jake was watching the skull Gewitter disappeared. Suddenly the old clock began to strike and at the same instant the voice of the fortune-teller was heard saying, "*Alle gute Geister loben den Herrn!*"—mingled

with the noise of shuffling feet, the mewling and spitting of a cat and a suppressed laugh. A moment later Galsch reappeared in the large room. Her hair was disheveled and she seemed to stagger. Throwing herself into her great arm-chair, she heaved a deep sigh.

“Almost I passed the midnight hour in my consultation,” she said, “and the consequences might have been dreadful to me and you both. Did you not hear the laugh as of a demon?”

“What is it, Galsch?” with tremulous voice asked Zellon, who had run to the outer door and stood now with the latch in his hand ready to retreat at the first appearance of anything uncanny.

“Sit down,” she said. “You will carry out your plan without discovery. But I saw a bloody hand and you may be wounded. Jake Zellon, beware!”

“But you’re sure what I do Monday night will succeed?” he inquired, sitting down again.

“Just as I told you,” she replied.

“Good so,” said he in his old, reckless way. “That’s all I want to succeed now; the rest may take care of itself.”

“I told you that you would take your own way,” said Galsch.

“Galsch, you told me to beware,” said Jake rising up and preparing to go. “You’d better beware too after what you said came near happening. Don’t you remember the blacksmith over in Bern township who sold himself to — Never Mind I think you called him! — for so

many years of — Never Mind's — service? The smith made him work so hard one night ironing a wagon that toward morning the — Never Mind — claimed his wages, and the smith was found drowned in three inches of water, his face down in it. Look out once, Galsch! So it'll go with you some night."

"You take care of yourself and I'll take care of *him*," she replied smiling. "Pax vobiscum!"

Zellon left the house and rejoined Prantman who, chilled through, was impatiently waiting for him. While walking down the road he gave some account of his interview with the sibyl. Pete listened eagerly.

"Sapperlotte! I tell you it's good, Jake," he said gleefully. "Let's have revenge and make it hot for Nigger Ruthvon and the Hartnagel pig, and we won't care for all the evil spirits" —

But, alas for human courage! At that moment within fifty feet of them from the woods on the upper side of the road came the startling cry "Yahoo, Yahoo, Y-a-h-o-o!" — dying away on the silent night with the mournful cadence which we are apt to associate with the wail of a lost spirit. The two men fairly leaped into the air at the awful sound, then started at a dead run as if all the evil spirits whom Pete had defied were in full pursuit. Reaching the forks in the road, Prantman turned to the right and called to Zellon to come with him. Not until the foot of the mountain was reached did they abate their speed.

"I never heard him so near," said Pete almost ex-

hausted. "Something's wrong. Shall we give it up, Jake?"

"Nix," answered the latter with an awful oath. "Never!" and they went on to Prantman's.

No sooner had Zellon left the fortune-teller's door and his retreating footsteps were heard than Tom Hartnagel emerged from the little room. He was half amused but very serious too.

"Don't kill him Hartnagel, so long as he doesn't attempt your life," said Galsch noticing the stern look that came into his face after he had laughed at Gewitter's part in the night's performances.

"Oh, no; his time hasn't quite come yet," was the reply.

As Tom went down the road over which Zellon had just gone he heard the sound of a fife and well knew who the fifer was. Presently, closer to him, he heard a voice singing:—

"Come, come, my love, and go with me;
Come, come, my love, and go with me;
Come, come, my love, and go with me
And happy all the day we'll be,"

with a *ritard* movement and a grand flourish in the last line.

"Why, Billy, here I see you again," said Tom when the two met.

"Oh, it's you, Tom, is it?" said the bright youth with affected surprise. "A lad like you ought to be in bed at this time of night."

“Hold your mouth, you young rascal,” said Hartnagel much amused. “Don’t you know Jake Zellon is around here and maybe Pete too?”

“They all both was lately but they’re two miles away now,” replied Sharp Billy laughing heartily.

“How do you know it?”

“Why, they agreed to run a race by moonlight, starting right below here. I knew of it and walked down to see it. And such running, clean down honest! I could hear the clatter of their boots a mile down the hill. Barney Butz and Jack Stroud with their old engine would have been left out of sight in two miles!”

“You’re a young Deihenker, sure,” said Tom greatly diverted. “What have you been doing?”

“Nothing particular,” answered Billy with a smirk. “No doubt your dear friend, Peter Prantman, will tell you next time you meet him in prayer-meeting.”

“All right, Billy. You’re a good boy anyhow. And now give me your hand. I may never see you again, for Tuesday afternoon I go off to Harrisburg to see Pete Prantman’s Southern friends and they don’t like me.”

“I wish I could go with you as fifer to your company but my mam can’t spare me,” said the lad ruefully.

“You are serving your country well at home,” answered his friend. “Good-bye, Billy, and take care of yourself.”

“Good-bye, Tom,” said Billy trying to laugh. “Come home soon.”

Going down the mountain in the bright moonlight

Tom again heard the fife, and the tune was "Rally round the flag, boys." It did the brave fellow good and made him stronger for duty.

CHAPTER XXII.

AN EXPERIMENT THAT WORKED BOTH WAYS.

Under his mother's tender care Captain Ruthvon's health had improved rapidly, and early on Monday morning he was on his way to Reading to inform the military authorities of the existence of an organization in Copton township having treasonable objects. On his father's account he was exceedingly reluctant to take this step, but duty to his country seemed paramount to all other considerations. His affection for his father was strong as ever and he hoped that the latter would presently see his error and withdraw from the lodge of Knights. He had an interview with Colonel Erb, and several telegraphic messages passed between Reading and Washington, with the result that Captain Ruthvon was instructed quietly to watch the movements of the Knights in the vicinity of Haltfest during the remainder of his furlough.

His errand satisfactorily done, the captain's ardent thoughts turned again to Blanche Chetwynde. Mr. Chetwynde and Frank had visited him as soon as they knew he was at home, but he had not seen Blanche since his return from the army. He resolved to call at Mr. Chetwynde's before going home. The family greeted him most cordially. Only Blanche showed a slight feeling of constraint and seemed unhappy.

“Charlie, I’m sowing the hill field and you must excuse me now,” said Jabez after some conversation. “Come over often ; we shall always be glad to see you here.”

“Miss Blanche, you are invited to Susie’s party to-night and so am I,” said the captain after a little further discourse. “Will you accept of me as an escort?”

She replied hesitatingly that she had not fully decided to go.

“Certainly you will go, child,” said Mrs. Chetwynde ; “it’ll do you good. You’ve been out so little since you came back from Connecticut. Besides, Susie would be so disappointed.”

Blanche blushed when she observed how intently the captain was looking at her and remarked that she had found so much to do at home that she had not had time to visit much.

Evening was coming on and Charles prepared to leave.

“Where is Tom Hartnagel?” he inquired. “I propose that we all go over to the depot from Susie’s to-night and see him and the other boys off.”

“Tom? Didn’t you see him?” said Mrs. Chetwynde. “He went over early this morning to see you and again at noon, but didn’t find you. He said he wasn’t going away until to-morrow because he must see you first.”

“Then I must go at once, for he has probably gone over again. — Miss Blanche, I will come for you at eight o’clock.”

Hartnagel had gone to Ruthvon's not only to see the captain but also to discharge his duty to Sallie Vonneida as a faithful lover should. The fact that he was obliged to go so often enabled him to perform it well. On the third visit he had a rather stormy encounter with Frederick Ruthvon.

"I'm tired of having black-snakes running backward and forward over my premises," said the latter, "when I know that very likely they're plotting against the liberties of their neighbors. I'd as soon you'd stay away as come here, Tom Hartnagel, — in fact, the first would please me best."

But as this conversation occurred by the kitchen door, Sallie heard what Mr. Ruthvon said and at once spoke up with freedom and bluntness.

"If it's too good here for Tom Hartnagel, it's too good for me too, Fred Ruthvon," she said, and at once made preparation to go. Mrs. Ruthvon, whose gentle manner had much influence over the young woman, succeeded however in placating Sallie and she resumed her work.

Having called Sallie Vonneida "A bully girl" and told Ruthvon, senior, he ought to be ashamed of himself, Tom hurried off before a reply could be made. He met the captain on the road and communicated to him at length what he knew of the plan of the two conspirators.

"Their experiment will work both ways," said the captain. "If possible, Zellon must be caught in the act."

“I’m with you, captain. I’m not going now till to-morrow or the day after. I can be of more use at home just now than in Maryland.”

“Bravo! Tom. You are the fellow for me! Now, I propose this:—I could of course disappoint the rascals by going a roundabout way to-night, but sooner or later they would find their opportunity anyhow, and it’s best to let them have it when we are prepared to meet them. And if I can capture Zellon, it may result in breaking up the Knights at the start.”

His further thought, to which he did not, however, give expression, was that if Zellon were taken in the act, his father would perhaps abandon an organization to which such a miscreant belonged.

The direct road from Haltfest to Mr. Ruthvon’s house led through Muhlenberg Schlapphammel’s woods and the two friends agreed that very likely there, as best adopted to his purpose, Jake Zellon would try his experiment. It was arranged that each man was to carry a rifle and a pistol; that the captain should hitch up old Sim, a horse of little value and very gentle, and at the appointed time carry Blanche to Squire Zweispringer’s and then excuse himself on the plea of important business; and that Tom should then meet him, after which, at half past ten, they would drive back toward Ruthvon’s.

“Now,” said the captain when they were leaving the village, “don’t hurt the fellow if it can be avoided.”

“All right,” said Tom, but with a strong mental reservation.

The carriage-top was up and the captain drove. Tom, leaning back so that he could not be discerned, sat with his trusty rifle in readiness for instant use. Charles pretended to relate an incident in his war experience and spoke with his ordinary volume of voice. The moon had just risen when they entered Schlapphammel’s woods.

“Hold your lines steady,” whispered Tom, “for I think if the rascal’s courage hasn’t failed him, we’ll hear from him soon.”

They felt somewhat as they used to feel when approaching a masked battery, or what might prove to be one, down in Virginia.

“It was a gallant affair. We drove the rebels right before us down the hill and into the woods beyond. I wish some of the rebels in Copton township could”——

A sharp report rang out on the air and a disguised voice said in shrill tones “Leave here, Ruthvon. Somebody is on your track. Next time you die. Beware the draft!”

Poor old Sim reared, plunged and fell. Hartnagel leaped to the ground and when the voice in the woods ceased speaking he cried “Halt!” but hearing retreating footsteps he discharged his rifle guided by the sound. A yell of pain and an oath followed the report. Then rapid running was again heard. Tom plunged into the woods in hot pursuit, but suddenly all was

quiet, and as it was very dark among the trees in spite of the moon, further search would have been vain and Tom returned to the road. Here he found the captain trying to loosen the wounded horse from the harness.

“We can’t manage this thing without a lantern and we failed to bring one,” said Charles.

Tom started for help and went by Mr. Ruthvon’s to his employer’s house. In a short time he was back with Mr. Chetwynde and a lantern. The horse’s hurt proved to be only a flesh-wound and the animal was able to be led home. Mr. Ruthvon, hearing strange voices, came out of the house and inquired what was the matter.

“Well, father, some one has shot poor Sim from behind the bushes over in Schlapphammel’s woods,” Charles replied.

“Yankee Chetwynde, is your daughter hurt?” asked Frederick Ruthvon hastily, turning from his son to his neighbor.

“She isn’t, I’m glad to say, neighbor Ruthvon,” answered Jabez, “but it can’t be reckoned to the man who shot your horse that she is well. She wasn’t in the carriage it seems.”

Charles felt a thrill of pleasure when he heard the question and noticed the anxious tone in which it was asked.

“Have you any notion, Charlie, who shot Sim?” said Mr. Ruthvon.

“I’m not certain,” answered Charles.

“If I knew” — Mr. Ruthvon began.

“You’ll probably know in good time if a certain yell meant anything,” Tom Hartnagel broke in, “and when you do find out you’ll not be much surprised, for if I ain’t wrong I’ve seen the man in Philip Huber’s company.”

This was a keen thrust and Ruthvon, senior, said angrily: “I’m sure the fact that he may have been seen in Mr. Huber’s company doesn’t make him any worse and won’t account for this outrage.”

“Maybe not,” retorted Hartnagel, “but I’ve heard that the leaders of the Knights of the Golden Circle in Indiana have advised the use of such remedies on certain objectionable people, and I thought, you know, that the man who shot Sim might be following their advice and concluded to try his hand on a horse first, by the devil!”

A strong light seemed to break in on Frederick Ruthvon just then, but he busied himself about the horse and said nothing.

Sim having been cared for as well as was possible under the circumstances, Charles Ruthvon hastily returned with another conveyance to Squire Zweispringer’s, for Blanche. It was quite late now and all the guests except Doctor Helfer had departed.

“Ho! what is the matter with you, Charlie?” said the latter. “Why, your face and clothes look as if you had seen and fought with a ghost.”

“I can trust you all, and will,” he replied after viewing himself in a mirror a moment and giving a light

laugh. He then related the manner in which Tom Hartnagel had obtained his information of Pete Prantman's plans and gave a detailed account of the evening's adventures. They all agreed that Katrina Galsch's life would be worth little should Zellon discover that she betrayed him, and solemnly promised to keep her secret.

Charles and Blanche drove home by the "back road" and the lane. The ride did not prove what the former had so fondly hoped it might. Blanche was nervous after what she had heard and even the captain held the reins more firmly than usual. He informed his companion of his father's eager question regarding her safety and expressed the belief that it augured well for their hopes.

"But it was only natural for him to ask the question, Charlie," said Blanche. "He would have done it about any one else under the same circumstances."

"Not in the same manner though," answered Charles. "His eagerness and evident anxiety revealed more than the words he spoke. What has happened will cause him to think."

"Will he ever know who did this cowardly deed?" she asked.

"I believe he has already made a shrewd guess from the hints Tom Hartnagel threw out," he replied.

"It is awful to have neighbors like Pete Prantman and Jake Zellon," said Blanche with a shudder.

"Yes, and they believed you might be in the carriage

and yet went on with their plan. There is a day of awful reckoning coming," said Charles with sudden energy.

"Oh, Charlie, Charlie, be careful," exclaimed Blanche with woman's solicitude.

"I shall be," he said; "yet what does it matter? In a few weeks I must return to duty at the front, and if I fall few will care and some will rejoice."

"Surely none would be so heartless as to rejoice and many would mourn," she said impulsively. "Do not mention such an awful thing. Think of your father and mother and Catharine."

"And not of you, Blanche? Would you be among the mourners?" he asked almost bitterly.

"Oh, Charlie, it is unjust, cruel, to ask such a question," she answered reproachfully.

"And, dear Blanche, I sincerely beg your pardon; but I feel despondent and irritable to-night. I am grieved at you and vexed at my father."

"Perhaps you will understand us both better after awhile," said she after weeping a few moments silently. "If you are right, Charlie, in reference to your father's feelings, they will one day show themselves. Be patient. My promise to you shall never be broken."

"I will trust you, dear Blanche," said he sadly.

By this time they had arrived at Mr. Chetwynde's house, and having assisted Blanche to alight, and waited until she reached the door, Charles drove slowly home.

The next night the attempt on Captain Ruthvon's

life—for such it was believed to have been—was known and discussed at Baltzer's. As to who was the assailant various opinions were held, and two or three names were mentioned. Jake Zellon was not seen for several days, but a well-known physician of Womelsdorf had a number of visits from him at night. When next seen in Haltfest his left hand was bandaged and in a sling. He explained that he had been accidentally shot while engaged in pistol practice in the little meadow back of Mehlhuber's mill. His talk about Lincoln hirelings was louder and his threats fiercer than ever.

CHAPTER XXIII.

UNCLE SAM HEARS THE EXCUSES OF SOME OF HIS NEPHEWS.

“ I pray thee have me excused.”

According to notice given to all persons at the time of their enrollment the preceding month, certain days to hear and determine claims for exemption from military duty under the present registration were set by the Commissioner of Draft for the district. When the handbills were posted in the townships of Copton, Rattleton and Knocksdehudel hope rose high in many a heart, and brains that had never been bothered with study before were cudgeled and worried that perchance they might yield a plan whereby their owner could avoid the service he might be called on to perform. In consequence some fearfully and wonderfully conceived devices were presented and urged before the Commissioner.

On the day for hearing the claims from the three townships named and a number of others, the early train from Haltfest was crowded with claimants and their friends, the latter consisting largely of wives, sisters, mothers and sweethearts.

The Commissioner's rooms were in the old Bell building on Penn Street, south side, between 5th and 6th

Streets, Reading. At the hour appointed for the hearings to begin they were filled with a motley crowd of men and women of all ages and conditions. Some of the men were smoking and not a few had evidently braced themselves for the occasion with the cup which not only exhilarates but likewise intoxicates. Others were silent and looked as if they entertained no hope. Such as were surely disabled were happy in their infirmities for once, but they who had only the device of the cudgeled and worried brain to depend upon, felt much like the passenger who holds a pass of very doubtful character when he sees the conductor coming. Jake Zellon and Andrew Pfannkuchen looked defiant. One man was whistling, another tried to crack a joke, a third danced a jig, and in one corner a young woman was talking earnestly to a young man, evidently her lover, and smiling to encourage him with an effort in which cheerfulness and tears were contending for the mastery.

Pete Prantman and his father were also in the throng. Pete frowned at Sharp Billy but failed utterly to make any impression on that ubiquitous lad.

“Now the mill begins to grind and some of you will soon be fine,” said a jolly man. This cheerful remark, made in a loud whisper, was evoked by the entrance, at a side door, of Major Richard Hautnehmer, the Commissioner of Draft, accompanied by two policemen, Elijah Belsnickel and several other deputy marshals, three clerks and a member of the Reading bar, who

volunteered his services for that day and acted as counsel to the Commissioner in the solution of such questions of law as might arise.

The Commissioner was not at all popular. He smiled too much, as if the proceedings were all a pleasant play arranged for his special delectation, and more than one man in the room would cheerfully have sent a bullet through his heart if it could have been done safely.

“He has easy smiling, the big-mouthed pig,” said Mrs. Pfannkuchen.

“He ought to be sent to the war,” remarked another.

“I wonder how much he gets a day for his dirty work?” asked a third.

But these remarks and many more equally hostile and disparaging were made in low tones and Major Hautnehmer, unconscious of them and serenely smiling, took his seat at the desk behind the low railing which separated the office proper from the rest of the apartment. His counsel sat down close by and the policemen lounged behind them. Having looked over the people as though he had a very agreeable piece of news to communicate, the Commissioner suddenly exchanged his smile for a frown and rising up spoke as follows: “In accordance with a notice given by handbills and in the newspapers I sit to hear claims for exemption from the pending draft by persons enrolled in the townships on the list for to-day. The clerk will call the roll in alphabetical order of each township, and when the name of a person claiming exemption is called he will come forward promptly

and state his claim briefly and as clearly as possible. If he cannot do this himself, counsel may do it for him. Cases needing surgical examination will be attended to in the adjoining room, where Doctor Goettman is in attendance for the purpose."

During this speech the silence was as the grave.

"Now it begins to grind. Look once a little out!" said the jolly man in a whisper when the Commissioner ceased speaking.

"The clerk will begin calling the rolls, the township of Albany coming first," said Hautnehmer after consulting with his counsel a few moments. Then the clerk, whose short red hair stood up like the quills on the fretful porcupine, began to drawl out the names, with a pause and a glance of expectation at the crowd after each name.

Copton township was reached late in the forenoon and as this narrative has to do principally with that district we pass over the proceedings up to that point.

"Fritz Abele, Hannes Adelman, Fridel Affhauser, Levi Ahrenschweisz,"—

"Here!" came a clear voice in response to this euphonic cognomen, and a man of great obesity came waddling forward.

"What is your claim?" asked the Commissioner brusquely.

"Too fat. Can't run. Can't stoop down handy," answered Ahrenschweisz laconically. There was a laugh in the room at the expense of the claimant, but it was a good-natured laugh and hurt no one.

If the man who invented sleep is entitled to blessings, no less the woman who discovered laughter. In our deepest troubles it comes and is better than a medicine.

“How much do you weigh?” inquired Hautnehmer snappishly.

“Well, in summer when I work hard I weigh two hundred and eighty pounds,” was the answer, “but in winter when I don’t do much except eat sour-kroust and leberwurst, I go up to three hundred and forty pounds. You see”—

“Go through that door into the surgeon’s room,” interrupted the official. “Clerk, call the next name.”

In less than five minutes the fat man returned. He looked like one who has the laugh on his side now and is prepared to enjoy the fun. Doctor Goettman had assured him his claim would be allowed.

“Say once, how much had you to pay him?” said Pete Prantman pressing up to Ahrenschweisz and whispering in his ear.

“Hold your mouth; you’ll catch it if you try that there game,” answered the emancipated citizen. Pete was disconcerted but could not believe it possible that the latter had got clear of Lincoln’s clutches without paying well, and so his faith in the potency of money in such cases soon revived.

Presently the clerk called, “Jacob Brummler.” To this name the jolly man answered.

“Your claim, Jacob?”

“It’s best,” replied Jacob, “to have two legs of flesh when a man goes to the war. I’ve but one of that kind. The other is of wood and wasn’t originally furnished me by my parents but by a fellow down in Philadelphia after the cars took off the right one—it was the left one, but I mean the one I had first. I might use the wooden one in a battle though for a club.”

There was great laughter at this speech. The Commissioner shouted “Silence!” and not the first symptom of a smile did he show now that there was something worth smiling at,—which impressed one with the idea that the smiles on his face when he first entered the room were such as a tiger might manifest before springing on his victim.

“Who enrolled you?” he asked angrily.

“Lige Belsnickel there, of course; who else?” answered Brummeler coolly.

“Didn’t you tell him you have only one leg?”

“Certainly not, for I’ve got two,”

The people laughed again, much pleased at anything that made against the hated official.

“I mean one natural leg?” said Hautnehmer, red in the face with anger.

“No I didn’t.”

“It was your business to.”

“Oh, indeed,” said the jolly claimant with an innocent air and a wink in it’s first stages in his left eye. “By henker, I didn’t know that I was to do so when he didn’t ask me at all. I supposed they wanted one-

legged men to hurry on the rest under McClellan and it gives me sorrow that"—

"Here! Go into the surgeon's room without any more words or I'll put you under arrest," exclaimed the Commissioner trembling with passion. The case was speedily settled and Brummler came forth from the doctor's presence smiling more broadly than ever.

And so a number of claims, some pathetic and some ludicrous, were passed upon, and the clerk read out the name of "Jared Dreifusz." In response an old man led up to the railing a listless youth of about twenty-one years. The latter had a very large head, a long body and short bandy-legs. He looked around him with the vacant stare so surely indicative of idiocy. Most of those present of course knew him and wondered what the official would do with his case.

"Is this your son?" asked Hautnehmer.

"It is," answered the old man in a voice choked with emotion while tears coursed down his cheeks. "I'm sorry I had to bring him here, for I'm afraid he'll take a fit or become violent, as excitement always brings on one or the other, or both."

"He should not have been enrolled," said the Commissioner.

"So I told the marshal," replied Jared's father, "but Jared wasn't home when he came to our house, and he said he must enroll him and I had nothing more to say.—I tell you, friend, if it wasn't for this poor boy,

old as I am I'd been in the army long ago, but he must be cared for like a little child."

There was some commotion in the room when the father spoke. Instantly the dull eyes of his son became lustrous with anger, his mouth foamed and his fists were clenched. Before Mr. Dreifusz could interpose he made a furious rush at the crowd and grasped Pete Prantman,—who happened to be nearest,—around the body with a giant's strength.

"Donnerwetter! Take him away! Jake, help me!" shouted Pete struggling with the madman. Women shrieked, men swore and yelled and for a few minutes pandemonium reigned. It required both policemen and several other strong men to break the poor fellow's hold, and when at last he was overpowered he screamed and fell to the floor in a terrible fit.

"Carry him into the doctor's room. Call the next name," ordered Hautnehmer. In a few moments "James Fetzner" was heard and James came to the railing.

"Your claim is what, my man?" inquired the officer very blandly.

"I've lost lots of teeth and I'm awfully troubled with toothache. Look at my face once," was the response in most lugubrious tones. His jaws were swollen and he looked every whit the man with the jumping toothache. Of course he failed to state that he had purposely brought on the attack for the occasion by wading in spring water a day or two before, the efficacy of which procedure he knew from sad experience.

“That’s bad,” said Hautnehmer. “Walk into the next room and see Doctor Goettman; maybe he can help you.”

He really smiled very pleasantly then, did this officer. He was extremely patriotic, and he derived much pleasure from the fact that this case would not result in exemption.

It should be recorded here that before the sittings began the Commissioner, his counsel and Doctor John Grebsgong Goettman had gone over the enrollment books with the enrolling officers, and in this way, aside from personal acquaintance with many of the applicants for exemption, had gained considerable knowledge of the value of a large portion of the claims presented.

“I’m sorry, James,” said Goettman when Fetzer appeared before him; “I remember last time I was out your way hunting rabbits I gave you something for your toothache. You’ve lost some molars sure, but your front teeth are all in good shape and you can bite off a cartridge in a wink,—at least I wouldn’t like to venture my finger between them. But,” he went on in a confidential way, laying his hand on the applicant’s shoulder and smiling so broadly that all his gold-filled teeth beamed pleasantly forth, “your toothache will go away long before you’re called on to go to war. I can’t exempt you, you know, but you won’t be drafted, James, for I never knew it yet to hit a man who was troubled with toothache!”

With these consolatory words the surgeon dismissed

him. He came forth with a woe-begone countenance and communicated with Pete Prantman.

“Why didn’t you offer him the ten dollar bill pap gave you for that object this morning?” said Pete to his foster-brother. “Then you’d been all right, you pumpkin-head.”

“May be you’ll know after awhile,” said Fetzter, holding his aching teeth and retiring to a corner.

When “Calvin Kalbfleisch” was called out a man of forty-three years came forward with a halting gait.

“What may your claim be?” asked the presiding genius of the mill. He looked stern now.

“I’ve been much troubled with rheumatism for many years, and haven’t been able to do hardly anything in all that time,” answered Kalbfleisch very meekly.

“Go into the next room,” was the sharp command. This man’s claim was entirely just, but it was disallowed. Why? Perhaps because he looked stout enough aside from the limp in his walking, and perhaps not. His failure caused much indignation among the waiting people, and none were more disgusted than Andrew Pfannkuchen’s mother whose near neighbor Kalbfleisch was.

“He should have given that there doctor money,” whispered Pete Prantman to her. “Wait till my turn comes.”

Pete’s confidence in the power of money was evidently fully restored.

And so the mill ground on—and very unevenly it

seemed to grind too — until the name of Owen Machgelt was called by him of the red head. A strongly built middle-aged man with very long hair, and wearing a broad-brimmed hat and a drab “shad-belly” coat, came to the railing. He was accompanied by a spruce-looking young man who proved to be Machgelt’s lawyer. The latter wore eye-glasses and kid gloves and Owen was his first client.

“Your claim?” said Hautnehmer sternly.

“My client’s claim for exemption from the pending draft, sir, that is, from military duty, sir, is conscientious scruples based, sir, on religious grounds, sir,” pompously interposed the sprightly young attorney. Hautnehmer’s lip curled scornfully.

“Mr. Goldscheu, will you please question this man?” said he to his counsel.

“On what ground do you base your claim, Machgelt?” answered Goldscheu.

“As I said already, sir, he bases it, sir,” — began the claimant’s attorney.

“Mr. Winkelmeyer, I am not at present questioning you, but Machgelt,” interrupted Goldscheu suavely,

“And I, sir, am his lawyer, sir,” retorted Winkelmeyer in a way that promised well for future success in his profession. “The Commissioner clearly stated this morning, sir, that where a claimant is not able” —

“I understand,” again interrupted Goldscheu, speaking now with biting sarcasm, “but after you have had your second or third client you will be able to see more

distinctly than you can now, Mr. Winkelmeyer, that this is a case in which Mr. Machgelt alone can answer properly."

Having crushed Winkelmeyer, Goldscheu turned to Machgelt again.

"Mr. Machgelt," said he, placing the tips of his fingers and thumbs together, "do you base your claim on religious grounds?"

"I do," answered Owen gravely. "I am a Menonite, and we are non-resistants."

"Would you permit the rebels to overrun your farm, drive away your horses and cattle and burn your buildings, without resisting them?"

Promptly came the answer: — "I would not resist by force."

A look of contempt passed over the face of the attorney, but Winkelmeyer rubbed his hands in good professional style and smiled. Owen himself was calm as if in his meeting-house listening to his pastor. The throng was hushed.

"Now listen," said Goldscheu fixing his cold grey eye on the applicant; "suppose a burglar entered your house at night, would you permit him to carry off your valuables without protest if you were awake?"

"No. I would reason with him and show him how wrong his act was."

"Well, but I mean would you seek to use force in a mild way such as for instance throwing your bootjack at him?"

“I would not resist him by force at all. The case you state happened in my house last summer.”

“I can’t deny that I think,” said Goldscheu somewhat nonplused, while Winkelmeyer rubbed his hands harder and smiled more broadly. “But now I put this to you: suppose a man broke into your house and proceeded in your presence to murder your wife and children—would you not seek to defend them by force?”

“I would not,” was the calm reply.

“Then you are either a liar or a coward!” exclaimed the counsel excitedly.

“I am responsible to God alone,” said Machgelt firmly: Nothing remained under the law but to declare him exempt. Winkelmeyer had won his first client’s case, and with a triumphant look at Goldscheu he escorted Owen from the room.

The very next name read off by the clerk was that of Patrick Mahoney. No sooner was it pronounced than briskly forward came the owner. He was a jolly, hearty-looking Irishman of some thirty summers, possessed a ruddy countenance, a shock of hair emphatically auburn, and, as he presently proved, a witty brain and a ready tongue.

“Your claim?” asked the Commissioner, somewhat impatiently.

“Bless your honor,” said Patrick, bobbing his head, “Oi’m afther havin’ the very same disase the last jintleman had which you iximpted him so moighty handsome, your honor.”

“But the last gentleman had no disease at all,” answered the genius of the mill. “He had religious scruples.”

“An’ that, your honor, is ixactly my throuble,” was the ready response. “It’s conscientious schruples Oi’m afther havin.’”

With a smile he could not repress Mr. Goldscheu took Patrick in hand.

“Mr. Mahoney, are you opposed to war?” he asked.

“Is it opposed to war I am, your honor?” said Patrick. “Yis, Oi’m a non-resister, jist loike the jintleman which the same his honor there iximpted so beautiful jist before me, your honor. I was always opposed to the war which the same William the bastard of Orange made on poor king James, an’ Oi’m riddy to knock blazes out of any sphalpeen of an Orangeman that” —

“Hold on, Patrick,” interrupted Goldscheu, trying in vain to look sober. “Suppose your wife were to hit you over the head with a broomstick if you came home drunk, would you resist her, that is, would you strike back?”

This question evidently brought up in Patrick’s mind familiar domestic scenes and reminded him of his partner’s prowess, for he looked very crestfallen and replied with a dubious smile: “Shure, your honor, Oi’d not resist one bit. Oi’d crape under the bed an’ be quiet as a mouse!”

A roar of laughter, in which even Hautnehmer joined, followed this answer, for all who knew Mrs. Mahoney

were aware that so far as she was concerned her husband certainly was a "non-resister."

"Now, Mr. Mahoney, I ask another question," resumed Goldscheu, leaning back in his comfortable arm-chair. "Suppose some one should twit you with being from Ginnegal, where, it has been said, they eat potatoes skin and all, and would then tread on the tail of your coat besides, I presume you would bear it all very meekly? Be quick; our time is precious."

"Be jabers, show me the dhirty sphalpeen as would do that, an' Oi'll show your honor what Oi'd do before you could wink," replied Patrick with much animation.

"Would you strike him?" persisted the attorney.

"He would, your honor, for that's jist what he was afther doin' to me lasht wake," said a loud Hibernian voice in the crowd, and the face of its owner confirmed the words, black and blue vying with each other there.

"Blast the dhirty liar," yelled Mr. Mahoney, and springing on his offending countryman the two were pommeling each other right merrily when the policemen seized them and ejected them from the room. Patrick Mahoney was not exempted.

Andrew Pfannkuchen's name was reached in due time. That young giant came to the railing followed by his mother. She was all solicitude for her boy and reminded one of a motherly hen whose chicks have grown large and no longer heed her calls.

"What is this boy's claim for exemption?" asked the Commissioner sarcastically of Andrew's mother.

“ Ach ! thou beloved ground ! ” she began. “ His pap has been dead fifteen years and all his brothers but six ; he had the measles when a baby, then the water-pox, then afterwards scarlet fever and it left him with fits for a long time, and he’s still troubled a great deal with bauchweh and he can’t eat ground-nuts at all because they give him the bauchweh bad and you see yourself he doesn’t look strong and has blue stripes under his eyes and besides he couldn’t carry a gun and he hasn’t never been on the cars and we walked to the city this morning. Oh, dear land ! ”

There was much merriment during this speech and her big son, half ashamed, plucked her dress several times as if to silence her, but in vain. She went on with great volubility, enlarging on Andrew’s ailments much as she had done when Belsnickel enrolled him a month before.

“ Andrew, you and your mother will be so good as to go into Doctor Goettman’s room a few minutes,” said Hautnehmer. But Andrew refused to do this and all his mother’s tears and entreaties could not move him. Doctor Goettman was a mighty hunter and had visited Andrew’s neighborhood a number of times in quest of game. He and Andrew had become quite well acquainted and more than once had drank “ Regewasser ” together. Young Pfannkuchen had shown his skill frequently in running down foxes, unearthing woodchucks and shooting fowl, and well knew it would be useless to see his friend as a claimant for exemption.

“Very well,” said Hautnehmer; “if you won’t let the surgeon examine you, I can’t admit your claim at all.”

“There’s a way left if I’m drafted,” said Andrew looking defiantly at the Commissioner from his height.

“The sittings are adjourned for one hour,” said Hautnehmer paying no further attention to Andrew.

“You ought to be shot, you luder,” shouted Mrs. Pfankuchen at the officer. “Oh! if I could only have my hand in your hair half a minute. My!”

She reached wildly across the railing and clutched the air, but Hautnehmer turned his back upon her and walked away. Weeping and protesting she then followed her boy as he stalked out of the room. Some of the people went outside to seek food, but most of them, with little appetite, munched pretzels and cheese where they had already stood so many weary hours.

One of the first names called when the session was resumed was that of Peter Prantman. He came forward with his father. He looked more awkward than ever in his ill-fitting garments, and his countenance had that sickly, bluish hue that indicates the failure of courage and confidence. He was now face to face with those in authority and somehow they had suddenly assumed terrible proportions in his eyes.

“What is your son’s claim?” said Hautnehmer to Hans Prantman, whom he knew personally.

“He’s under age.”

Hautnehmer looked scrutinously at Pete, whose teeth

again manifested a decided tendency to chatter. Then he glanced at the enrollment book.

"How's this?" he asked. "Your son is down as twenty-five years old."

"It's a mistake," said Hans.

"How was it?" said the Commissioner turning to Belsnickel.

"As I remember it, he refused to give his age," replied the marshal, "and I used the discretion allowed in such cases and put him down at twenty-five as about correct. Besides, he inadvertently admitted he was twenty something."

"It isn't so, he's only nineteen," said Prantman, senior, irritably.

"Have you his baptismal certificate or your family Bible record with you?" asked Goldscheu.

"No, I didn't think it worth while, because you Lincoln men won't believe an honest man," answered Hans gruffly.

"Are you willing to swear, Prantman, that your son here present with you is only nineteen years old, going on twenty?" was Goldscheu's pointed query. But Hans knew the penalty for perjury and replied that he would not take such a solemn oath before nigger-worshippers.

"Then he stands at twenty-five and his claim is disallowed," said the Commissioner.—"Call the next name."

"But he's got another claim," interrupted Hans.

"Name it quickly," said the officer impatiently.

"He is opposed to war," was the response. "He can't conscientiously" —

At that point Pete leaned over the railing as if to whisper to Hautnehmer, and when the latter inclined his head to listen the former slyly sought to put a bank-note into the Commissioner's hand and at the same time tried hard to wink with his left eye. The officer understood it all in a moment and promptly improved his opportunity.

"Hiltebeutel! Fryberger!" he shouted to the two policemen. "Out with this fellow! Give him his money" — holding up the bill prominently — "and if he comes in again, arrest him."

Pete, trembling with fear, was seized by the officers and most unceremoniously hustled into the street, and for the time his faith in the power of money was completely shattered. His father followed him, and as they walked down Penn street toward the "Plow and Harrow" the twain agreed that the lodge must act at once and that Huber must recommend the immediate use of stronger remedies than any he had yet proposed.

Meanwhile the people in the office were impressed with a sense of the power and incorruptibility of Major Richard Hautnehmer, and this official looked very self-conscious indeed, and leaned back in his chair with an air which plainly said, "Behold how mighty and how virtuous I am!"

It has been reported that William Rambeutel pre-

ferred a claim for exemption on the ground of being a natural-born coward, but the author has been unable to verify the report from the official records and believes it to be unfounded and malicious. For William had but recently led Vickey Hauser to the matrimonial altar, and no married man would enter a claim on such a plea.

"Jacob Starmkessel" came from the clerk's lips. The spectators laughed. The trumpet of war would never waken Jacob. He was in his grave two weeks, they said, exempted forever.

Presently the name of Christopher Stettler greeted the ears of the people and he who, if he lived until Second Christmas, would be seventy-six years old, came forward leaning on his staff.

"Belsnickel, how is this? Did you enroll this old man?" asked the Commissioner sharply.

"Surely not," replied the enrolling officer in great surprise. "I wrote his name, I admit, but some young fellow I did not know imposed on me for once by giving me this old man's name for his own."

"That young scamp will go where he can't be drafted even if he tries, if I can find out who he is," said Hautnehmer angrily. "Strike off Mr. Stettler's name, Lebgueth."

"I heard I was on the roll and I thought I'd better see about it," said Stettler. "You see I'm a trifle old and I'm afraid I couldn't do much with the rebels if I should get among them," and greatly relieved he hobbled out of the room and down stairs into the street.

The last name called with which this narrative has any concern was that of Jacob Zellon. He came to the railing with a dark frown on his face and his left hand in a sling.

“My claim for exemption is a sore hand which the doctor says will never be of any use again,” said he without waiting until the usual question was put to him. Like many others, he had an interview with Doctor Goettman, who brought down a great deal of game in those days. Having examined Zellon’s hand, the surgeon pronounced the wound to be comparatively slight and the applicant’s claim was rejected. With a deeper frown and a muttered curse Zellon greeted Philip Huber. This individual was in the apartment several times during the day, but was exceedingly cautious in his movements and words. Only once or twice did he speak to any one and then only a word of encouragement to a few persons whom he knew to be members of his enterprise out in the township of Copton.

So the work went bravely on until at last the roll of names was exhausted. Then the sitting was declared closed and for that day the mill ceased to grind.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A RUPTURE IN THE RUTHVON HOME.

About this time there was sorrow in the Chetwynde home. The battle of Antietam, fought September 16th and 17th, 1862, brought joy to the North and revived its courage, but to many a home it meant sorrow and desolation. The news of the rebel defeat was speedily followed by lists of the dead, the wounded, the missing. Anxiously the Chetwyndes scanned these rolls but the name of Clinton Chetwynde, whose regiment participated in the battle, was not found in any of them. Presumably, therefore, he must have escaped unhurt. But no letter came from him—not even to Susie Zweispringer. Daily the papers were searched and the revised lists carefully examined, but for ten days no news came concerning the absent one. Then Susie and her father were seen driving rapidly to Chetwynde's, for the evening papers contained another list of missing and in it they had read "Clinton Chetwynde, Co. —, —rd regiment Pennsylvania volunteers." All was uncertain. Perhaps he was a prisoner, perhaps dead, maybe wounded. After the first expressions of grief a consultation was held as to what could be done. Captain Ruthvon was hurriedly sent for. He sought to console the family and Susie. Clinton was probably a prisoner,

and as the rebels were on the retreat and constantly harassed they would not be able to guard their prisoners very closely and he would have many chances of escape to the Union forces. But it availed little. The element of uncertainty was too great to permit a very comforting hope to spring up, and even Charles could not entirely conceal his anxiety.

“My duty is not done until I have made an effort to find my boy,” said Mr. Chetwynde. “He may be lying wounded in some negro hut and need my help.”

“I will go with you,” cried Susie impulsively.

“Oh, Susie that will never do,” said Charles. “You are a brave girl but you would only hinder Mr. Chetwynde in his efforts, Perhaps we can do better.—Mr. Chetwynde, I will go with you.”

Mr. Chetwynde was deeply touched by the captain’s offer. He accepted it, and they agreed to start on their journey with the first train west next morning.

Susie Zweispringer overwhelmed the captain with her thanks.

“Bring him back alive, won’t you?” she said when she had suitable opportunity. “And that matter between you and Blanche” — with the same decisive tap of the foot we heard before — “*will* come right. It *must!* So there now!”

Charles looked his thanks but made no audible reply.

“I love Clinton as a brother,” he said to Blanche when he bade her good-bye, “but the fact that he is

Blanche Chetwynde's brother enhances many fold the pleasure I feel in rendering this service."

"Good-bye, Charlie," she said with a warm pressure of the hand. "God bless you and keep us both!"

When Charles reached home and announced his intention of going with Jabez Chetwynde next day in search of Clinton, Grandmother Ruthvon, who had not yet retired, at once began.

"I knew there would be bad news, Charlie, my boy," she said. "I went out into the orchard this morning to see the apples and a big black crow flew right over my head, and in war times that's a sure sign as I often heard my grandmother say in the 1812 war."

"Well, grandmother," said Charles pleasantly when she finished speaking, "let us hope there won't be bad news this time."

Now Mr. Ruthvon had of course attended the lodge meeting at Mike Hahn's the previous Saturday night. Knight Huber had informed the Circle that about two weeks ago Charles Ruthvon had been seen in close communication with Colonel Erb and Major Hautnehmer at Reading, as was believed. In consequence the speaker had reason to think that the movements of the lovers of liberty and the utterances of that noble friend of the people, the *Reading Eagle*, were being watched by the Lincoln spies.

Frederick Ruthvon was deeply mortified, the more that the Prantmans and others made sneering remarks. On Sunday he did not speak to Charles at all and the

reply of the latter to his grandmother brought matters to an issue.

“Bad news, Charlie, bad news?” said he in a manner that betokened deep feeling. “What else can you expect? How could things be worse than they are?”

Mrs. Ruthvon noticed her husband’s emotion and looked anxiously at Charles. The latter understood her and made no reply to his father’s remark. There was a pause during which Mr. Ruthvon very deliberately filled and lighted his pipe.

“The draft has been put off once more for three weeks,” he resumed. “Why? Why, that these big fellows at the head of it — Hautnehmer, Doctor Goettman and hundreds of such ink-lickers, may have time to suck all the money out of the people.”

“They didn’t take much from Pete Prantman though,” remarked Charles in spite of a warning look from his mother. Catharine could not repress a laugh, for in Mr. Chetwynde’s copy of the *Reading Journal* she had read an account of Pete’s ludicrous failure as a bribe-giver, but her father frowned angrily.

“The ox didn’t know how to go about it,” said he. “Hautnehmer wasn’t fool enough to take the money where he might be seen doing it.—No, I tell you they’re just putting off the draft to get all they can out of the people.”

“And things are getting worse all the time,” he went on, puffing his pipe vigorously. “Now Abe Lincoln has put out an infamous proclamation by which all the

niggers in the South are to be free at New Year. This will make the Southern people desperate and they'll never give up. And suppose this robbery can be carried out, then all these swarms of vicious niggers will come and spread all over the North like the frogs of Egypt. It'll be awful."

Here he paused a moment. Charles sat with down-cast eyes and by this time grandmother was asleep in her chair.

"Our neighbors are in trouble," he resumed. "Perhaps their son is dead. But the Yankee is only reaping what he sowed. Yet, alas! I'm reaping a more bitter harvest than he though I never sowed such seed. He was brought up that way and his children all agree with him in his notions. The whole family felt honored when a son went away to risk his life to free niggers and if he is dead or wounded, they'll boast of it as long as they live. But to think that *my* son should take up with the notions of a Yankee stranger against all I ever taught him, and assist in an unholy war to take men's lawful property from them, is enough to turn my head entirely grey in a moment and to bring it in sorrow to the grave."

"And not only so," he continued more warmly, while Catharine wept and his wife trembled for the event, "but as I have heard on good authority, he is willing to assist in forcing others to engage in this war on the South and to watch peaceful citizens who meet together to protect their rights. And here"—putting aside his

pipe and speaking with unwonted animation — “are the so-called Home Guards — blackguards, that’s what they are! — coming home in a day or two to watch people who are far more honest than themselves — Tom Hartnagel, whom I as good as forbid the premises, Carl Schlapphammel, who is another turncoat, and fellows of that color — with these our son goes, Maria. I tell you it’s too much.— Charlie” — he had risen up and now advanced to his son’s chair, his face white with anger and his hand trembling,— “you must choose here and now between your family and ancestors, and Yankee Chetwynde and these cursed abolition thieves.”

His passion seemed all the more terrible to his family because usually he was calm and collected even when angry.

“Oh, Fred, don’t, don’t!” cried Mrs. Ruthvon.

“Wait a moment, mother; sit down,” said Charles rising and speaking calmly.— “Father, what are the consequences of my choice?”

“If you choose us, you are our son as before. If you choose our enemies, I’ll disown you and forbid you the house,” was his father’s reply.

“Oh, Fred, Fred, think what you’re doing,” said Mrs. Ruthvon, going to her husband and laying her hand on his arm.

“He’s brought it all on himself,” said Mr. Ruthvon without a sign of wavering in his resolution.

“I am to choose,” said Charles, “between your prejudices” —

“By that you mean being a Democrat and Pennsylvania Dutch of course,” interrupted Ruthvon, senior, sarcastically.

—“And Pete Prantman and Jake Zellon and Philip Huber on the one hand” — Charles was proceeding when his father again interrupted him.

“Pete Prantman and all the rest may go into the bushes,” said he. “You know what I mean, just.”

“Very well,” said Charles without a trace of anger, “but the choice is not as you state it. It is between my country and its friends on the one hand, and its bitter enemies on the other, and I choose the former. I cannot do otherwise.”

“Then go! You are no longer my son,” said Mr. Ruthvon hoarsely but resolutely. “To-morrow morning I make a new will in which Catharine becomes our only child and heir.”

“O father!” exclaimed Catharine throwing herself on her father’s neck, “don’t drive Charlie away. What shall we do without him? He’ll do what you want him to, won’t you, Charlie?” and the poor child dropped into her chair weeping passionately.

“Fred, you’re wrong in your decision even if Charles is wrong in his ideas,” said Maria Ruthvon with a tolerable degree of composure. “You’ll see it some day, though I know your mind is made up now. Go, Charlie, and remember that though your father disowns you, your mother never will. She will always have three children—Catharine, you, and Freddie in heaven.

Our dear Lord God will be with you while away on your dangerous errand. When you come back to Haltfest send for me."

The sad parting need not be described. Charles offered his hand to his father, but the latter refused it, saying: "We are strangers."

And so the son passed out into the night and the door of his father's house closed behind him. When next he crossed the threshold — but let us wait and see.

Very sad indeed but without a single bitter thought toward his father, our hero made his way to "The People's Hotel." His first impulse had been to go back to Chetwynde's but a moment's reflection showed him that under the circumstances this would be unwise, and he decided to seek the hospitality of Baltzer's inn for the night. Hen Weinmiller was just closing up and Baltzer was enjoying a final glass of beer and a pretzel.

"I again accept your invitation to make myself at home here, Baltzer," said Captain Ruthvon.

"It's right so I think," responded the innkeeper, stopping his drinking and munching long enough to pronounce the words.

After directing Weinmiller to call him for the early train west, Charles retired to rest. For a long time he could not sleep. He was racked with conflicting emotions. He carefully reviewed his whole course since the spring of 1860 to make sure that he was right, and that he could not conscientiously have done otherwise than he did in reference to his father's demand.

And so his sorrow was tempered by the consciousness of right-doing.

Moreover, hope — hope, that saves mortals from being crushed by the burdens which fall upon them — whispered to him of happier days to come.

He fell asleep toward morning and his dreams were not — strange to say! — of Blanche Chetwynde this time, but of his mother and Catharine. Happy the young man in whose heart mother and sister are enshrined. Over him the guardian angel need not soon weep.

CHAPTER XXV.

TOM HARTNAGEL SAVES A LIFE.

There was one happy heart left under the Ruthvon roof on the morning after Charles' departure. It was that of Sallie Vonneida. She had heard on the previous day that the Emergency Men were dismissed and knew that her lover might be expected home at any time. Jabez Chetwynde drove by early with Frank and called for Charles, but Mrs. Ruthvon informed him that he had gone on to the village. Mr. Ruthvon compared his watch with the old Dutch clock according to his daily custom and then went about his usual chores. He spoke kindly to his wife and daughter, but breakfast was eaten in almost absolute silence. Sallie wondered what had gone amiss, but even she dared not make any inquiry just then as to Charles' absence. After the meal was ended Mr. Ruthvon remarked to his wife that he was going to Haltfest and would not be back for several hours. She knew his errand well and also that remonstrance would at present be useless.

He made his way to the office of Squire Zweispringer and found that gentleman quietly enjoying his morning cigar and reading the *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

“ Good morning, Fred, take room ; how does it go ? ” was the squire's friendly greeting.

"It must be good," replied Ruthvon seating himself.

"I see in the paper that a good many of the Home Guards have got back from Maryland," remarked the squire unwittingly.

"Yes, and I think all the loafers that went from around here will be back soon too, and then honest men will have to hold their mouths and watch their hen-roosts," said Ruthvon angrily.

"Not so bad as that I think," answered the squire laughing. "Tom Hartnagel, for instance, wouldn't rob a hen-roost."

"Tom Hartnagel!" exploded the other. "That big mule told me I ought to be ashamed of myself, but I ain't, and if he comes on my premises again, he'll hear something. — Say, Zweispringer, I came to have you" —

"Is it true that Charlie has gone away?" interrupted the squire. "Weinmiller said he and Yankee Chetwynde took the early train west this morning."

"He and Chetwynde went off to look for Clint I believe," replied Ruthvon curtly. — "Say, I came to have you write a new will for me."

"A new what?" asked Zweispringer in great surprise.

"A new will. Charles is no longer a son of mine. I disown and disinherit him," answered Ruthvon, and then briefly related what had occurred.

"I have to say the same thing to you that Hartnagel did," said the squire after Ruthvon finished his account.

“I whistle on your opinion,” responded Ruthvon stubbornly. “Will you write the will or won’t you?”

“Now, look once here,” persisted Zweispringer speaking earnestly but kindly. “I’m not a Lincoln worshiper and I believe he’s overdone the thing with his Emancipation Proclamation business, but I do say that you’re driving matters too far with your boy.”

“My father’s ways and notions were good enough for him and they’re good enough for me. They’re not good enough for Charles and so he must go his own road,” said Ruthvon sternly.

“Do you reap your grain with a sickle as your grandfather did?” asked the squire with great animation. “Do you wear homespun as” —

“That is quite another thing,” interrupted Ruthvon, senior, irritably. “Will you write the will or won’t you? If not, I can soon find somebody that will. Deihenker!”

“If it must be done, I might as well do it I think,” said Zweispringer getting out his writing materials. “Go on.”

And the will was written and properly executed. Charles was cut off with a dollar and, after Mrs. Ruthvon’s death, Catharine was to be sole heir to all the property. It was a bitter thought to Frederick Ruthvon that after so many generations the old homestead would pass out of the Ruthvon name, and that too by his own voluntary act. But he had made up his mind and nothing should change it.

Squire Zweispringer seemed to echo his thought when, the witnesses to the will having gone away, he remarked as he handed the instrument to his neighbor: "I hope, Fred, your time and expense are lost this trip."

"Why so then?" inquired Ruthvon placing the will in his inside coat pocket.

"I hope to hear before long that this will is destroyed," answered the squire in a serious tone. Mr. Ruthvon winced under his friend's words and look.

"He's made his bed and must lie on it," he rejoined gruffly. "He loves strangers better than his fathers and their good old Pennsylvania Dutch notions and ways, and he must take the consequences of his choice."

"Blanche Chetwynde is a pretty nice stranger to love," said the squire smiling and giving Ruthvon a quaint look.

"Of course, of course, and I suppose your daughter thinks the same of the Yankee's oldest son."

"And her father, being a man of good sense, doesn't object."

"Squire, you're getting too black and your neighbors notice it too. I doubt whether you can be re-elected on the third Friday of next March."

"Yes, neighbors like the Prantmans and Hahn have thrown out hints like that," replied the squire hotly. "It's all right. I was born in Berks County and am not responsible for the fact, but I thank God I'm not a Bourbon. I can forget some things and also learn some

new ones, and the Prantmans and all their friends may make the most of that. I can live without the office and somebody else may write your wills, so help me Schinnerhannes!" And for one so prudent and peaceful the squire was rather flustered.

So they parted, the squire to tell Susie, who remarked that old Ruthvon ought to be shut up a month on dry bread and water to bring him to his senses, and Frederick Ruthvon to return home and inform his wife of what he had done. Mrs. Ruthvon listened attentively and calmly to him.

"Fred, do you think it was quite right to do this without consulting me at all?" she asked in accents of tender affection when her husband had ended. "Didn't I bring you some property when you married me and haven't I through all the years since worked with you faithfully on the field and in the house to keep what we had and to increase it?"

He looked at her in surprise, for among these people these things are seldom considered.

"But if you outlive me, everything except one dollar is your's during your lifetime," he answered after pausing a moment.

"True, but don't you think it would have been right for me at least to have had an opportunity of expressing my wishes?"

He looked down but made no reply.

"You've done wrong, Fred, and you'll see it some day," she continued. "O Fred! our dear boy, our Charlie"—

“He’s mine no longer,” he said sternly yet with something husky in his voice.

“But he will always be mine,” she replied weeping.

After dinner, for which, save in Sallie Vonneida’s case, there was little appetite, Mr. Ruthvon prepared to do a bit of repairing on the barn roof. Benneville Rothermel, the hired man, was engaged in cutting corn. Mrs. Ruthvon thought her husband should not try to do the repairing alone as some rain had fallen during the night and the roof was wet and slippery. But the corn-cutting needed to be finished at once, and he said he could do this trifle of work alone just as well, and let Rothermel go on with the corn. He set up a ladder but it barely reached the eaves of the roof, twenty-five or more feet from the ground. Standing on one of the topmost rounds, he nailed a strip of wood on the shingles parallel with the eaves, to give him a foothold; then he mounted to the roof and nailed other strips of wood at intervals higher up, until he reached the places that needed patching. Next he descended and brought up a small bunch of shingles and in a short time the task was completed to his satisfaction. But while unfixing the uppermost strip the one against which his feet were then propped loosened and he began to slide down the roof. One by one the strips gave way when he struck them. The last one fortunately held. He grasped it and sought to place his feet on the ladder, but in his excitement he gave it a slight push. It slipped over

sideways and fell to the ground leaving the unfortunate man hanging by his hands and dangling in the air at a dangerous height.

The spot over which Mr. Ruthvon hung was just by the wall of the barn roadway or "in-drive," as it is called in Pennsylvania Dutch, and if he fell he must strike this wall and either be killed or crippled for life. To call very loud hanging in such a position was impossible. He exerted all his power to raise himself to the roof but failed. His strength was almost gone, the perspiration oozed from every pore and the pain in the muscles of his hands and arms was excruciating. A few moments more and he would be dashed on the stones and hard ground below. Once more he called, this time feebly. He was answered, and a man ran up from the road at the top of his speed.

"Hold on a moment more and I'll get you down all right," said a hearty voice, and Tom Hartnagel seized the fallen ladder and, heavy and unwieldy as it was, in less than a minute had set it up directly under Mr. Ruthvon and was running up its rungs.

"Hurry up, I can't hold any longer," came from Mr. Ruthvon in feeble tones. Tom ascended almost to the top of the ladder, and then taking a firm hold with his left hand, passed his right arm around Mr. Ruthvon's body.

"Steady now," said Tom; "if the ladder holds, we're all right. Put your foot on this round. So! Now let go."

"I can't do anything at all with my hands or arms; their strength is all gone," cried Ruthvon.

"Keep your feet steady and go slow and we'll be all right," answered the brave, strong fellow.

"Hold me hard," cried Ruthvon, "my legs are paralyzed and I shall fall."

"Steady, until I get a firmer hold. So! Now we're all right," said Hartnagel. They descended safely until within about ten feet from the ground when suddenly a rundle snapped under their united weight and they fell to the ground at the foot of the wall. Tom struck first, and Frederick Ruthvon fell on him. In consequence the latter was not injured at all, save a slight scratch on his hand, but Tom struck his head against the wall and lay motionless. For a little while Mr. Ruthvon could only call. Otherwise he seemed helpless.

"Dear Lord God!" he exclaimed when at last he was able to turn his head and for the first time discovered who his rescuer was, "it's Tom Hartnagel, and the man who saved my life is dead. Halloo! Will no one hear me?"

It happened that Sharp Billy was returning from the village. He heard the call for help, and ran up.

"Fighting, are you?" said the young limb, who had however comprehended the situation at a glance.

"Run quick for help; I'm afraid Hartnagel is dead," said Ruthvon.

"Hartnagel!" cried Billy. "Get off him;" and in a moment he had rolled Ruthvon off his friend. "Tom,

Tom, are you dead?" he continued, greatly excited. "Here, you rascal, hurry up; grow this way quick," he shouted to Rothermel, who was coming from the corn field. By this time Mr. Ruthvon was regaining some power of limb and arm and was able to render a little assistance. They raised Tom and carried him to the house. Blood was oozing from a cut on his head. By the application of water and other remedies he was soon restored to consciousness, and thus Sallie Vonneida's lamentations were somewhat abated. Meanwhile Sharp Billy was sent after Doctor Helfer. He rode a horse bareback—rode like a boy escaping from the jaws of destruction—and in an incredibly short space of time the doctor was on the scene. The latter pronounced Hartnagel's hurt only a scalp wound, and said that with a little care the patient would soon be around again. A sprained ankle and a bruise near the old wound complicated matters somewhat.

"That was a narrow escape, by the great Eulenspiegel, Ruthvon, and only for Tom Hartnagel I think my services wouldn't have been needed," said Helfer after viewing the place over which Mr. Ruthvon had been suspended.

"I believe it," answered the latter briefly but with far more emotion than he was wont to manifest. The doctor noticed this and was wise enough to say nothing more.

Frank Chetwynde came over as soon as he heard of the accident and in the evening asked whether Tom could

be conveyed to Mr. Chetwynde's house. Tom thought he could go.

"Oh, no, Tom, you can't go to-night," said Maria Ruthvon with motherly kindness.

"Nix!" exclaimed Frederick Ruthvon, "you remain here in my house until you are able to walk home. Say nothing more about going to Chetwynde's to-night. We'll show you that we can take care of you as well as the Yankee, by henker!"

And Catharine said he must not go, and Sallie smiled on him so sweetly, and grandmother said that to move a man from one house to another on the very same day he was hurt was unlucky.

"I often heard my mother say so," she went on. "It'll never do, you Tom. You can't go to-day, and if there's any signs of wild-fire on the wound, I'll drive it off bad quick."

This clinched the nail and our friend yielded cheerfully.

"Well, it's all right so, I think," said he as he lay on the comfortable lounge. "I just got down from Harrisburg at noon and was on my way home from the depot. I saw you standing on nothing out there, Fred, and I think even Pete Prantman would have tried to help you. But I thought I ought to go to Chetwynde's to-night because after what I said to you not long ago and after what you said to me on the same occasion, I supposed" —

"Say now no more about that," interrupted Frederick

Ruthvon hastily. "And remember, you Tom Hartnagel, that you are always welcome in this house and on these premises by day and by night, and whenever you need anything call on me, and if I can give it to you, you shall have it," and he left the room before Tom could say a word in reply.

Mrs. Ruthvon rejoiced secretly and, like one of old, pondered these things in her heart. They were to her a token that her husband would by and by relent toward their boy and call him back again. Meanwhile she could only pray for the absent one and hope on. She was comforted by the words of Neumark's grand old hymn, familiar to her from her earliest childhood:—

"Wer nur den lieben Gott laeszt walten,
Und hoffet auf Ihn allezeit,
Den wird Er wunderbar erhalten
In allem Kreuz und Traurigkeit :
Wer Gott, dem Allerhoechsten, traut,
Der hat auf keinen Sand gebaut."

In less than a week after the accident Tom Hartnagel was able to walk to Mr. Chetwynde's house. Then first he learned of the alienation of Mr. Ruthvon from his son, for Mrs. Ruthvon had forbidden Sallie to inform him of the fact on pain of her great displeasure. Tom was very indignant and declared he was going right back to tell old Ruthvon again that he ought to be ashamed of himself, but when Mrs. Chetwynde showed the impetuous young man the folly of such a course he reluctantly abandoned it.

Blanche Chetwynde was now quite sure, not only that she had done right in rejecting Charles Ruthvon's proposal, but also that it was her duty to urge him at her first opportunity to think of her only as a dear friend.

After an absence of nearly two weeks Jabez Chetwynde and Charles returned from their quest. They had made diligent inquiry in every place where they supposed information of the missing soldier might possibly be obtained, but all that they could learn was that Clinton had last been seen bravely fighting and almost surrounded by Confederates who had suddenly swung round and made a momentary stand near the creek. With heavy hearts they gave up the search and turned homeward. Captain Ruthvon tried to comfort the afflicted father with a hope he hardly dared entertain himself. He knew that in every great battle many of the combatants disappear and are never heard of again though their names are not on the printed lists of the dead. The earth seems to swallow them up. Antietam would not prove an exception.

On arriving at Haltfest Charles went to Squire Zweispringer's house. He received a warm reception and at the earnest solicitation of both father and daughter he concluded to make his home there for the remainder of his furlough. In view of his friendship with Clinton Chetwynde his presence in the family was a comfort to poor, stricken Susie, but it drove another big nail into her worthy father's political coffin.

CHAPTER XXVI.

DANGEROUS COUNSELS.

The battle of Antietam, while not decisive, delivered Pennsylvania from immediate danger and freed even Maryland almost completely from the presence of rebels. The fierce tide of war once more ebbed away from these states back into Virginia. The draft was spoken of again. Men said it would surely be made now. To stop it was the prime object of the Golden Circle knighthood.

The meeting appointed for Saturday, September 27th, at Mike Hahn's was duly held, and, as has been hinted, the second meeting of the lodge took place there on the evening of that day. Beyond the initiation of a dozen new members, the impartation of some additional grips and signs and the election of certain lodge officers, little was done on the latter occasion however. It is true, Huber's statement in reference to Captain Charles Ruthvon's suspected communication with the military authorities created some excitement, but the leader did not advise any action in the matter. The fact that the draft, which was to have been made two days before, was once more postponed — this time for three weeks — to October 16th, — had probably led him to believe that the government either did not need more men or else

was afraid to proceed. He hinted as much to the lodge but appointed another meeting, to be held two weeks later at the same place. When this convened October 11th had come, but there were no signs that the dreaded draft would again be put off. On the contrary it seemed certain that this time it would be made.

“My fellow Knights,” said Huber after eight new members had been duly initiated, “it is my solemn duty to inform you that unless the election goes against Lincoln next Tuesday, there is no hope for another postponement of the awful draft. I had it to-day on the best authority that the preparations are complete to go ahead with it next Thursday. Therefore we must take measures to defend ourselves, peaceably if we can, forcibly if we must, against the oppression of Abe Lincoln, and to compel the government to listen to the people’s complaints.”

There was silence in the lodge for the space of a minute. The government was still a considerable force and how to resist its tyranny successfully and to compel it to listen was a problem requiring for its solution at least that amount of time. Indeed, at the expiration of the minute no brain apparently had quite solved it, but as a short step in that direction Pete Prantman ventured to ask how many days Huber thought would be allowed drafted men to get ready for army service.

“I believe the custom is to allow very little time — certainly not more than two weeks,” answered Huber.

“That would give altogether nearly three weeks and in that time a good deal can be done,” said Pete.

“And what would you for one propose, Prantman?” asked Huber. This was what Mr. Boffin would have called “a scarer.” Pete hesitated a moment. He was about to say “Coarse salt” when some one suggested “A ten dollar note.” A laugh followed at Pete’s expense but Huber quickly stopped it by saying that it was no laughing matter for it involved men’s liberties.

“I’d say guns, pistols and knives, if I had my way,” said Jake Zellon sullenly, whereupon the member who had spoken before remarked that that was like a cross-cut saw because others could use them too. This nettled Zellon and Huber was once more obliged to interpose his authority.

“If we want to keep off the dangers that threaten, we must be united,” said he after order had been restored. “Now, I don’t believe in bloodshed if it can be avoided, but if an enemy knows that his adversary is prepared to meet him, it will often incline him to yield a good deal. Hence, while we must be prudent we must at the self same time let these tyrants know by quiet hints that we are prepared to resist them. And the hints must not be empty boasting either: we must gather weapons.”

“Now, I have a plan,” he continued in lower tones. while his hearers hung on his words. “We must all contribute something, and the Indiana members of our patriotic order, who have plenty of money, will give us what more is needed. I mean with these moneys we must purchase arms. If you agree, I can start an agent for Indiana to-morrow to see leading men there and in

two weeks we can have the guns, for I know just where to get them."

Huber's proposition was unanimously agreed to, after Hans Prantman had first stipulated that the contribution aforesaid was not to be laid as a tax, but was to be according to a man's knowledge of his ability to give.

"Where can we store these arms for the present?" Huber next inquired. Some one suggested Ruthvon's barn but Frederick Ruthvon was absent to-night, and besides on account of his renegade son, whose furlough would not expire for several weeks yet, the suggestion was out of the question.

Prantman's barn was then mentioned, but Hans said there was no room, because of the large stock of cattle and sheep. Why not at Huber's as headquarters? a member asked. But the prudent leader — who never took a risk he could make another assume — promptly replied that his place was too far out of the way, and that, aside from that, he lived in a county very hostile to the good cause.

Jake Zellon then said he knew just the place — Mehlhuber's mill. In the wheel-room any amount of arms and ammunition could be hid away. The proprietor demurred emphatically, for somehow, dull as he was, he had an idea that there might be danger lurking in this new enterprise. But the vote in favor of the mill was unanimous and Christian was given to understand that there were other mills in the county where grists could be ground. This threat quickly brought him to terms,

though he cursed Zellon in his heart for suggesting the mill to the lodge.

“But Rambentel must leave,” said Jake; “he isn’t a Knight and is such a coward.”

To this Mehlhuber was also obliged to agree. Then a subscription paper was circulated and the lodge adjourned to meet on Saturday night after the draft, in a hall over the bar-room of “The People’s Hotel” in Haltfest. And surely, if slowly, the strong arm was coming closer to Huber.

It so happened that Tom Hartnagel’s sister, Lovina Hartnagel, had gone into service at Mike Hahn’s about three weeks before. She was a quiet, retiring girl but in her way quite intelligent. She idolized her brother Tom and had imbibed all his patriotic notions. He had told her of the appointments for September 27th in Hahn’s barn, and urged her to keep a sharp watch and learn all she safely could. The weather was chilly and very unpleasant now and hence the meeting of October 11th was held in the large living-room of the house. The windows were carefully closed up and two guards were stationed outside. No spies could come near without being detected at once. But unfortunately Mike Hahn forgot, and the others did not know, that Lovina’s little chamber was directly over the room where the lodge met. Neither did any one notice that there was a large knot-hole in the floor above them. Of this meeting Lovina of course knew nothing, but when after dark men began to come into the house in unusual numbers

her suspicions were at once aroused. The lodge opened and proceeded with its work unconscious of the fact that a very acute female ear was all the while at that knot-hole hearing every word that was said.

When the proceedings closed Lovina was in a tremble, and for hours after the Knights had dispersed she lay awake thinking of what she had heard and what she ought to do. Her brother was so impetuous, if she told him he would likely do something that would cause both him and her trouble. And yet at all hazards some true, loyal person must be informed of what was going on. But who more true and loyal than Tom? And to inform any one but him first would be disloyalty to him. Of that she would never be guilty. She would tell him and if trouble came, let it come.

The next day was Sunday, and the funeral of William Fox, a brave Union soldier killed at Antietam, was held in the old church. Of course Tom Hartnagel was present. Lovina saw how stern he looked all through the service, as if he were ready to spring on any man in the vast audience who might say a disparaging word of the Union or its soldiers, and her heart almost failed her. But when the congregation was dispersing she drew him aside, and as they walked down the road toward the village, she communicated to him all she had heard on the previous evening. He gave an irreverent whistle and then uttered one or two words not at all in keeping with the solemn exercises he had just listened to.

“Lovina, you are a bully girl, clean down honest,”

said he. "Now, not a word of this to any one at present, not even to father. And who would have thought at it? You have been initiated into the Knights of the Golden Circle, Lovina! Go away once! But"—winking at her—"I think I'm just as bad as you! Now we must hold our mouths, the road is too full of rebels."

At Haltfest they separated. Tom found Captain Ruthvon at Squire Zweispringer's and informed him of what his sister had learned regarding the plans of the Knights.

"It is better they should be found out, Tom, before they do something that will bring them into serious conflict with the government," said Charles, after hearing Hartnagel's account. "I am glad Lovina overheard them."

The day following he reported the matter to the military authorities at Reading, but under the law as it stood at that period of the war, unless they committed an overt act of treason, nothing could be done with the Knights beyond watching them.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A LOTTERY IN WHICH ALL THE TICKET-HOLDERS WANTED BLANKS.

The draft of 1862 was postponed three times in Pennsylvania, twice on account of unfinished preparation and a third time because the government, being no longer so hard pushed for men, was desirous of giving the delinquent districts one more opportunity to make up their several quotas of troops. Some townships made strenuous exertions and filled out their allotment, but in others, notably where the Golden Circle had gained a foothold, little effort was put forth.

Of the latter Copton was one. It is true, a meeting was held in Haltfest ostensibly to encourage volunteering, but the proceedings did not tend to promote that end. The principal speaker, then a prominent officeholder, had much to say about the Emancipation Proclamation and the horrors that must attend the execution of its provisions; he expatiated on the ill effects of Lincoln coffee on the system; he described the clothes furnished the soldiers as shoddy and shavings; and characterized Abraham Lincoln as the new god whom the Radicals addressed in their prayers saying: "Father Abraham, who art in the White House," etc. Some of the language he employed was such that, while it delighted the

Prantmans and men of that stamp, it could not have been used in the presence of ladies, and brought a blush to the cheek of every decent man in the audience. Even so strong a pro-slavery man as Frederick Ruthvon declared it was a shame. The meeting resulted in several cheers for Jeff Davis but produced no volunteers for the Union army.

The upshot of it all was that when October 16th arrived Copton township was forty-two men short of its quota. The city was full of country people for the draft was something new to that generation. Men heard the fathers speak of a draft that was made during the second war with England but up to the time of the enrollment in August it was hardly thought possible that such a thing could occur in their own day. But it was about to happen nevertheless.

“Uncle Sam’s Lottery,” as it was facetiously called, was located in the same room in the Bell building in which the claims for exemption had been heard and was conducted under the supervision of the Commissioner of Draft for the district. The names of those enrolled were written on separate slips of paper. The Sheriff of the county placed the slips from a given township or ward in a wheel, such as is used in drawing jurors, and after each turn of the wheel a blindfold boy drew out one. The persons whose names were thus drawn were drafted. Double the number wanted were drawn so as to leave sufficient margin for final exemptions, deaths, etc. The names were enrolled in the exact order in

which they were taken from the wheel. Thus the owners of those near the foot of the roll still had several chances to escape from actual service.

The Sheriff took each slip as drawn and read aloud the name written upon it. He then handed the slip to the Commissioner who repeated the name, and a clerk called it out of the window for the benefit of the people in the street below. There a great throng had gathered, for although the drawing was public the room where it was done could hold but a small proportion of those who desired admission. The concourse was largely composed of enrolled persons, with however a fair sprinkling of old men and boys. Here and there a woman might be seen, standing by the side of a husband or brother, anxiously waiting to see what the day would bring forth for her loved one. Such as were members of the Golden Circle instinctively grouped themselves together, but their leader did not once lend them the encouragement of his presence. He deemed it best for the cause he represented, to say nothing of his personal safety, not to expose himself to the gaze of Lincoln's minions more than was actually necessary. It was a trifle chilly that October day and Pete Prantman's teeth would chatter again in spite of all his efforts to keep them quiet. He had visited Katrina Galsch the preceding night to learn the issue beforehand so far as it related to himself, but she pretended to be ill and he failed to see her. Wearing the blue jean coat with the long tails, he stood in the street to-day in unhappy mood.

It is safe to say that in "Uncle Sam's Lottery" every ticket-holder desired a blank, so to speak. A few indeed expressed themselves as entirely indifferent — they would just as lief be drawn as not. Young fellows were they, with no one dependent on them and no ties to bind them, but in the countenances and movements of even these there was that which gave abundant proof that their feelings did not tally with their brave words.

The first township drawn was Albany; then Alsace; by and by Copton. Eighty-four names were to be furnished by its roll and the chances of "drawing a blank" were about two out of three. Probably one half of the men enrolled in the township were present, and when it was reached they were keenly alive to the situation.

The first name drawn was that of Ezra Mattes, a laboring man not present. "Ephraim Banteufel" shouted the clerk at the window and promptly some one shouted back from the street: "Call louder else he won't hear you. He was buried near two weeks ago!"

Samuel Wamsher was the next to draw a prize. Samuel was an itinerant showman and held the position of tumbler and contortionist in his troupe. He created a diversion by running into a clear space in the street when his name was called, throwing a somersault and crowing like a rooster. But the wheel turned quickly and the name of Hen Weinmiller was next heard. He would be exempted surely, some one jocosely remarked, because the people of Haltfest could not get along without him.

“Ach Gott!” cried a man in pathetic tones on hearing his name from the window and sank to the ground in a faint. It was Calvin Kalbfleisch, he whose claim for exemption was just. His cry brought tears to many eyes. Little time was there for pity however. The names followed each other rapidly.

“Fritz Kleinkammer” called the clerk. There was laughter among Fritz’s acquaintances, for he was to be married in a few days. It was hardly a subject for mirth, but those who knew Betsy Braunmiller thought that in this case the chances of war would not be much worse than those of matrimony.

Clear and distinct came “James Fetzter.”

“You can easy pull out my name but it won’t be so easy to get the owner,” he yelled back. Muttering an oath, he made his way out of the crowd. Doctor Goettman’s prophecy had failed for the first time!

A few more names and then from the window “Carl Schlapphammel” was announced. Bravely he answered “Here!” Among the Knights there was nudging of elbows, and “Serves the traitor right” was heard. But Carl replied defiantly: “I’d rather be drafted into the army than be forced to take an unlawful oath in Prantman’s barn, any day in the week, clean down honest.” They shook their fists at him but dared not provoke him further.

When the name of Adam Flickinger was drawn the people laughed again, for Adam was an octogenarian and it was evident in this case as well as in that of Chris-

topher Stettler that Elijah Belsnickel had been imposed upon by somebody. Adam was wiser than Christopher and had not taken the trouble to attend exemption day.

Nathaniel Gottschall's name was the next to be placed upon the fatal roll.

"It's hitting the blacksnakes now, ain't it is?" said Pete Prantman. "Nate is the blackest kind. He said a nigger was better than some white men he knew. The Abolitionist! I'm glad he's hit and I hope he'll get his dues. Sapperlotte once more!"

Another turn of the wheel. The blindfold boy puts in his hand. He draws out a slip and lifts it up. The Sheriff takes it and reads. Then the Commissioner. Then the clerk, and the crowd is greeted with "Peter Prantman!"

"Donnerwetter!" shouted the owner of the name starting much as he did the last time he had heard the Indian. Then he stood for a whole minute like one struck dumb. If ever there was a frightened mortal, it was Pete Prantman that day, and if in thought he was already facing the horrors of the battlefield, his face certainly did not contradict his fancies. His father came up to him and told him to come along—it was time to go home. Then he found his tongue.

"I'm not going in the war. I'll kill myself first, pap, holy cross!" and he stamped on the ground with his big cow-hide boots as a stubborn boy might, to the great amusement of those about him. No one pitied the burly coward now that his turn had come.

“Well, don’t make a fool of yourself anyhow,” said Hans angrily as he took his son away. “Don’t you see the worshipers of black Abe all laughing at you?”

By this time the next name and the next had been called and attention was diverted from Pete and centered on the window again. The name of a toothless man, then that of a cripple and that of a blind man, followed each other in tolerably close succession and at each there were more or less laughing and rude jesting.

Presently a slip was drawn on which was written “Patrick Mahoney.” Our Irish friend promptly responded to Uncle Sam’s call.

“Oi’m here, your honor,” said he making a bow to the clerk at the window, “an’ since the day ye refused to iximpt me Oi’ve renounced me faith. Oi’m a resister now an’ bad luck to the ribel what gits in Patrick Mahoney’s way, for he’ll be dead afore he becomes conscious of it. An’ Oi’ll git away from Biddy too an’ dhrink whin Oi loike, an’ if Oi’m kilt, Oi’ll have a noice wake, an’ Biddy’ll cry her eyes out!” And away he went to the nearest saloon to solace himself with whiskey and the thought that if he must face the dangers of war, he would at least for the time be released from the tyranny of his termagant wife.

A little later the clerk read out the name of Jacob Zellon. Jake frowned and then smiled disdainfully.

“Many a bird will be hatched before the Radicals see me fight to free niggers,” said he, interlarding his words with the vilest oaths. He left the place soon after, cast-

ing a look of deadly hate at Tom Hartnagel who had just arrived and stood on the edge of the crowd in his favorite attitude.

“Remember Baltzer’s tavern and Prantman’s orchard,” he hissed as he passed Tom. “I’ll be even with you before very long, you Hartnagel pig you.”

“I remember them,” replied Tom, eyeing him steadily, “and Muhlenberg Schlapphammel’s woods in the bargain.”

Zellon’s step wavered just a moment and his hand approached his inside coat pocket, but he recollected himself and with an oath passed on.

William Rambeutel exulted in secret when he heard Zellon’s name called. He felt certain Jake had instigated his discharge from Mehlhuber’s employ. His triumph was of brief duration, for a few minutes later he was startled by hearing his own name. However, it stood near the foot of the list and he would very probably escape.

And so the drawing for the township of Copton by and by was finished. The Commissioner announced that the drafted men were required to appear for examination and enrollment on Wednesday forenoon, October 22d.

Various were the comments among the people from Copton when its roll of drafted men was completed.

“Why wasn’t Tom Hartnagel hit?” some one asked.

“Easy to know that, you dumb-head,” was the gruff reply. “He’s a black one and of course his name wasn’t in that there wheel at all.”

“But Nate Gottschall was hit and I think you can't find a blacker one than him,” replied the other.

“Yes, and there's Phil Markbein too. He's an Abolitionist,” said a third.

“Jim Fetzer will run away, but Zellon will make them come and take him,” said the second speaker, changing the subject when he found the theory of collusion would not work. “If they'd all do that Lincoln wouldn't get many soldiers by drafting I think, by Judas!”

Thus the talk went on.

Tears fell on many a hearthstone that night when husbands and brothers returned and reported what they had drawn in “Uncle Sam's Lottery.” There were sad communings about the management of domestic affairs during the absence of loved ones and the probabilities of a safe return home, and already the shadow of the parting moment began to obtrude itself.

Nevertheless “The People's Hotel” had a fine run of custom on the evening after the draft and Hen Weinmiller was kept too busy to think of his misfortune. Some drank because they were sad, others because they were glad and Sparger because he could not help himself. Great is whiskey and the devil is its prophet! It drove away the sadness of the sad, it made gladder the glad; but on the morrow the sad were sadder, the glad were gloomy and Sparger's chains were riveted on its victim more firmly than ever.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE KNIGHTS AND SOME BOYS IN BLUE.

“What’s going on in the hall to-night?” said Doctor Helfer to Squire Zweispringer as the two sauntered from the office of the former toward Baltzer’s tavern on Saturday evening after the draft.

“I see it’s lit up, but I haven’t heard of anything,” answered the squire.

“Ho! if there isn’t Philip Huber just coming out of Fettig’s store and I’ll bet the brightest button against a green persimmon that he’s up to some devilment.”

“He and his lodge will get trouble before long I’m afraid and I regret that Fred Ruthvon has been turned all wrong by it.”

“Fred is very grateful to Tom Hartnagel and good may come of it,” remarked Helfer.

“I hope he’ll get out of the ring before he gets caught with the rest.”

They saw Captain Ruthvon and Tom Hartnagel standing in the dim light in front of Fettig’s grocery apparently in earnest consultation, and asked them about the light in the hall. The answer was that it was supposed the drafted men from Copton township were holding a meeting. Presuming that others also might attend, the doctor and the squire went up stairs, but

were promptly turned back by the sentinel at the door who said that a private meeting of drafted men was being held. They noticed, however, that men not drafted came up, whispered to the sentinel and were at once admitted into the hall.

“Just as I surmised,” said Helfer. “Huber and his crew are in there.”

The Knights of the Golden Circle were simply holding the meeting appointed by Huber a week previously. The windows were darkened and every precaution was taken to prevent any outsider from acquiring a knowledge of what was done. The noise in the room below was also in their favor.

Among those present were a good many drafted men, and quite a number who had stood aloof but, being drafted were now anxious to join, were initiated. The latter were nearly all from the townships of Knockshudel and Rattleton. When the ceremony of initiation was concluded the leader proceeded to address the lodge.

“Knights,” said he in his most impressive manner, “in spite of protests and entreaties the draft has been made. Yes, the blow of the tyrant has fallen and he is about to place his uniform of infamy upon unwilling citizens. The crisis has come and we must act like men.”

“What shall we do?” asked several members regardless of the rules.

“The messenger I sent to Indiana,” replied Huber, “telegraphed me from Muncie to-day on his way back

from Indianapolis. He says the 'goods' we ordered will be shipped to-morrow. There are five hundred rifles and a lot of small arms. The boxes will be marked *unfinished rifle barrels* and consigned to a name I shall give to Mehlhuber. They can be conveyed from Reading after dark and put in the mill. The name of the 'goods' on the boxes will allay suspicion as there is one or two gun-barrel boring-mills in this vicinity and such boxes are often sent here."

"That there is good," said Mike Hahn aloud.

"Is it all right, Mehlhuber?" inquired Huber.

"It must be good so," answered Christian, but in very rueful tones as if it were very far from being "good," and would be much better if the arms were lost on the way. "Somebody else must haul them from Reading though," he slowly added. "It won't look so suspicious."

"That's right," said Huber. "Prantman there will haul them out."

"A man ought to be paid pretty good for doing such dangerous work," said Hans. "Two dollars and a levy wouldn't be too much."

"That'll be all right," replied Huber smiling.

"How about reporting next Wednesday?" inquired Fritz Kleinkammer. "Maybe we're all in the army before the guns come, by henker! You said once we shouldn't report, Mr. Huber."

"I advise all to report," answered the leader. "I have it on good ground that the drafted men will get at

least ten days more, and maybe get off entirely yet. Black Abe and his cabinet are getting scared on account of the strength of our order in the west and because we gained so much in Congressmen in the election last Tuesday. So I advise you who are drafted to report next week and then when you come back on furlough we can arrange it all better than if you got into trouble by not reporting this time. The guns will then be here and likely before that time there will be an uprising in the west that will stop the war business bad."

To a man these people believed Huber. Whether he believed his own statements may bear discussion.

"It is well always to be prepared for the worst," he went on. "If by any mischance you should be forced into the army and should ever fall into the hands of the Southern soldiers, or be hard pushed in a battle, remember the sign of recognition. — All of you give it now. So! That is good. That sign will protect you if you are in personal danger after capture, for our members in the Abolition army have a good understanding with our members in the Confederate army."

"But does any of the big officers belong to it?" asked Pete Prantman.

"Indeed! — in both armies, and you needn't be afraid to make yourself known to them," answered Huber. — "And let me remind those of you who are not drafted of your duty to those who are. A part of your oath was that you would assist those who refused to report to the Lincoln officers when drafted. Therefore if a drafted

man who will not report comes to your house by day or by night and asks for food or shelter, you are bound by your oath to grant his request, and if he is pursued by soldiers you must give him hiding if you can."

Hans Prantman and others made wry faces at this, but Jake Zellon said "Good for that there!"

"Now, there is an important thing I wanted to ask about when Kleinkammer interrupted me," pursued the leader. "Has Rambuettel been discharged?"

"Yes, he has and is in Reading," replied Mehlhuber.

"Who is in his place? We must have a trusty man there."

"I'm the man, holy cross!" exclaimed Jake Zellon savagely, "and woe to the man who tries to take them without my leave."

"You mean the guns, Zellon; you're all right," said Huber patronizingly.

"Maybe I am," replied Zellon sullenly, "but I don't believe in reporting next Wednesday, and, so help me the crook! I for one won't report, that there is settled."

"All good, Zellon," said Huber. "Every Knight is bound to help you. — And now let me propose something," he continued in a lower tone. "I was thinking at what a friend told me to-day how kind the people hereabout were in July, 1861, to the Tammany regiment when it was detained at this station several hours on its way to the war. That was before the people knew the war was just to free niggers and put money in the pockets of the big-bugs. Now, Yankee Jedwig,

or whatever his name is, is said to be doing much for the soldiers and professes to love them a great deal. You drafted men are in one sense soldiers and I propose that next Saturday night you all pay this Abolitionist a friendly visit and see whether he'll be good to you. He ought to give you a good supper and cider anyhow."

Huber's proposition was received with great enthusiasm, especially by Pete Prantman and Zellon. Huber saw how eager the latter were.

"Be sure to make the visit a friendly one," said he smiling pleasantly and laying much emphasis on the word "friendly."

"Are you sure now, Mr. Huber, we'll get five or ten days' furlough after we report?" inquired an anxious drafted man.

"Quite sure, as I have said," answered Huber.— "We will meet next Friday night at Mike Hahn's house.—Now, is there anything more?"

There was. Just then loud voices were heard in the bar-room below and much confusion appeared to prevail. Five or six soldiers, it would seem, were on their way back to Reading from a point near Schnarraffelsschedel, whither they had been sent under a petty officer to look for a deserter. Their search was unsuccessful and, weary and hungry, they turned into Baltzer's tavern to refresh themselves. While so engaged they learned— from Doctor Helfer it is believed by Mike Hahn to this day—that a meeting of Knights of the Golden Circle was in session in the hall above.

“The traitors,” shouted one of the soldiers. “We fight and they plot against us. — Sergeant Thompson, with your permission we’ll see what they’re at. Won’t we, boys?”

“We’ll clean out the lodge and make every one of them take the oath,” was the hearty response.

“Careful, only fun, lads,” said the officer.

“All right, sergeant,” answered the spokesman.—
“Landlord, show us the way quick.”

“You go up and in behind there,” said Baltzer pointing with his finger. The bar-room was full of men, and as a fight was expected there was much excitement. The sentinel heard the noise and caught some of the words. He rushed into the lodge-room and cried that the soldiers were coming to arrest them all. Instantly a dash was made for the door. Pete Prantman jumped over three benches at one leap and in three leaps more was down the steep stairway and in the back yard. Clearing the fence between these premises and those of Caspar Fettig, he crept into an empty store-box as the handiest refuge. Some of the Knights fell down the steps and others rushed over them.

Philip Huber was one of the first out. He lost his hat and bumped his nose against a post in the dark yard but he never stopped until he was safe in the cellar of Fettig’s store, where he was presently joined by eight or ten of his fellow Knights.

In all the turbulent history of “The People’s Hotel” such swearing and crowding and hurrying had never

been known. When the soldiers reached the rear entrance they found one man lying stunned at the foot of the stairs and another coming leisurely down. The latter was Zellon. Where nothing supernatural was in question he had an abundance of courage of the bull-dog kind. At the beginning of the panic he had called on the Knights to make a stand, but in vain. He swore at them and then coolly followed them down.

“What do you want?” he demanded of the soldiers.

“We want to be initiated into the lodge,” was the reply.

“I’ll have to do it myself then, for, holy cross! the cowards is all gone,” said Jake. “They ought to be put in the army, every one!”

And sure enough when the boys in blue reached the hall not a soul was to be seen.

“We’ve cleaned out the lodge without touching a man,” said the leader, “and if all Knights are made of such stuff, I reckon the government needn’t be much afraid of them.”

The soldiers had a hearty laugh over the matter and returned to the bar-room. After they had resumed their journey to Reading Deacon Fettig—who was a prominent Knight—brought Huber and the rest up from the cellar by the stairs leading into the back yard. Here they were joined by Pete Pantman and several others.

“I think these fellows were not after us at all, from what Fettig here says,” said the leader, looking rather

crestfallen even in the dim light of Fettig's lantern and speaking in tones very much humbler than common; "but men need not be ashamed to run and hide when tyrants are after them and they themselves are unarmed, — especially leaders, for these must always bear the persecution. The Christians in old times often had to do this."

As they came around the store into the street Sam Barbour emerged from the grocery with sundry packages on his arms. Barbour, to whom allusion has once or twice been made, was a colored man. He had worked for Jabez Chetwynde in Connecticut and resolved to go with his employer when the latter moved to Pennsylvania. Jabez was glad to have him do so, for Sam was a sober, steady fellow, of whose devotion and attachment to those who meant him good there was no doubt. Though long isolated from his race, he retained its characteristics of dialect, love of song, and shrewdness. He had a wife and several children, lived in a small tenant house and worked on Mr. Chetwynde's farm.

He had come to the village rather late to-night and hearing the uproar waited to learn what it meant.

"There is one of the rascals for whose kind a good many white people are getting drafted," said Huber, on whom the sight of a colored man acted as an irritant — especially just now. He had been humiliated and felt that somehow this poor negro was partly the cause. He knew his men well, and what he said in guarded language was equivalent to the "Watch him, Tiger," which

a man addresses to his mastiff when he wishes him to spring on an enemy. Certainly that was the effect of his words. Hardly were they spoken before his followers came up to Barbour, and while some stood in his way, others began to jostle him. He tried to get away from them, but whichever way he turned they got in front of him and prevented his going.

“Gen’lmen, what do you wish?” he asked, after bearing their rudeness as long as he could. “Please let me go ’long, gen’lmen. It’s gittin’ late an’ I has some of Mr. Chetwynde’s things heah, dat’s sut’n, an’ I must git ’long shuah.”

Pete Prantman waxed very bold. All the instincts of his early schoolday supremacy came strong upon him. He seized Barbour’s packages and threw them on the ground, scattering their contents in every direction. Enraged by the unprovoked assault, Barbour made a furious dash at Pete, but one of his assailants tripped him up and he fell headlong. He rose up again quickly, but the cowardly ruffians kicked and cuffed him until he was well nigh senseless, after which they ran away in the darkness.

An assault on Sharp Billy by James Fetzer, into whose way Galsch’s boy happened to come, wound up the disturbances of the evening.

CHAPTER XXIX.

AN OLD CHURCH AND A MEMORABLE SERVICE THAT WAS HELD IN IT.

From Haltfest toward the north the ground rises in terraces until at the end of a mile a considerable eminence is reached from which there is a delightful view across one of the finest agricultural valleys in Pennsylvania. On this height, just midway between the French and the Revolutionary wars, was erected the old church to which reference has several times been made. It was a building of medium size. Its walls were of stone and very thick. They were covered with a preparation of ground brick, which gave the structure the appearance of a great red cube with a steep roof on the upper face.

Within, everything was ordered after the most primitive fashion. The walls were bare and the windows small and dingy. The pews were high, uncushioned and uncomfortable. No carpet was visible anywhere save on the pulpit steps. On three sides were high galleries; on the fourth was the little "wine-glass" pulpit perched on a high post. In the west gallery was a small but sweet-toned pipe organ. The bellows of this instrument were located among the huge timbers of the loft and were operated by means of two long ropes reaching down through the ceiling to the side of the organ.

In this building the fathers had worshiped for generations, without a change in the order of service, and but little in the equipments. Innovations — choirs, co-seating of the sexes, Sunday schools, young people's societies, collections for missions — were frowned upon. The children were quite content with the ways of the fathers. And when the latter were done with earth their bodies were laid to rest in the beautiful old God's Acre hard by the church. No costly monuments were erected over their graves. They who slept here had led humble lives and a few simple words on a plain marble slab were their only biography. Of them Gray's lines were descriptive : —

“Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learn'd to stray;
Along the cool sequester'd vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.”

It was the Sunday morning after the draft, and although the services were appointed for ten o'clock, yet an hour before people from all parts of the surrounding country began to flock to the church. The rumor had gone forth that the good old pastor, the Reverend Ortho Dox, who had been over this parish for a generation, would this morning in his sermon make reference to the draft and address such of the drafted men as might be present. As he very seldom referred to current events in his public discourses or prayers and as the draft came right to the homes of many of his parishioners, expectation was awake and all were anxious to hear what he

would say. But presently some one brought a report to the large group of men standing in the open space in front of the church that Mr. Dox was ill and would not be able to officiate at all that day. This gave those who did not like the preacher's conservative course in regard to war matters an opportunity to nudge one another and make uncomplimentary remarks about him.

Of these was Doctor Helfer, who though not a member of the church was what in the Congregational body is called a member of the society. For that locality he contributed liberally to the pastor's support and the current expenses of the church. Indeed, when he wrote "\$5" opposite his name on the subscription paper which Deacon Fettig handed him shortly after he settled in Haltfest, that official was almost startled, for in those days not a single member in all that large and wealthy pastorate paid that much annually for the support of the gospel. So the doctor was allowed considerable freedom in his remarks, the more that, unlike the members of the society among Congregationalists, he had no vote in the affairs of the church.

"So Dox isn't coming," said he. "I think he's glad he isn't well. He'd have been ashamed not to say anything to the drafted men and yet have been afraid to do so for fear of offending Vorsteher * Prantman and a lot of other fellows. I'm disgusted with old Dox!"

"You ought to be more charitable," remarked Squire Zweispringer in a tone of remonstrance. "You don't

* Deacon.

know what he might have done, doctor. He did well at Fox's funeral."

"The less a preacher says about these things the better for him and the church," said Frederick Ruthvon sententially.

"But how can he do his duty in times like these without alluding to national affairs when members go to war and those who are killed must be buried?" asked Helfer. "I tell you," he continued with great animation, "it's no wonder so many people stand off from the church when large numbers of its ministers are either dumb dogs in the pulpit or else condone wrongs crying to heaven for vengeance."

"But with all that," answered Ruthvon warmly, "a decent hypocrite *in* the church is far preferable to an open-mouthed unbeliever *out* of it even if the latter is an Abolitionist."

Doctor Helfer was about to reply in a manner calculated to unfit all within hearing for a religious service when Vorsteher Prantman came up and said that Mr. Dox had made arrangements to have the Reverend William Heimer occupy his pulpit this morning and that the substitute would be here in a few moments.

"Ho! what'll it give now?" exclaimed the doctor. "There'll be fun sure," with which cheerful remark he turned and entered the church followed by all the rest.

The church was crowded with people in every part — even the pulpit stairs and those leading to the galleries, — and when it was whispered from mouth to ear that

Heimer would preach instead of the pastor expectation became still more intensely eager. The galleries were occupied exclusively by men, who according to custom all kept their hats on. There was one exception. Captain Ruthvon removed his hat when he entered the church, just as he had done for some years. The act was noticed and commented on unfavorably, as it had been when he did it the first time.

“He’s as proud and stuck up as ever,” said Ret Prantman to Sallie Vonneida, who now were on speaking terms only because it afforded them opportunity to nag each other.

“He’s sweet as sugar and nice as apple-pie,” answered the knowing Sallie, looking at Tom Hartnagel in the east gallery and in her description having him in mind more than the captain.

“He thinks himself above us, though he’s only Pennsylvania Dutch, like the rest of us,” retorted Ret, “and he must show himself in church by taking off his hat before the minister comes in.”

“And he still goes after a Yankee girl too,” added Miss Vonneida in a real cutting way, and it is to be feared that time and place alone saved her from receiving very tangible evidence of Margaret Prantman’s wrath.

Conrad Windkasten, the sexton, who also had charge of the organ bellows, was in his place and looked unusually self-important. He did not indeed furnish the music himself but let all men take note that without him

the organist could not furnish it either. Nathan Geiger despised the humble bellows-blower but the latter returned his scorn and on several occasions had shown him how dependent he was by permitting, as if by accident, the bellows to cease working for a moment during the singing, to the unspeakable delight of Sharp Billy and the righteous indignation of the old organist.

Sharp Billy, who attended church pretty regularly, much for the same reason that a newspaper reporter attends a political meeting, sat by the sexton, and notwithstanding the assault and his late walk on the preceding evening, was wide awake, Sometimes Windkasten would condescend to let the lad pull the ropes, but by no means to-day when so many people were present.

The Elders and Vorsteher were also in their places, in the two front pews on the right of the pulpit, with a due expression of dignity on their faces. Vorsteher Prantman was clearly in a pleasant mood, even though his son was drafted. Evidently he anticipated a feast of very fat things.

A large proportion of the drafted men from Copton, Rattleton and Knocksdehudel was present. They did not sit together in a body but were scattered among the audience. Some of them looked sad, as though they might be worshiping for the last time in the place hallowed by so many precious memories. Others wore an air of cheerfulness that lacked genuineness and a few seemed like men whose hand is against every man.

Pete Prantman, who sat by Andrew Pfannkuchen, had a weary, hunted look — like a man who, confronted by a great danger, has been day and night taxing his brain to devise a plan whereby to evade it and has failed. He awaited the sermon anxiously. Perhaps it would give him a clew.

When the hour for beginning the services arrived there was a decrease in the volume of sound made by the whispered conversations and all eyes were frequently turned toward the south door, though which the minister and the organist always entered together. Suddenly all was hushed and every hat was off in a twinkling. The preacher of the day and Nathan Geiger were coming up the aisle side by side. The latter ascended to the gallery and the minister walked past the altar and under the pulpit, where holding his hat before his face, he stood for a moment and offered a silent prayer.

“Now,” whispered Sharp Billy to Windkasten when the preacher laid aside his hat, “it’s full and he’s going to set it down and go up stairs,” for which irreverent remark the bellows-blower gave him a look that would have blighted any other lad but merely evoked a pleasant wink from the witch’s boy.

Having divested himself of his overcoat, the Reverend William Heimer ascended the spiral stairway and entered the pulpit. This eminence reached, he looked a moment over the entire audience, after which he opened the Bible at the place of the lesson for the day. He was the pastor of a church in the township of Knocksde-

hudel but, like Mr. Dox, lived in Reading. He was a young man of medium size, heavily built, with sharp, bluish eyes, thick lips, a tawny, freckled complexion and a full, clean-shaven face. His toilet was very carefully made, and his coat and neck-tie were faultless. He had about him an air of dogmatism and authority that would have graced the proudest archbishop in the land but that somehow would equally well have become the presence of the potentate of a gilded lager-beer saloon. He moreover possessed a most exalted opinion of his appearance and talents and was the very personification of selfishness. His manner distinctly said —

“ I am Sir Oracle,
And when I ope my lips let no dog bark! ”

He was a Pennsylvania Dutchman of Pennsylvania Dutchmen, with all their immobility, stubbornness and prejudice against everything pertaining to New England. Personally he was known to comparatively few in the audience, but his reputation was that of an ardent sympathizer with the South in its efforts to overturn the government. Indeed it was common report that Philip Huber had had the gratification of initiating him as a Knight of the Golden Circle, and no one had ventured to contradict Doctor Helfer when he made a statement to that effect one night at Baltzer's though several winked at each other and quietly chuckled. When Heimer entered the pulpit these things were remembered, and as in addition to all this he was physically the very oppo-

site of their own quiet, easy-going minister, and a stranger was a rarity in that pulpit, it is safe to say that in all the long history of the congregation no audience had ever gathered here so attentive, so anxiously eager, as the one at this moment before the Reverend William Heimer.

“He knows everything, that one does,” whispered Ad Sparger to his next neighbor. In making this remark the loafer simply voiced what was then the common belief among the more ignorant Pennsylvania Germans and is held by many of them until this day — that regularly ordained German Reformed and Lutheran ministers are *ausgelernt*, that is, have exhausted the fountain of human knowledge and “know everything.” Certainly the Reverend William Heimer looked conscious enough to be rated with this class.

The public religious services of the Pennsylvania Germans are commonly conducted in pure German. This was the case in the present instance. They began with an invocation after which a hymn was announced. Then the minister, standing, lined out the hymn. One line sung, he read the next. Before each line the organist would play a prelude of six or eight notes leading up to the music of that particular line. Then, being also the Vorsinger, or precentor, his voice would rise loud and shrill. He sung with much effort, and on the higher notes his face grew so red and the veins of his forehead and neck stood out so, that one was alarmed for his safety. But in the eyes of this simple

folk there was no musician in all the country round like Nathan Geiger. Many followed his lead and a goodly volume of song, making up in earnestness what it lacked in harmony, ascended.

The hymn was followed by the lesson and a "free" prayer. The latter was the prelude to the sermon. The minister besought God to give grace to all to bear persecution for conscience' sake. He prayed that light might be given to those who, though at the head of the government, were walking in thick darkness and that the cry of the widow and the orphan might soon cease to ascend to heaven. This prayer had at least two effects: it still further whetted the appetite of the audience, and made Vorsteher Prantman wink, — "He'll give it to them once!" — to Vorsteher Fettig.

A second hymn was sung —

"Liebster Jesu! wir sind hier
Dich und Dein Wort anzuhoeren,"

after which the preacher announced his text. It was Romans 13:1-3: —

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same."

"These are days of sadness," he began. "The morning, so bright, but now darkened by clouds, is a type of

the joy that was, and of the sighs and tears that now are, in the land.”

There was an instant response on the faces of the audience, and Heimer was quick to perceive it. He went on with greater animation: “Husbands and sons are slain in the South. The dark cloud has moved north until now it hangs over us. It is touching and blighting our homes. Our dearest ones are forced to go forth to the war. More than this could hardly be demanded of them, and the great question at once forces itself upon us, namely, whether this is right; or, in other words, whether the power which exercises such fearful authority is of God?”

He then laid down two propositions: First, that while the power that is, is ordained of God, it may degenerate. Second, that when it so degenerates it ceases to be God’s ordinance, and ought to be destroyed. These propositions he discussed at length, and illustrated them from history sacred and profane. Having done this, he proceeded cautiously: “Our government was ordained of God. Has it become degenerate and ceased to be the ordinance of God? That is, has it ceased to be a terror to evil-doers, and become such to the righteous and to all good citizens? I will not answer; I need not. Let the millions of treasure wasted, the vast section robbed of its lawful property, the thousands slain in battle, the cries of the wounded, the tears of countless widows and orphans, give you an answer. Let the corruption and wickedness which are fostered by and stalk boldly

through the land without rebuke from those in authority, reply. Let the spies and informers that swarm on every side, watching peaceful citizens gathered for lawful purposes, bear witness. Even every word I am now speaking is heard by those who will faithfully repeat it to their masters."

Many eyes were all at once turned on Captain Ruthvon in the east gallery. He sat like a statue, but kept his gaze steadily upon the preacher.

"Is God then seeking the overthrow of this government?" continued Heimer. "He may possibly be using means which need not be named, but are manifest to all who will closely observe."

Vorsteher Prantman and Fettig winked hard at each other.

"Under all the circumstances I pity you in this assemblage who are so unfortunate as to be numbered among the drafted. You are required to fight in a cause revolting to you as honest men who believe that the rights of all should be sacredly guarded. In three brief days you must say adieu to your home and all that is dear to you and in many instances it will no doubt be the final farewell. Wives will weep for husbands; widows, fathers and mothers lament for sons; little children will in vain stretch out their tiny arms for their papas — desolation will reign supreme in your homes,— and, let me say it boldly, all because of the wrong-doing of the powers that be."

Pete Prantman said "Donnerwetter!" to Pfann-

kuchen, Doctor Helfer ground his teeth and muttered "Traitor!" *unter dem Bart*, while Sharp Billy nudged Windkasten and said "he could soon go into the fortune-telling business on his own account so far as that preacher was concerned if the sermon kept on awhile yet and Captain Ruthvon's eyes didn't give out," for which Windkasten told him to "hold his mouth." Women sobbed and the facial muscles of many of the men twitched suspiciously. There were stern faces too and a vast majority of the great audience hung approvingly on the orator's words.

At this impressive juncture in his discourse Heimer paused a moment to note the impression he had made.

It met his expectation and gave him inspiration for a grand peroration. The silence suddenly became almost painful, for the next words were what they had waited for. Would he say "Do not report for duty and resist if necessary?"

But again the sublime and the ridiculous met. Ad Sparger before coming to church had taken several drinks at "The People's Hotel" and the liquor with the impure air of the room caused him to go to sleep near the beginning of the sermon. Just at the point referred to he suddenly roused up, stretched himself and in shrill tones exclaimed "Are you a Democrat?" In spite of the solemnity of the moment the younger people tittered but were quickly hushed by the stern looks of the preacher. Vorsteher Fettig rose up as if to put out the disturber but Heimer stopped him.

“Let him alone,” said he. “He was dreaming and is not responsible. Treat him kindly.”

After his irrelevant question Sparger was still but half awake and put his head down behind the back of the pew in front. The speaker's unfortunate use of the Pennsylvania Dutch word *treat* confused his faculties utterly; his favorite expression came to his tongue instinctively, and raising his head he said with clear but rapid utterance, “Let's drink one!” Those who were not angry could not repress their mirth entirely, but Prantman and Fettig were in the gallery in a moment and led Ad out of the church. They looked very virtuous when they resumed their places and probably never gave a single thought to their sacrilegious conduct of a year ago whereby they had encouraged this poor wretch in his sad career. Heimer remained standing and when all was once more quiet began his peroration.

“When I remember these things, and when I reflect on the blood that must yet be shed in order that unholy ambition may be gratified, I for my part, whatever others may do, blame no man who may desert from the army, though I do not tell him to do so. I can despise no man who will give food and shelter to such an one, and I refuse to censure any person who, being drafted, fails to report for duty, even though I do not counsel him in this matter.—The dear Lord God have us all in His holy keeping. Amen.”

There was a sense of relief when the last word fell from the minister's lips and the closing exercises received

scant attention. The *Klingelsaeck*, or jingle-bags, were thrust before each worshiper as usual by the Vorsteher during the last hymn but only a few coins were dropped into them and by the neglect of the bellows-blower the organ suddenly ceased to play and the voice of Nathan Geiger sounded forth alone, but only Sharp Billy seemed to enjoy the mishap. The people were preoccupied. Men scanned each other's faces with an air of inquiry, or nodded approval, as the case might be, but no sooner was the benediction pronounced than the sound of conversation was heard all over the church. Vorsteher Prantman and Fettig met Heimer as he came down from his lofty perch and warmly congratulated him.

"That was once a bully sermon, clean down," said the former. "You did give it to the black ones right. I don't believe my Pete will go now anyhow."

A large throng of men and women came up to the preacher and thanked him for his sermon.

"Yes indeed," said Prantman officiously, "he's the man for my money, you people."

The Reverend William Heimer's vanity was highly gratified by these expressions of approval but somehow he seemed anxious to get away. On the plea that he had another appointment to fill later in the day he hurried out of the church and drove off. He evidently feared that some of the drafted men might ask questions he would rather leave unanswered.

When Doctor Helfer came down the gallery stairs Prantman accosted him.

“ Well, Doctor, what do you think of that sermon once ? ” queried he.

“ It was from beginning to end a plea for rebellion, deserters and men who refuse to report when drafted, ” answered Helfer hotly. “ One more like that ’ll shut Heimer up. ”

“ Who ’ll shut him up ? ” asked Hans much excited.

“ Ho ! that ’s none of my business, but maybe it ’s somebody else ’s, ” and the doctor left the church before Prantman could rejoin.

“ He means that Ruthvon dog, ” said Jake Zellon who heard the latter part of this conversation as he came down the steps, “ but that there spy had better look out, for the bullet is moulded that ’ll settle him. ”

“ Hush ! don ’t you see the witch ’s boy behind you ? ” said Prantman in a whisper. Zellon said nothing more but looked as if a second bullet were moulded.

Pete Prantman, James Fetzter and Andrew Pfannkuchen walked down the road together. The clouds were heavy and rain began to fall. Pete ’s face still wore the weary, hunted look and it was evident the sermon had failed to solve his difficulty.

“ Why didn ’t Heimer come out plainer and tell us what to do ? ” said he to his companions.

He came out as plain as he dared with Ruthvon and Hartnagel watching him, ” Fetzter replied ; ” and I think he wouldn ’t have said he wouldn ’t blame us if we didn ’t report, if he wasn ’t sure nothing wouldn ’t be done to us if we just would keep out of the way awhile. Any-

how I'm not going to report," and he began to whistle.

"Jim, don't you know this is Sunday, you pig?" said Pete angrily.

"I forgot," replied James, starting. "But you fellows who go next Wednesday will get caught nice on that getting-five-or-ten-days-more business."

"Donner — I mean — this is Sunday — do you mean so, Jim?" said Pete now more excited than ever. The very thought of the scenes of the present week made him shudder. At this point Zellon overtook them and the question was submitted to him.

"Nix!" he exclaimed contemptuously. "That's only a trick to get them all to come. Huber don't know everything. When they get them once they won't let them go again, lean on that."

"Not handy," chimed in Andrew, who was not drafted and felt good.

"If you don't get off," added Jake, "then you must run away and that's far more dangerous than staying away, for then you've took the oath."

"Don — this is Sunday — I think do you mean so?" said Pete.

"If you don't believe it, go once next Wednesday, you dumb-head, and you'll find out, forget it not," was Jake's consoling reply, and the look on Pete's face was more clearly defined than ever.

"You won't go then?" Pfannkuchen asked Zellon.

"Go nix!" the latter replied. "And I think if you

don't go with us Jim here and me'll have to make that visit to the Yankee's house alone next Saturday night."

That same evening after dark Squire Zweispringer's kitchen door was suddenly opened by an unseen hand and a note was thrown into the apartment. The note was addressed to Captain Ruthvon. Going to his room, he read as follows:—

"To Captain Ruthvon:

Beware of Jake Zellon. He's been heard to say to-day that your bullet is moulded.

A FRIEND."

The captain kept his own counsel, save as to Tom Hartnagel, whom he trusted implicitly in these matters.

Reports of the Reverend William Heimer's sermon reached the authorities at Reading during the week, but the latter, instructed from Washington, took no notice of his utterances.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE GOLDEN CIRCLE LOSES A MEMBER.

The dreaded day came quickly and on Wednesday morning, October 22nd, the depot at Haltfest was full of drafted people and their friends waiting for the Reading train. Doctor Helfer and Squire Zweispringer had a friendly word for each one and promised a number of men that their families should not want during their absence in the army. James Fetzer and Jake Zellon were not present but Pete Prantman was. The weary, hunted look was gone; so also was his right hand index finger! When asked about his bandaged hand he explained that on the previous Monday night while cutting rye straw for feed he had accidentally cut off a finger and that Doctor Knochenschneider of Schnarrafelsscheddel had dressed the wound. That Pete had purposely maimed himself in order to escape military duty need not be questioned and he was but one of many who did the same thing or similar things about that time.

Penn street, Reading, was filled with country people. Notwithstanding the boasting and threats they had indulged in, nearly all of the drafted men reported for examination and enrollment. From all parts of the country they flocked to the headquarters of the Commissioner of Draft. Some brought with them blankets,

comforters, boxes of fruit, preserves and other things from home, expecting at once to go into winter quarters and hoping in this way to make themselves more comfortable. All who could not pass Doctor John Grebsgong Goettman's examination, or were otherwise incompetent to render military service, together with those whose names remained on the roll after the quotas were filled, were discharged. Those held for duty were sworn into the service and furloughed for five days, and all once more turned their faces toward home.

The lodge-meeting on Friday night in the great room of Mike Hahn's house was largely attended. The sharp ear of Lovina Hartnagel was again at the knot hole in the floor above and heard all the proceedings. Philip Huber, who in the past few days had risen greatly in the confidence of the Knights, himself presided. The question to be considered was whether the drafted Knights should return to duty at the end of their furlough or remain at home and take chances in flight or resistance if sent for.

"We want to keep off suspicion and gain all the time we can," said Huber. "I advise the drafted Knights to report next week, for they'll get at least five days more."

"Are you sure of that?" asked Fritz Kleinkammer, who was now a married man of three days' standing.

"I have it on good authority—no matter how," answered Huber. "Meanwhile the arms will be here and if necessary we can use them. But I don't believe you need ever put on the Lincoln collar, for inside of a

week there will probably be news from the West that will make old Abe and his cabinet, and Curtin and Hautnehmer glad to let all drafted men go where they like."

Pete Prantman began to feel very sorry for his index finger.

At this point Christian Mehlhuber, covered with the marks of his calling, slowly arose and said he had something to communicate. The miller was about forty-five years old, quite stout, slow in motion and slower in speech, phlegmatic to a degree. He very seldom said a word in the meetings, and as he seemed considerably excited, all eyes were at once turned upon him.

"I didn't speak of this here thing to any one before to-night," he began very deliberately, "for fear some one might hear that oughtn't to hear, or some one"—looking at Zellon—"might do something ugly and spoil everything."

"That was all right, Mehlhuber, though you might have told me safely," said the presiding officer reproachfully.

"Maybe so, but well I think not," replied the miller stubbornly. "I'm sure I was right, for you know that birds of the"—

"Never mind the birds, tell us what you've got to say," cried several voices impatiently.—

"—air sometimes carry matters, the Bible says," Christian continued, raising his bushy eyebrows but not his voice and speaking a trifle slower. "Jake there hasn't

been helping me much in the mill this week. He and Fetzer has been up the creek in the Crow Hollow most of the time, coming to the house only at eating-time, which is right so, as the Lincoln fellows might get"—

"Sapperlotte once more!" interrupted Zellon impatiently, "can 't you tell us what it is, you pig you?"

"Order!" said Huber.

—"them else," the miller went on as soon as the interruption ceased. "And so yesterday when I was in the mill alone by myself and was just pouring Brett-schneider's oats into the hopper and taking out the toll, in"—

"To the devil with the toll. You took enough, sure," said Fetzer.

"It's against rule 16 to interrupt a member so," said Huber sternly. —

"came young Ruthvon and that black Hartnagel"— here the female ear in the room above suddenly became very acute — "and Hartnagel asked the price of Lincoln coffee, and other things, and Charlie said it was so long since he had been in the old mill, if I didn't care he'd look around the mill once a little so as not to hinder our talk, and after a little I went down stairs to set the mill-stones correct, and saw Ruthvon come out of the wheel"—

"Holy cross! it's good I wasn't there," cried Zellon fiercely.

Huber again rapped for order and declared he must impose a fine if there were any more interruptions.

—“room, which he said reminded him of when he used to fish for roach in the tail-race arch when he was a little boy,” resumed the dusty miller, if possible more deliberately than ever. “He was so pleasant, and asked me whether I still drew the gun-barrels from Reading for the bore-mill, and said the bore-mill must pay big now, as there was such demand for guns all over in these war times. He looked sharp at me too, and when we did come up stairs Hartnagel was coming from the upper story and he said the smut-machine and chaff-chambers looked as natural as ever.—Now,” suddenly raising his voice and striking his broad chest a hard blow with his fist, “somebody has been talking once out, and no guns is going to my mill even if there is other mills in the county!” He looked defiantly at Prantman, senior, and sat down heavily enough to shake the floor.

There were a number of pale faces in the lodge when the miller ended, and whispering and glancing from one to another. Some one had proved false and speedy arrest of every one might follow. Who was the traitor? Of spies and eavesdroppers they did not think at that time. Philip Huber was much agitated. He had believed that a show of arms on the part of a large number of men would really frighten the government and cause it to dismiss all drafted men, and now such a show in Copton township at least seemed impossible.

“Our proceedings here two weeks ago and those at Baltzer’s hall last Saturday night,” he said after medi-

tating a few moments, "have at least in part become known outside the Circle. I am very sorry for Knight Ruthvon, yet I must say that his son showed more feeling for him than Abolitionists usually show for anybody except niggers. He did not wish to see his father in trouble with the government and believed that if we knew it was aware of our designs, we would desist. This I think made him speak to Knight Mehlhuber as he did."

"I think you're wrong," said Hans Prantman. Frederick Ruthvon did not stir. He sat with downcast face.

"Maybe I am," said Huber. "But shall we be frightened and give up? That is the point. I say never. Meanwhile who is the traitor?" he cried, his face swollen with anger. "Is it possible" — changing to his solemn tone — "that any Knight could be vile enough to break his solemn oath?"

"Certainly," said Prantman, senior.

"This is a very serious matter and must be investigated," continued Huber not noticing the interruption. "It is every one's duty to help the Circle by his counsel and by imparting any knowledge he may possess. I take it for granted that all absentees were informed of the nature of the proceedings at the last two meetings."

Several members replied that *they* had been. Hans Prantman then got up and his small pig-eyes twinkled as if he were about to say something that pleased him greatly. "I don't know who told on us," said he, "but I could make a guess at it. If we see one of our members

go a great deal with black ones and have them come to his house too, then I'll get the plagues if it doesn't look suspicious once a little! My mother used to say if a white sheep went among black ones, it would get black too after awhile." When he sat down nearly every eye was on Frederick Ruthvon. Up to this point the latter continued to sit with his eyes on the floor, but he now quickly rose to his feet. As usual he spoke calmly.

"Is there any man who accuses me of treachery to this lodge?" he asked looking around and waiting for a reply. No one ventured to bring so grave a charge.

"If there is such an accusation made, I am here to meet it," he said.

"None is proved," said Hans Prantman with a sneer.

"And none is yet made, Prantman," replied Ruthvon sternly.

"But it looks suspicious that" — began the other again.

"You bring your charge against me or else be still," said Ruthvon in a manner as expressive as his words. "I insist, Knight Huber, that he does one or the other."

"That's according to rule," replied the chairman.

"I ask again, is there any one who charges me here with violating my oath?" said Ruthvon louder than before. There was no response.

"No charge being made against me," he went on, "I need say no more, but I feel that after what has been said I must speak in my own defence. — Charles Ruthvon is not my son. I disowned him because he went

contrary to the political principles I got from my father, and that ought to be enough to refute the false words spoken by my neighbor. But I did say and do some things that may have seemed suspicious to such as were watching me. I did talk indignant when Yankee Chetwynde's barn was set on fire, and also when my horse was shot in Schlapphammel's woods with no regard for the life of an innocent girl who was supposed to be in the carriage, and I wish in each case the villains had been discovered and punished to the full extent of the law."

"But they wasn't," said Jake Zellon with an air of triumph.

"They're living yet," retorted Mr. Ruthvon, "and will still get their dues."

"Who do you mean?" asked Zellon starting from his seat on the bench.

"Make him be still, Huber, till I am done," demanded Ruthvon.

"That's what I say, by my sex," added Kleinkammer.

"Kleinkammer is getting black too," said Pete Prantman spitefully,

"So is your finger," replied Fritz.

"Order!" shouted Huber while Pete and Fritz looked daggers at each other.

"Then, too, I was not present at the last two meetings," Ruthvon resumed. "It was because I couldn't go, and Hans Prantman there himself gave me an account of the proceedings of both meetings. And I find

that it is regarded as suspicious that I am very friendly with Tom Hartnagel, and that he comes to my house. May my heart wither when I cease to be friendly toward the man who saved my life!— And I don't want the friendship of any man who would ask me to shut my door in Tom Hartnagel's face. Then I am not sure either that the gathering of arms is right when I know that some of them will be used to avenge private grudges. Anyhow, Philip Huber, I can't and won't approve of such things as will be done to-morrow night, let me say at your instigation."

"Bah! go away once," sneered Zellon.

"He's getting too good for us," Pete Prantman chimed in.

"I have good ground for believing too," said Ruthvon not heeding these remarks, "that my property and perhaps my life are in danger from members of this lodge."

"Be careful, Ruthvon, what you say," exclaimed Huber.

"I am," replied Ruthvon, "and I will now do what I would have done anyhow to-night even if nothing unusual had occurred, but which I couldn't do so long as suspicion rested on me, or I supposed any member wished to bring a charge against me."

There was perfect silence in the lodge.

"Is there any form by which a member can be dismissed from the Circle?" he asked.

"None," answered Huber in surprise. "All are

sworn for life and the recognition sign is their certificate when they travel. But who wants to leave the Circle?"

"I do," said Ruthvon firmly.

Shouts of "Traitor," and hisses greeted these words.

"Didn't I tell you, huh?" said Hans Prantman triumphantly.

"I do," repeated Ruthvon, "and dismissal or none, I've met with the Circle for the last time to-night," and all the earth could not have shaken his determination, for the concentrated firmness, stubbornness and energy of generations of Ruthvons were now aroused in him. "Remember," he continued, as Huber was about to interrupt him, "I don't propose to violate my oath by revealing the secrets of the order, unless it were before a magistrate when legally called upon. My political principles I inherited from my fathers and not from the Circle, and they remain the same as ever, but I cannot maintain my self-respect and at the same time remain associated on intimate terms with men like Pete Prantman, Andrew Pfannkuchen and Jake Zellon."

Instantly all was confusion. Zellon made a spring for Ruthvon but Huber, Kleinkammer and others rushed between them and forced Zellon back into his seat. Huber begged all to remember how much was at stake, and be quiet. In the struggle the secretary's table was upset and the crash made such a noise that Lovina Hartnagel recollected herself just in time to suppress a scream, but rose up from the bare floor far more noisily than would have been safe had all been still. A shrill

female voice was heard in the entry below expostulating with the guard at the door.

“Thou beloved ground! what is wrong in heaven? Let me in, let me in, something is wrong sure with Mike,” cried Mrs. Hahn. Mike himself went to the door and assured his spouse that all was well, upon which she went away muttering that this war business was “enough to make one’s head white.”

Frederick Ruthvon did not move during the uproar. When a degree of order had been restored by the chairman he said: “And now let no man stop my way,” and walked toward the door.

“Shoot the traitor!” shouted Zellon starting after him. Hisses and curses again filled the room. Huber saw the stern determination of Mr. Ruthvon, and that an attempt to detain him by force or to permit personal violence to be done him would be exceedingly unwise.

“Remember your oath, Ruthvon,” he cried, stepping in front of Zellon. “Open the door and let him go.” In obedience to this order the door opened, Frederick Ruthvon passed through and the Golden Circle had lost one of its members forever.

Philip Huber did not believe Ruthvon to be the traitor. He knew the man’s character too well. And of course Huber was right. The reader knows how the proceedings of October 11th, became known to the outside world, and he remembers also that on the evening of the previous Saturday Captain Ruthvon and Tom

Hartnagel were seen in close consultation in front of Fettig's grocery. These had no chance of getting nearer the lodge than the bar-room that evening, but they nevertheless accomplished their purpose of finding out what the conspirators were doing. Tom Hartnagel had not acted the spy in vain. He remembered the name and face of Hi Wambsgans, a very stupid young fellow from Knocksdehudel township, a member of Haltfest lodge. Tom had seen him in the village in the evening and observed that he put his horse in the sheds of the lower hotel. Accordingly, after ten o'clock, the ex-soldier went down and loitered around there in the dark. Some time passed and then Wambsgans rushed into the shed in breathless haste and began to untie his horse. Tom quietly approached him and in a low tone said "R. D."

"H. O." came the prompt response.

"Do you know anything about the grip?" asked Tom.

"I think I do, but it's bad dark and them ugly soldiers is after us." He gave Tom the grip. The latter assured him there was no danger and by a little adroit questioning, without awakening the shadow of a suspicion, drew from the silly Knight the substance of the proceedings of the meeting and a hasty account of the visit of the soldiers, and during all the stormy scenes of the session still in progress not a thought of his interview with the stranger under the sheds entered Wambsgans' dull brain. But nothing of this was known to the Circle

and hence when the door closed behind Frederick Ruthvon there was much perplexity. With Huber, the more thoughtful members believed him innocent. Whatever they might think of the reasons he had given for withdrawing from the lodge, his well known love of truth and his course toward his son weighed strongly in his favor with them.

The serious fact remained that some one had proved false to his oath. There was no means of discovering the traitor at present. The leader could only exhort all the members to faithfulness and prudence.

“Of course the arms cannot now be stored in the mill,” said he, “but” —

“I’m sure they can’t, even if there is other mills in the county,” interrupted Mehlhuber, who after finishing his speech had never once risen or uttered a word during all the excitement except that when Andrew Pfannkuchen had trod hard on his toes he exclaimed “O heaven!”

“All right,” said Huber impatiently. “The boxes will be stopped at Reading. We’ll meet here again a week from to-morrow night. It’s safer than Baltzer’s hall. You drafted men will get a furlough. Look out for good news!”

“And all of you who want a good night-supper and cider don’t forget the visit to Yankee Chetwynde’s house to-morrow night,” said Jake Zellon. “We’ll go in spite of that old Ruthvon bugger, and we’ll meet at the big chestnut tree in Prantman’s lane at 7 o’clock.”

“And be sure to make the visit a friendly one, as I told you before,” added Huber. “I’d like to go with you, but I have an engagement.”

And so the lodge adjourned.

When Frederick Ruthvon reached home he said to his wife, who was waiting for him : — “Maria, I’ve been to the lodge for the last time. I’m a Knight of the Golden Circle no more.” He vouchsafed nothing more, and knowing his mood she only said, “So?” and thanked God in secret.

The next morning, being Saturday, Lovina Hartnaget as usual took the week’s butter and eggs to Fettig’s grocery. By previous arrangement she met her brother Tom on the way. In her communication to him she laid far more stress on the contemplated “visit” to Chetwynde’s than on Ruthvon’s defection from Golden Circleism, though she admitted that she could hardly restrain herself from applauding when Ruthvon left the room.

“You tell Chetwynde, and be on hand yourself,” she said earnestly. “And, Tom, I’m so stiff I can hardly walk from watching so long in one position, and my ear sings, but I’d do it again to-night if it was necessary to defeat them rebels.”

After again calling his sister “A bully girl,” Tom bade her good-bye, and, avoiding the village, returned to Jabez Chetwynde’s.

CHAPTER XXXI.

A "FRIENDLY" VISIT, AND HOW IT ENDED.

At the hour named by Jake Zellon about two dozen Knights of the Golden Circle, nearly all drafted men, gathered at the rendezvous in Prantman's lane. The day had been warm and pleasant but the night came in chilly, cloudy and very dark. The sough of the autumn wind in the boughs of the great old chestnut tree sounded weird and sad, and despite the errand they were on, caused some of these men to think of what might very soon come into their lives. They were quiet and seemed more like persons about to attend a funeral than to go on a frolic. Zellon was one of the first to arrive and he noticed that those who came were rather grave.

"What's the matter, you dumb-heads?" he growled. "It's chilly to-night and I wish we had a jug of Mehlhuber's juice here to warm us up. But never mind, we'll make the Yankee give us all the cider we can drink and something to eat too, won't we, boys?"

"Say, Jake, don't be so loud," expostulated Pete Prantman. "They'll hear us, and besides you're liable to be jumped on any time by the Lincolmers — you and Jim there."

"I've got all my fingers anyhow," Zellon returned.

“Yes, and a hole in your hand from shooting too much at a mark besides,” added Pete. These little pleasantries were ended by the sound of approaching footsteps.

“Late, as usual, Andy,” said Jake lighting an old lantern to see that none but friends were present. “Now we’ll wait no longer else the Yankee’ll be in bed. Off we go!”

For some hours preparations had been going on at the house of Jabez Chetwynde to receive the expected company hospitably and when the Knights left their meeting-place a substantial meal was ready in the kitchen. Mr. and Mrs. Chetwynde, Blanche, Tom Hartnagel and Captain Ruthvon were in the sitting-room awaiting the visitors. Mrs. Chetwynde and Blanche were ill at ease. They knew the bitter enmity Zellon and Prantman bore toward the family. Moreover, they felt that the presence of Tom and the captain would have a tendency to excite their angry passions. Indeed Mrs. Chetwynde had hinted as much, but the two soldiers declared there was no danger, or if there was they must share it with the family. The gentle lady was cautioning them to be prudent when suddenly the sound of a fife was heard not far from the house.

“That’s Sharp Billy’s signal of the approach of our visitors,” said Hartnagel, and a few moments later, without a preliminary knock, the rude party with Zellon at their head entered the outer door of the sitting-room. Jabez did not mind the manner of their entrance how-

ever, for he had become accustomed to this peculiar feature of Pennsylvania Dutch civilization. He said "Good evening" pleasantly as they filed in. A few returned his salutation and seemed half ashamed of themselves, but the majority were sullen, and all kept their hats on.

Zellon was taken aback somewhat when he saw Captain Ruthvon present in addition to Tom Hartnagel, but suddenly the thought flashed upon him that here the very opportunity he had been seeking might present itself. Besides, the villain was in desperate mood to-night. He knew that what Pete had said to him concerning himself and Fetzner was true, and he cared little what he did. If possible he must start a quarrel as best calculated to serve his purpose. Turning his back on Captain Ruthvon and the ladies, he addressed Mr. Chetwynde:

"They say you're an awful friend of the soldiers. A good many of us has been called on by black Abe to fight to get the niggers free and we thought you'd be bad glad to see us before we go away and give us a drink of fresh cider and something to eat, and so we came here."

There was a good deal of laughing and snickering among the men at this speech. Tom Hartnagel, with his coat off, stood on the opposite side of the room, his arms folded on his chest and his jaws more firmly set than usual.

"Zellon I'm a friend to every true man who has gone

or is going out in defence of his country," said Jabez standing close to the fellow and speaking very kindly.

"To free niggers you mean," interrupted Andrew Pfannkuchen.

"He's right," said Zellon with a wicked leer in his eye. Hartnagel gave a start and one arm left his chest, but a look from Mrs. Chetwynde restrained him.

"And I think," continued Mr. Chetwynde without seeming to notice the rudeness of his visitors at all, "I'm not boastful when I say that I have shown my friendliness in practical ways, and I'm ready to do it again. My own son is at this time probably dead or if living, a prisoner and perhaps starving, and this makes me feel all the kinder toward our soldiers."

"And you Yankees is the cause of the whole trouble," replied Zellon rudely. "By the devil, you ain't to be pitied, Chetwynde."

This time it was Captain Ruthvon who started but Mrs. Chetwynde laid her hand on his arm and looked so anxious that he leaned back in his chair and said nothing. Jabez felt the ruffian's cruel words keenly but resolved not to permit himself to lose his temper. He bit his lip but spoke calmly.

"I didn't know you were coming until about noon, otherwise" ——

"Who told you we was coming?" asked Zellon hastily.

"Well, Zellon, that has nothing to do with the matter. It was better to know you were coming, so that

we could make some preparation for you," answered Jabez smiling.

"I think, boys, we can guess now sure who the traitor was, ain't we can?" said Pete Prantman. Hartnagel and the captain could not help smiling at each other. The latter was in great spirits over his father's defection. He had communicated the news to Blanche and whispered that a better day was coming.

"I was going to observe," Chetwynde resumed, "that if we had had more time, we could have made better preparation. Still, there is a plain supper prepared to which all are heartily welcome, except perhaps a few of you."

"Not all welcome, huh?" sneered Zellon. "Who isn't welcome?"

"Soldiers should always be gentlemen," said Chetwynde.

"But we ain't gentlemen," replied Jake; "we're Pennsylvania Dutch and don't want any of your be-deviled Yankee 'gentlemening'."

"Zellon, will you please let me finish what I wish to say? Soldiers ought to know how to behave and be willing to make right any wrong they have done. You know that in the Bible a great and good man once said to the soldiers, 'Do violence to no man.'"

"But we don't care what the Bible says," answered Jake.

"But I do and you ought to. — Now, what I want to say is this: certain ones of you made an unprovoked

assault on Sam Barbour a week ago. Those of you who took part in that outrage ought to be quite ready to apologize. Without doing that I should think you wouldn't wish to eat at my table, since some of the goods you destroyed were mine, and no man who had a hand in the affair and won't apologize can partake of my hospitality."

"Who do you mean?" snarled Zellon.

"I mean you for one, and Pete over there was one of the chief fellows," replied Chetwynde calmly.

"Who says we had anything to do with it? Do you take the word of that black nigger against ours?"

"You haven't denied it yet and Sam Barbour's word has always been good so far. But there were good witnesses, besides."

"They lie, and I think we'll go out in the kitchen once and eat," said Zellon beckoning to his companions.

"On the conditions named," said Chetwynde striding to the door-way.

"Soldiers often take things whether people want to give them or not, ain't so, Ruthvon?" answered Jake, trying to pass by Chetwynde into the kitchen.

"Zellon," said the Yankee firmly, "you are rude and must leave my house."

Zellon replied by seizing his arm and pushing him out of the door-way. In an instant, the captain and Hartnagel were at Mr. Chetwynde's side and a fierce struggle began. Only four of the Knights — Fetzter and Pfannkuchen among them — stood by their leader, however.

The rest of the gang became frightened when they saw the serious turn the affair was taking and ran out of the house headlong, Pete Prantman being the foremost. Pfannkuchen rushed at Chetwynde but Hartnagel confronted him. Loosing his hold on Jabez, Zellon drew a pistol and aimed it square at Tom as the latter retreated from Pfannkuchen's blow, but in the act of firing Chetwynde struck up his arm and the bullet buried itself in the ceiling. Fiercely he turned on the Yankee again. The latter was faring badly, for the remaining members of the party closely engaged Charles and Hartnagel, when like a flash through the open door a young man in blue uniform sprung into the room. To seize Zellon and hurl him to the floor was the work of a moment, but the latter was older and stronger than this newcomer and seemed to be about to overpower both him and Mr. Chetwynde. At this moment the captain broke away from his antagonists and succeeded in felling the ruffian with a blow on the head.

"I'll have you anyhow, before I'm hung," shouted Jake with a terrible oath. "Your bullet is moulded and here it goes," and rising to his knees as he spoke he pulled his weapon again and fired at Ruthvon before any one could interpose. The ball struck Charles in the left breast and he sank to the floor with a groan.

"Run now," cried Zellon: "there's one nigger-worshiper less and I don't care how soon I hang," and in the confusion he and his companions escaped out of the house — except Pfannkuchen.

“I’ve got one of them and he shall hang if I can hold him,” said Hartnagel. He and Andrew were struggling on the floor, but the young man went to Tom’s aid and the big mountaineer’s arms were quickly secured.

The self-control exhibited by Mrs. Chetwynde and Blanche during this fearful scene was remarkable. Aware that cries on their part would but embarrass their friends, they remained in the corner of the room farthest away and were almost perfectly quiet. Even when the young soldier rushed in they only exclaimed “Oh, it’s Clinton, it’s Clinton, thank God, he’s alive!” but made no other demonstration at the time.

But now Blanche’s lover fell wounded before her, perhaps dead. The very thing he had spoken of to her long ago had happened. It was indeed too late! His lips would never speak words of love to her again. Self-reproach was her first feeling, and forgetting even her brother’s return, she cast herself down by Charles’ side.

“Charlie, Charlie, maybe I was wrong after all, can’t you speak to me?” she cried in piteous tones.

“My daughter, come away quick,” said her father lifting her up. “He must be attended to instantly. Clinton,— God bless you, my son! — and Tom, — God bless you too, you are a brave fellow! — carry him to the lounge, — off for Helfer, Frank — where is Frank?”

That lad, with an intuition worthy of greater years, had seen at a glance who was needed most. He called

to his mother and without waiting for directions jumped into the wagon, which he had left in Sharp Billy's care.

"I'll go with you," said Billy, who hovered around the house after the Knights went in. "You may need me with all them hemp-growers around," and at the top of the horse's speed in spite of the thick darkness they started for Haltfest.

Mr. Chetwynde bathed the captain's face and washed the wound, from which blood was oozing. The wounded man groaned and opened his eyes.

"Where am I?" he said feebly. "Is that you father?" Jabez Chetwynde motioned back Blanche and the rest.

"Charlie, be perfectly still a little while," said he. "You are hurt and must sleep now."

The captain closed his eyes and apparently became unconscious again. Mrs. Chetwynde and Clinton were locked in each others arms.

"You Pfannkuchen you," said Hartnagel anything but gently, as Andrew tried to rise to his feet, "you lie still and be bad quiet or, by the great Eulenspiegel! I'll shoot you dead."

"What right have you to keep me tied here, you devil?" asked the other.

"You murderers will find out once now," answered Tom. Pfannkuchen began to think that something serious had really happened. He made a desperate effort to regain his feet but Tom put a foot on his chest

and bade him lie still. "You will stay there till the constable comes," said he.

"Tom, how did we come to forget? — but how, to be sure!" said Mr. Chetwynde hastily on hearing these words. "Run over and tell Mr. and Mrs. Ruthvon; break it to them as gently as you can. Then hurry on to the village and summon Squire Zweispringer and Constable Stahlschmidt. Both will be needed."

"I'm off," said Tom. "Clint, how are you? Take care of this rebel."

"If he stirs, I'll shoot him on the spot like a dog," answered Clinton disengaging himself from his mother's and sister's embraces and shaking hands heartily with Tom.— "Mind that, you rebel. I've seen your kind often since I left home, only you're worse than the Virginia species."

Shortly afterwards Doctor Helfer arrived. He hurriedly examined the wound and pronounced it very serious indeed.

"One inch lower and the hurt would necessarily have been fatal," said he to Mr. Chetwynde. — "Clint, how are you? — What have you got there? Andy Pfannkuchen! A nice Knight. Keep him.— Glad to see you, Clint. Sorry to send you away so soon, but, dark as it is, you or Tom Hartnagel must go at once for Doctor Goettman. He's the best surgeon in Reading and we must if possible get that ball out in the morning."

"I'll go myself," said Clinton hastily, "if you'll mind this fellow.

“I will,” said Helfer; “and if Zellon is caught, I’ll help to hang him, and Philip Huber alongside, for he’s to blame more than anybody else for all this trouble. But Charlie must be taken up stairs at once, away from all noise. We can do it, Chetwynde.”

Preparations were quickly made and the wounded man was conveyed to an upper chamber.

“Oh, doctor, dear doctor, he must not die,” plead Blanche when Helfer came down stairs for a moment. “Save his life!”

“I’ll do my best, rest assured,” he answered in husky tones.

When Mr. and Mrs. Ruthvon came in answer to Tom Hartnagel’s summons a sad scene was enacted. The parents were distracted with grief. Doctor Helfer urged caution, but for a season the flood of sorrow could not be stayed. Charles opened his eyes when he heard his mother’s voice. They fell on his father who stood weeping by the bedside.

“It’s all right, father, is it not?” he said with a feeble voice. “You forgive me, don’t you, and I am still your boy?”

“I have nothing to forgive, Charlie,” replied the father with choked utterance. “You are still my son, my only son. It’s all my fault, I think, but curses on the man who fired that bullet.”

“It’s all right now, father, even if I do die, for I am still your boy,” said Charles.

“Oh, Fred, Fred,” said Mrs. Ruthvon, “in my deep

distress your words bring me comfort and joy. — Dear Lord God, spare my poor boy !”

“ Now you’ve spoken like a father and a man,” whispered the doctor to Frederick Ruthvon, “ and have saved me from saying that you are a fool and unworthy of such a son. — Now every one be quiet, else I’ll put you all out except Charlie.”

And thus, anxiously watching, midnight came upon them and the Sabbath began — a Sabbath that might usher Charles Ruthvon into the eternal Sabbath of heaven.

CHAPTER XXXII.

ZELLON VISITS THE FORTUNE-TELLER FOR THE LAST TIME.

Doctor John Grebsgong Goettman arrived at Mr. Chetwynde's house early on Sunday morning and he and Doctor Helfer at once held a consultation in reference to Captain Ruthvon's injury. The bullet had entered the left side of the chest and penetrated the left lung. They probed the wound cautiously and determined the direction which the missile had taken ; but owing to the condition of extreme shock and the fear of exciting fresh hemorrhage, they decided to defer further search until the following day.

“ A trifle lower and my services would not have been needed,” said Goettman ; “ and it's bad so.”

“ He came home ill about September 1st and hadn't yet recovered his full strength,” Helfer remarked.

“ That's against him,” replied Goettman.

“ He was going back to the army again to-morrow. He had a sixty days' furlough,” remarked Helfer further.

“ Unless we succeed in securing that ball to-morrow, I fear the prognosis of the case will be very unfavorable and that the young man will have an eternal furlough,” said Goettman putting a cigar stub between his teeth and preparing to leave.

“Ho! it must be done,” responded Helfer, but the interjection sounded tame and the kind-hearted physician’s eyes were moist.

“I’ll be back at ten in the morning, Helfer. Watch him closely and husband his strength as much as possible. Young Chetwynde is furious and when he comes back you’ll see more blue-coats. I understand my old friend Pfannkuchen had a hand in this thing and is trapped.”

“He is and I hope he’ll get his due,” answered Helfer.

“He would if the military authorities could deal with him, but as it is most likely he’ll escape,” said Goettman, biting the stub viciously.

“Constable Stahlschmidt took him on Squire Zweispringer’s warrant and by this time he’s well on his way to Reading. Of course it’s a case for the court of Oyer and Terminer, the more ’s the pity,” remarked Helfer.

“Yes, for such traitors the best thing is shooting on the spot,” said Goettman emphatically, his gold-filled teeth showing conspicuously in spite of the cigar. “I’ll see you in the morning.”

“I’ll stay here all day. Don’t fail me to-morrow, Goettman.”

And so began the weary struggle for life. Clinton Chetwynde returned from Reading at noon, but, as Doctor Goettman had predicted, not alone. With him came six soldiers, under Sergeant Thompson. They were instructed to act as aids merely to the constable to whom

the warrant for Zellon's apprehension might be given, so as to avoid all friction between the civil and the military authorities. They received a hearty welcome from Mr. Chetwynde, and even Constable Stahlschmidt, jealous as he was of the military authority, was glad to have them with him in view of the desperate character of the man he was to take.

While the soldiers were doing justice to a bountiful dinner in the kitchen Clinton partook of his in a back room up stairs where there would be no intrusion by visitors, and gave the family a brief account of his capture by the rebels and his escape. He was carried toward Richmond and notwithstanding his vigilance, for a whole month no opportunity of escape presented itself, and when at last he succeeded in getting away from the camp he was a number of times in danger of recapture.

"But the negroes helped me through," said he, "sometimes by giving me shelter, sometimes by warning me of the approach of danger, and again by guiding me on my way at night. Not one was untrue, and these men — for they *are* men — deserve the liberty they are about to get. After reaching our own lines I applied for a furlough for sixty days and got it. I traveled day and night to get home and here I am."

"Franz Yorim, who carries more gossip than goods," said Mrs. Chetwynde, "stopped on his way home yesterday at dark to tell us that you had been seen in Reading. It was not true, but high hopes were raised

and Frank went to meet the late train last night and again to-night, and this time he brought you."

"And now for Zellon," said Clinton after a little further conversation. "We know where to look for the villain and by evening I think we'll have him."

Early in the afternoon Stahlschmidt was ready to start on the execution of his warrant. He found himself at the head of a goodly force, for besides the soldiers a number of men and boys volunteered to join the hunt.

Leaving him and his men to make their way toward the South Mountain through the heavily falling rain, let us go back to the preceding evening and follow Jake Zellon when he rushes from Chetwynde's house after shooting Captain Ruthvon. James Fetzer and he kept together, running all the way, until they reached the road that stretches along the foot of the mountain. Here they stopped to rest and hold a consultation.

"We'll wait here about half an hour to see whether any one is coming this here way," said Zellon. "It'll never do at all for us to keep together."

"Mehlhuber is bound by his oath to give me" — Fetzer began.

"I don't want to know where you're going," said Zellon irritably, "and I'm not going to tell you where I'm going. It might be bad for you to know. No one's coming," he continued after a long silence. "It's as dark as two bags. Off with you."

After Fetzer's footsteps had died away he followed a short distance in the same direction. Then he turned to

the left, taking the road that led up the mountain. His destination was the fortune-teller's habitation. For some time he had been forming a plan to rob Galsch. He believed that the small chamber contained immense wealth. His avarice overmastered his superstitious fear. He resolved to possess himself of the sibyl's treasure and then leave the neighborhood forever. He was certain he had killed Ruthvon, but before mounting the gallows he would enjoy himself awhile. His designs on Galsch must be consummated that night. He hurried through the thick darkness along the same broken road down which he and Pete Prantman had so recently come at such break-neck speed. At the Cross-rock he slackened his pace and peered all around lest some bogey might spring upon him unawares. These creatures of the imagination he dreaded far more than the avengers of the law's majesty who would soon be on his track. He was not molested and toward midnight reached the rock where Pete had waited for him on his previous visit. Cautiously he approached the sibyl's habitation. To his surprise he saw a light streaming from the window. Creeping up carefully, he looked into the large room and to his still greater surprise he saw Pete Prantman in the apartment with the fortune-teller. The former stood by the fire on the hearth and Galsch sat by the table consulting the large black book.

“What has brought that hog-dog here at this hour?” said Zellon to himself in a whisper. “The coward is up to something.”

He went up to the door, softly raised the latch and walked into the room. Pete was startled at sight of his late companion, but Galsch rose up hastily and looked at Zellon as if frightened. She took a step backward and exclaimed: — “Zellon, Zellon, what have you done?”

“What *have* I done, you cursed old witch?” he said fiercely.

“There is blood on your right hand and” — starting back another step and seeming to tremble — “there is a great black arm over your head and back of you I see a gallows!”

“Holy cross! heaven! lightning!” he cried, fairly leaping to the opposite side of the room. “Did you tell her, Pete?”

“He told me nothing,” she interposed. “Can’t I see for myself?”

“What made you grow this way so soon after I saw you last, Pete?” he asked after recovering himself.

“I never allow patrons to tell each other their errands while in my house, it confuses everything,” said Galsch hastily, seeing how embarrassed Pete looked and fearing he would say something that would anger Zellon.

“Katrina, me and you is good friends and I want to ask a favor,” said the latter in a conciliatory tone. “In spite of the black arm I’m bad hungry. Give me something to eat once.”

“That shall you have,” she replied pleasantly and, having first closed the big book and deposited it in her strong box, proceeded to set before him bread and meat.

He ate heartily and then remarked that he liked her bread much better than Mehlhuber's wife's and would like to take a loaf with him to the mill to eat in the evening when he got hungry. She understood him perfectly and readily complied with his request.

"It's getting late and I must go home now," he said rising, "and I think it's time for Pete too." He stepped up to the latter and hissed into his ear:— "None of that there; not a word to any one that you saw me here. If you offer to give me up to save yourself or to get a reward, there's a bullet moulded for you too if I hang next minute. Pete shrunk from him and made no reply, and Zellon then opened the door and went out without another word.

"Zellon," said Galsch following him outside, "when you are hungry at the mill remember there is more bread left where that loaf came from." He merely grunted "It must be good so" and was gone. He lurked around the building however for two hours, but Prantman tarried and meanwhile Sharp Billy came and entered the house. Zellon could not execute his designs that night but resolved to do so the next. He knew it would be dangerous then, but what mattered it? Bestowing a curse on Pete Prantman, he made his way to Bodie's barn, where he slept until near daylight. Then he went toward Outlook Hill, stopping at a brooklet to eat of his loaf. It was a dismal morning. The rain began to fall and the leaves were coming thickly to the ground— nature was weeping for its departing glory. Shortly

after day-break he stood on the topmost rock of the Hill but the magnificent view afforded by that peak was now in large part hidden by the mists overhanging the valley. But Zellon had no thought of the scenery. He hardly gave any heed even to the falling rain.

The spot had a strange fascination for him. He knew that, but for the fog, he could see Chetwynde's house and all its surroundings. He lingered for some time in the rain, seeking in vain to penetrate the vapory veil that hid the valley from his sight. Then he turned and sought shelter like a hunted animal in the thick undergrowth, ate more of the loaf, slept awhile, and ate again. Once more he stood on the summit of the mountain. It was now noon. The rain still fell steadily, but the fog had lifted except on the extreme northern side of the valley. His first glance was toward the Yankee's house and his gaze was riveted. Numbers of horses and carriages were in the lane and groups of people stood in the yard sheltered by umbrellas. Presently eight horsemen rode up to the house, dismounted and entered. He knew their errand well and gnashed his teeth.

“She must yield up her treasure before I go; so help me all evil spirits, hell! sacrament!” he growled. “I'll have a good time in the South and hang decently at last.” He remained standing in one spot for some time without seeming to feel the rain and chilly atmosphere. At last the soldiers reappeared and mounted their horses. With them were others, some riding, some on foot. All turned south toward the mountain. Then he

knew that the hunt had begun. Stepping behind a tree lest he might be discovered even at that distance, he examined his pistols carefully and then resumed his watch. The whole party kept on until they reached the road mentioned before. They turned west and the question was whether they would go on towards Mehlhuber's mill or take the mountain road. He hurried along the rough path to ascertain, and found that they were all going straight ahead. He knew their destination, and surmised that later in the day the chase would turn in the direction of the fortune-teller's habitation. He rightly concluded that the safest place to hide in until night was the thick foliage of some tall pine. In a few moments he had selected and mounted one some distance from the road, and for a long time he heard nothing save the dismal patter of the rain on the leaves.

When Constable 'Stahlschmidt reached the mill he found the doors fastened, but Mehlhuber soon appeared from the house and opened them. The miller said that Zellon had not been there at all to his knowledge since noon of the previous day. Three men kept guard outside while the rest — the civilians who had volunteered in the search had already been driven from the field either by the elements or by fear — with Clinton Chetwynde in the lead made diligent examination within the building. No one was found. James Fetzler had slept in the mill-room, but took to the mountain at day-break. Two men were left in the mill, against the solemn pro-

test of the proprietor, and toward evening Zellon from his perch saw the constable and the remainder of his posse ride along the road toward Galsch's place. One straggler passed under the very tree he was in.

Meanwhile Tom Hartnagel had arrived at the sibyl's. He believed he would be more likely to secure information of the whereabouts of Zellon here than anywhere else. He was not disappointed, for Galsch at once informed him of Jake's visit during the night, and expressed the opinion that if the fugitive was not leaving for good, hunger would bring him again after dark. When Stahlschmidt came he was told of her view and agreed with her. If Zellon were lurking in the neighborhood however, he would probably observe their motions, and it was resolved that the entire party should return to Chetwynde's and thus remove suspicion. After nightfall Sharp Billy would conduct them back by an unfrequented path from the road at the foot of the mountain.

This was done. The constable, Tom Hartnagel and one soldier were duty hidden in the "consultation chamber" and the remaining soldiers, including Clinton Chetwynde, were placed at various points around the house. The task of those without was a disagreeable one, the rain still descending steadily, but the men were accustomed to such weather and minded it but little.

There were no signs of Zellon in the first hours of the night, but about eleven o'clock he walked into the house. He shivered with the cold and wet and hugged the fire

closely. Here he might have been taken easily, but the officer had instructed Galsch to get him to talk as much as she could first, for obvious reasons.

“I saw the Lincolners go back,” said Zellon, “but I had to wait so long to be sure none of them was coming back here. Give me some juice or something hot quick, Galsch. I’m wet through, holy cross! It’s too bad for a dog to be out to-night, let alone a decent man like Jake Zellon, huh?”

Without replying she went to an old cupboard, brought out a large bottle of antique shape with a drinking-glass to correspond, and set them on the table before him.

“You are cold, drink,” she said. He filled the glass and emptied it, and again, and yet again.

“Say, Galsch, but that is wine once,” he exclaimed after the third glass. “Does the devil furnish it as part of your bargain with him?”

“My father brought that wine from the fatherland long ago,” she replied with a tinge of sadness.

“It warms better than the fire,” said he filling the glass once more. “Give me something to eat. Mehlhuber’s wife is sick and I got nothing all day.”

“Eat and drink while you can, Jake,” she responded proceeding to procure him food.

“You’re right!” he exclaimed with an oath. “But Katrina,—kill that cat! she’s the devil if you ain’t,—of course you didn’t tell them devils I was here. Me and you is friends.—Say, do you see the black arm over me yet?” and involuntarily he looked upward.

"Not now," she replied evasively. "Gewitter, lie down, will you?"

"But how is it about that cursed Ruthvon whom Prantman has always hissed me on to kill?" he inquired, beginning to devour the meal she had by this time placed on the table.

"What about him?" she said innocently.

"Oh, bah! you know, you old hex you," he answered petulantly. "Did you hear whether he's living, the carrion?"

"If he is, I hear it's no fault of yours, Jake, and I think you had better go off as soon as you can."

"I will when I'm ready, but I ain't quite yet."

"You want to make it hot for one or two yet before you go, I think."

"Lean on that," he answered with a wicked leer. "Maybe you'll find out soon. I made it hot and light for the Yankee and — but never mind; it is nothing to you. You ask Pete about it."

After eating and drinking like one famished he asked whether she had heard anything of Fetzler or Pfannkuchen.

"Both safe," she replied, "Andy in jail and Fetzler gone."

"Say, you Galsch," said Zellon rising from the table, "the bottle is empty, but I think there's plenty more of this good wine in the little kammer there. May I go and look?" and before she was aware of his design he had secured her hands by means of a strong cord he

had with him. Recovering from her surprise she gave a shrill scream, the outer door and the door of the chamber opened almost simultaneously, and Clinton, Sharp Billy, Hartnagel, Stahlschmidt and the soldiers rushed in. Quick as a flash Zellon drew a pistol and leveled it at Hartnagel. The ball grazed Tom's ear and hit one of the soldiers in the shoulder, wounding him slightly. Zellon then turned and made a leap for the window opposite the main door, carrying sash and glass with him. Several shots were fired but all missed him. He was almost through when a ball better aimed struck him and wounded him mortally. He was dragged back into the room and laid on the floor.

"Mam was wrong after all," he said. "The bullet has done it and I'm dying. "Curse Huber! curse you, Galsch, it'll come home to you! Stahlschmidt, tell my old mam at Rausch Gap," he went on, his voice weakening rapidly — "tell her that her good-for-nothing boy wasn't hanged after all. And Pete Prantman, he paid me twenty-five dollars to set fire to — I'm dying — Lord God, have pity — O! mam, I'm — I" — and the soul of Jake Zellon had gone into the hands of the Judge of all the earth who doeth right.

During this scene Tom Hartnagel stood in his favorite attitude but with head cast down. Katrina Galsch was the first to speak after its close.

"The black arm I saw over him struck him sooner than I thought," she said.

"To be sure," replied Hartnagel looking up at her

rather contemptuously, "but Herrschaft! Galsch, if we hadn't been here, the devil you serve, all the evil spirits, and Gewitter there in the broken window in the bargain, —skull, candle, books and all, — couldn't have saved you from being robbed and maybe killed."

"But I'm sure my master sent you here to save me," she returned in a very serious tone. Hartnagel could not refrain from laughing at this remark, but quickly changing his manner again he took hold of one of the dead man's hands.

"He was a strong, courageous fellow, I must say," he remarked. "What a Union soldier he might have made, only for Ancoony and them fellows. I forgive him his ill-will to me though he came near laying me out. My ear sings."

The wounded soldier was attended to, after which, at the request of the constable, Sergeant Thompson detailed two of his men to remain with the body until the coroner could be notified and an inquest held. A great fire was built and the entire party disposed themselves around it and rested until morning.

"My head is all turned round," whispered Sharp Billy to Tom Hartnagel when the latter was leaving.

"How so, you Schwernoether?"

"I was sure it was going to be hemp," he replied with a curious twinkle in his eye, "but after all it was a bullet and I'm afraid my mam can't see very clear any more and that I'll have to set up business myself soon."

“I think not, Billy,” said Tom. “Me and you’ll set up together maybe sometime.”

Sharp Billy looked at Tom in surprise. He did not understand him then.

A jury was duly impaneled by the coroner and an inquest held on the body of Jake Zellon. Several of the jurymen were inclined to censure Stahlschmidt for allowing soldiers to aid him. Their inclination was the stronger because it clearly appeared that Sergeant Thompson had fired the fatal shot; but as neither this officer nor the constable had in any manner transcended his authority, nothing remained for the jury to do but to bring in the verdict they did — that Jacob Zellon came to his death from a bullet wound made by Sergeant Peaceful Thompson, while seeking to avoid arrest on the charge of assault with intent to kill, and that in their opinion no blame attached to the said Sergeant Peaceful Thompson for his act. The body was removed to Mehlhuber’s mill, where, in the mill-room, it reposed until next day when relatives from Rausch Gap took it away for burial.

William Rambeutel was reinstated as miller, but he slept in the mill-room no longer.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE STRUGGLE FOR LIFE.

Sunday is the great visiting day of the Pennsylvania Germans. They go to church in the morning if there are services, and in the afternoon they make visits. Without any preconcert fifteen or twenty persons will often gather at one house. And where very sick people are, there visitors most do congregate. Jabez Chetwynde's residence was not treated exceptionally. The news of young Captain Ruthvon's misfortune spread rapidly and although the rain fell, faster and faster, yet by eleven o'clock on Sunday morning scores of men and women had arrived there and dozens more were on the way. They filled the dining-room, they crowded the kitchen; some were in the barn; others stood under their umbrellas in the door-yard; and, as the days when doctors forbade unnecessary persons in the sick-chamber had not yet come, too many of them found their way into the room where Charles lay and the doorway was blocked up by those who were possessed of a morbid curiosity to get even a glimpse of the wounded soldier.

He was dying, his assailant was at large but soldiers were coming to catch him, young Clinton Chetwynde came home unexpectedly, Frederick Ruthvon was recon-

ciled to his son again — all these and a hundred other things were eagerly discussed, and it is but just to record that nearly all the visitors abhorred Zellon's deed and sympathized deeply with the afflicted family. The arrival of Clinton and his comrades in arms created quite a flurry. The young women remarked that Clinton had grown in his absence and was handsomer than ever and Susie Zweispringer was envied by many a lass. Sergeant Thompson too was the recipient of not a few admiring glances and none were more ardent than those of Margaret Prantman, who, sour as she was could nevertheless in her peculiar way appreciate a handsome male countenance.

When Constable Stahlschmidt and his force set out in quest of Jake Zellon tongues wagged rapidly. Would Jake be found? What would be done with him?

"I hope they won't get him," said Miss Prantman to Miss Vonneida who had left grandmother alone to come and inquire about Charles. "It was only a frolic and they was all to blame."

"Ret Prantman, you hold your mouth, or I'll have you put out of this house quicker than you came in," exclaimed Sallie in tones none the less emphatic for being low. "Shame yourself!" Ret held it prudent not to make any reply to the angry girl and contented herself with a sneer and turning her back upon Sallie with a female twist.

Shortly the kitchen door opened and a little old man entered. He wore blue pantaloons muddy to the

knees, a red vest much too short, last summer's shabby linen duster and a battered "stove-pipe" hat. In his right hand he carried a tattered umbrella and in the other a small brown tin box.

"There's old Bapp, the witch-doctor," exclaimed several of the women, nudging their neighbors. "Wonder what he wants anyhow?"

"Oh, he can draw any bullet with stuff he's got," said a wrinkled old woman sitting by the cook stove. "They say the Yankee wouldn't let them put up horse-shoes over Charles' room-door, and that's just the reason the doctors couldn't get out the bullet. Something must be done and old Bapp can do it too."

Witch-doctor Bapp of Schnarrafelsscheddel was not at all averse to partaking of the food which the hired girl with much deference offered him. After eating he inquired whether Doctor Helfer was in the house and was taken aback considerably when answered in the affirmative. Was Fred Ruthvon in? Yes. Could he see him? They would inquire. Mr. Ruthvon soon came down stairs and Bapp at once drew him aside.

"Now," said the charlatan, "I'm told that bullet is still in your son's body and I hurried with all my might to get here, for I didn't know what would happen soon. I knew your father and, you know me. He and me always stuck to the good old ways and you remember how I once saved your roan horse — you was only a boy then — when he had the bots so awful, by giving him

seven grains of rye that grew on the very spot on Mt. Carmel on which the prophet Elijah did build the altar.”

Mr. Ruthvon had a good deal of superstition left in his composition, and his native inertia inclined him to believe in talismans and occult remedies. Besides, under present circumstances his mind was in a state of receptivity. His son's life was hanging in the balance. Nothing that promised to save it was to be lightly rejected. He gave close attention to Bapp.

“I have, as you know,” continued the latter, quickly noticing the interest he had aroused in the stricken father, “one of the five stones which David took out of the brook when he went forth to slay Goliath. It's been in our family more than one hundred years. My great-grandfather on my mother's father's side brought it from Germany. You know how it cured Felix Fetz-er's wens, though, as they say, he was afterwards murdered” — lowering his voice to a faint whisper — “by Hans Prantman.”

“Well, Bapp, what do you want to do?” asked Frederick Ruthvon somewhat impatiently.

“Just so,” answered the witch-doctor. “If that bullet isn't taken out in three days, your boy is — all done. If the wound is touched, that is, if *I* touch the wound with this here wonderful stone, the ball will come out day after to-morrow, if he's then living, and if he isn't; it won't matter you know. No means was used to keep — you know who — out of the room they tell me, and

these is hiding the ball and holding it back and that is the true reason the doctors couldn't find it, and if they had, they couldn't have pulled it out. This stone will bring it and the — you know who — will have toothache more than one night, I can tell you now once. If the doctors stir around in that wound again to-morrow, I'm afraid the boy is — all done."

Surely, thought the father, there could be no harm in trying this remedy. "How much would you charge to touch the wound?" he asked.

"If I make a charge, it won't do no good," was the reply, "because our Blessed Redeemer said, 'Freely ye have received, freely give'; but if you give me nothing, it won't do no good neither, for He also said, 'The workman is worthy of his meat.'"

"But you've had your dinner haven't you, already, Bapp?" said Mr. Ruthvon smiling.

"But our Redeemer didn't mean it that way," replied the quack, irritably, his hat all the while on his head and the box in his hand. "I leave it to you, but I generally get five dollars for a touch, and as this is a bad case, ten won't make it work a bit the worse."

"I'll give you the sacred number, seven, if it brings the bullet on the third day, or sooner."

"There isn't any 'if' about it, and it doesn't do no good if no money passes between us first," hinted Bapp gently. Ruthvon thereupon counted the seven dollars into the witch-doctor's hand.

"Now," said the former, "Doctor Helfer is here and

he may object to another doctor's coming in. If so, of course you must give back the money."

"They don't know anything, these doctors, and they're jealous of me. It's all chance with them, but my remedy is sure. You must make Helfer consent," said Bapp, and his weazen face grew very anxious when he saw a possibility of being obliged to refund his fee. When Ruthvon took him up stairs he left him standing in the entry and beckoned Doctor Helfer out of the sick-room. The three then retired to a corner and in a low voice Ruthvon made known Bapp's errand.

Now the relation of the regular medical practitioner to any one "irregular" is much akin to that of the dog to the cat: the canine is ready to worry the feline at sight. Helfer was no exception. He was jealous for the good name of the divine art of healing, as every true physician should be.

"Ho!" he exclaimed, restrained from giving his favorite word its strongest emphasis only because of the surroundings, "you and all your tribe ought to be in jail and I hope we'll soon have a law to stop you hyenas from eating dead people. — Stone! your grandmother! David, to be sure! By the great Eulenspiegel, if David could be here and throw a stone into the forehead of every one of you leeches, he'd be doing a better job for the world than he did when he killed big Goliath." Notwithstanding his high hat, which he still kept on his head, Bapp looked very little indeed just then, with the

doctor towering over him in righteous indignation. But he stood his ground.

“ You ain’t been able, the two of you, to get out the bullet and I can’t do no worse,” he said. “ Besides I ain’t going to bore into the poor young man’s lungs as you do,” and a faint but triumphant smile lit up his pinched face.

“ Doctor, don’t be so cross,” interposed Ruthvon when he saw that Helfer was about to reply hotly. “ See here,” drawing him aside a little, “ there can be no harm I think in his touching the wound with the stone. More, my mother has great faith in Bapp ever since he cured our roan horse and if you refuse him and anything should happen to Charlie, we’ll never hear the last of it while she lives.”

“ All right, put it on your mother,” replied the physician gruffly. “ Of course you don’t believe in this mule ?” he continued semi-interrogatively. “ If it must be so, I’ll see he does no harm with his quackery and then kick him down stairs, with my compliments, in the most delicate manner.”

“ Do so, doctor, — I mean let him proceed,” said Ruthvon. The doctor looked into the room. The wounded man was asleep. Mrs. Ruthvon sat near the bed but said nothing. The doctor then requested the people by the door and in the hall to go down stairs awhile, with which request they complied very reluctantly.

“ Here, you carrion,” said Helfer in a loud whisper to

the witch-doctor, "do you know how to undo the wound and put on the cloths again? No, of course not," he went on when the quack stammered something in reply. "You couldn't dress a cut finger or open a pimple, and yet pretend to draw bullets. Get out! — Now, I'll lay bare the wound, but if you hurt Charlie or wake him up much, I'll throw you and your box out of the window."

They all entered the room and Helfer very gently exposed the wound. Bapp removed his hat and took out of his box a smooth, white stone of about half a pound weight. Standing before the bed he muttered: "*Lapis, trahe, jubeo te!*" Then he touched the wound very lightly three times with the stone. The patient did not wake but moaned a little at the third touch.

"Off with you now," whispered the doctor, impatiently motioning Bapp away.

"He scared me so that I could hardly say the sacred words right," said the latter to Ruthvon on returning to the entry," and my hand trembled so bad that I'm half afraid that I didn't touch the wound fair the third time and in that case it may do no good."

"Then you ought to give back the money or at least part of it," said Ruthvon.

"Oh, that would spoil everything," said the witch-doctor hurriedly, at once taking his departure.

But the end was not yet. Hardly was Bapp fairly gone before another character appeared on the scene and inquired for Mr. Ruthvon. It was "Dutch Hen." He was a European German, and among the Pennsylvania

Germans foreign-born Germans are looked upon as being considerably inferior to themselves and are called "Dutch." Nevertheless "Dutch Hen" had a reputation among the more ignorant of the population for great skill in the occult sciences of making thieves return stolen goods, of discovering buried treasure, and of mixing love potions and other nostrums. Hence when he came into the house such of the visitors as yet remained manifested renewed interest and delayed their departure in order to learn what he might desire to do.

Frederick Ruthvon was informed of "Dutch Hen's" desire and came down stairs. "Hen" said he heard the bullet was not yet extracted and hoped they would have nothing more to do with Bapp, whom he had just met out in the lane. He had a remedy which, if administered to Charles, would bring the ball to the surface in twelve hours. Years ago, he said, one of the kings of Saxony was wounded in the same way exactly. The physicians could not find the ball and the king was given up to die. But that day an aged stranger came, who said he had a remedy. Being required to name it, he did so. It was administered to the royal patient and in twelve hours the ball appeared in the mouth of the wound, and he soon recovered. "And I have the very same remedy," said "Dutch Hen" in conclusion.

Mr. Ruthvon asked what it was.

"It's three drops of blood," answered "Hen," "from a snow-white dove descended from the one Noah let out

of the ark. I've got the cure with me now and for twenty dollars you can have it."

This was almost too much for the credulousness of even a Pennsylvania German. Yet Mr. Ruthvon felt it his duty to report the matter to his wife and Doctor Helfer, so that if the worst happened, he might have nothing with which to reproach himself. The doctor was vexed exceedingly when informed of "Dutch Hen's" errand.

"So long as this thing didn't interfere with the safety of my patient it didn't matter so much," said he, "but this so-called remedy couldn't be given Charlie without disturbing, and perhaps exciting, him and in his present state this might cause hemorrhage and kill him; and if you let this Dutch pig-dog use his stuff, I must quit the case and give up all responsibility, and it may easily prove that your son's blood will be on your hands."

The doctor's words produced the desired impression.

"You must send 'Hen' away," said Mrs. Ruthvon to her husband. And it was done, though the mountebank predicted dire consequences.

An anxious night began. The watchers and one or two neighbors alone remained. The parents seldom left the bedside of their child, and Mr. and Mrs. Chetwynde were indefatigable in their attention, notwithstanding their anxiety on Clinton's account. Catharine remained with Blanche, and until long after midnight at short intervals the two went from their room to the door of the sick-room to inquire about Charles.

Early in the evening Doctor Helfer went away for an hour or two to see a few patients urgently needing his attention. Blanche met him below on his return. Her pale face and anxious look almost startled him.

“Oh, Doctor Helfer, will he live? Will he live? You *must* save him!” she said, and burst into bitter weeping.

“Keep up courage,” he said as cheerily as he could. “Charlie comes of good stock and has lots of life in him yet.”

When the doctor resumed his watch Frederick Ruthvon went home for a few moments. He unlocked a desk in his sleeping-room and took out of it a paper which he carried to the kitchen. There he placed it on the fire in the stove and watched it carefully and with intense satisfaction until it was consumed, after which he returned to Jabez Chetwynde’s.

“Squire Zweispringer’s hope is realized,” he said in a low voice to his wife.

“I don’t understand you.”

“That will be burnt to ashes.”

“Thank God! Dear Lord Jesus, spare my poor boy!”

CHAPTER XXXIV.

OCCULT REMEDIES.

Slowly the night wore away and a cloudy, dull morning dawned. The rain had ceased, but at nine o'clock it began to descend in torrents again. Nevertheless promptly at ten Doctor Goettman drove into the yard. Doctor Helfer had sought in every way to augment the captain's strength for the operation which would probably decide the issue, whether of life or of death, and when Goettman had examined him he pronounced him in excellent condition — the pulse good and the eye bright.

“Yes, doctor, it is all right now, I'm father's boy again,” said Charles smiling on his father who stood at the foot of the bed. “And tell *her* I am going to get well,” he added. The two physicians now began the second examination. Doctor Goettman's educated, skillful touch discovered the ball somewhat deeply lodged in a tumefied spot near the upper angle of the shoulder-blade. To cut down in that situation and extract the missile was the work of a comparatively short time, but in consequence of the congested state of the blood-vessels surrounding the injured parts there was much hemorrhage, and when the operation was ended the patient was very much exhausted. Before leaving, Doc-

tor Goettman, to whom Helfer had given a brief account of yesterday's experiences, gave strict orders to the attendants.

“Anything exciting will tend to produce fresh hemorrhages and these and inflammation are now to be dreaded most. *She*, whoever she is, must not see him at present.”

In the afternoon the weather cleared and many visitors came, some from a distance of eight miles. Curiosity brought most of them; others were moved by avarice, for several quacks and impostors, each with a sovereign remedy, offered their services to Mr. Ruthvon, but in view of the doctor's injunction they received no countenance and trudged off to Mehlhuber's mill, where it was known Jake Zellon's body lay waiting to be claimed by his friends. There were not wanting neighbors, however, who were sincerely desirous that something out of the ordinary might be done to save the young soldier's life. One good old lady said that a certain decoction made by boiling in water nine kinds of *Gekræuter* or herbs which she named, was an infallible remedy for all kinds of bleedings and should be given to the patient at once. When the doctor objected, she turned away with a sigh saying, “*Wie mer's macht, so hot mer's!*” * Later, when Helfer went away for a few hours, she began anew to extol the virtues of her cure. It could be administered, she said, and the doctor be none the wiser, but Mrs. Ruthvon, to her great disgust,

*As one does, so one has it; i. e., as you sow, so you reap.

declared that at this critical stage nothing must be done without the consent of the physician.

A young woman suggested that horse-shoes should be nailed over the door of the room where Charles lay. Ret Prantman, she hinted, had been there three times, and Ret hated him.

“And I ain’t at all sure,” said she, “that Ret don’t know more than she ought to about certain things maybe one better not speak of much,” but neither was her suggestion followed.

Powwowing was not without eloquent advocates but Mr. and Mrs. Ruthvon were resolute, and not a few said that this refusal to use good old Pennsylvania Dutch remedies was due to the influence of these English Yankees, who thought they knew everything but could not even talk Dutch. “Well,” said one of these pleaders for occult remedies with a spiteful toss of her head, “if they won’t hear and he dies, let him die; we ain’t to blame,” which was highly comforting to all concerned.

The limit of Doctor Helfer’s patience was almost reached when, on coming back from the village, Christopher Stettler, who had been gulled out of many a hard-earned dollar but whose faith had increased in direct proportion to his losses, asked him whether it would not be a good plan to consult Katrina Galsch. She had wonderful knowledge and could surely point out the proper means to cure the captain.

“Ho!” said he, for emphasis supplementing the interjection with a word not found in the canon, “Stettler,

if you were not an old man I'd put you out of the house.— Now, Mr. Chetwynde, I give orders that any person who hereafter even suggests any tomfoolery in regard to Charles Ruthvon shall at once be chased out of this house. I hope you all hear me."

"It shall be done," answered Chetwynde, though he could not forbear smiling at the doctor's earnestness. He had been considerably annoyed by these people, but as the patient was only a guest and these things were regarded as matters of course, courtesy had kept him from betraying his annoyance.

Another anxious night passed. Tuesday came in clear and cold, but Charles was much worse. There were several hemorrhages early in the morning and he was very low indeed. Yet he was happy — happy because his father was reconciled to him again.

"I want to live, for your sake and for *her* sake," he said faintly to his parents and sister, "but I am content. Our dear Lord God does all things well." They could only silently weep. Toward noon Goettman and Helfer held a consultation. They agreed that if there was no change for the better by next morning, the chances of recovery were very few.

In the afternoon Grandmother Ruthvon came. Thus far on various pleas they had persuaded her to be content, but now she insisted on coming. She must see Charles. On entering his room she began to lament, yet her presence, instead of exciting, soothed her grandson.

“I knew all last week something bad was going to happen,” she said. “Something killed our black rooster on Sunday night before, and that’s a sure sign something bad is going to happen that week, and I told them so and you see it is so. But, my dear child,” she continued, stroking his forehead and hair with the tenderest affection, “you’ll get well, for God told me so in a dream last night.”

Strange as it may seem, her words carried hope to the hearts of these parents. They believed she possessed the gift of second-sight. Gently they persuaded her to leave the room at last. But toward evening she overheard the doctor say that there were symptoms of “Wild Feuer” or erysipelas about Charles’ wound. These tidings excited her very much. Nothing would help in such cases, she declared, but shovel and fire, and she must *brauch* at once. Remonstrance was vain.

“The wild-fire will spread all over and kill my poor boy in three days,” she said in piteous accents. “You know I can always cure it. You must let me pow-wow.”

Doctor Helfer finally agreed to let her have her way. “The fire is soothing,” said he, though with a wry face, “and I think he’s often seen her do this thing. But by the great Eulenspiegel, if it was anybody but grandmother!” —

An iron pot with glowing wood coals was brought into the room. Then the old lady, a cap as white as snow on her head, took a small fire-shovel and filled it

with coals from the pot. This she held over Charles' breast, about a foot from the body, for a moment, after which she slowly passed it back over his head, at the same time saying in solemn, measured tones —

“ Feuer, zieg, zieg, zieg!
Wild Feuer, flieg, flieg, flieg!
Im Höchste Name! ”*

This operation she repeated three times, each time using fresh coals and saying the same words. Through it all grandmother looked as innocent and good as the best saint in the calendar ever did, and was as sincere.

“ Now it will be healed,” she said with evident satisfaction when she had ended her conjuration. Doctor Helfer gave vent to a sigh of relief but said nothing. Charles had fallen asleep and no harm was done. Grandmother returned home to Sallie Vonneida in Tom Hartnagel's care contented and happy.

Late in the evening Charles became still worse. His breathing was rapid and his mind preternaturally clear. Without, the stars shone as calmly and beautifully as when the angels over Bethlehem's plain sung their grand doxology at the Wondrous Birth, but within the Chetwynde home were anxious hearts. For what might not the night bring forth?

**“ Fire, draw, draw, draw!
Wild fire, flee, flee, flee!
In the Highest Name! ”

CHAPTER XXXV.

LOVE AND HATE.

Sorrow softens many a stony heart when eloquent appeals and earnest pleadings have failed. Affliction sweeps away prejudices which the strongest arguments only confirmed, and changes habits of thought and action supposed to be as the everlasting hills themselves. The tear of distress is a mighty solvent. A heart-pang, felt when the prospect of a sundering of the golden-threaded cord that binds heart to heart seems just at hand, makes cobwebs of the thick-walled fortress of conservatism and tradition and levels it with the ground.

Frederick Ruthvon was incased with inherited beliefs and notions. To these his son had gone counter and so long as Charles was well he could banish him from his home and, as he believed, from his heart. But a bullet pierced the bosom of his child. An instant revulsion of feeling followed and parental affection was overmastering. In the face of this calamity the things for which he had driven Charles from his door and withdrawn his love dwindled into insignificance. What he felt on his way to Mr. Chetwynde's house on Saturday night only those can understand who have had a similar experience. They can appreciate his words: "I have nothing to forgive. You are still my son, my only son."

Calm reflection during the first day of anxious watching but deepened the channel in which his thoughts and feelings had begun to run. He realized that he had done injustice to his wife and daughter as well as to Charles. He felt sure that his convictions were not so precious that they must be followed at the expense of broken hearts. He was ready for the burning of the will.

Moreover, he now saw more of his Yankee neighbor and of his family than he had in all the years before. He observed how anxious they were, he heard the kind words they spoke. He himself could not handle Charles more tenderly than Jabez Chetwynde did, Mrs. Ruthvon could hardly be more attentive to him than Mrs. Chetwynde was, brothers could scarcely have manifested more affection for him than Clinton and Frank were doing. Surely these people, he concluded, could not be filled with prejudice and hate against those who might differ with them politically. In striking contrast were they with the Prantmans and many other neighbors. Need he wonder that Charles had been drawn to the Chetwyndes or that he had formed a deep attachment to Blanche? He remembered too, how the latter had refused to plight her troth to the son, because the father would not yield his consent to their union. His native good sense led him to perceive more fully what he had already partly confessed, that she must possess wonderful firmness and decision of character. And when he saw the marks of grief in her countenance and manner and was sure that they were the index to the unspoken

sorrow of her wounded breast, his own heart went out to her.

On Tuesday night when Charles became worse there were present in the room his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Chetwynde and Doctor Helfer. Since the night of the shooting Blanche had not seen her lover, except once when he was asleep. But now he asked for her and his mind could not be diverted from her.

“Tell Blanche I want to see her.”

Doctor Helfer whispered to him and tried to soothe him, but without avail.

“I must see her now,” he persisted. The doctor was perplexed. An interview at this crisis might prove very serious; to refuse it might be more dangerous still. To his great surprise Mr. Ruthvon said: “Let her come in, Doctor Helfer.” He hesitated no longer, but went himself to inform Blanche of her wounded lover’s desire, and prepare her for the interview.

“Is Charlie very sick?—is he worse?” was her startled inquiry.

“I think it may do him good to see you,” he replied evasively, and his voice trembled a little. With pale face and fluttering heart she entered the room, and when she saw the haggard features of him who was now doubly dear to her it required all her fortitude to keep herself from falling. Frederick Ruthvon did not say a word, but advancing to her, took her right hand, led her up to the bedside and gently placed it in the right hand of his son, after which he resumed his former position. No

words were needed ; all understood the action perfectly. Blanche bent down and kissed her lover.

“ I keep my promise, Charlie,” she said. “ I am yours forever, darling. Oh ! Charlie, you must not die. God will spare you,” and she buried her face in the pillow and wept.

“ I am willing to die now if it be God’s will,” he replied, “ but I have so much to live for I am going to get well. Grandmother knew it.”

“ The dear Lord God will spare you, my child,” said his mother coming up to the bed and smoothing his forehead as when he was a babe. Jabez Chetwynde and his wife were deeply moved by the scene.

“ May God’s blessing rest upon the children,” said Jabez in deep, earnest accents. And it did. Charles Ruthvon and Blanche Chetwynde were betrothed and their betrothal was sealed in heaven.

Doctor Helfer went up to Ruthvon, senior, who still stood in the same spot, and shook hands with him heartily.

“ Ruthvon,” said he, “ you are an honest man and I esteem you highly.” Turning to the bed, he directed all conversation to cease as Charles must sleep. Blanche withdrew and presently all was hushed in the room.

We are told on excellent authority that Satan when expelled from heaven entered even the garden of Eden, and tradition adds that when God brought to Adam the woman he had made and the man was filled with ecstatic

joy at the gift, the Evil One stood a little way off and gloated fiendishly in anticipation of the ruin he would work. So too, when the scene just described was transpiring in the sick-chamber a being filled with hate and envy was close at hand. Margaret Prantman's eyes saw part of it and her vigilant ears heard all that was said. Since the affray of Saturday evening she had come two or three times daily to Mr. Chetwynde's house and had exercised the freedom common in Pennsylvania Dutch communities in homes where there are sick persons. She seemed to have a morbid curiosity in the captain's case. To-night she came over and inquired about Charles as usual. She sat by the stove in the kitchen with a number of other neighbors. Leaving the group whilst they were in conversation about this and that, she went out into the hall and up the stair-way, just as she and others had done before. When she reached the door of the room where Charles lay — a moment after Blanche and Doctor Helfer had entered — she found it half open. Hearing voices, she peered and listened, and saw and heard what has been related. She gnashed her teeth and almost choked with rage, but when Helfer spoke she quickly descended the stairs and went back into the kitchen.

Several of the neighbors said they would remain until toward morning as their services might be needed and Miss Prantman remarked that she might as well stay also until it was time to milk the cows, because her folks were all in bed by this time and would not expect her

home anyhow before milking time. So the fire was renewed and all settled down for the broken rest peculiar to the circumstances.

The night wore on. After midnight Charles rested easy. Mr. and Mrs. Ruthvon, weary with anxiety and constant watching, on the insistence of Mr. Chetwynde had lain down to secure needed rest. The doctor had retired to the next room to snatch a little sleep, and Mr. Chetwynde was left alone with the sick man. While quietly keeping vigil the door was pushed open softly and Ret Prantman came in on tiptoe. He looked at her in some surprise but said nothing. She took a chair on the far side of the room from the bed and assumed the air of a patient watcher, and for a long time they sat like statues. Then Charles stirred and spoke in a low voice. Mr. Chetwynde arose hastily and stooped over the bed to catch his words. At the same moment Ret stepped to the small stand on which stood a number of tumblers containing medicine. Mr. Chetwynde turned to get a drink for Charles and detected the woman in the very act of pouring into one of the vessels a white powder from a small piece of paper.

“What are you doing, Miss Prantman?” he asked excitedly, rushing up to her. But she was too quick for him. Seeing herself detected she swept the glass to the carpet with her hand, breaking it and spilling all its contents. He seized her arm and in his anger squeezed it so tight that a cry of pain escaped her. Helfer heard the noise and came hurrying into the room.

He was quite bewildered at the scene that met his gaze.

"This woman has been interfering with your medicines," said Chetwynde still holding Ret by the arm and every few moments giving her a shake.

"Charlie, lie right still, it's nothing, lie still," said Helfer while Chetwynde in a low whisper told him what he had seen.—"Wait a moment now, Chetwynde." He left the room and presently returned with Mr. Ruthvon whom he requested to remain with Charles. Mr. Ruthvon stared but asked no questions.

"Now bring her out of the room," said the doctor to Chetwynde. When they were in the entry he closed the door and took up the lamp standing there.

"Tell us now," said he turning on Ret and speaking gruffly, "what you put into the tumbler or else off you go to jail to-night yet, you Deihenker you!"

"It was only a love powder," she pleaded thoroughly frightened. "I wanted to make him love me. Let me go and I'll never come here again."

"But what did the powder contain?" persisted the doctor.

"I don't know."

"Where did you get it?"

"From 'Dutch Hen,' and I gave four dollars for it."

"Do you know that by examination we can find out what the powder was?" But by this time Ret had gathered up her wits again, and hate resumed its throne.

“Do it then,” she replied spitefully.

“She upset the glass and broke it, doctor,” said Chetwynde.

“See to her a moment,” he answered. He went back into the room and examined the fragments of the tumbler and the spots made by the liquid on the carpet. The latter had absorbed the contents of the vessel so completely that he concluded it would be difficult to discover from the remains what Ret had put into the medicine. Nevertheless he determined if possible to frighten her into a confession. She quickly perceived even by the dim light of the lamp that his examination had proved unsatisfactory and an unwholesome smile flitted across her face.

“There’s enough of the stuff left on the carpet to tell what you put in the tumbler,” he said assuming an air of confidence.

“Is that so? Then what was it?” she asked tauntingly.

“Poison!” he replied. “Rat-poison!”

“And you lie, you devil you!” she hissed back.

“And we’ll make ‘Dutch Hen’ tell too what was in the powder.”

“It’s all right,” she said with a sneer. The doctor was nonplused but kept a bold front.

“Turn her out of the house at once,” he said to Chetwynde. “I’ll see to her in the morning. She must never be allowed to come into this house again.”

“I’ll make you prove what you said and you’ll hear

from Pete too," she snarled as she went down the stairs. Mr. Chetwynde accompanied her to the kitchen. She put on her shawl and "Shaker" hat and left the house. Those in the kitchen wondered at her sudden departure and the Yankee's flustered appearance but nothing was vouchsafed them.

"She's a devil, so help me Schinnerhannes!" said the doctor to Mr. Chetwynde whom he met in the upper hall on his return from the kitchen. "I haven't the least doubt she put arsenic in that medicine."

"It's hard to believe she is that bad," responded Chetwynde. "Perhaps after all it was only what she calls a love powder."

The doctor shook his head dubiously. "I believe I am right," said he. And he was. Subsequent inquiry showed that "Dutch Hen" had not furnished the potion. Hate, not love, had actuated Margaret Prantman. The powder was ratsbane and if the intended victim had received but a third of it, his end would have been speedy. But no effort was made to prove her guilt. One good thing resulted, however: never afterwards did she come to Mr. Chetwynde's house or to Frederick Ruthvon's.

In the morning Mr. Ruthvon was fully informed of the occurrence. He did not say a word in reply but his countenance became very grave. Not for long, however. The joy in his heart caused it to light up quickly again, and Ret Prantman was forgotten. Charles was better, much better, Doctor Helfer said. The symptoms

of erysipelas had all disappeared and the pulse and breathing were more natural. When Doctor Goettman came and examined the patient he smiled all over his face.

“Is it possible?” said he biting his cigar-stub vigorously. “There is a wonderful improvement.”

After the consultation was ended he informed Mr. Ruthvon that unless sent for he need not come again, as Doctor Helfer could manage the case nicely alone now.

“Has *she* seen him yet?” he asked his colleague who accompanied him through the door-yard to his carriage.

“She has,” answered Helfer — “saw him last night when I believed it would be for the last time alive, and I’m willing to give love a good share of the credit for his improved condition this morning.”

“Say, you Helfer, is this Yankee’s daughter the one?” asked Goettman with sudden interest.

“Lean on that!” replied Helfer and then gave the other an account of the betrothal of Charles and Blanche.

“No wonder he’s better, by Esculapius!” exclaimed Goettman. “He’ll get well, sure ; if he don’t, he’s a big fool.”

“But if another woman had had her way last night, I’m afraid even love couldn’t have saved Charlie,” said Helfer.

“Is it possible?” cried Goettman when Helfer finished his narration of Ret Prantman’s attempt.—“The water carried the stuff into the carpet and I don’t

believe it could be successfully analyzed," he continued after he had gone back into the house and examined the spots on the carpet.

"Ruthvon won't do anything about it, he's too happy to think of it," said Helfer when they returned to the yard. "Besides, she won't trouble us any more, and if she should come back here I'll kick her out of the house as sure as my name is Henry Helfer."

"And may the blessing of Esculapius rest upon you for it," responded Goettman with hearty emphasis. "Good-bye. If anything serious develops, let me know."

From this time Charles continued to improve rapidly. In three weeks from the time he was wounded he was able to be taken home, and in due season he received a two months' leave of absence from his command, dated from the expiration of his furlough.

Winter had come, but never in the brightest June had the Ruthvon home been as bright and happy as it now was. It need not be said that Susie Zweispringer was happy too. Next to Clinton Chetwynde and her father she loved Blanche.

"Didn't I tell you it would all come right yet?" said she to the latter in her enthusiastic way. "Old Ruthvon is a man of sense after all, and I really believe he always thought a lot of you but wanted to be contrary, for he said the other day to papa that a nicer and better girl than the Yankee's daughter couldn't be found." Blanche blushed but her friend's words were precious to her.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

UNCLE SAM CAPTURES AN UNWILLING NEPHEW.

Philip Huber proved right again. For when the first furlough of the drafted men expired, they were granted a second for the same length of time.

Our government, unlike monarchies, does not regard men as "food for powder" or as created merely "to serve rulers." Hence, so far as possible, it accommodates itself to the comfort and welfare even of those upon whom it may call for service in time of war. The second furlough was given in order that all the drafted men might have ample time to set their affairs at home in proper order. But it was needful that the militia should now be drilled and made acquainted with the requirements of military life; when the additional five days ended no further leave of absence was granted, and about November 3rd the men of Berks and Lehigh Counties went into camp a little north of Reading.

Among the few who failed to report for duty was Hans Prantman's foster-son. When he parted from Jake Zellon on the night of the outrage at Chetwynde's residence he made his way to Mehllhuber's mill. He ate an early breakfast at the house after which, as we have seen, he took to the mountains. He had a relative — his mother's aunt — who lived in a lonely glen among

the Blue Mountains in Dauphin County, whom he had visited two or three years before, and after nightfall he started thither on foot. He reached the end of his journey late on the following day, footsore and weary and was kindly received by Mrs. Schweinfort. But when he had hunted and fished a day or two time began to hang heavy on his hands and he ventured to go to a solitary mountain station on the Dauphin and Susquehanna Railroad. Here his eye fell on a copy of "*The* ———, published at Pottsville. He could read English quite poorly but he picked up the newspaper and presently found an item that interested him very much. It ran as follows :

"As we go to press we learn that Captain Charles Ruthvon, who it will be remembered was shot by Jake Zellon last Saturday night at the home of Jabez Chetwynde, in Copton township, Berks County, is still living but that his recovery is considered doubtful. Also, that the assailant's body has been claimed by his friends. that Andrew Pfannkuchen, another principal in the affair, is out on bail and that James Fetzer, who was one of the cowardly gang, is still at large. We hope to be able to give fuller particulars soon."

He laid down the paper and went back to his grand-aunt's house, where he remained in seclusion for over a week, but at the end of that time he determined to return to his old haunts. He knew the danger attending such a course, yet was impelled to do it by a power he could not resist. Charles Darnay was no more surely drawn to the Loadstone Rock of Paris by an unseen force than was James Fetzer back to Copton township by the same invisible, intangible agency. He

reached home at night and was admitted, but his reception was very cool. Hans Prantman was alarmed by the events of the past few weeks. He was unwilling to take unnecessary risks. Self was always first.

“Jim, I think you’d better go off awhile yet,” said he to his *protegé* next morning. “I don’t believe there’ll be any trouble, but a body can’t always generally sometimes tell. You know the Lincolners is much excited over that there Ruthvon thing and if the Hartnagel pig should see you he’d sell you for a dollar. Besides, I’m told there’s a fine for harboring them that hasn’t reported.”

“But you know your oath as a Knight, pap,” protested James.

“Well, but one can’t take that just that way.” answered Hans evasively.

“A devilish nice Circle,” said Fetzter irritably; “it promised all sorts of things and here you tell me its drafted members are about all in camp and them that failed to report may be caught and must hide and the Circle can’t help them. Into the bushes with such a Circle!”

“It’ll work all right yet, Jim,” answered Prantman soothingly. “The uprising in the West hasn’t come yet and so nothing could be done here. But there’ll be another draft attempted soon, for the nigger-worshipers made lots of money on this one. By that time we’ll be ready for them.”

“Yes, ready, when everybody that can hobble has been drafted, or is killed, like poor Jake, or is fingerless,

and black Abe and his thieves has got the last cent in their pockets," retorted James in cutting tones. Hans winced a good deal but made no reply. His foster-son made no sign of leaving.

"What did they do at the meeting at Hahn's last Saturday night?" Fetzter asked after a pause.

"There was none; it was too hot on account of the Ruthvon matter. Old Schlapphammel, Doctor Helfer and some other Radicals said they'd help hang Huber and you too if you showed your faces around, and the soldiers would have helped too."

"They ain't got me yet. When will there be a meeting then once?"

"Huber sent word there would be one the 15th, a week from to-day. Young Ruthvon is going to get over it as Jake didn't shoot quite straight enough and by that time things will be quiet and honest people can go out again."

"Where will it be?"

"At Hahn's again. There's to be a shootle-match for turkeys there that afternoon and that'll help to keep off suspicion."

"I wonder if I can go?"

"Nix go! You go where you came from, but don't tell me where that is, for I don't want to know."

"By gripes! I think I'd better, else it might go with me as it did with my pap, you know," answered Fetzter spitefully.

"You can go in the bushes for all I care," said Hans

hastily. Just then they were greatly startled to see three cavalry-men go by the house at a sharp gallop toward the mountain, and a moment later Pete Prantman rushed into the house slamming the door behind him and yelling "Donnerwetter! Jim, clear out. Did you see them thieves go by now straight? I told you what Tom Hartnagel said at Baltzer's last night, that it had been decided at Washington that all drafted men who hadn't reported should be imprisoned a year and that all who didn't report by next Monday would be shot as soon as they could catch them, but you won't listen. They're after you, Jim."

Pete cautiously looked out at the door to see whether the soldiers were out of sight. "They're coming back," he cried slamming the door again. "Run, Jim, and get in the barrel!"

Fetzer ran down into the cellar and crept into a cider-barrel, one of six or eight of uniform size lying in a row on timbers. It had been prepared for just such an emergency by removing the back end. As soon as the fugitive was in the vessel Hans Prantman fixed it into its groove in the timbers with the open end within a few inches of the wall, and there it lay as innocent looking a cider-barrel as ever was seen. Drawing a pitcher of cider from one of the barrels, he hurried up the steps into the kitchen, reaching it as the soldiers entered at the door opposite.

"Hollo!" exclaimed Prantman as if greatly surprised, setting the cider down on a table.

“Sorry to disturb you,” said Sergeant Thompson politely removing his cap, “but we’re hunting for one Fetzter and got by your place in some way, though it’s conspicuous enough too. Have you seen him lately?”

“It’s now already two weeks,” said Hans with true Pennsylvania Dutch stolidity.

“I believe you, Mr. Prantman, but my duty requires me to search the house,” replied Thompson with genuine New England suavity. Prantman was dumfounded and for a moment could not come to speech. “Lincoln hirelings” were going to search his very house!

“You black” — he began at last.

“I have no time to converse with you,” interrupted the officer. Ordering one private to remain in the kitchen, he and the other soldier searched the upper part of the building first. Among the big timbers of the garret they found Ret and Hans’ wife. On the second floor they discovered Pete in bed, shoes and all, feigning sickness.

“I reckon this is our man,” said Thompson. “Get out and come along.”

“Who do you want?” asked Pete shivering.

“You — James Fetzter.”

“I’m Peter Prantman. I reported and was sent home.”

“Let me see your hand,” said the sergeant.—“The fellow I heard Doctor Goettman speak about! — Peter, has Fetzter been here lately?”

“Two weeks ago,” answered Pete, “but if you’ll look—it makes nothing out.”

“Sir?”

“It doesn’t matter; he isn’t here.”

Down stairs they went and into the cellar. A certain heart beat very fast. With lighted lantern they peered and pried into this nook and that cranny, but the barrel in which Fetzer lay concealed did not yield its secret and the soldiers returned up stairs. From the house they all went to the barn. This they examined very carefully, for Pete’s hasty words had aroused suspicion in the officer’s mind, but they were unsuccessful and mounting their horses, rode off toward the South Mountain.

After dark Fetzer left Prantman’s and went to the mill. William Rambeutel slept in the house now and when the miller and the philosophers had left, Fetzer entered the mill by the tail-race archway and slept in the mill-room. Mehlhuber gave him food and he spent the day on the hills. Thus a week passed and apparently no further search was being made for him. He concluded that the hunt for drafted men was ended and that he might safely attend the shooting-match and the lodge meeting at Hahn’s.

The 15th of November was pleasant,—exactly the day a frequenter of shooting-matches would choose. By one o’clock quite a crowd of boys and men was gathered in Mike Hahn’s meadow. At these matches shot-guns were used when turkeys were the highest prizes, and the

distance was fifty yards. Each competitor had his own target. It consisted simply of a pine board an inch thick and six inches square with two straight lines drawn in lead from opposite corners and crossing each other in the centre of the board. Shot of a specified number must be used but there was no restriction as to the size or make of the guns, in consequence of which some antiquated, odd-looking pieces were brought into requisition. Neither was there any limit to the number of competitors, of whom a goodly proportion usually forcibly illustrated the Pennsylvania Dutch adage ——

* "Wer sich ernæhrt mit Fische un' Jage,
Der musz verrisz'ne Kleder trage."

The marksman who succeeded in putting a shot nearer the centre of his target than any of his competitors to theirs, was declared the winner.

Doctors Henry Helfer and John Grebsgong Goettman were great lovers of this sport and considered very good shots. Both were present. Pete Prantman put in an early appearance and Ad Sparger was promptly on hand. Andrew Pfannkuchen came a little later and he and Pete were together most of the time. Sufficient chances were soon sold at a levy each, to pay for a turkey and the trial of skill began. Dr. Goettman led off but placed only one shot in his target and that some distance away from the centre.

"You've lost your skill since you was up on the moun-

* "He who gains his support by fishing and hunting, must wear ragged garments."

tain last, doctor; what's wrong?" said Andrew familiarly.

"Oh, I've been shooting Knights of the Golden Circle and am too tired," retorted the doctor.

"Ho! that's a centre-shot anyhow," exclaimed Helfer laughing heartily. Pfannkuchen shot next and came within a quarter of an inch of the centre of the target. He looked at Goettman and smiled triumphantly. It was now Ad Sparger's turn but the poor fellow's hand trembled so much that, although Doctor Helfer allowed him to use his own gun, he missed the target completely. He looked as blank as the mark he had aimed at and for some time seemed to be mentally calculating how many drinks of panacea his chance-money would have procured him. Of the next two marksmen neither did as well as Pfannkuchen had done. Then Pete Prantman took his place and fired, but probably owing to the loss of his "trigger-finger" failed to touch the board.

"That was really a sad accident, Prantman," said Goettman in a tone of mock compassion, "by which you lost not only your finger and the privilege of serving your country in the field, but much of your skill as a marksman too, it would seem."

Pete made no reply in words but in looks made good the deficiency several times over. Doctor Helfer now stepped to the mark and Pfannkuchen looked anxious. The target received a shot in the very centre.

"Is it possible?" exclaimed Goettman.

Several others followed but none came within half an

inch of the required point. Doctor Helfer was accordingly declared the winner of the turkey and Pfannkuchen received the surplus money, three levies. While the crowd was examining the targets a man came walking across the meadow from the barn.

“Ho! if that isn’t Jim Fetzer, I’m a rebel,” said Doctor Helfer. It certainly was Fetzer. He got a warm welcome and a number congratulated him on his escape from military service. He was somewhat alarmed when he saw Doctor Goettman, but Pfannkuchen whispered him to talk right up to the Lincoln ink-licker if necessary.

“Fetzer, do you know it’s dangerous for you to be here?” said Helfer.

“Yes, and you make it unpleasant for us too,” added Goettman, “for as good citizens we ought to give the authorities information about you.”

“You refused to exempt me when I had a good claim and now you and your authorities may go into the bushes,” replied Fetzer hotly.

“That’s right,” said Pfannkuchen, “talk up to him. He no doubt got ten dollars for examining you, and he’d sell you for two more. Let him know he isn’t in his room in the thieves’ office in Reading.

“I should say, Andrew,” replied Goettman, coolly biting a cigar in two, “that for a man against whom a grave offence is charged in the courts you are talking very loud. And, Fetzer, Stahlschmidt may be after you too before long, as well as Hautnehmer.—

Hahn, put me down for two chances in the next match."

So the crowd scattered again, and in a few moments the shooting for the second turkey began. During its progress Yorim the Jew peddler came over from the house. He was known to everybody, and as it was no unusual thing to see him anywhere at any hour, no one gave any heed to his presence. He stepped up to Fetzter and when all were watching Doctor Goettman, who was about to make a second trial of his skill, said quietly: "Jim, get away from here! Six soldiers was taking dinner at Baltzer's when I left there and I think they are after you. I saw the witch's boy whisper to the leader on the porch, and I think they'll find out soon enough where you are. Clear out and don't forget the nine dollars you owe me on the watch yet."

Doctor Goettman missed his target entirely this time.

"Is it possible?" he said, putting a heavy emphasis on each word.

"It is," said Pfannkuchen spitefully. "You won't hit again if you shoot till dark. I've fixed that." Fetzter pretended to join in the laugh which followed but took advantage of it to whisper to Yorim:

"That there young skunk owes me a spite and he saw me on the hill yesterday. Which way did the Lincolners go?"

"They hadn't left the tavern yet when I drove off, but you'd better get away as soon as you can. I don't

want to see you hurt." And he added mentally: "I might lose my nine dollars if you got caught."

A dispute arose between Helfer and Johnny Shiffler as to which had put his shot nearer the centre of his target and almost the entire assemblage including Yorim gathered around and took part. When it was finally decided in Shiffler's favor Fetzler had disappeared from the scene. A little before sunset six soldiers rode up to Hahn's barn and thence to the shooting-ground, where half a dozen men and boys were still engaged in target practice. Sergeant Thompson looked over the group a moment and then led his force to the house. He entered and was surprised to find ten or twelve men in the kitchen. They frowned on him and did not answer his salutation.

"Is Mr. Hahn here?" he asked,

"Yes," answered that individual.

"Have you seen James Fetzler here to-day?" he inquired of Hahn aside.

"Yes," was the sullen reply.

"Is he on your premises now?"

"Not so far as I do know."

"Mr. Hahn, I have authority to search all your buildings but if you'll give me your word that so far as your knowledge goes he is not on them, I will take it. And you must remember that to help a drafted man will cause you trouble."

"I have said it to you and I don't know where he is — may be in Patagony or in Conywaychique."

“ All right, sir.”

Andrew Pfannkuchen could have told in what direction the fugitive had gone, but he too had vanished. Sergeant Thompson and his men rode toward the turnpike and when they struck it, some distance above Halftast, turned toward the west. Less than a mile farther on lived a middle-aged woman familiarly known as “ Deaf Gretchen.” She was born deaf and dumb but notwithstanding knew all the news of the neighborhood and delighted in gossip, especially if it partook of the nature of scandal. She had her own system of signs and from long acquaintance many persons were able to converse with her pretty well. When the soldiers arrived opposite her house she came running to the front gate and as was her wont began to chatter and gesticulate. She pointed in the direction of Mehlhuber’s mill and imitated a man hurrying and looking behind him. Thompson had no knowledge of the woman but believed she was either trying to help him or to deceive him.

“ We’ll see,” he said. “ Forward !” And off they went at a brisk gallop to the mill. Andrew Pfannkuchen came out just as they arrived there ; he paid no heed to them, apparently, and walked up the glen. Throwing his rein to one of his men, Thompson entered the mill. In the mill-room he found the proprietor and Yonie Zwiwwelberg.

“ Mr. Mehlhuber, I come to see you often these days,” remarked the leader pleasantly. “ I’m back for the

second time to-day you see, and am getting well acquainted around here."

"It is right so," answered Christian.

"Has Fetzer been here?"

"He went up the road maybe."

"Toward the head of the hollow where the gun-barrel factory is?"

"That is maybe so."

Leaving one man at the mill the sergeant took the rest up the road in the direction Pfannkuchen had taken. The shades of night were beginning to fall. Suddenly Sharp Billy emerged from behind a tree.

"I saw him going into the boring-mill only ten minutes ago," he said.

"Whom?"

"That one you're hunting."

"Billy,—that's your name, isn't it?—you're a trump and will be a general easy before the war is over," said Thompson, which compliment Billy promptly acknowledged by taking off his little old hat and cutting a caper. Fetzer was not found at the boring-mill and it was too late now to make farther search for him. It was getting quite cold also and the soldiers started for Haltfest. Not far from the mill Sharp Billy again met them, and they halted.

"What will they do with Jim if he's caught?" he asked coming up to the sergeant's horse in the gathering darkness and speaking in low tones.

“ Oh, he'll be put in the guard-house awhile and then be sent to the front,” answered Thompson.

“ Is that all, clean down, now ? ”

“ I reckon that's about all — unless he has to carry a stick of wood on his shoulder a week or so besides. But why do you ask such a funny question ? ”

“ Because this time you'll get him sure and I don't want to have him shot, but if that's all they'll do to him I don't care, He hit me because I'm a friend to Tom Hartnagel, and so I'll tell you, but you must promise not to tell on me, else they'll make me dead, sure.”

“ I promise, general, for all of us ; speak quick,” said Thompson laughing yet wondering what the lad had to reveal. Billy came up closer and asked the officer to stoop down.

“ Him and Andy is in the mill again,” he whispered. “ I was watching and saw them go in by the tail-race archway. You must put a man there before you go in the mill, else they'll get out there again just like two ground-hogs.”

“ Thank you, general. I reckon I'll manage it now.” They tied their horses to trees some distance from the road and cautiously approached the mill. One man was stationed by the archway, another was placed by the lower back door and a third guarded the main entrance, by which Thompson and his remaining men entered the mill. In the mill-room by the dim light of a *drone* lamp hanging on the wall they saw Rambeutel and three or four “ Bergknibbel,” besides Andrew Pfannkuchen.

The work of the week was over and the miller was about to go to the house. On seeing the soldiers he was much alarmed, his first thought being that after all he was needed to make up the forty-two men required from Copton township. He was much relieved when Thompson asked whether James Fetzer had been there lately.

"I certainly haven't seen him to-day," answered Rambeutel innocently and Pfannkuchen said he hadn't seen Jim for over two weeks.

"You men will consider yourselves under my orders awhile," said the sergeant. "The mill is guarded; do not attempt to leave it."

The "Bergknibbel" were scared. The terrors of war had come to that very room where they had often so comfortably discussed them! Pfannkuchen, however, was braver and sat him down on the bed in sullen mood. The officer left a man outside the mill-room door and with the other, having provided himself with an old-fashioned lantern, went into the upper part of the mill. While they were peering around here and there, suddenly a man sprung from behind the smut-mill, ran to the hoist-hole and slid down the rope with a whirl. Down the stairs to the ground floor ran the searchers but found no one. They concluded that Fetzer, if it was he, must have gone into the wheel-room. No sooner had they entered that apartment than they heard a splashing of water evidently made by men engaged in a struggle. Cries for help also came through

the opening in the wall between the wheel-room and the chamber of the great water-wheel. Thompson handed his gun to his companion and by the light of his lantern clambered through the aperture as quickly as he could. Jumping down into the shallow water, he stumbled over the guard whom he had stationed at the archway and heard rapid steps in the water beyond. He called to his comrade to come and care for the man in the water and then hurried after the retreating skulker. The next moment he heard the guard at the lower door cry "Halt!" followed almost instantly by the sharp report of a rifle and sounds of a scuffle. He ran to the guard's assistance and the fugitive was soon secured.

"It's our man," said Thompson; "he answers the description. — Fetzler, we've got you at last."

"I don't owe the old witch's boy nothing, I think," the prisoner replied sullenly.

"Take him to the mill-room," ordered the sergeant. The man who had called for help was somewhat hurt by a blow from Fetzler's fist. He was brought out through the archway and in a few moments all the soldiers and their prisoner were gathered in the mill-room. Pfannkuchen was gone. Rambeutel said he had jumped out of one of the windows about the time the rifle shot was heard.

"We'll remain here till morning," said Sergeant Thompson. He ordered the miller to renew the fire in the stove and then dismissed him and the "Bergknibbel," who were overjoyed at their release. A sentry

was posted outside the mill-room door and Fetzner was permitted to dry his clothes by the stove. Soon nothing was heard save the rippling of the water on the stony bed of the tail-race.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE KNIGHTS ATTEMPT A RESCUE.

Andrew Pfannkuchen made his leap from the window without injury. He would have gone to Fetzter's aid had not the odds been against him. He waited long enough to make it tolerably certain that the soldiers would remain in the mill with their prisoner until morning and then hurried down the road and away to Mike Hahn's. The distance was over two miles but in about half an hour he stood in the presence of Philip Huber and the assembled Knights. The lodge was discussing matters relative to a dead member — Jacob Zellon — but Pfannkuchen was permitted at once to tell the story of the capture of a living one — James Fetzter.

“Now, what'll you do?” he asked in conclusion. “What's this lodge worth anyhow? Many of our members is wearing a blue uniform against their will, one has been shot by a Lincoln hireling and another is a prisoner. We've been talking and bragging, but we ain't lifted a hand to prevent all this.”

Huber rose and explained the matter much as Hans Prantman had done to James Fetzter.

“The next draft, Schtern Riesel!” exploded Andrew indignantly. “Not handy! If not something will be done, the order'll get weaker and weaker. People is

laughing already because we didn't dare to meet last week on account of the shooting of Charlie Ruthvon."

A number of members said that was certainly so.

"Now, I say let's rescue Jim, according to our oath," he continued; "then if they see we're doing something once we'll get many new members. Here's — let's see — ten, fifteen, twenty, thirty — more than forty men. If Mr. Huber will lead twenty-five of us, we can get Fetzler free." But Huber was not at all anxious to embrace this opportunity to find fame and honor. He explained that while such a rescue as Pfannkuchen proposed was very desirable and they were at perfect liberty to attempt it, he himself was no soldier and his commission was to organize lodges and stir up the people.

"Then *I'll* do it if twenty men will go with me, said Pfannkuchen enthusiastically; "there isn't much risk if we follow the plan I've got."

"What is your plan?" asked Huber.

"We'll march up to the mill without noise, then Mehlhuber can go in, make believe surprise and see how things looks. Then he'll pretend to go to the house but come and report to us, and then we'll surround the mill, shout awful threats and them that's got guns and pistols will at the same time shoot them loose. I think there isn't more than four or five Lincolners, and this will scare them awful and they'll run out of the mill, thinking a big mob is going to tear them up. Anyhow they'll come to the door, and Jim knows the hoist-hole

and, if he isn't tied, will have a fine chance to get off and no one will know who done it."

Some of the older men shook their heads, but to the younger members the plan seemed very harmless and promised lots of fun, and if they succeeded in releasing Fetzner, it would be something to boast of for a life-time. If Huber had doubts of the feasibility of Pfannkuchen's scheme, he said nothing and when a call for volunteers was made twenty-two young and middle-aged men at once agreed to go.

"Of course Mehlhuber will go?" said Pfannkuchen.

"It's on my way," answered Mehlhuber.

"Let's hurry up now," said the leader. "The moon rises a little after one o'clock, and we must have Jim out before that time else we might be seen and known."

"I hope you'll all get shot for your trouble, you copperheads you!" whispered Lovina Hartnagel to herself at her post in the room above. Huber wished them luck, and out into the night went the rescuers. Six or eight had rifles, as many more had shot-guns used at the shooting-match in the afternoon, and nearly all had pistols. In a comparatively short time they were within twenty rods of the mill.

"Now we must remain here and be very quiet until Mehlhuber returns and reports," said Pfannkuchen softly after halting his party.— "And, Mehlhuber, be very sure to try apple-jack on them. If you can get them all drunk, it's soon done."

"That's good so," Mehlhuber replied and away he

went on his somewhat dangerous mission. Carelessly humming a choral, he went to the main door but found it locked.

“Who comes there?” sounded sharply from within.

“The owner of this here mill. I will come in,” replied Mehlhuber.

“Wait a minute,” said the sentry and reported to his officer. The sergeant ordered a second soldier to undo the door, whereupon the owner of the mill walked in and went unhindered to the mill-room.

“Hello! what’s this?” he said in seeming surprise looking around in the dim light. “I thought it was Rambeutel.”

“Mr. Mehlhuber, we’re very sorry to trouble you so much,” said Thompson, “but its late and we concluded to wait here till morning.”

“Hollo! is that you, Fetzer?” said Mehlhuber pretending to notice the prisoner for the first time.

“Yes, it is,” answered Fetzer, who now sat on the bed and looked rather despondent.

“You soldiers you, will you take a drink of something to warm you up and make you dry?” said Mehlhuber addressing the leader.

“Have you hot coffee? We shall be glad to pay you for it,” replied Thompson.

“Nix, coffee! I just came from town and the frau is in bed and the fire is out, but under the bed there is what’s better than coffee to dry your clothes.”

“What is it?” asked Thompson.

Mehlhuber reached under the bed and drew out the big black jug. Removing the corn-cob stopper, he offered the vessel to Thompson. "Drink one, its fine apple-jack," said he.

"Mr. Mehlhuber, I and my men are all from Maine, where we don't drink such stuff," said the sergeant laughing.

"The Schinner! what do you then drink up there?" exclaimed the miller in blank astonishment.

"Good water, tea and coffee."

"Go away once! not drink apple-jack? I think Fetzter there is fast, but can he take one?"

"Certainly, if he wants to."

"G'sundheit!" said Fetzter taking a strong "pull" at the jug, "may be it's the last one."

"We're Pennsylvania Dutch and have no bedeviled Yankee nonsense about us," said Mehlhuber likewise taking a drink.—"You can stay here till morning but I think you'll pay something?"

"Certainly, certainly," answered Thompson, smiling; "will a dollar do?"

"That is right," said the other taking the money and leaving the mill. Having rejoined his party down the road, he duly reported what he had seen and done.

"You see the apple-jack plan don't go," said he. "The rascals is all ragged Yankees and don't even know what apple-jack is, kotz taussig!"

"Schtern Riesel! then we'll go ahead as we'd planned," said Pfannkuchen. "Very quiet now. Yell awful when the time comes."

Softly they walked up to the mill and surrounded it. All at once shouts fell on the still night — “Grab the Lincoln devils! Shoot the thieves! Throw them into the race! Don't let one of them escape!” and sundry other hostile expressions, accompanied by a volley of pistol and rifle shots. Sergeant Thompson, who had gone to sleep, was on his feet in an instant. He was somewhat startled at the noise and uproar outside but when the shouting was not followed by an assault and the firing did no execution even on the windows, he began to suspect the nature of the demonstration and resolved to teach those engaged in it a lesson and have a little fun besides. Leaving one of his men to guard their prisoner, he gave the others instructions and led them out through the upper door. Then he shouted “Charge!” and ran to the lower side of the building. “Fire!” came the order, and every rifle was discharged into the air. Such running in every direction, such stumbling, such falling, such yells and profanity as followed were simply astonishing!

Fetzer concluded that the soldiers were fighting with a band of rescuers and determined to make a dash for liberty. His limbs were entirely free and like lightning he sprung upon the unsuspecting guard at the door, hurled him into the opposite corner, opened the door and ran. But the guard was on his feet again in a moment and in pursuit of the fugitive. When he reached the outer door, Fetzer was just at the far end of the long plank slanting from the doorway to the ground. The moon

had risen and he was in clear view of the guard. The latter cried "Halt!" but Fetzner gave no heed to the command. The next instant there was a flash and a report and he lay dead on the ground.

A number of neighbors, alarmed by the shouting and firing, came running to the scene, but of the Knights only two reappeared that night. One was Mehlhuber, the other Andrew Pfannkuchen. The latter, seeing his late comrade dead, and fearing the soldiers, quickly departed again. Sergeant Thompson was at first disposed to place Mehlhuber under arrest, but he doubted whether he would be justified in the act either by his superior officers or by the civil magistrates, and forebore. He ordered his men to carry the dead body into the mill-room and left it in charge of two of them, after which he took his departure for Reading to make his report of the affair at headquarters. Before leaving he instructed the guards to deliver the remains to the civil authorities whenever the latter should demand them.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE WATCH WITH THE DEAD.

The news of the tragedy at the mill spread rapidly, and by noon of Sunday a great multitude of people had collected there. Much excitement existed and the military authorities and the President were denounced in unmeasured terms. The irritation was increased by the fact that the guards would not permit any unauthorized persons to touch the body of the dead man — not even Hans Prantman. The poor fellows fared badly enough. The provisions promised by their officer failed to arrive and no one offered them any refreshment. By liberal pay a boy was finally induced to bring them some food. Vile language was also hurled at them, more especially by women, but fortunately they did not understand it.

When the Coroner arrived the excitement became still greater, for trouble between him and the soldiers was looked for ; but when the official made a formal demand for the body of James Fetzter it was immediately complied with. The crowd cheered lustily : it was a victory over the hated soldiery. The Coroner's jury found a verdict according to the facts and censured Thompson and his men. The Coroner announced that the friends of the deceased were at liberty to remove the corpse for

burial, and Hans Prantman promptly came forward and claimed it.

“The funeral will be next Wednesday at ten o’clock,” said he in a loud voice. “Pfarrer Heimer will preach the sermon and I give you all an invitation to come to the house before and after the God-service at the church. Come all. We’ll see once whether black Abe’s soldiers will hinder us.”

A good deal of surprise was expressed at Prantman’s special invitation, for he was fearfully stingy. Some however shook their heads and remarked in whispers, that he had taken poor James and raised him to make good a wrong they need not mention, and that no doubt he now wished to bury him big for the same reason that had caused him to take care of the lad after the father’s untimely taking off. But the last sentence he had spoken undoubtedly indicated Hans Prantman’s strongest motive for desiring to give his foster-son a grand funeral. Was not James Fetzer killed because he had refused to enter the service of Abe Lincoln? That was sufficient. By making him a funeral after the most approved Pennsylvania Dutch fashion, he could safely and with the approval of nearly the entire community show his contempt for the military authorities and his sympathy with all who might refuse to report when drafted or who might afterward desert from the Union army. And moreover he would engage the Reverend William Heimer to preach the funeral sermon, and that worthy, if urged a little by the promise of a good fee, would no

doubt give these same military authorities such a lecture as they had never before received in all their existence. He fairly gloated over the idea, and his hate of everything pertaining to the war (except the high prices he received for all that his farm produced) dominated for the time his love of lucre.

In due season the body of James Fetzer was conveyed from the mill to Hans Prantman's house. It was laid in the front room, or parlor, below stairs and the house was put in mourning. During the day the old Dutch clock, which, with weights and pendulum exposed, stood in one corner of the apartment, was stopped, to be started again at six o'clock in the evening. All the pictures and all the looking-glasses in the entire building were turned with their faces to the wall. The old family Bible and the hymn-book were opened and conspicuously placed upon the antiquated bureau or dresser in the living-room adjoining the parlor. Moreover — though this was not a sign of mourning necessarily, be it understood — Prantman, senior, secretly placed on the ledge over the door between the two rooms the foot of a toad which had been preserved for just such an occasion as the present.*

*By many of the Pennsylvania Dutch the toad's foot is still held in high repute as a talisman. From a German work printed in Pennsylvania in 1847, entitled "*Der lange verborgene Schatz und Haus-Freund, oder getreuer und christlicher Unterricht fuer Jedermann,*" which is to be found in many Pennsylvania German families, the following is translated in illustration:—

"To make a horse stand still against the will of his driver.

Mix the following ingredients, viz.:

A half ounce of Quarilaserum,
A quarter do. Putandrumlongum,
A do. do. Succus leritarium.

Scatter this across the road where the horse is to stand still; he will go no farther until the stuff which hinders him is removed. *But should the driver have on his person A TOAD'S FOOT, the mixture will be rendered inoperative.*"

The shutters were bowed and in the front part of the dwelling all was hushed save when the undertaker or some other person entered on a necessary errand. In the back part of the mansion, however, and in the out-buildings the first notes of preparation for the great event of Wednesday were already heard, and calculations were being made as to the number of pies, cakes and loaves of bread that must be baked, the number of turkeys, chickens, calves and pigs that must be slaughtered, and the amount of extra help that must be engaged.

Hans Prantman was much perplexed as to whom he should invite to watch with the dead the last night preceding the funeral. Among these people this watch is considered an important matter and is scrupulously maintained. In the case of a murdered person the common belief was that just as the clock struck the midnight hour on the night before his obsequies he would audibly speak the name of his murderer and pronounce a curse upon him. In view of this fact, as James Fetzner was regarded as having been murdered, unusual interest attached to the watch of the last night. Whose name would the dead man speak? That was the question oftenest asked by the gossips.

Tom Hartnagel and Doctor Helfer had openly said that Hans Prantman was largely responsible for Fetzner's death and the former had even declared that he believed James would pronounce his foster-father's name at the last midnight hour. Who, then, should the

watchers be on Tuesday night? Ordinarily four men about the age of the dead person, or young men if the latter be a child, are chosen and each night the watchers are changed, but Prantman resolved to disregard this custom, at least so far as the last night was concerned. Indeed, he was tempted to undertake the watch alone, but that, he concluded, would set every tongue in the community wagging, and he abandoned the idea. However, he would be one of the four. It was quite unusual for a member of the family of a deceased person to engage in this office but in the present instance it would not be deemed remarkable, he argued, because after all James was not a blood relative of the family. But whatever might be said or thought, at all hazards he must be present in the death-chamber on Tuesday night.

“And,” said he to himself, “I must have men with me who I can trust not to talk out in case anything unpleasant should happen, verdollt sei! They say Jim’s father spoke my name but it shan’t be said that the son repeated it.”

So he chose him true and good members of the Copton lodge of the Knights of the Golden Circle every one. They were Christian Mehlhuber, Mike Hahn and Andrew Pfannkuchen. He did not care who watched on Sunday and Monday nights. On the latter William Rambeutel was one and, at his own solicitation, Ad Sparger another. Ad enjoyed the watch, for by the Bible and the hymn-book on the bureau stood a pleas-

ant-looking bottle. It contained panacea and before retiring the host had told the watchers to help themselves from it whenever they felt like it. It goes without saying that during the night Sparger often did feel like it and his frequent excursions from the Todeskammer to the living-room were evidence that he gave free vent to his feelings.

“Who are the watchers to be to-night, Ad?” Tom Hartnagel inquired on Tuesday at Fettig’s store.

“I think Mehlhuber and Hahn, and Pfannkuchen says he’s one, but by Schinnerhannes I don’t know who else,” answered Sparger.

“Birds of one color and I can tell you who the fourth one’ll be,” said Hartnagel.

“You know much, Hartnagel.— Say! Let’s drink one.”

“Rambeutel says you was drunk all last night and you look bad enough now.”

“And I feel a great deal worse than I look,” answered Sparger with his enfeebled wink. “A *schmaler* would make me look and feel much better.”

“You beat Billy Gox all to nothing,” said Tom laughing, “but we’re not in a tavern you see, Ad.”

On the street Hartnagel met Sharp Billy. “Billy,” said he, “I’d give a good red cent to be one of the watchers at Prantman’s house to-night.”

“May be them that’s invited will be afraid to come,” answered Billy, “and so you and me can be sort of assistant watchers, you know,” and the two friends walked up the road in close conversation.

Sharp Billy was wrong, for when Hans Prantman invited the three men named to assist at the watch on Tuesday night they felt honored and at once accepted. True, they believed that something supernatural might occur but that did not deter them. We may dread these things, yet are drawn to them. At eight o'clock all three were already on hand. They were advised by those present not to be scared if anything bad happened, to say their prayers when the watch began and to look very intently at the dead man when the decisive moment arrived,—the result being that even Mehlhuber was presently worked up into a very nervous state indeed.

By nine o'clock the baking and boiling and cooking were ended for the day, the neighbors left and all the household but its head retired to rest. The four men were left alone with the dead. In the sitting-room was a small wood stove with just fire enough to keep the two apartments comfortable. The bottle by the open Bible and hymn-book on the bureau had been replenished since the watch of the previous night and close by were pipes and a pot of cut-and-dry. The first acts of the watchers after being left alone were to take a drink from the bottle in the old-fashioned way and to fill and light pipes. Thus fortified—the prayers were omitted at that time, reserved as it were for a later hour when something more potent than whiskey and smoke might be needed—they went into the death-chamber and sat down.

Without, the night was dismal. It was very dark and

the rain fell steadily. Within, all was quiet save the clock, whose ticking seemed wondrous loud to-night, as though it were conscious of being closely observed and had put itself on its dignity. The stillness shortly became oppressive and when the watchers grew a trifle accustomed to their surroundings occasional remarks were indulged in by this or that one. Every now and then too, the pleasant-looking bottle received attention and pipes were filled. Courage grew and tongues loosened. The dead man's merits and demerits were discussed. Several times allusions to his father's death were made but at such points Hans Prantman always diverted the conversation by referring to the pattering rain or by inviting his colleagues to step into the next room a moment.

“This here thing is awful,” said Hahn after one of these excursions to the sitting-room, “and yet I think nothing will be done to these Lincoln murderers. Doctor Helfer told me this evening that a warrant was out for to arrest Sergeant Thomas and his fellows and that they'd be tried in our Oyer and Terminer court, but that nothing couldn't be done to them as they'd only done their duty. It's bad. But just wait once a little now! Congress comes together soon and you can lean on it that Ancoony'll give it to them fellows that they'll think they're standing on their heads.”

“My poor Jim was murdered,” said Prantman with a long-drawn sigh, “and who knows who'll be next. Thou beloved ground!”

“Yes,” said Hahn lowering his voice to a whisper as if afraid Fetzner would hear what might be disagreeable to him, “Nate Geiger told me something this very afternoon.”

“What was it?” they all asked in the same tone.

“You all know the bier hangs on pegs against the north side of his house, under the projection of the roof, and he says that without fail that bier strikes against the side of the house three times in succession on the night before he receives notice to play the organ at a funeral.”

They all drew closer together.

“Now,” continued Hahn lowering his voice still more, “Geiger said that only a few persons knew this, but as I was to be a watcher to-night he’d tell me, and also that last Saturday night it struck so loud that he was sure the person of whose funeral he’d get notice had come to his end by violence, and that he was also pretty certain another funeral of the kind would soon follow. So that one may easily say who’ll be next, by my sex.”

At that moment the clock gave warning that it was about to strike ten. The sound made them all start up from their chairs. They looked at each other in a way which clearly said, “What made you do that, you dumb-head?” and then went into the sitting-room to strengthen themselves anew — not from the Bible and hymn-book yet however — for what might be before them. As they were returning the clock struck. The whirl of the wheels and the strokes of the hammer made

an unusual noise and when they ceased the stillness was as the tomb.

We have no doubt on a dark night shivered over a dreadful ghost story told by a comrade, but nevertheless we were ready immediately to listen to one still more awful. Once in the current, it becomes irresistible. Thus, while these men were already very nervous, they were prepared to speak and hear of things dark and mysterious. Indeed, the unnatural silence of the house was worse than the most fearful tale. To hear their own voices was reassuring. It drew away their attention from the sheet covering the body of James Fetzer, to which it had a tendency to revert whenever there was a pause in the conversation. Hahn was the first to speak after the clock ceased striking.

“It’s wonderful,” said he puffing away at his pipe, “how the spirits of them that’s been murdered like to return to the spot where it was done. Abel’s blood cried to heaven from the ground where it was spilled.” Hans Prantman looked very uneasy. Hahn hitched up his chair closer to the rest and looked furtively around the room a moment. “I tell you, neighbors,” he resumed, “Katrina Galsch’s house’ll be a more awful place than ever since Jake Zellon’s blood ran on its floor, and, Mehlhuber, I doubt, by the dev — my! almost I said it! — I mean I don’t believe you’ll keep Rambeutel long, after Fetzer’s murder in front of your mill and him and Zellon both laying dead in the mill-room.”

“Hold your mouth,” said the miller with a much

heavier enunciation than common; "if you talk much out about it, I won't be able to keep a miller at all. I say, damn the war!" and he stamped hard on the floor with his heavy foot, to his own great alarm and that of his companions.

"I remember an experience my mother had," said Hahn after they had recovered themselves. "I often heard her tell about it."

"Let's hear it," said Pfannkuchen. Still closer they all got together forming a semi-circle, their heads nearly touching.

"It happened many years ago, — wait a little bit once," said Hahn suddenly rising and going to the sitting-room. — "It's getting empty soon," he resumed taking a seat and speaking in a hushed tone. — "It was before the days of railroads. My parents had just been married a short time. In them there days the store-keepers had to get their goods hauled to their stores from Philadelphia in big four-horse wagons. On one occasion my father went for a load of store-goods for old John Hinnersheets over at Schnarraffelsscheddel — he died just about a year ago, you know, ninety-nine years, one month and two days old. Father took her along with him that trip. It was in the beginning of June and the weather, I've often heard her say" —

"By the Deihenker, what's that there?" exclaimed Pfannkuchen starting up and staring at the window, the shutter of which had blown open. "Look at them eyes! Schtern Riesel once more!"

“*Alle gute Geister*” — Hans Prantman began instinctively.

“Gute Geister, your grandmother!” said Hahn contemptuously; “it’s only a big black cat, that’s all. You know how cats always try to get where the dead is. Is it your cat, Prantman?”

“No,” answered Hans. “Drive it away and close in the shutter, you Pfannkuchen.”

“Not handy! Drive it away yourself; it isn’t my cat and I didn’t put it there,” said the big “Bergknibbel” backing his chair further away.

“I’ll drive it off,” said Mehlhuber laconically. He advanced cautiously toward the window and threw his big red bandana against it, whereupon the animal quickly disappeared, but none of the men were brave enough to close in the shutter. Assured that the manifestation at the window was of this world, the watchers refreshed themselves from the pleasant-looking bottle, renewed the fire, turned the lamp-wicks a little higher and resumed their seats.

Meanwhile James Fetzler slept peacefully on, unconscious of the fears that filled the hearts of multitudes of the living. The old clock ticked off the seconds of time that make up the span of man’s life but it meant nothing to him, for whom time was no more.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

GHOSTLY MIDNIGHT VIGILS.

“Let me see ; where was I in my story ?” said Mike Hahn when they were all seated again. “Oh, I remember. — Yes, it was in June when my parents made that trip and mother often said it was awful hot weather at the time. They got to Philadelphia without accident. Father loaded his things and they started back home again. All went right until late one evening they got to what is still known as the ‘Dun Horse Tavern,’ on the Harrisburg and Philadelphia turnpike, not far from the Berks and Montgomery county line.”

“I’ve seen it several times,” exclaimed Prantman deeply interested. “I stopped over night there twenty-five years ago and I remember I slept in the lower front room.”

“I’ll get the plagues if that wasn’t the very room my mother was in,” said Hahn in a tone entirely out of keeping with a Todeskammer.

“Holy cross !” said Prantman half rising from his chair ; but recollecting that the narrator had not yet said anything about the room, he added, “What of it ? What happened in that there room ?”

“When they got to the tavern they found it full of

people, the barn full of horses and mules and the stable-yard full of Conestoga wagons. The landlord said if father could find a spot in the yard to place his wagon and feed his horses, he was quite welcome to do so, but that he must sleep in his wagon as the rooms in the house were all full."

" 'Oh, I'd rather sleep in my wagon,' father replied. 'I can watch the goods better and it's so hot in the house anyhow; but my wife is with me and if she could sleep in the house it would be all right, ' "

" 'We have no room empty,' said the host, 'except the lower front room and — we never put any one in there without it's necessary, — it's a — well, a sort of spare-room, you see, and — your wife wouldn't anyhow like to sleep in a room alone.' "

" Father noticed his hesitating manner but thought nothing of it at the time."

" 'Oh, yes, she's brave,' he replied, 'and if it's that room there' — pointing to one on the ground-floor, — 'she can leave the window open and if anything disturbs her, she can call to me right here in the wagon, you see.' "

" 'Well, I think — yes, it can be done,' stammered the landlord, 'but of course if anything should disturb her — you know there's so many strange people around — you won't blame me.' "

" Father said that was all right, for he had never heard anything against the reputation of the 'Dun Horse Tavern.' He put mother into the room and told

her to leave the window open, and in case she needed anything to call to him in the wagon. Then he fed his horses and lay down the best way he could. He was bad tired and was soon sound asleep. Mother also fell asleep but was woke up some time in the night by a noise in the room above her. It was made apparently by a heavy footfall accompanied by what seemed to be a chain dragged over the floor. It came as far as the top of the stairs and then went back. In a few moments this was done again. Mother thought she heard groans also. She was so afraid that she couldn't move or cry out. Each time the noise came near the stairs she feared it might come down. And that's just what happened."

"No! Schtern Riesel!" exclaimed Pfannkuchen with dilated eyes.

"Yes, it was," said Hahn. "The seventh time that she heard the footsteps and the clanking chain they came past the door of the room above and out on the stair-case landing, and then — step — clank — step — clank — whatever it was, came down, down, down. When it approached the foot of the stairs, where the door of her room was — closer and closer — she became almost paralyzed with fear and unable to move. Suddenly the door opened, a form in white entered the room a few feet and then stopped. Her eyes were fixed on it and gradually it grew into gigantic proportions, the eyes got as big as an ox's and blazed, and from its nose and mouth blue flames did come out.

Mother made a big effort, jumped out of bed and ran screaming to the window and called father. Her cries woke him, and in a moment he was by her side in the room. Nothing out of the way was to be seen there and for a time she was unable to tell what had happened. As soon as she did so he concluded it was best to leave such a place. The noise woke up some of the people and the landlord came and begged them not to go, and when they insisted he requested them not to say anything. He would charge them nothing, he said, and in the morning would certainly discharge the drunken hostler who had disturbed them. My father made no reply. That night they reached home in safety."

"What was it anyhow?" asked Pfannkuchen eagerly.

"Some time afterward father had occasion to make the same trip," continued Hahn, and he made inquiry of some old people in the vicinity of this tavern whether they had ever heard of anything being wrong there. An old man told him he had, and that almost every one knew what made the trouble in one or two rooms of the inn.

"Of course Scholl doesn't want strangers to know about it," said he to father. "You see about ten years ago Yokkle Klingweiler kept that tavern. He was an ugly, cross fellow and gave the old house a very bad name. More than one man was robbed there at night. But one evening a cattle-drover from somewhere behind Reading stopped there and was put in the room above the lower

front room. He had just sold a drove of cattle in Philadelphia and had much money with him. He was murdered in his bed and dragged down stairs into the lower front room, where the body was found next day.' ”

“Holy cross!” exclaimed Prantman.

“Schtern Riesel!” ejaculated Pfannkuchen.

“Huh!” grunted Mehlhuber. At this point Hahn lowered his voice almost to a whisper.

“‘But Klingweiler was gone,’ said the old man. ‘Everybody believed he had killed Fritz Fetzter’ ” —

“Fritz Fetzter did he say?” asked Hans Prantman excitedly.

“He did certainly,” Hahn replied, “and it never struck me until now that he had the same name as” — sinking his voice very low — “the dead man there on the cooling-board.”

“I knew him when I was a boy and it was Jim’s grandfather,” said Prantman.

“Lean on that there!” added Mehlhuber very deliberately.

“It’s strange,” said Hahn musing, — “grandfather, father and son, all getting murdered.” Prantman looked around the room carefully, not excepting the part behind him, but said nothing.

“What became of Klingweiler?” said Pfannkuchen impatiently.

“Nothing was heard of him for ten years, the old man told my father. ‘And that was two months ago,’ said he. ‘He was hurt in a fight in a town on the

Mississippi river and died next day. But while dying he made a big confession. He said he killed the drover asleep and got over three thousand dollars. Then he pulled him out of the bed across the floor to the door but for a long time, though he exerted all his strength, he couldn't get him across the threshold. Seven times he tried and the seventh time he succeeded by pronouncing the Highest Name. Then he partly carried and partly dragged the body down the stairs and into the room right below the one where the deed was done. Under the floor of this room was an unused well, which has since been filled up. Into it Klingweiler wanted to throw his victim, but in his confession he said that when he got to the room an awful shape appeared over the spot where the well was. Terror seized upon him and he ran out of the room. He filled a carpet-bag with victuals and hurried from the house. He traveled at night, and by day stayed in the woods, and so escaped. A little while before the news of Klingweiler's confession and death they say a woman who was put in that room was bad scared by an awful sight coming in through the night. Since then nothing wrong has been heard or seen at Scholl's place and he keeps a good house. My belief is nothing will be seen any more. The drover's murderer is now dead, and the murdered man is satisfied and won't trouble anybody any longer.' "

"My father always believed the woman the old man spoke of was my mother," said Hahn. "He heard afterwards that a drunken hostler slept in the room

above the lower front room, and that he sometimes carried chain-traces and other harness from the barn to his lodgings and mended them there. He was a big smoker, and he frequently came down from his room to the bar-room at night to get liquor and light his pipe. So some people said they believed the hostler made all the noise that disturbed the people, and that sometimes when he came down stairs half drunk he'd get into the wrong room, and then of course timid people would raise the report of spooks and connect the noises with the drover's murder. I know that the landlord discharged the hostler after my mother's scare, but it was for appearance' sake he done it. She saw things too plain that night, and she was quite bad cross at the idea that she wouldn't have known a drunken hostler from an awful-looking spook, and I'm sure she was right too. It was Jim Fetzer's grandfather's ghost she saw that night, clean down honest!"

As Hahn finished his story, the clock gave the warning sound for eleven. The watchers started to their feet as though a strong electric current had passed through them. It reminded them that in an hour it would be midnight. Almost mechanically they once more proceeded to the sitting-room. Reëntering the death-chamber they noticed that the last hour was already one-fourth gone, and that it was time to remove the sheet from the face of the corpse. During the remaining minutes not a word was spoken by any one. They sat close together, all facing the body. When but ten

more minutes of midnight were lacking they looked at each other, got up and approached the cooling-board. Their faces were pale, their hands trembled and their breath came thick and fast, as when a man is facing a mortal danger. How they wished they were elsewhere! Yet they could not have turned their backs on the body lying so quietly before them without being panic-stricken at once. When the steady old clock gave the warning for midnight they started again, though they had tried to prepare themselves for it. They did not look at the clock nor at each other, but at the dead lips—held as it were by a spell.

At the first whir of the fly-wheel they bent down low and listened intently. Just as the first stroke of the hammer fell, an owl flapped against the window and uttered a doleful screech. For a moment their attention was distracted from the corpse, and, mingled with the solemn striking of the clock, an unearthly voice shrieked "Hans Prantman! Curse him!"

It was more than poor, superstitious human nature could endure and pell-mell they all rushed out of the Todeskammer into the sitting-room, upsetting two or three chairs and the big sawdust spittoon in their flight. There they made a stand and after a few moments went back as far as the door and peered into the room from which they had just retreated. They saw nothing amiss. All was quiet. The deceased lay there with hands folded and eyes and lips closed. Done with this world surely forever was he; no secrets had he

to reveal; his loves and his hates had perished for aye.

"I had just turned from the window there and I saw his lips move," said Hahn after they had partially recovered from their fright.

"What do you think he said?" asked Prantman, the sweat standing like beads on his forehead.

"Said!" exclaimed Pfannkuchen. "I think you know what your name is."

"Lean on that," said Mehlhuber venturing into the death-chamber a step, but immediately backing out again; "and I'm quite sure he lifted a finger an inch or so and pointed at you, Hans."

"*Alle gute Geister* — but I'm sure that I didn't — ach Gott — Galsch," said Hans in an agony while the others looked at each other significantly.

"No," said the miller with what was as near to a sneer as he could come, "but I will get the plagues he may mean that you kept him from reporting and so are the cause of his death."

"But, Sacrament! I'm no worse in that there than Huber and you and all the rest," retorted Prantman partly recovering his wits again.

"Maybe, but you know how people talked about Jim's — well, he said 'Prantman' and something else and I'm sure about the finger," said Mehlhuber stubbornly.

"I don't know what he said," answered Prantman, "but anyhow we're all good Knights and you won't say anything about this here thing, for if it got out, people

would only laugh and say we was all drunk — especially them Radicals.”

They all agreed to keep the awful manifestations of the night a secret. Next a journey was made to the cellar to replenish the bottle from the demijohn, after which the watch was continued, but from the sitting-room. Not until the first streaks of day broke through the windows did they venture into the Todeskammer to replace the sheet over the dead man's face. With returning light however courage revived. Andrew Pfannkuchen soon forgot his promise, and by the time the people gathered at the house for the funeral, all the particulars of the incidents of the preceding night were known and freely bandied from mouth to mouth. Gossips shook their heads wisely when they heard of Hans Prantman's agitation, and the murder of James Fetzer's father at the Cross-rock was talked of almost as much as the untimely taking off of James himself.

There were two persons, though — to say nothing of Doctor Helfer, Jabez Chetwynde and others — who had no faith in the gruesome tale which in due time was borne to their ears. They were Tom Hartnagel and William Galsch, better known as Sharp Billy, and when the Yankee with a curious smile inquired of his hired man what he thought of the matter, Tom smiled back and said he had heard his father say that some very strange things had happened in New England years ago, and why might not similar things occur in Pennsylvania, for it was not at all behind the former.

Perhaps Christian Mehlhuber's fears, and the pleasant looking bottle on the bureau by the open Bible and hymn-book accounted for the lifting up of the finger.

CHAPTER XL.

A FUNERAL, AND A FUNERAL SERMON.

“Hier, Mensch, hier lerne was du bist!
Lern hier was unser Leben ist.
Nach Sorge, Furcht und mancher Noth
Kommt endlich noch zuletzt der Tod!”

It need hardly be said that the funeral of James Fetzter was very large. The weather, indeed, was unpropitious. There were clouds, fog and rain, and the roads were thick with mud. Notwithstanding these drawbacks early on Wednesday morning people began to gather at the old church on the hill and at Hans Prantman's house. The fact that Fetzter had been shot by a soldier, curiosity to learn what had occurred at the watch of the preceding night, the prospect of a bountiful dinner after the services, and the further circumstance that the Reverend William Heimer was to officiate, would have called a great throng of people together even had the weather been much worse than it was.

At the house, as is customary at Pennsylvania Dutch funerals, not only were a hymn sung and a prayer offered, but an address of considerable length was made by the preacher. The burden of this address was the uncertainty of man's life and the need of being at all times prepared for death. No allusion was made to the

war or the manner of Fetzer's death. The people were somewhat disappointed. They expected and desired strong meat right from the start. Knowing that nearly all present would go to the church and that he would have an immense audience, Heimer purposely reserved these parts of his discourse.

The services here ended, the procession was formed under the direction of the "coffin-maker," as the undertaker was called. First came the Reverend William Heimer in an open buggy, looking like the leader of a triumphal procession, next the bearers in a "democrat" or spring wagon and after these the hearse. The wagon following nearest the latter contained Pete Prantman and old Mrs. Fetzer, James' mother. Then came Prantman, senior, and his wife, followed by Amos and Margaret, and vehicles of all descriptions filled with neighbors. Slowly the long train — one of the longest ever seen in the township to Copton — passed through Haltfest and up the terraces to the church. Outside, about the principal entrance to the graveyard a great multitude awaited the arrival of the funeral cortège, regardless of the rain. They had poured out of the building the moment the first stroke of the bell announced its near approach.

Among the Pennsylvania Germans the dead are seldom taken into the church and in all the history of this old building so far as known no corpse had ever been carried into it at a funeral. The "viewing" is done outside. When, therefore, the procession arrived, the bier was

set in its usual place near the main gateway of the graveyard and the coffin was taken from the hearse and placed upon it. Those who had not gone to the house were very anxious to see the dead man's face, and no sooner were the lids of the coffin laid back than the throng made a rush. The word "rush" is used advisedly. It describes just what occurred and what in a modified form may still be seen at any large funeral in the community. Instead of forming a line and thus giving all who desire to do so an opportunity of seeing the body without being compelled to elbow and jostle their neighbors, this unseemly way has obtained generation after generation. The pushing and stretching of necks remind the spectator of men, women and boys trying to approach the ticket-wagon at a circus.

On the present occasion it was again a triumph of the tallest and the strongest. Instead of casting a glance at the body and then giving way to others, these persisted in lingering close to the coffin. Thus the women on the edge of the crowd had no chance whatever of satisfying their curiosity. The steadily falling rain made matters all the more aggravating.

"Look once at Jared Katzbauer there," said a sour-looking middle-aged woman who could not get near, "he ought to be ashamed of himself. Somebody ought to twist his long neck. Why can't he make room for other people as good as himself? There he stands, the big dog!"

But, my friend, Katzbauer is only availing himself of

what custom sanctioned and his superior height and strength enabled him to attain. He is utterly unconscious of any impropriety. He is only doing what he has seen done without rebuke since childhood. Do not censure him. Blame rather the abominable inertia, born of stupid conservatism, that will resist and characterize as impious an innovation even in the direction of decency and Christian courtesy.

“Say! you Jared,” said this same woman in a very loud whisper to this same Jared Katzbauer as soon as she found opportunity, — “is his face black? How did he look? Has Fetzner turned black?”

There was a pause in the pushing and scrambling however when Pete Prantman brought the mother of the deceased to the coffin. A wail of agony burst from her with the first look at her dead child's face. Her sorrow was perhaps all the more poignant because there were so few evidences of any in those about her. Owing to her poverty she had been compelled to give her only child to strangers, but he was still her son and her consolation. He visited her frequently and however rough he might be in the company of others, to her he was always kind and gentle. Now he was gone. The light of her life was put out. No wonder she threw herself on the coffin and kissed the face and smoothed the brow of her child, weeping the while as only a mother bereft can weep and exclaiming like David of old, “My son, my son!”

Ah! mother! — earliest and best friend. Who truer

than she? Who as true? If her son is virtuous and comes to honor, she rejoices as none other; if he forsakes her instruction and stains his soul with crime, her prayers still ascend for him. When he is glad she laughs with him, when trouble comes her voice soothes him, when all forsake him she clings to him. Into the prison, to the gallows' foot, she follows him, and when the highest penalty has been paid her hand still strokes his sin-hardened brow as in the days of his innocent childhood. No marvel that God's displeasure rests upon the son who fails to honor his mother!

After a few moments the stricken widow was led gently away from the coffin. Then ensued another brief struggle to see the remains, ended by the closing of the coffin lids. Next the minister announced the words which at every funeral during decades had been sung on the same spot:

“Was Gott thut das ist wohl gethan,
 Es bleibt gerecht sein Wille,
 Wie er faengt meine Sachen an
 Will ich ihm halten stille.
 Er ist mein Gott,
 Der in der Noth
 Mich wohl weisz zu erhalten;
 D’rum lass’ ich ihn nur walten.”

When all but the last two lines of this stanza of Nodigast's beautiful lyric were sung, led by the shrill voice of Nathan Geiger, the minister gave a signal, the bearers lifted the bier and the procession made its way

to the grave, the remaining lines being sung as it moved slowly along. At the grave the clergyman spoke the words of committal, which were followed by the singing of three verses of the grand old burial hymn: —

“Nun bringen wir den Leib zur Ruh,
Und decken ihn mit Erde zu,
Den Leib, der nach des Schoepfer's Schlusz,
Zu Staub und Asche werden musz.”

All who had come to the grave — except the bearers, whose duty it was to make and to close up the latter — then went into the church. Nearly all the pews save those reserved for the mourners were already filled with persons who had not gone to the grave for fear of not being able to enter the church at all if they did. The Vorsteher placed seats in the aisles, and when the service began the audience was almost as large as the one gathered there a month before. Doctor Helfer, as was his wont, sat in the east gallery near the head of the stairs, so that if he were needed suddenly he could readily make his way out. Near him sat Tom Hartnagel and opposite in the west gallery Frederick Ruthvon and Jabez Chetwynde side by side. Squire Zweispringer was seated below, back of the officials. None of those named had gone to the house, but by their presence at the church they were manifesting their sympathy with the bereaved mother.

The Reverend William Heimer entered the pulpit and almost every eye was upon him. He looked more important and self-conscious than when he preached the

“draft sermon,” as the effort of October 19th was called, and the air of authority and dogmatism was more clearly emphasized. When the usual preliminary exercises were concluded he arose and announced his text. It was the seventh, eighth and ninth verses of the fifty-ninth chapter of Isaiah:—

“Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths.

The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings: they have made them crooked paths: whosoever goeth therein shall not know peace.

Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness.”

Just as he finished reading the text the west door opened and the bearers, or “grave-makers,” came into the church and seated themselves on the white bench reserved for them in the aisle, retaining their hats on their heads. They had hurried the work of closing up the grave. Hence, instead of coming in when the sermon was half over, as was commonly the case, they had completed their duties in time for the entire discourse. Every one of them had been in the rescuing party, and all were deeply interested listeners. The minister paused until the stir had subsided and then began his sermon.

“These are indeed evil times,” said he, taking a survey of his audience. “We have had war two entire summers and one winter, and now when for the second

time the dead leaves from yonder woods are blown over the God's Acre, the end seems as far off as ever. Your treasures are being wasted, the morals of the nation corrupted. Wickedness with brazen front stalks forth at noonday, the pestilence wastes, the arrow flies and strikes the heart. Many of your sons are on the tented field, some have been slain and to-day you are gathered here a congregation of mourners."

The silence was almost like that of James Fetzer's grave itself, and Heimer with much animation went on to describe the evils that must yet follow those already experienced if this unholy strife between the North and the South did not soon cease.

"And who can tell why all this is?" he exclaimed excitedly. A rather loud "Hem!" with a sarcastic interrogative turn was heard in the east gallery as if in response to the orator's question. Dozens of heads were turned in the direction of Doctor Helfer, but he looked so unconscious and intent on the minister that no one could positively say he had uttered the exclamation. Heimer quickly interpreted the sound, and it acted like the spur on a fiery steed.

"What brought our young friend to his untimely grave?" he asked looking steadily toward the quarter where Helfer sat. "It was not wasting disease, nor accident. It was a bullet from a rifle deliberately aimed at him. He was strong, generous, kind-hearted and deeply attached to his widowed and now heart-broken mother." (Here Mrs. Fetzer began to sob bitterly.)

“Four years ago he became a member of this church by confirmation and was admitted to the Lord’s table, after a course of catechetical instruction under his aged and beloved pastor. Only a few weeks ago he was present, I am informed, in this temple to hear the gospel as it fell from the lips of him who addresses you to-day.” (Another loud “Hem!” from Doctor Helfer’s direction and, it is to be feared, from his mouth.) “Now he has disappeared in the dark grave. And why? Because he sought to escape from the hands of those who he believed wrongfully restrained him of his liberty and who tried to force him into a service he detested in common with tens of thousands of good and true men throughout the land. The President of the Northern states has promulgated a proclamation which is to take effect next New Year’s Day. If it can be carried out, it will rob multitudes of people of the property guaranteed them by the Constitution and the laws of God, and will pour into the North millions of ignorant, savage beings. And I say that because the deceased shrank from helping to carry out this unholy proclamation he lies in his grave at the present moment?”

Doctor Helfer glared on the preacher and his enemies report that at this point he used language that would have uncanonized him had he been a saint, but the affirmative nods of many heads gave proof that the mass of the audience was in hearty accord with Heimer. The latter was now fully wrought up and proceeded to describe the rulers of the nation, their acts and the con-

sequences. He said the text was quoted by Paul and set forth the unregenerate. Our rulers did not know the way of peace; their goings were all wrong; they thought of gain only; the public good was not in their view. Their acts naturally corresponded. They desired to continue this war for gain and hence less than two weeks ago had removed from the chief command of the army General McClellan, the only man who could have brought us peace. They drafted our sons and for a price permitted the rich and favored to escape. They arrested men who are better than themselves and shot them down in cold blood if they resisted.

Having elaborated these points, he concluded as follows: "Thus we are filled with sadness, the land groans under its burdens and is covered with darkness. 'We wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness.' We must bear much for the sake of peace; we must suffer patiently, for in so doing we but follow in the footsteps of our Divine Redeemer, who will comfort you, the childless widow, and you who brought up the departed one as if he had been your own child, and enable you to pray even for them who took his young life. But, beloved in the Lord, when our hearts are filled with anguish because of them that are slain without a just reason and our burdens seem heavier than we can bear, is it any wonder if we sometimes speak harshly of our rulers even while we counsel forbearance from acts of violence, and occasionally feel bitter toward our neighbors who by their words and acts

encourage the oppressor and have no sympathy for us in our distresses?"

Here he looked around upon the entire audience as if to bid defiance to any who did not agree with him, and spoke with great emphasis and impressive deliberation:— "And when I recall the calm face of him whose body we have but now committed to the earth there to await the resurrection of the just at the Youngest Day, when I think of the thousands slain and of the homes made desolate in the North and in the South,—then I am constrained to say that Abraham Lincoln is an unscrupulous tyrant! Nay, would I be far away from the truth were I to pronounce him a ruthless murderer? James Fetzler lies in his grave guilty of no wrong, a martyr in a good cause. The dear Lord God comfort his sorrowing mother and be gracious to all his people. Amen."

A murmur was heard throughout the congregation when the sermon was ended. It was mostly, though by no means in every instance, of assent. Some were too much awed to give any sign. The authorities denounced so roundly were mighty and the language of the preacher was dangerous.

Frederick Ruthvon hung his head, like a man in deep thought. Jabez Chetwynde did not know enough of the language to be able to comprehend the import of the discourse in that way but with his Yankee shrewdness and intelligence he interpreted it with a good degree of accuracy from the looks and manner of the audience.

As if the air had grown too close for him to breathe, Doctor Helfer arose and left the church, and Tom Hartnagel, to enter as it were his protest against the sermon, likewise got up and with a defiant air followed the doctor, with the full approval of Sallie Vonneida and Susie Zweispringer who sat together in one of the pews under the west gallery.

Before the last hymn was sung the minister read the *personalia* or obituary. On behalf of the Leidtragenden or mourners he likewise returned thanks to all who had shown kindness, and extended the usual invitation to all "to return to the house of mourning to partake of such refreshments as might be set before them." After the hymn he pronounced the benediction and the audience began slowly to disperse. The Reverend William Heimer descended from the pulpit and Hans Prantman at once went up to him and gave him his fee, after the manner of all the people, rich and poor, of the two principal denominations. Dame Rumor afterwards said that he was so much pleased with Heimer's effort that he gave one dollar and twenty-five cents, but she was at once flatly accused of saying what was incredible.

Numbers of men and women shook hands with the preacher and congratulated him on his great sermon.

"It's just what the black thieves need," said Deacon Fettig, "and if all the preachers did speak like that, this here war would soon be over, plague take it!" But we thank God, deacon, that very few of them did in the North!

The funeral services were over but the funeral feasting was yet to come. The people were now in full retreat from the church and, on foot, ahorseback, in carriages and wagons, in spite of weather and roads, at least one half of them were wending their way to the house of Hans Prantman. Ad Sparger woke up in good time and hurried away at his best gait. The goal of his ambition for to-day was to sit at the first table, at which the minister would eat. As he had been one of the watchers he would likely accomplish his purpose if he were at the house in time. Let us follow him and look upon a Pennsylvania Dutch funeral feast.

CHAPTER XLI.

A PENNSYLVANIA DUTCH FUNERAL FEAST.

The preparations for the feast after the funeral of James Fetzler were on a large scale. The like had seldom been seen even in a community where "big funerals" were so common. Seventy-five chickens, ducks and turkeys, three calves, an ox and a hog, were slaughtered for the occasion. Four hundred pies such as only Pennsylvania Dutch housewives can make, and one hundred loaves of bread, besides cakes innumerable of all kinds, were baked; and all the accessories needed to make a Dutch funeral table full-orbed and complete, so to speak, were provided in profusion.

Be it remembered that among these folk, in country places, the house of mourning becomes a house of feasting just as soon as the dead body has left it. The minister indeed invites the people back to "the house of mourning," but it has ceased to be such, at least in the sense in which Solomon speaks of it. A wedding is made little of. A couple agree to get married, the groom places his bride in a carriage — or perhaps they journey on foot, — and off they go to the pastor's house and are united in the holy bonds. No one takes much notice of the event unless it be the young men and boys of the neighborhood, who will probably greet the newly

wedded pair with a *charivari* on their return. Likely there are no invited guests and no special meal.

But a funeral without feasting — that would be a novelty indeed. The poorest man in the community would deem himself disgraced if the people attending the obsequies of a member of his family were not invited to return to the house after the services at the church, “to partake of such refreshments as may be set before them,” and in numerous cases families have plunged themselves into debt in order to provide the eatables necessary to satisfy the demands of a semi-barbarous custom. The bigness of a funeral is gauged not only by the numbers at the church, but also by the number of tables filled by those returning to the house. Hence when a member of an old, wealthy family is buried it is a matter of pride to the survivors if the throng of guests is very large.

Among the ancient Jews there were professional mourners, and in these communities on funeral occasions there are what might properly be called professional eaters. These are men and women who make it the great business of their lives to attend every funeral for miles around. At home they seldom have more than enough to keep body and soul together. They hear of a funeral with glee, and a journey of three or four miles on foot through rain and snow is nothing to them. They may not go to the church at all, but whether they do or not, they are always found promptly on hand at “the first table,” unless the number of immediate

relatives of the deceased is large enough to fill this set, in which case they must wait for "der zwet disch." And if regard for the dead may be measured by eating and drinking, that of these rounders is often great indeed, for some of them have been known at "the house of mourning" without much apparent effort to drink six cups of coffee, Pennsylvania Dutch size, and to eat in due proportion.

Those who are cynically inclined may speak slightly of all this feasting and gorging at such times and hold the sorrow of the feasters and stuffers to be very shallow. To these cynics the reply is that high authority informs us that profound grief and a brave appetite may co-exist in the same individual and are not at all incompatible with each other, especially if there is no anxiety on the part of the mourners in regard to the will which is to be read after dinner. Moreover, it were well for all such carpers to bear in mind that the motives from which this funeral custom sprung had their root in mistaken kindness and courtesy, and that while at these feasts tongues are loosed and every-day topics are often discussed, the best of order and decorum is commonly observed. The eating and drinking are hearty, to be sure, but the guests depart pleased with themselves for having shown regard for the dead and sympathy with the living, pleased with the sorrowing family for providing so bountifully, and pleased in some instances with the deceased for furnishing the occasion. What more does the objector want?

When the people arrived from the church the lower part of the Prantman house at least bore quite a different appearance from that which it presented a few hours before. The carpet, which had been removed, was relaid, the pictures and looking-glasses once more showed their faces, the old Dutch clock ticked away steadily, the Bible and hymn-book were closed and even the pleasant looking bottle hid its smiles for a season in the cupboard. The sitting-room and the front room, lately the Todeskammer, each had two great old-fashioned tables set. These fairly groaned under the weight of good things — beef, pork, veal, fowls, pies, cakes, jellies, sauces, slaw, potatoes — time would fail one to name them all. Old as it was, the house had never seen such tables before — certainly not since Hans Prantman became its owner.

The Reverend William Heimer, smiling very graciously, was duly on hand. He was seized upon as soon as he arrived by Mrs. Jemima Gorgelmesser, a very stout, asthmatic old lady, and shown to the head of the tables in the front room. For much the same reasons that caused him to hurry away after preaching to the drafted men he would gladly have gone directly home from the church. But this was not to be thought of. No end of unfavorable comment would result from a failure of the officiating clergyman to return to “the house of mourning” after the funeral services to grace the feast by his presence, unless he had very urgent rea-

sons for absenting himself. So Heimer with due dignity and solemnity took the place assigned him.

By dint of the most rapid walking of which he was capable Ad Sparger reached the house before all the tables were quite filled. He was in a perspiration and his shoes and nether garments were covered with mud. Though sober, he was not presentable. At one of the tables in the sitting-room there was one empty chair left. Mrs. Gorgelmesser, who directed the seating of the people, wished an old woman who came hobbling into the apartment to occupy this vacant seat, but Sparger wanted it.

"I was a watcher Monday night," he said in a low tone; "all the other watchers is at the first table and it is my right to be at it too."

"But this old woman has far to go and you will surely let her sit down," was the conciliatory reply.

"Anyhow he isn't fit to sit down with decent people," said a sharp-tongued assistant who stood near.

"But I was fit to be asked to watch and so ought to be fit to eat at the first table," he retorted. Meanwhile the old woman in question quietly decided the dispute by sitting down in the seat Sparger coveted. There was a good deal of tittering at his expense among those nearest and he left the room in high dudgeon. Going into the kitchen he threw down his battered "stove-pipe" hat by the stove and declared he would not eat at all now but would complain of his treatment to Hans Prantman.

"It's too bad," he growled. "I don't care who gets shot next and I won't be a watcher again," but getting no sympathy he became quiet and the sober second thought presently led him to alter his resolution about refusing to dine.

All being quiet at last, the Reverend William Heimer said a very brief grace, perhaps to make up for lost time. Probably, too, he believed with a Pennsylvania Dutch Lutheran preacher of a somewhat earlier day that at meals short prayers and long sausages were most in consonance with each other and the fitness of things. When the eating and drinking were once fairly begun conversation grew brisk. Heimer resolved if possible to keep it from turning to war matters at his end of the table. Mrs. Fetzler sat next to him on his right and he paid much attention to her. On his left were Hans Prantman and his wife and next to Mrs. Fetzler sat Pete, Ret and Amos. Pete and his sister had no time to talk at the beginning of the meal but after the sharp edge of appetite was blunted a little they began in low tones to comment to each other on the food.

"My! I wish there was a burying every day," said Ret; "isn't this good eating, Pete?"

"Lean on that, clean down," answered the brother in what was regarded as very emphatic language, "and pap and mam will make us eat beans, bacon and dry bread and drink cold water all winter, to make up and save the cost of this here funeral of Jim. So eat all you can while you've got the chance, Ret, for there's about ten

thousand waiting outside and there won't be a crust left after they're all done," and at it they went with fresh vigor, fairly gorging themselves with the rich food.

"You have been a widow quite awhile," said Heimer to Mrs. Fetzer. "How long is it since James' father died?" Mrs. Fetzer looked embarrassed. Heimer noticed it, and supposing it to be caused by her inability to remember the exact time of her widowhood, sought to aid her.

"He died of a fever, I believe?" said he interrogatively. This remark was unfortunate and made matters worse. Hans Prantman heard the turn the conversation had taken and quickly interposed.

"Help yourself now, Herr Parre,"* he said. "Take out some more of that there chicken and slaw. Preachers all like chicken. I know our's all run when they see one go by the house. Help yourself. You're at a farmer's table and you must do so if you want to get something," and he laughed heartily at his wit.

"Oh, I understand," Heimer replied. "I was raised a farmer's boy and know a farmer's ways and how to help myself."

"I think, Herr Parre, you heard of the awful shooting of another young neighbor a couple of weeks ago," said a man named Zug sitting half way down the table and speaking very loud.

"Yes, I heard of it: it was bad," answered Heimer.

*Mr. Minister.

"It seems a pity to some people that he didn't shoot as straight as the soldier who afterwards killed him, ain't it does, now honest?" said Zug, evidently trying to evoke some rash expression from the minister.

"I don't quite understand you," returned the latter,

"Of course you know he shot and wounded a Lincoln captain, the son of Fred Ruthvon?" said Zug.

"Yes," said Heimer, drawing out the word cautiously, for everybody at the table was listening, and he did not know whether to regard Zug as a friend or an enemy.

"The Lincolner is recovering."

"So I have heard."

"If he hadn't, it might have been better for you and for a certain lodge, as I hear, by my sex!"

"So!" said Heimer, reddening. Zug was possessed of a strong desire to be seen and heard, and loved to make mischief for its own sake. He noticed the effect of his remark, and as he knew nothing about delicacy of feeling, followed it up.

"I heard in Reading," he went on, "that your draft sermon in our church was all reported to the United States Commissioner there, and that they once had a notion to send for you. Of course you can guess who reported you."

The laity often hear what does not reach the ears of the clergy, and so it really happened that what was talked of all over the city, had not yet come to the knowledge of the Reverend William Heimer. He was excited, but smiled, and tried hard to keep cool.

“I had not heard anything about this,” he said. — “Mr. Prantman, thanks for a little more bread. Mrs. Wormschneider, can you spare me another *tasse* of coffee? — Thanks. — But I think, my friend, I said nothing but the truth.”

“My! but the Herr Parre eats. He has now once an appetite, he has!” whispered Pete to his sister.

“Yes, I’ve watched him,” replied that young woman. “He’s had four pieces of chicken, two pieces of calf-meat already, slaw three times, and three cups of coffee, and by my sex, he doesn’t seem to be near done yet.”

“Huh, huh!” grunted the brother going on with the stuffing process.

“No, I think you didn’t” said Zug in response to Heimer’s last remark, “but you know, Herr Parre, these Radicals often twist things to suit themselves, by—— whoa! I pretty near swore before the minister!” he whispered to his next neighbor, while he blushed scarlet and the people snickered. Heimer took advantage of Zug’s confusion to ask Prantman, senior, in a low tone to whom Zug referred as having reported his sermon to the United States Commissioner.

“Oh, he means that young Ruthvon of course,” said Prantman.

“So I thought; but what does he mean by saying it would have been better for me and a certain lodge if this captain had not got over it? — Mrs Gorgelmesser, that is glorious apple-pie; can I have another piece? Nice thanks!”

“I think he means that the black snake will report you again,” said Prantman.

“But he was not at the funeral at all, was he?”

“No, but his father was and Doctor Helfer, who doesn’t like you a bit, and Tom Hartnagel, Ruthvon’s penny-dog, and Nigger Chetwynde. And old Fred Ruthvon and his son has made up and they now treat Tom near like one of the family, and so he’ll hear all you said.”

“Yes, and Herr Parre,” said Ret shrilly, “Sal Vonneida was there too, and Sus Zweispringer, and what one of all these doesn’t know the others do.”

“Hold your mouth now once and don’t talk so loud,” said Prantman to his daughter. “Go on with your eating.—Yes, Herr Minister, you’ll no doubt get reported but you know we—you know who, huh?—will all stand by you.”

“Thanks, but I think they can’t do much with me.—Peace be with you all.” He rose, and those who yet remained followed his example. To sit at table after the minister left it was thought highly discourteous, though to leave it as soon as done eating, without a word of apology, was no breach of good manners. Zug followed Heimer into the hall.

“You see I forgot myself,” said he to the minister, “and these Lincolners do such bad things that one must swear sometimes.”

Heimer laughed and remarked that mistakes would happen now and then.

In a short time "the second table" was ready. It was promptly filled, Ad Sparger being the first to sit down and the last to rise. At this table the conversation was carried on with less constraint, the guests being relieved of the presence of the minister. The shooting of Fetzner was the main topic and the act was bitterly denounced.

"I believe that poor Fetzner named the wrong man last night," remarked Christopher Stettler. "Prantman had nothing to do with this here thing at all. Jim should have said 'Lincoln' instead of 'Prantman' and the two names is so very near alike that in their fear Hahn and the rest only misunderstood him, that's so." Later Stettler repeated this original idea at "The People's Hotel." It was taken up by others and in a short time most people believed that the drafted man had named Lincoln and not Hans Prantman as his murderer.

The eating and drinking continued until sunset, but finally the last guest arose from the table and departed and the funeral of James Fetzner had become a part of the annals of the neighborhood.

On leaving "the house of mourning" — which he did as soon as he could consistently with common courtesy — the Reverend William Heimer drove directly to Baltzer's at Haltest and at the bar called for a glass of lager-beer. While he was drinking it Mike Hahn and Andrew Pfannkuchen also came in, followed a moment latter by Doctor Helfer.

"Herr Parre, that was once a good sermon, I'll get

the plagues!" said Hahn. "You can beat old Dox into the ground, I must say. I only hope there won't be no trouble about it."

"Oh, no! No trouble at all," answered Heimer. "I said nothing out of the way and it would never do for them to interfere with ministers of the gospel.—Walk up and have something, you people."

Hahn and Pfankuchen were not slow to accept the preacher's invitation to drink, but Doctor Helfer sat still in his chair and with the freedom afforded by the ordinary bar-room broke in:—"Never do, Mr. Heimer? Never do? Suppose ministers preach treason, can't the government interfere with them?"

"You are Doctor Helfer I believe," said Heimer blandly, "yes, sir. — Well, who, let me ask, Doctor Helfer, has preached treason?"

"Ho! Herrschaft! Gideon! Benjamin!" — (The last three words it may reasonably be presumed were a substitute for others less suitable for the presence of a minister.) "If you didn't this morning, then I'd like to know what treasonable preaching is, Mr. Heimer."

"Shame yourself! do you know who you're talking to?" exclaimed Hahn with a show of great indignation.

"I do, and I mean just every word I say," replied the doctor rising from his chair and speaking with much heat. "I pity poor Fetzler. It wasn't his fault that he didn't report and got shot. It was the fault of older people who by their teaching and example led him wrong. It's said he spoke Prantman's name last night as that of his

murderer. If it's true, then he should have added the name of the Reverend William Heimer."

"That is a serious charge. — How so?" said Heimer, his conflicting emotions causing him to turn red, white and blue alternately.

"You said in your draft sermon last month," answered Helfer walking close up to Heimer who still stood by the bar, "that you'd blame no man who failed to report when drafted, and Jim Fetzer said afterwards, in my hearing, that you knew what you were about and that he certainly wouldn't report now, because he knew it would be all right, And I hope, Mr. Heimer, that you'll be called to account for your sermon to-day."

Heimer had recovered himself and eyed the doctor steadily.

"Nice thanks," he said very sarcastically, nose and lip both curling up; "when I am, may I call on you for help?"

"If you get your head broken, yes," replied Helfer in the same vein.

"Again nice thanks, Doctor Helfer."

"None are needed, Mr. Heimer. You will deserve all you get in the way of broken bones, and my services I'll make you pay for, don't you forget," retorted the angry physician.

"Hold your mouth," said Baltzer from behind the bar.

"When I'm ready, Dan."

The Reverend William Heimer paid for the drinks and quietly lit a cigar.

“Good day, gentlemen,” said he bowing politely. He left the hotel, got into his buggy and drove away rapidly, as though in this way giving vent to feelings he dared not express in the inn. His offensive language became known to United States Commissioner Olds at Reading the same day on which it was uttered, not however through either Tom Hartnagel or Captain Ruthvon but through the gentleman whom we met at the lower hotel in Haltfest on the evening when the tidings came from Bull Run — whom the Commissioner quietly sent to the funeral, in view of the sermon of October 19th. A few days later the clergyman received a communication from the urbane official that a repetition of utterances like those of November 19th at the obsequies of James Fetzer might possibly be held as treasonable and be followed by unpleasant consequences.

The Reverend William Heimer was quick to take advantage of this notice to increase his notoriety. On the Sunday after its reception he posed in his pulpit out in the township of Knocksdehudel as a martyr and complained bitterly to his people. But, like a child with burnt fingers, he was very careful not to offend again.

CHAPTER XLII.

LIGHT AND SHADOW.

One Sunday forenoon, a few weeks after the funeral of James Fetzner, there was a rap on the front door of the Ruthvon mansion. Captain Ruthvon answered it and a young man introduced himself as John Hinton.

“Come in, come in, Mr. Hinton,” said the captain with a hearty clasp of the hand. “I have heard my family speak very highly of you and I am glad to meet you. You taught the school at Haltfest last winter, I believe, but of course we didn’t get acquainted, and since you began your present term I haven’t been out much, but now I trust we shall meet often.”

“Thank you, Captain Ruthvon, and allow me to congratulate you on your recovery.”

“I am doing nicely indeed, and the folks have all gone to church. I told them I could remain alone that long very well.”

“Perhaps I should have gone too though I don’t understand the language very well, but I came to do an errand that was entrusted to me.”

“Indeed!”

“Yes, sir. Last night on my way up from home in Uwchlan, Chester county, I concluded to visit one of my old pupils, Carl Schlapphannel, who was drafted

and is in Camp Terrell near Reading with the other men. I thought it might do him good to see me. So I went out and had no trouble in finding him. He was very glad to see me and insisted on my remaining and taking a soldier's supper with him. I did so and by the time we got through and talked a little while longer it was nine o'clock. Carl is an orderly sergeant and wrote a pass for himself and me through the picket line. He said he would go with me a little way as it might be the last time we would see each other. In due time the sentry challenged us. Like all the other sentries he was armed simply with a stout club. We advanced and Carl handed him our pass. The moon was shining brightly and the soldier could see us distinctly. To read the pass though he had to strike a match and we leaned over him as he hurriedly perused it. The thing was ludicrous. He was a green militia-man and had anything important been at stake, we could have knocked him down and run away very handily! There was however no occasion. The pass was satisfactory and we were permitted to go on our way. Carl soon stopped and said good night and good-bye. I had proceeded but a short distance farther toward the city when I was accosted in the moonlight by a soldier going in the opposite direction. He had evidently been on the lookout for me, for he at once asked me whether my name was Hinton, the teacher at Haltfest. On answering him in the affirmative, he handed me this letter and asked me to deliver it to you in person

as soon as I could. I inquired his name but he said he would rather not mention it and that he wished to send the letter by me because he trusted me more than some of the postmasters. I thought, Captain Ruthvon, this explanation would interest you and that it might possibly throw some light on the contents of the message. I beg pardon for my long prelude."

"I am much obliged to you, Mr. Hinton, for delivering the letter so promptly," said the captain when Hinton ended his account. "One question — was this soldier a young man?"

"He was," answered Hinton and then took his leave. The letter was anonymous and poorly written. The substance of it was that the writer was in danger and oppressed by his conscience; that he had been a member of the Golden Circle of whom some believed he had betrayed their secrets, which he had not done, at least not intentionally, for he had only one night spoken to a stranger who had the words of recognition and the grip, and it seemed they had been overheard by somebody while talking together; that he knew he would never get back from the army alive, for Katrina Galsch had told him so; and that his brother, who was also a Knight, had informed him that at a meeting held near their home a week ago, it had been resolved to push the extension and influence of the Circle during the winter, and to make themselves felt especially with Frederick Ruthvon, Doctor Helfer, Tom Hartnagel and the witch's boy, and in this way to some extent avenge the death of

their comrades and fellow-members. The writer requested that no inquiry be made in regard to him and wished to be remembered as a soldier who would try to do his duty to his country to the end.

Captain Ruthvon read this letter carefully several times with painful interest. It was quite evident, if the author was sincere, that the Golden Circle would make renewed efforts to embarrass the government in this section, and to harass all in the community who were true to it. He foresaw clearly that sooner or later the Circle and the government would come into conflict. In such an event there could be but one issue, and many of his old neighbors and friends might meet with imprisonment, fine and even confiscation of property. If the Circle could be broken up before matters came to this pass, for instance by the arrest of the leader, a desirable end would be attained. He himself was gaining strength rapidly and by the time his leave of absence expired he would be able to perform light service, and it had been intimated to him that he would be transferred to Reading to watch the movements of the Knights in view of his intimate acquaintance with the people and the country. If this were done, his duties would be of the most delicate nature and might cause fresh misunderstanding between him and his father. Should he resign his commission? He sat for some time in deep thought. He resolved to clear away at once everything that could create new difficulty. Accordingly after dinner was over he had an interview

with his father. First of all he read the letter which Hinton had brought him.

“I’m not surprised,” said Ruthvon, senior, when it was finished. “I know they’ll go on until they get where it won’t rain on them for awhile.”

“That is what I wanted to speak to you about,” said Charles. He then went on to tell of his probable transfer to Reading and of his duties in that case.

“So had I not better resign my commission?” he concluded. Mr. Ruthvon stared at his son but said nothing.

“You see, father,” said Charles noticing his father’s look, “you and I — you did not always approve of what I did and said, — and, you know — and — after what has happened nothing must come between us again.”

“Nothing must, Charlie,” said the father with moist eyes.

“I know something of what you have suffered,” continued the son, “and I have not forgotten the night when you brought Blanche to me and put her hand in mine. I am now ready to do something to please you — anything short of a plain violation of duty.”

“What do you think I would wish you to do?” Frederick Ruthvon asked after several moments of silence.

“I can resign my commission with honor now,” answered Charles, “and, as I intimated, I will do it if you wish me to.”

“And then I suppose these Knights would be much

pleased as well as myself, and would brag that they had scared you out of the army," said Mr. Ruthvon watching Charles closely. The latter certainly winced a little.

"I think they would," said he, "but I can stand it maybe."

"Charlie," said Mr. Ruthvon visibly affected, "our dear Lord God has given you back to us as from the dead. There is nothing between us and nothing ever shall be, and I don't want you to resign from the army either, or to go away from Reading if you can stay there. Charlie," he continued after a pause of more than a minute during which he seemed to be engaged in a mental struggle, "I—I will say that I was wrong in some things. My prejudice against Blanche Chetwynde was foolish. Her sweet manner and brave heart showed me that. And I was wrong too in some things about the Yankee and the war.—Say, Charlie, did you see anything of the *Reading Eagle* of last Tuesday?"

"No," said the captain looking at his father wonderingly. "I heard mother say she couldn't find it anywhere."

"Here she comes," said Mr. Ruthvon.—"Maria, have you seen last week's *Eagle* anywhere?"

"No," said Mrs. Ruthvon. "I wanted to see about that accident to Sam Gelsing down on the Cacoosing but Catharine couldn't find it and I couldn't either."

"And I think you won't for some time in this house," said the other with an energy that almost startled his

wife. "I've ordered them to send my copy — well, it's stopped from coming here and it never will come again, I think."

Mrs. Ruthvon and Charles listened in astonishment.

"I'm disgusted with the character of the leaders of the Knights around here and their acts have opened my eyes. What does Philip Huber care about the country? Nothing at all. He wants the money, that's what he's after. We must have a government, and it's folly to say the Southerners won't take our property if they get the chance.—Maria, I am not an Abolitionist and I never need be, for that thing will now settle itself. I believe too that Lincoln has done wrong often. Charlie, I am a Democrat as my fathers were before me, but I believe our only salvation is in making the South give up, and from this time on I am A WAR DEMOCRAT."

They looked at him in silent amazement. He got up and went on with a degree of excitement very unusual for him: — "No, Charlie, I don't want you to resign your commission. Do your duty just as your great-great-grandfather Johames Ruthvon would have done it, and if it demands of you the arrest of Huber himself and the whole Copton lodge of Knights along with him, do it and your father will stand by you, by Schinnerhannes!"

When Charles and his parents went into the kitchen they found Tom Hartnagel there. He was telling Catharine and Sallie a funny story of his war experience. He smoked his pipe and was in great good humor. Presently Clinton Chetwynde and Susie Zweispringer

came. It was a common thing for them to be seen at Frederick Ruthvon's house these days and to come and go together. If ever a girl was in love and proud of her lover, it was Susie surely.

"This won't do, Tom," said Charles when they all had laughed heartily at a joke that Hartnagel had cracked. "This is Sunday and there's too much noise. You need to be talked to and I order you to come with me." Tom took the hint and promptly followed Charles from the apartment.

"That's my old friend Hi Wambsgans sure," exclaimed he after Charles had read Hinton's letter to him—"the fellow I fooled in the lower tavern sheds."

"Do you think he is honest in writing the way he does?"

"He couldn't be dishonest if he tried."

"Then we'll keep his secret, but make good use of what he says, Tom."

"Lean on that, captain, and if my name is Tom Hartnagel, these Knights'll bounce around lively before long."

"Keep cool, Tom, and don't do anything without consulting me. Just yet we can do little but watch and be on our guard. As I told you last week, I'm sure Congress will soon do something that will make it easier to deal with them."

"Easy or not," exclaimed Tom with sudden vigor, "if any of them hurts Sharp Billy, there'll be some bones for Doctor Helfer to set without any law of Congress, I'll bet you now."

"All right, Tom," replied the captain smiling; "you

may avenge Billy without consulting me, but he is a boy that can help himself pretty well—and others too, I find.”

A happy family were the Ruthvons that night. The old affection had resumed its throne. Mrs. Ruthvon was filled with joy and her fervent thanksgiving ascended to heaven. In sweet communion the evening was spent.

These same hours witnessed another and very different scene. It was at the fortune-teller's house on the mountain. In the large room sat the sibyl with Gewitter in her lap. Opposite her stood a visitor. It was Hans Prantman. He had been deeply impressed with the fact that his foster-son had named him in the Todeskammer. True, he had encouraged Christopher Stettler's idea that Fetzer had said "Lincoln" instead of "Prantman," yet he was ill at ease and in his unrest he became more embittered than ever against the Union cause and its friends in the neighborhood. He had attended the meeting of the Circle referred to in the letter and was largely instrumental in securing the passage of the resolution of hostility to certain individuals. He seemed to hold a particular grudge against Sharp Billy. On this account he had been anxious for some time to see the fortune-teller but until to-night no suitable opportunity had presented itself.

"Take room," said Katrina. "I haven't seen you for a long time; how does it go with you?"

"It must be good so, but it might be better," he replied sullenly remaining standing by the fire.

“How is that?” she asked looking at him with a curious twinkle in her dark eyes.

“How is that, huh, you witch?” he growled irritably.

“Yes. What do you want?”

“What do I want, you evil spirit?”

“To be sure. What do you want, Hans? You seem very much out of humor this Sunday night. I think you didn’t go to church this morning like your good neighbor, Frederick Ruthvon,” said she tauntingly.

“Ruthvon!” exploded Prantman,— “Say! Galsch, is that there young satan around?”

“It’s always full of them here. Which particular one do you mean?”

“I mean Bill and you know it. When I came to the mountain I’m sure I saw him just ahead of me in the road.”

“He isn’t here. He went from church on an errand to Frisbie, and the poor boy may be frozen in the snow.”

“Anyhow he’s one of them I want to speak to you about. You’ve heard of the Knights of the Golden Circle?”

“I think I have,” she replied significantly.

“They can make themselves felt.”

“So I have heard.”

“There is several persons that had better mind when they receive warning from them,” said Prantman sitting down on a stool and speaking in a lower tone. “Fred

Ruthvon is a traitor and his son and Tom Hartnagel is spies. Doctor Helfer talks too big and Katrina Galsch and her young satan is too friendly with the nigger-worshippers."

"So?" said the sibyl unmoved.

"Galsch, you old witch," exclaimed Prantman provoked by her coolness, "that Rutznasz must go. You must send him away. He sticks out his tongue at me like a snake every time he sees me and makes other bad motions, and he's all the time with Hartnagel or running errands for Lincoln Ruthvon and spying around. You *must* send him off."

"And I tell you, Hans Prantman, I will not send him away," replied the fortune-teller, a fierce light suddenly coming into her eyes.

"Somebody else will then," said the other angrily.

"And I tell you once more," she said rising and stretching herself to her full height, "somebody else had better not. If it's you that tries, I will tell what you wouldn't have me tell for all you've got in the world, and if it's some one else that hurts the boy, I'll find means — and you know, Prantman, I *can* find them — to make him wish he had been strangled at his birth. The other men you threaten can take care of themselves, but so help me all the evil spirits, if any of your Knights hurt my boy, they will be followed by shapes and plagues they can't get rid of. More yet: I can and I will expose the secrets of your lodge and bring the Lincoln government down on you."

Her visitor cowered under her wrath. She knew her man and pushed her advantage.

“Do you come here, Hans Prantman, to threaten me and my boy?” she continued, looking like an evil spirit aroused,— “me, who saw you strike down Felix Fetzter that evening in June at the Cross-rock, and afterwards helped you hide the body?”

“You know, Galsch,” rising from his seat and speaking almost pleadingly, “it was done in anger, when he accused me of having spoken improperly to his wife.”

“But people didn’t hesitate to say that the one who killed him got the seven hundred dollars he had in his pocket at the time, and whisper even now that Hans Prantman was the man, and Katrina Galsch knows he was.”

“And I gave you five hundred of it to keep you from telling what you saw by a cursed accident,” said he.

“And I’ll stick to my bloody bargain, unless you do another murder,” she retorted. “In that case I’m free from it.”

“For God’s sake don’t speak so loud,” said Prantman in a hoarse whisper. “If we’re found out, we’ll all both hang.”

“I know it, but what need I care. I’m alone in the world.— And yet I do care,” she said checking herself and speaking more calmly. “I shall indeed leave no name behind but Billy has been as a child to me, and for his sake I will care. When I shall be helpless and friendless — for as soon as I am no longer feared all will forsake and hate me — he will take care of me and at the

end lay my body in the grave," and for the first time in many years the eyes of the fortune-teller were filled with sincere tears. Quickly rallying, she said with vehemence:—"Do you wonder that I stand up for the boy? Let any one touch him and he shall feel all the terrors I can command. Hans Prantman, beware, lest a gallows should suddenly stand before you!"

"Galsch, I wish there was no law for you!" he exclaimed shaking his fist into her face.

"Prantman, don't you dare touch either me or Billy," she replied defiantly. "I can even now do that which would lift you up to the roof. Remember the Indian. Over his spirit I have control."

"Ruhig!" said he shivering. "I haven't heard him since that—that night when—Say! is it true that he's been heard lately!"

"Ask your son about that," she answered smiling grimly.

"Do you think there's any danger to-night?" he asked, going to the little window and peering into the wintry night.

"There is, unless you promise to let the boy alone and keep your lodge from hurting him, Speak quick!" She proceeded to get a large conch from the old cupboard against the opposite wall.

"This the Indian used in his day to gather his tribe on these mountains to go down into the valley on his forays, and he loves the sound of it still," she said holding up the old shell and going toward the door.

“Don’t blow it,” cried Prantman excitedly. “I tell you the young satan can go in the bushes so far as we are concerned. No one will harm him or you, I think.”

“It must be good so,” said the sibyl in a calmer tone ; “but remember your promise. Now you’d better go home. But wait yet a moment.” Opening the door quickly, she put the conch to her lips and blew a strong blast — just one note. The moon had risen over the mountain and the tall pines threw ghostly shadows over the pure snow.

“Nothing will hurt you now,” she observed with a look akin to contempt when she saw the frightened manner of her departing visitor, “but still you had better not go by the Cross-rock to-night.”

While she yet spoke a human form came indistinctly into view in the moonlight out in the road and a boyish voice sung: —

“ Pennsylvanians to your station,
 Boldly meet the traitor foe ;
 Fight as bravely for the Nation
 As you did in Mexico.

So let the wide world wag as it will,
 We are for the Union still,
 For the Union, for the Union,
 We are for the Union still!”

Sharp Billy stood before the door by the time the end of the refrain was reached.

“Church was late getting out this morning and that’s

one of the pieces they sung," he said to Hans Prantman who had come out of the house. "Tom Hartnagel and Captain Ruthvon can sing it much nicer than me, and if you or Parre Heimer will ask them, they'll sing it most any day for you," and making a bow with mock civility, he disappeared within the door. Prantman ground his teeth and walked away without even saying good night to Katrina Galsch.

"Billy, that one won't trouble us again for a long time," said the latter when both were safe in the house.

"It would have been longer maybe though if he had heard the Indian," answered Billy looking inquiringly at his foster-mother.

Katrina laughed at the picture he evoked but presently said in a grave manner: — "That one promised that you should be let alone, and so the Indian was satisfied. Warm up, my Billy, you are cold. Here's some hot coffee for you. You'll warm and keep your mam when she gets too old to help herself, won't you, Billy?"

An affectionate embrace and a kiss were Billy's answer, and in a few minutes all was still in the lonely habitation of the fortune-teller.

CHAPTER XLIII.

A REVIVAL OF GOLDEN CIRCLEISM.

Doctor Helfer was in a troubled state of mind. Alarming rumors had come regarding the army of the Potomac before Fredericksburg, and these rumors were now verified. Twelve thousand Union soldiers had been killed and wounded in that unfortunate engagement.

It was a cold winter evening a little beyond the middle of December, and the doctor went over to talk with Squire Zweispringer and thus relieve his mind, but not finding the squire at home he conversed with Susie a little while and then sauntered on to "The People's Hotel." There was a larger gathering than common in the bar-room, and the late battle and the chances of the drafted militia of Berks county coming into active conflict with the Southern soldiers, were under discussion.

"Here comes the prophet," said Mike Hahn sarcastically when Doctor Helfer came in. "No doubt he can answer the question."

"What's the question, Hahn?" inquired Helfer leaning on the bar."

"You know our drafted neighbors went up the railroad just a week ago to-night," replied Hahn. "Will they be taken to Fredericksburg into this battle?"

"No, it's over, and as I understand, they were sent

from Washington to Suffolk and that's far enough from Fredericksburg."

"But you don't always know," said Hahn. "You said the South would be thrashed in three months. It's twenty since they took Fort Sumter and now they've just about killed and captured the whole Abolition army."

"Yes, and whose fault was it but Abe Lincoln's that all them men was killed in cold blood?" said Pete Prantman, who sat with his chair tipped against the wall, his left foot on the lower rung of the chair and his right leg crossed over the left. "Six weeks ago he put out the only man in the North who could handle a big army—at least Parre Heimer said so, and Ancoony says so and he's in Congress and ought to know I think,—and now he's got it; his little Burnside all knocked to pieces, huh?"

"I don't want to talk to a man who glories in the slaughter of twelve thousand brave men, the soldiers of his country," said Helfer angrily. "And, Prantman,"—advancing to the latter and shaking his finger at him—"a fellow who cut off his finger to escape the draft ought to sing low."

"But isn't it true what Pete says?" asked Hahn, to Pete's great relief.

"Suppose it were, Hahn," answered Helfer, "will it help things to rejoice in the result. It'll only take so many more men and dollars to fight it out. The North will never give up. It'll rise in its might now and crush

out all opposition whether it comes from the South or enemies here in the North.”

“Now the prophet speaks again,” said Hahn. “I pity these men, but, I’ll be plagued if I don’t believe it’s better so, else as soon as the drafted men is killed there’ll be another draft and we’ll all be killed, and may be this defeat will bring old Abe to his senses and stop the war.”

Mike Hahn undoubtedly voiced the sentiment of a large majority of the people of Copton and the adjoining townships at this critical period of the war. The removal of McClellan from command had greatly increased the discontent excited by the draft and this uneasiness was intensified when on the night of December 11th the drafted men from Berks county passed through Haltfest on their way to Washington. To all this was now added the news of the awful slaughter before Fredericksburg — a result, it was alleged, of McClellan’s removal. When, then, the dark year of the war closed with the Union cause in a seemingly hopeless condition the old cry of the previous summer and autumn was raised with renewed vigor — that something must be done to stop the war and that the best way to accomplish this was to compel the government to let the South go.

And the very first day of the new year brought a fresh grievance. The Emancipation Proclamation took effect. If the Union arms were successful, in a short time the entire North and especially south-eastern Penn-

sylvania, would be overrun by the emancipated slaves and a reign of terror inaugurated. People would have to defend their homes much in the same way the forefathers had done in the days of the Indians.

“Why I never saw so many niggers in all my life as I did see in Reading on Second New Year,”* said Mike Hahn at Baltzer’s about this time.

“They’re coming,” chimed in Jared Katzbauer. “I saw one go down the turnpike yesterday — an awful looking fellow.”

“That was the Yankee’s nigger, you pumpkin-head you,” said Christopher Stettler.

“Don’t you think I know the Yankee’s nigger?” said Katzbauer stubbornly. “I tell you they’re coming. Dan there will have to stand behind his bar with a pistol in his hand when black Abe’s pets come else his dram will go in a hurry, by my sex.”

“I think they get not much here now once,” growled Baltzer.

“And I’m afraid a decent white man won’t be able to get even a single *schmaler* any more at all,” said Ad Sparger looking wistfully at the bottles and tumblers.

It would be a misfortune, then, if the Union forces won, these people said. Much better in the end that Burnside was defeated. A little encouragement of the South, a show of strength on the part of the Knights of the Golden Circle all over the country, and the government would give it up and glad peace would return once

*January 2nd.

more. The fear of a negro invasion would be dispelled and the drafted fathers, husbands and sons would all come back in the spring. The times seemed propitious too in these parts. Andrew Pfannkuchen had been triumphantly acquitted, and Sergeant Thompson and the private who shot Fetzer had barely escaped conviction on the charge of manslaughter, five jurors standing out a whole day for a verdict of guilty. The government was very quiet also. No soldiers had been seen outside of Reading for some time.

Thus encouraged the Knights forgot the lessons of Zellon's and Fetzer's death and grew bold again. Philip Huber was very busy in the early months of 1863. New lodges were organized in the townships of Rattleton and Knocksdehudel and also in some of the adjoining townships of Lancaster county. Members by the hundred were sworn in. In due time Captain Ruthvon and Clinton Chetwynde received anonymous communications warning them to return at once to the army. Both missives were signed, in a disguised hand, "*Those who can make good their words.*" At the expiration of their furloughs the two young men had been assigned for duty at Reading and were able to be at home part of the time. Their presence in the neighborhood was very undesirable to the Knights.

Doctor Helfer was notified in the same mysterious way that if he did not cease his loud talk in defense of emancipation another doctor would be found and he would have only the niggers to doctor when they came,

and that it would likewise be profitable for him to get rid of Davy Rauh Zahn as soon as possible. The latter was with the witch's boy too much.

“Ho! Herrschaft! Gideon! Benjamin! Donnerwetter!,” exclaimed Helfer, boldly showing the note at Baltzer's. “Let them get the new doctor as quick as they like, and as for Davy, all the Knights will be hung up before I send him away.”

Frederick Ruthvon too was warned. He was accused anew of being a traitor to the Knights and informed that in the good time close at hand his treachery would be punished as it deserved. It would begin on the third Friday of March next when another man than a traitor to his party and his neighbors would be elected school-director in his place. Squire Zweispringer was told that if he wished to retain the honorable office he had so long held, he had better not talk quite so much in approval of War Democrats. He was invited to join a certain association of patriotic men of which he knew something. Jabez Chetwynde was apprised that the climate of New England would agree better with him than that of Berks county, not being as hot as the latter. John Hinton was asked to show his colors by seeking admission to a beautiful Circle; and many other citizens were addressed in the way of warning and admonition.

Hans Prantman had either forgotten his promise or was unable to control the action of his fellows, for Katrina Galsch was again requested to send away Sharp

Billy. If she refused to comply, she would some dark night be whipped out of the township and Billy would never be heard of again.

Of course everybody knew that all these communications emanated from the Golden Circle, but as yet it was difficult to proceed against its members even after considerable evidence was gathered. Tom Hartnagel, whom the Circle had by no means overlooked in making up its list of obnoxious persons, was in favor of making short work with the Knights.

“Captain,” said he to Charles Ruthvon one day, “you lead twenty-five good men like Clint and me and we’ll break up every lodge of these cowardly Knights in the county in ten days.”

“We can’t do that,” responded the captain; “the law would be against us and we would do more harm than good; but if they injure person or property, we can bring them under the operation of the civil law as individuals, and——”

“Have them acquitted by a jury of Knights, clean down honest,” Tom indignantly broke in. “Do your dirty best, captain, and you’ll never in that way get a single one of the rascals where it won’t rain on him!”

“Hold on, Tom,” said the captain smiling at his friend’s headlong zeal. “Remember, we’ll soon have a law of Congress, as I’ve told you several times, under which we shall be able to reach and punish this class of traitors in spite of Heister Clymer and his *habeas corpus*.”

Captain Ruthvon was right. A bill was introduced in the House during the 3rd session of the 37th Congress entitled "An act for enrolling and calling out the National Forces, and for other purposes." As might have been expected from a legislator who subsequently voted against the passage of the XIVth amendment to the Constitution of the United States abolishing slavery, Suydenham E. Ancona, who then represented the Berks county district, bitterly opposed the enactment of the Conscript Act. He delivered a speech against it on the pages of the Congressional Record, February 28th, 1863, of which Jabez Chetwynde remarked to Doctor Helfer that "if it does not teach patriotism it is nevertheless one of the finest specimens in existence of inflated rhetoric and flatulent buncombe."

In this speech Ancona spoke of "the blood-hounds of the partisan press and pulpit of New York and New England" as being in part to blame for the reverses of the Union arms. He declared that the government had "perverted the war now to an utterly impracticable and hopeless purpose — the emancipation of the inferior race, the negro, destined by nature and its irreversible laws to be subservient to its superior, the white." He characterized the war power as "the bloody goddess of despotism, at whose shrine you see kneeling the horde of greedy contractors, with all the paraphernalia and circumstances of reality." He described the national administration as "faithless, corrupt, and imbecile." He alleged that infamous impositions had been practiced

upon his constituents by the officials conducting the draft of 1862, and expressed it as his belief that any attempt to carry out the conscription contemplated by the pending bill would be almost certainly followed by a revolution that would bring desolation and blood to the doors of the people of the North. He inveighed against those provisions of the bill under which he declared farmers, mechanics and poor laboring men would be "dragged from their homes and helpless families by military satraps, for an indefinite service in a cause and for a purpose they believed utterly wrong, useless and impracticable." Moreover, he demanded as a condition of his further support of the administration with the means to prosecute the war, among many other things that "the emancipation policy announced in the bulls of September 22nd and January 1st" should be "revoked and annulled," that certain generals be "peremptorily dismissed from the service they disgraced," and that General McClellan be "restored to supreme and untrammelled command of the entire army of the United States."

The Knights of the Golden Circle from Missouri to Pennsylvania were greatly encouraged by this speech of the Representative of the Berks district in the highest law-making body of the Nation. It was read amid great applause in the Copton lodge over Baltzer's bar-room.

"Hurrah for Ancoony!" exclaimed Hans Prantman. "He knows much, the Ancoony does — more yet than Glancy Jones. You will hear, by henker, that General

Mecnellan in two weeks is back again and there won't be no more drafting business." Hans expressed the thought of the lodge and a great shout went up for "der Ancoony."

"What did you copperheads yell about up there?" Doctor Helfer inquired of Yonie Zwiwwelberg after the session was over and the Knights came straggling into the bar-room.

"Haven't you seen Ancoony's big speech?" Yonie responded.

"Yes, and he ought to be sent down to South Carolina where he belongs," said Helfer; "but I think the congressman from the county beyond Outlook Hill can take care of him."

Certainly "The Great Commoner" did take good care of the bill in question. Within four days after Suydenham E. Ancona made his speech as aforesaid, Congress passed the enrollment bill by a very large majority. This famous Act authorized the President to appoint a provost marshal for each congressional district. It made it the duty of the provost marshal to arrest all deserters from the army including drafted men who failed to report, and "to detect, seize, and confine spies of the enemy" and deliver them to the custody of the general commanding the department in which they might be arrested.

It ordered that all drafted persons who failed to report without furnishing a substitute or paying for one, should be deemed deserters and be arrested by the

provost marshal and sent to the nearest military post for trial by court-martial. It enacted that all persons not subject to the rules and articles of war who should entice or attempt to entice a soldier to desert, or who should harbor or employ a deserter, or refuse to give him up, knowing him to be such, were, on legal conviction of the offence, to be fined in a sum not exceeding five hundred dollars and imprisoned not less than six months nor more than two years. It provided, moreover, that if any person resisted a draft made under it, or counseled or aided any person to resist, or obstructed or assaulted any officer making the draft, or counseled a drafted man not to report for duty, or dissuaded him from the performance of military duty as required by law, such person should be subject to summary arrest by the provost marshal and be delivered to the civil authorities, and on conviction of the offence be punished by a fine not exceeding five hundred dollars, or by imprisonment not exceeding two years, or both ; and that all persons found lurking or acting as spies in or about any fortifications, posts, quarters or encampments of any of the armies of the United States, should be tried by court-martial or military commission, and, on conviction, suffer death.

There was consternation in the ranks of the Knights of the Golden Circle. Their joy was turned into mourning. The bill was clear in its definitions and statements, and the oath they had taken at their initiation came in direct conflict with its provisions. Should they dis-

band? That was the question that agitated the lodges of southeastern Pennsylvania. The next meeting of the Copton Lodge was largely attended. Huber himself was present and, as if reckless with desperation, made a fiery speech. The sacred *habeas corpus* was now in the dust and they were all under the tyrant's heel. All should be ready to go to prison if necessary in defence of the principles of liberty inherited from Andrew Jackson and guaranteed by the Constitution. The work of the lodges must go on. They must not for a moment think of disbandment. But, like the forefathers in the Revolution, they must be exceedingly cautious. Spies must be guarded against and traitors punished. "If we all stand together like good patriots, the end is not far off."

It is not, Philip Huber. The great arm is coming dangerously near.

"But none of the persons we sent warnings to has took notice of them," said Mike Hahn. "Doctor Helfer defies us and now they'll all be bolder than ever. I wish Ancoony was here to tell us what to do."

"In two weeks I think I shall be able to give you further instructions," said Huber. "By that time I shall hear from Indiana and we will know what to do. Remember, I'm at Reading now. I can get information quicker there, and to hoodwink the spies I've taken some work at the upper foundry which doesn't take near all my time."

The men to whom Hahn referred surely seemed to

give no heed to the mysterious communications they had received, except that they kept a close watch and prepared themselves better to meet any attempts at physical violence. Sharp Billy several times narrowly escaped personal injury at the hands of his enemies, and in going to and fro between home and Haltfest made numbers of detours.

“See here,” said he one day to Tom Hartnagel, “look what my mam gave me yesterday. It’s a fortune-teller and she thinks I can use it some day to tell the fortune of somebody that won’t let me alone.” He exhibited to his friend a bright revolver which his foster-mother had bought for him of Yorim the peddler.

CHAPTER XLIV.

LOVINA HARTNAGEL FORGETS HERSELF.

On Saturday evening, March 14, 1863, a week after Huber's harangue, the Knights of Copton met at Mike Hahn's house in the same room where they had met so often before. In view of their experiences the members of the order had grown suspicious by this time and were generally cautious in manner and speech. The act so recently passed by Congress was a stimulus to still greater care to keep improper persons out of hearing when their secret meetings were held.

Hans Prantman had called Hahn's attention to Lovina Hartnagel and Mike had grown a trifle uneasy about that young woman.

"She's Tom Hartnagel's sister," Prantman had said, "and I see her go to the Yankee's house on Sundays oftener than is healthy and you mustn't trust her."

Thus far Hahn had never mistrusted Lovina at all, but he now recollected that her room was directly over the one in which the Knights held their meetings. However, nothing had ever been noticed amiss during the sessions of the lodge. Lovina herself was a model of discreetness. She never mentioned the Knights in her intercourse with the family and seemed innocence and simplicity combined. But on this particular evening when awhile after dark the members began to gather,

Hahn asked his wife whether Lovina was in her room. The reply was that she had gone home and would not return until after church to-morrow.

“You don’t want to take her in, I think,” Mrs. Hahn went on. “We women don’t care a devil about your nonsense and if you catch it sometime, don’t ask us to nurse you. You’d better all go to bed instead of filling the house with mud so that we can’t go to church to-morrow for cleaning it out, you heretics you.”

Notwithstanding this sharp rebuke from his wife — who by the way was own cousin to Lovina’s father, and less than half approved the doings of the Circle — Hahn assured himself that Lovina was gone by taking a lamp and looking through her room. The knot-hole in the floor he did not discover, for the maiden had carefully laid over it the only piece of carpet her humble apartment contained and he returned below well satisfied that so far as the hired girl was concerned the coast was clear.

Now it so happened that Tom Hartnagel had seen his sister during the week when she carried the eggs to Fettig’s. He told her that if the Knights met at Hahn’s on Saturday night she must not fail to be at her post in the room above.

“You know,” said he, “under the new draft law we can catch these copperheads easy, Lovina. If you can hear again what you heard before, when Huber initiates members, it’ll go far towards downing them, and if you ain’t afraid to listen and will afterwards testify if necessary, it may be a big thing for the government.

“I’m not afraid, Tom, at least not,—well not much,” replied Lovina. “I’ve thought that Hahn sometimes looks suspiciously at me lately, and of course if they caught me listening they might hurt me.”

“By Rinaldo Rinaldini!” exclaimed Tom so hastily that Lovina had to check him for fear he might be overheard, “if any of them rebels touches you, Lovina, I’ll make leberwurst out of every one of them!”

“I’ll do it, Tom, if they make me dead,” she said resolutely.

“There’ll be no danger, Lovina, if you make no noise, for if they found you in your room, there would be nothing against you. Once more, and we’ll get Huber where it won’t rain on him and you’ll go home to father’s and get promotion.”

Lovina was on her mettle now, for not only was she a staunch Union girl but above all things she prized her brother’s approbation. Her feminine instinct taught her that her employer was at least a bit suspicious of her and she believed it probable that if a meeting were held at Hahn’s on Saturday night, her bedroom would be examined beforehand. On Friday morning she learned from words dropped in conversation that the meeting would be held there. She flushed a little and Hahn noticed it. She at once concluded that unless she used a little deception she would not succeed in her design and as the cause was good she did not hesitate to employ it. Accordingly she asked permission to go home on Saturday night and after the milking was done she

changed her garments and started away. It was very dark but Lovina was a hardy young woman and did not mind it. She went down the road a few rods, then turned back and entered the house by the front door. The latter was seldom used but she had taken care to unlock it shortly before going away. Had she been a minute sooner, she would have encountered the head of the house returning from her room. Fortune favored her, the hall was dark and in a moment she had tripped noiselessly up the steps and was safe behind her own door. Though all in a tremble of excitement, she silently laughed over her success thus far. By this time the room below her was crowded with men, and when Huber came in he was greeted as one might be on whom the hope of the Nation depended.

Amid the noise incident to his reception Lovina gently removed the carpet from the knot-hole. Laying her head close by the latter, she was able to hear all that was said and done and also now and then to catch a glimpse of those who were immediately below her, without danger of betrayal by the light.

About twenty new members were sworn in and each man paid down his hard-earned dollar. The same questions were asked and the same instructions given as on all former occasions of initiation, followed by the usual grunts of approval and looks of amazement on the part of the initiates. When the ceremony of initiation was over Huber fell to telling of the progress the good work was making in the West—the accessions to the Circle

and the rapid crystallization of the anti-war elements by its means.

“How about them instructions from out there?” interrupted the rude Pfannkuchen. “It’s about time we heard from there.”

“That’s so,” growled Christian Mehlhuber. “It’s time. If the war goes on, this summer we millers must give half our tolls to help feed the niggers, they tell me.”

“It’ll be worse than that,” said Huber. “They’ll quarter soldiers on you and the land will swarm with spies like frogs in Egypt, and the spies will be uglier than the frogs, for these at least couldn’t betray those among whom they came.”

“Sacrament!” snarled Prantman, senior.

“Under the infamous law,” said Huber, “passed in spite of all the mighty efforts of that noble son of liberty, Suydenham E. Ancona”—

“Hurrah for the Ancoony!” shouted Mike Hahn. “Under this awful new draft law,” resumed Huber, “a number of police spies have already been appointed and sent out and one cannot trust even one’s own servants any more.”

“Say, you Hahn,” interrupted Hans Prantman with characteristic Pennsylvania Dutch freedom of manners, “how about that Hartnagel girl?”—Lovina’s heart gave a big leap—“I did see her with that Esel of a brother of hers last Wednesday morning.”

“Oh, she went home to-night and won’t be back till to-morrow,” answered Hahn. Lovina smiled in the dark

but her heart accelerated its speed more and more as this dialogue proceeded.

“That is right,” said Huber. “It’s best nowadays to regard everybody as a spy unless we are quite sure he is all right.—As to the instructions from the West, I believe that when we meet next Saturday night in Prantman’s barn I shall be able to give you news that will make glad the heart of every man who believes that this country is for white men and not for niggers.”

“Hurrah for the Huber!” shouted Hans Prantman.

“And for the Ancoony,” added Hahn enthusiastically.

“And too for the Heister Clymer!” yelled Mehlhuber; “he’s opposed to the *habas corpis*, which means taking the toll from millers, lean on that.”

“Hurrah for Jefferson Davis!” shouted Andrew Pfannkucken and Yonie Zwiwwelberg simultaneously.

“Thank you, friends,” said Huber bowing; “we are all doing the best we can for you. Maybe it might be best not to mention Mr. Davis too loud. Some black-snake might hear you and use it against our noble order, you see. Mr. Ancona will be up here himself before long to address you. He is home from Washington and I saw him to-day. He is tired out from making motions to adjourn and lay on the table and voting. He’s more than a match for old Thad Stevens. He’s strong on motions to adjourn and embarrasses the Radicals bad in that way.”

“Let him grow this way once, we want to hear him,” said Pfannkuchen.

“He’ll come,” replied Huber.—“And now to kill all suspicion I want to appoint a meeting in Prantman’s orchard for next Saturday afternoon at two o’clock if it is not too cold to assemble. We will call it a Union meeting and invite everybody. To interest the people I’ll discuss some question about the conduct of the war and will say something relative to being loyal and true which all Knights will understand. Then at eight o’clock we’ll quietly meet in the barn to initiate some more men who Fettig tells me want to be in the good ranks. And I will now appoint Andrew Pfannkuchen and Peter Prantman to search the barn carefully for spies before the meeting begins, for I’ve been led to believe that on the very night our lodge was organized there somebody outside got our pass-word. This time nobody will.”

“Not handy!” said Pfannkuchen savagely. “If anybody hides there next Saturday night, he’ll get run through.”

“That’s right too,” said the leader. “It’s only self-defence.”

“And if it’s Tom Hartnagel,” cried Pfannkuchen with an oath, “I’ll run him through with a pitch-fork and not only once, but”——

“Do it if you dare!” came in a clear female voice at this point through the knot-hole in the floor above.

“Donnerwetter! what’s that?” exclaimed Pete Prantman springing to his feet. There were many blanched faces. The lodge was betrayed!

“It’s that Hartnagel witch, I tell you,” said Prantman, senior, in a subdued voice.

“See to it quick,” said Huber much excited. Thus exhorted Hahn seized a lamp and hurried into the hall followed by the whole lodge. The front door was wide open and a gust of wind put out his light in a twinkling. To close the door and renew the light consumed several moments — enough to save the listener up stairs.

It need not be said that the words which had startled the Knights fell from the lips of Lovina Hartnagel. In her indignation at Pfannkuchen’s cruel threat against her brother she forgot herself and the note of defiance escaped her. Pete Prantman’s exclamation reminded her instantly of her sad mistake and of the necessity for prompt action if she would escape insult and possibly personal injury. Rising softly to her feet, she went to the window and raised the lower sash as far as it would go. Fortunately the window was not directly over the corresponding one in the room below. She knew, moreover, that there was a pile of wet straw just under, thrown there that very day by the stable boy when he opened the cellar windows. She resolved to risk injury from a high leap rather than trust herself to the fury of the angry Knights. By this time she heard voices in the hall and rapid footsteps ascending the stairs. She crept upon the window-sill and then, hanging by her hands a moment to steady herself, dropped down. She struck the side of the heap of straw and sustained no harm. The great watch-dog in his kennel close by

sprung out fiercely but at once recognized her and went back to his bed. She had barely regained her feet when she heard a crash as of a door and saw a light in her room.

"The window is open and she's gone sure," she heard Hahn say.

"She must be brought back and put under oath. Quick!" said another voice.

"She isn't far yet and Pete and me'll bring her back in a hurry," exclaimed a third, whom she knew to be Pfannkuchen. "I think maybe she's laying below with a broken neck. I hope so anyhow."

The brave girl waited no longer. Dark as it was, her familiarity with the premises enabled her to move through the yard with ease. She made her way to the back gate, intending to run across the fields to her father's house about three quarters of a mile away, but as she passed through the gate some one close by said in a low voice "Ruhig! Lovina, is that you here?" By this time she was thoroughly frightened and believing herself headed off already, gave a little scream.

"Lovina! Don't you know Tom? What is the matter?" said her brother taking the trembling girl in his arms.

"Oh, Tom, Tom, I'm so glad it's you!" she gasped. "But hurry yourself, hurry yourself bad. They're coming to take me back and make me take an oath."

"Who is? Tell me," said Hartnagel hastily.

"Andy Pfannkuchen; and he said he'd run you

through with a fork. Hurry yourself bad! Let's go. See, there comes somebody with a lantern."

"Take you back, Lovina, eh?" said Tom, grinding his teeth. "Hallelujah once more! The big rebel!— Here, Billy," he whispered to Sharp Billy, who was close by, "you stay here with Lovina. I'll be back in half a minute and if any one offers to lay hands on you or her, use that fortune-teller your mam gave you. But don't shoot me by mistake. I'll say 'H. O.' when I come back."

"I'll take care of Lovina, lean now on that," said Billy softly, but with much emphasis. Tom went back into the yard toward the lantern, which flitted hither and thither like a Will-o'-the-wisp. Presently he got in front of Pfannkuchen and the latter stumbled against him.

"Here, Andy, run me through and then take Lovina back, but take this first," and the giant measured his length on the ground with a blow from Hartnagel's fist. The lantern flew across the ground at least ten feet and went out.

"I'll teach you secessionists to make my sister take an oath," he shouted and in a moment had rejoined Lovina and Sharp Billy. A number of Knights, hearing the noise, now came out into the yard. Most of these made off in the dark, evidently believing an attack was about to be made upon the lodge. Tom and his young friend supported Lovina between them, and the three in a short time reached Martin Hartnagel's house.

“You see, Lovina,” said Tom, after they got there, “after I saw you on Wednesday it struck me that I ought to be around Hahn’s place Saturday night and that I should have told you so. I had no chance to tell you afterwards, but Billy and me has been about there since dark. We were close by when you went in at the front door, but couldn’t speak to you, though we knew you was up to something because you used the front door. We was on the other side of the house when you jumped it seems.”

“And Lovina didn’t say how-de-do to me when we met and I won’t look at her the next time we meet,” said Sharp Billy in an injured tone. Everybody regarded that as a pretty good joke and all laughed heartily at it as they sipped hot coffee.

“I’ll tell you one fellow who won’t look at anybody for a week, I think,” said Tom,—“Billy, did you see Andy Pfannkuchen’s lantern fly?”

“Yes, and I thought it was a falling star,” answered Billy.

“They know I heard everything,” said Lovina, “and I’m afraid they’ll do something awful now.”

“Awful, nix!” cried her brother. “As Captain Ruthvon says, the time for fooling with these secessionists is past. They’re getting too numerous and too troublesome and Uncle Sam must deal with them in earnest now.”

Mr. and Mrs. Hartnagel and the rest of the family had all arisen out of bed when Tom and his party came, and

listened with much interest to the account of the night's adventures. The old gentleman was very indignant, though his daughter was none the worse for her leap for liberty. He was an energetic man and not long after this was appointed an enrolling officer under the new law. On Sunday afternoon Tom had an interview with Captain Ruthvon.

"I am sorry for our neighbors," said the latter when Hartnagel had finished his graphic recital of the occurrences of the previous night. "I hoped they would take warning from the past. Do you think, Tom, the lodge here will attempt to meet at Prantman's barn now according to appointment?"

"I really don't know, captain. The best way to find out is for me to hang around Baltzer's this week as much as I can."

"We don't care about the afternoon meeting, Tom. That is only a blind and Philip Huber is too cunning to commit himself rashly in public. The lodge meeting is what we want to get at, and if it's possible we must have one or two uninvited but reliable persons there to hear the proceedings. I think that is all that will be needed now in addition to what we already have to enable the government to spring its steel-trap. I also think I know of one man who will be there, and maybe two."

"I'm one, captain, if you want me, I bet you on it," said Hartnagel heartily.

"I counted on you."

"You can. I know it won't be nice to have a spite-

ful fellow prod around in the hay and straw with a pitch-fork when you're hiding there. But I can work the wind-mill trick on them. They'll never think of looking there." The captain was much amused at the idea and greatly admired the ready tact and blunt manner of his friend.

"It's a great idea," he said, "but Billy must not come near this time; he might spoil everything and get hurt besides."

"Who is the other person, captain, if I might ask, and where'll he hide?"

"Come to our house without fail next Friday night after dark. You will find Sallie there of course, and me, but will also likely see somebody else who will tell you more about this matter."

"I'll be there sure; and, captain," he continued, coming closer to Charles and speaking in a confidential way, "let me say to you that the Yankee's daughter is getting more beautiful every day, and next to Sallie Vonneida she's the sweetest girl in the U. S. of A., and therefore in the whole world!"

"And neither you nor Sallie will be forgotten on your wedding day," responded Captain Ruthvon smiling as Tom Hartnagel left the room.

CHAPTER XLV.

UNCLE SAM PREPARES TO SQUARE THE CIRCLE.

“Squire, what’s this I hear about the Knights being disturbed at a meeting last Saturday night at Mike Hahn’s house?” Doctor Helfer asked Squire Zweispringer on Monday forenoon.

“As near as I can find out Lovina Hartnagel had something to do with it,” answered the squire. “Tom won’t say much about it. He told me to wait a little and I’d see something good for sore eyes.”

“Big Andrew Pfannkuchen came and roused me up early yesterday morning. His face looked like a pillow for size, and like the sky for color, to say nothing of a cut on his left cheek. He told me Prantman’s mule had kicked him. I think he’s been putting in his nose again where he had no business. That’s it.”

The rumor that something unusual had occurred at the last meeting of the lodge was an advertisement for the “Union” rally in Prantman’s orchard on Saturday afternoon. It likewise increased the attendance at the Spring election on Friday, and hence the majority by which Frederick Ruthvon and Squire Zweispringer, who ran on an independent ticket for school director and justice of the peace respectively, were defeated.

Susie Zweispringer and Blanche Chetwynde stood by.

the sitting-room window in the home of the latter on Saturday afternoon.

"There they go, the rebels," said Susie.

"Papa is going too," said Blanche, and he never went to such gatherings here before."

"So is mine," answered Susie; "he wants to hear Ancona, who is to speak again. Papa says a number of the 6th Pa. cavalry from the neighborhood of Frisbie are home on furlough. I do wish they'd get hold of Huber and his Knights just five minutes!" and the tap was once more heard.

A great crowd of men gathered in Prantman's orchard at the hour appointed. The weather was chilly and limestone mud plenty, but these did not hinder people from coming to see Knight Huber and Congressman Ancona and hear their deliverances on the war. If it is asked why Huber held this meeting in the face of recent events, the answer is that he reasoned that to give it up would mean the loss of prestige and that by discussing perfectly legitimate subjects he would convince all spies and informers who might be in the audience that he was a law-abiding citizen who had called the people together in lawful assemblage as guaranteed by the Constitution.

Tom Hartnagel was conspicuous in the throng. He wore a resolute air and his jaws seemed more firmly set than ever. With him was Sharp Billy, whom he insisted on having at the meeting as a sort of defiance to every individual Knight present. In the gathering too

was a stranger. He was dressed in farmers' every-day clothes. He was quite tall and very spare but evidently wiry and lithe as a catamount. His eyes were sharp as a lynx's, and seemed to look in every direction at almost the same moment. He was exceedingly friendly and manifested great interest in the meeting and the community generally. Before the proceedings began, he sauntered up to Huber in the most careless manner and inquired whether he had begun plowing corn-stubble yet. He asked the Knight also concerning the progress of the good cause among the sovereign people, and expressed himself in favor of using every means to resist the tyrants and robbers who were crushing the life out of the tax-payers in order to free a lot of vicious niggers.

"My name is Lewis Waffelfenger," said he. "I'd like to speak to this crowd but I've never done anything but plow and can't talk much. I live beyond the Forge and know that rascal of a Hartnagel standing over there. You'd better look out for him, he's watching you and would put irons on you in a minute if he dared."

Huber now called the meeting to order and made a speech. None better than he knew the meaning and scope of the new Conscript Act and he had diligently considered beforehand how far he might go without making himself liable to its penalties. He discussed high taxes, Lincoln coffee, the removal of Gen. McClellan, and the need of organizing for mutual bene-

fit, like the Odd Fellows and others. He extolled the example set by the township of Copton on the previous day in electing *white* men to office, and the heroism of Suydenham E. Ancona in resisting the Draft Act in Congress at the peril of his life. He eulogized Hi Wambsgans—of whose death from fever news had just been received—as a martyr. For the thousands of brave volunteers in the field and for the sick and wounded in the hospitals, he had no kind word. To questions about the occurrences at Hahn's house he made evasive, facetious replies, and a good many who had never heard him were disappointed with his speech. The fire and energy they had been told of were lacking. They were not aware that the Knight had been robbed of his eloquence by an intuition of the nearness of the great arm. Some of his audience left while he was yet speaking. Lewis Waffelfenger at any rate had disappeared, though not before he had observed Yonie Zwiw-welberg moving about among the men and whispering to this one and that one.

Congressman Ancona had been advertised to address the meeting but for reasons perhaps best known to himself that individual failed to appear. Altogether, the proceedings were counted rather tame. It was yet early when this "Union" meeting came to a close, and as the people had become chilled by the March wind, they quickly left the place.

An hour after night-fall human forms might have been heard stealthily approaching Hans Prantman's

barn and entering, after giving a countersign to pickets placed all about the building at short intervals. Rain began to fall and when the young moon set the darkness became dense. But for some time men continued to come by twos and threes. The barn was lit up dimly with lanterns and a couple of lamps set on a table. At nine o'clock Philip Huber called the Copton lodge of Knights to order. He had determined to hold this meeting in spite of what Lovina Hartnagel might have revealed. In case of trouble she was but one witness, and even she had *seen* no one at the session at Hahn's and would not be able to make any positive statements as to any persons who took part presuming that she was courageous enough to testify ; and he would make sure that no unauthorized persons came near enough to-night to hear lodge secrets. The right of assemblage must be vindicated.

First of all, then, Pete Prantman and Andrew Pfannkuchen proceeded to search the premises for spies. Their task was not a difficult one apparently, for being spring-time, there were comparatively little hay and straw in the barn and consequently but few hiding-places. They used immense pitch-forks in the prosecution of their appointed work. Having gone through the lower part of the barn, they came back and viciously prodded the hay in the left mow and then the bundles of rye-straw in the right as if each bundle held a Lincoln spy and they were running him through. They mounted to the "oberden" but it was empty now and no one was

found there. So the committee announced to Huber that their duty was discharged and that all was well.

Then the proceedings proper began. No less than seventy-nine candidates were initiated and precisely that many additional dollars jingled in the pockets of the chief Knight. The usual questions were asked and the usual instructions given. At each question there were suppressed chuckles under the straw in the right mow, and we may imagine that every letter of the Conscript Act on the statute book at Washington rose from the page and pointed at Philip Huber. After the initiations the leader by request explained the Act more fully and then launched forth into a speech in which he denounced President Lincoln and his cabinet in unmeasured terms. Some members clamored to know about the promised uprising in the West.

“No signal has yet been given,” said Huber in reply, “but the leaven is working. There is discontent among the generals and they are all jealous of each other. Some of them will soon find out that in the day of battle their own troops will not obey them, and who can blame them after the awful and useless slaughter at Fredericksburg?”

“But what’s to be done?” said Hans Prantman. “Are we to sit here until we’re all made dead?”

“Let all members keep well armed and be prepared,” answered the chief. “Don’t talk at all about last Saturday night. I think the girl will be afraid to say much. Terrible times may be close at hand and you

must keep a sharp watch on your Radical neighbors," he added significantly. There being now no more business, the lodge adjourned to meet at Mehlhuber's mill on the following Saturday.

In a few minutes all was silent in the great building. Then there was a rustling in the straw and the tall, thin form of Lewis Waffelfenger gradually rose up. The barn was dark as pitch but the stranger had evidently taken his bearings in the afternoon, for in a short time he was through the little door in the board partition and out on the threshing-floor. Presently the fanning-mill which stood in a niche partitioned off for it in the hay-mow, was shoved to one side a bit and Tom Hartnagel came forth.

"R. D." said he in a low voice.

"H. O.," answered Lewis Waffelfenger.

"Could you hear what the rebels said?" asked Hartnagel.

"Every word," answered the stranger, "and with your testimony and your sister's we have a clear case against Huber at least. But I do say, R. D., that in all my long experience in my business I never felt quite as uncomfortable as I did when that Dutchman walked over me and jammed his pitch-fork with a vicious grunt into the straw all around me. I've got on three coats and wear a heavy steel vest besides. But I knew these wouldn't protect my head and neck and yet I didn't dare stir at all. By swipes! the fellow put the fork right over my neck, a prong on either side. Fortunately my

neck is very thin as you perhaps noticed last evening and the fork was a wide, two-pronged concern it seems and I escaped. But, Jerusalem! my hair stood out so straight from my head that I was afraid it would move the straw and betray me, and I shan't be one bit surprised to find it all turned white when I get to the light. Let's get — sh —! What the deuce was that?"

A sound of suppressed laughter and of shuffling feet had caused them both to start. Waffelfenger drew his pistol and stood ready to use it.

"Halloo!" he softly called.

"Halloo! don't shoot," was the response in a muffled coffin-like voice.

"If that there isn't Sharp Billy, my name isn't R. D.," exclaimed Hartnagel in surprise. "Schinnerhannes will certainly get that boy yet, or else his man's master."

"But who's Sharp Billy?" inquired Waffelfenger somewhat anxiously.

"The smartest boy in Berks county, H. O., and true to the cause. — Where are you, you Deihenker you?" The platform on which Huber had sat, and which was about a foot high, was open at one end, and Sharp Billy crept out from under it.

"H. O., here's a lad who'll some day beat you all to nothing, if he follows your profession, clean down," said Hartnagel,—"You young scamp," he continued, addressing Billy, "didn't I tell you strictly to keep away this time?"

"Why didn't you then tell me to get out when I was

getting under the box?" said Billy as if much offended. "You was behind the wind-mill then already."

"I thought it was one of the secessionists coming in," answered Hartnagel.

"I had hardly got my last foot pulled under the box when Pete and Andy came in with a lantern, and there was an auger hole in one of the boards of the platform and when Huber shuffled around I was awful afraid one of the legs of his chair would get in the hole and he'd tumble down and they'd move the whole thing and catch me!"

"Would have served you right," said Waffelfenger brusquely; "but I want to get a look at a boy with your courage. So let's get out of here, for it's darker than Tophet and we daren't strike a match."

Hartnagel led the way to the back door of the barn. Here they waited and listened a few moments and then went to Frederick Ruthvon's house. Captain Ruthvon was anxiously awaiting their return. Waffelfenger and Hartnagel had both insisted that Sharp Billy, as their companion in the adventures of the evening, must accompany them and get warmed up.

"I want to see this lad more closely," said Waffelfenger. "He's got remarkable nerve."

"Billy," said Captain Ruthvon, "this is Mr. Leonine—Bradley Leonine—of whom you have often heard. He is Uncle Sam's boy and is just now hunting Knights' of the Golden Circle in this part of the country. We can trust a boy like you so far."

“How are you, Billy?” said Leonine — as he must now be called — shaking hands heartily with the boy. “You knew all but my name anyhow just as well as Hartnagel there, and we can trust you, Billy.” Sharp Billy’s ready wit forsook him in the presence of the famous detective of whose prowess he had heard so much. For the moment he could only faintly smile and gaze in admiration.

“Now, Billy, let me tell you one thing in the days of your youth,” Leonine went on as he seated himself. “Never forget it: to make a good soldier or detective you must learn to obey orders to a dot. Next time when Hartnagel tells you what not to do don’t you do it, Billy.”

“Lean on that!” was Billy’s emphatic reply.

“Now, captain, things have turned out pretty satisfactory,” said the detective, “and you must give me a hoist toward Reading to-night yet, — yes, yes, it must be done!” exclaimed he in his sharp, decisive way when Charles began to urge him to remain until morning.

“I’ll take him,” said Sharp Billy eagerly.

“You’re the boy! you can beat Jehu driving any day, I’ll bet,” said Leonine, and after a half hour’s private conference with Captain Ruthvon he drove away with Sharp Billy. The rain continued to fall, but he made his way to the city on foot with a happy heart after the lad had carried him a little over half the distance.

Sharp Billy was prouder of the honor of carrying Bradley Leonine part way home than any subject ever

was of a decoration bestowed on him by his sovereign.

"Tom, he knows much, that there one does," said he to Hartnagel afterwards. "I believe sure that he knows half as much as my mam herself. Why, he talked about Baltimore and Phildelphy and even New York just as me and you would about Womelsdorf or Frisbie or Schnarrafelsscheddel, and when he spoke to me about keeping secrets his eyes shone in the dark like our Gewitter's. My! I wouldn't say anything of what happened in the barn to anybody except my mam for the nicest house in Haltfest;" and next day when he got home footsore and weary he said in impressive tones to his foster-mother: "If that one ever sets up in fortune-telling, mam, I'm afraid he'll take all your custom away."

"All right, my Billy," she responded rather sadly as she stroked his hair; "by that time my own fortune will have been told, I think, and you will lay me down by my father. Now go and sleep awhile, Billy, and may you have a softer pillow and sweeter dreams than your old mam!"

As he ascended the rickety stairs to his little kammer he began to whistle "I won't go home till morning," but almost instantly checked himself, wondering what his mam could mean.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE SQUARING OF THE CIRCLE BEGINS.

On account of the heavily falling rain Philip Huber concluded to remain at Prantman's house until the next morning. The breakfast of which he partook after his arduous labors was rather scanty, for whatever aptitude Hans' wife and daughter may have possessed originally in matters culinary had been sadly dwarfed by the penuriousness of the head of the family. Soon after the meal was over the chief Knight started on his way to Reading, going by Frisbie. Meanwhile some of the members of the 6th Pa. cavalry mentioned by Susie Zweispringer in her conversation with Blanche Chetwynde heard of Huber's speech in the orchard and were exceedingly indignant. They had been made aware also that he was organizing lodges of men bitterly hostile to the cause they represented.

On Sunday morning five or six of these soldiers got together and concluded to ride out in the direction of Hans Prantman's place, and if they came across Huber, give him a lesson that he would not be likely to forget before the day of his death. Stopping at Baltzer's they called for drinks and inquired whether Mr. Huber was there. The landlord looked moodily at them but nevertheless answered them as civilly as was possible for him,

his task being made somewhat easier by the fact that they ordered and paid for second glasses of liquor. Not finding the object of their search here, they left the hotel and galloped off toward the south. On the way they met Doctor Helfer and Davy Rauh Zahn. One of the cavalry-men knew the doctor well.

“ Why, holloa, doctor, by gripes, is that there you ? ” he exclaimed, riding close up to the doctor’s buggy and shaking hands. “ I haven’t seen you since you left old Lancaster.”

“ Ho ! Knuddelbach, is that you ? How goes it ? Glad to see you in that suit, by the great Eulenspiegel ! ” was the doctor’s emphatic greeting.

“ I’m bully, doctor ! But, say ! do you want a case of broken bones ? ”

“ How so ? ”

“ If you do, just tell us boys where to find Philip Huber, by Judas.”

“ Huber ! I’m afraid the rebel has given you the slip this time, for I met him about an hour ago, just as I left Frisbie, and I’ve been in two houses since. He may stop at Schauffler’s tavern awhile though.”

“ That’s dumbness now once,” said Knuddelbach. “ Boys, if we’d stayed at Frisbie, he’d walked right into our hands. — Good-bye, doctor. We’ll see you after we finish up the rebels,” and off they went at break-neck speed in the direction of Frisbie. At every house they passed dogs barked and people came out and looked after them in wonder. When they reached Schauffler’s

they learned to their deep disappointment that Huber had left there nearly an hour before. The bartender said that a young fellow had come to the hotel on horseback and whispered something in Huber's ear, and that Huber thereupon mounted his horse and rode rapidly toward Reading.

"Where is the man who spoke to Huber?" asked Knuddelbach.

"He said he was going to Schmarraffelsscheddel when he left."

"Did you know him!"

"No, but I've seen him. He was a big young fellow."

It was Andrew Pfannkuchen. During the morning he came over from Prantman's, where he now lived, to loaf awhile at "The People's Hotel." When he heard the soldiers ask Dan Baltzer about Huber he instantly surmised their errand. If he could defeat them, he would have some satisfaction for past injuries at any rate and probably be rewarded richly if the Knights prevailed. While the men were drinking he quietly slipped out of the room and hurried to the lower tavern. There he hired a horse and rode by the nearest way to Frisbie, arriving as we have seen in good time to give his chief warning of the presence of enemies.

It was well both for Huber and the soldiers that the former escaped their hands, for it is more than likely that if the Apostle of Golden Circleism had fallen into the power of the exasperated men, his career would have

ended even more abruptly than it finally did. But the toils were around him and he could not escape. He was, as he had informed the Copton lodge, engaged in a foundry in the city of Reading. Thus he lulled suspicion and still had time enough left to gather useful information and attend to all the numerous duties devolving upon him as the head of the Southeastern Pennsylvania branch of the "Sons of Liberty." By Friday, April 3rd, less than two weeks subsequent to the meeting in Prantman's barn, the agents of the government had all their plans perfected, and the great arm that so long had been surely and steadily coming closer to him suddenly fell upon the devoted Knight.

On the morning of that day Philip Huber was employed in superintending some work in the foundry yard. Presently Bradley Leonine, looking pleasant as a great sunflower, came through the large gate into the yard and walked briskly up to him.

"How-de-do, Mr. Huber," said Leonine, extending his hand.

"Good morning," responded Huber taking the proffered member reluctantly. "You have the advantage of me and my hand is rather dirty."

"Oh, a man who has plowed all his life isn't afraid of a little dirt, you know," said the detective smiling archly.

"I remember you now," replied Huber looking sharply at Leonine. "I met you in Hans Prantman's orchard out in Copton, though you were not dressed quite as

you are now. You said your name was Waffelfenger and spoke good words for the cause."

"Certainly I did, always do and will now," said Leonine in his quick way, beckoning Huber aside and pulling a paper from his coat pocket.

"What do you want?" asked the Knight in evident alarm.

"Mr. Huber, my name to-day is Bradley Leonine, and I" —

"Bradley Leonine the detective!" exclaimed Huber, his floridity changing to a sickly pallor. "I have heard more than enough of you — the man who has whipped every man of all the hundreds he's fought with and arrested!"

"Well, I think I'll have to acknowledge the oats," said Leonine with a modest smile. "But now, Mr. Huber, you and I are friends and won't quarrel. I'm an officer in the United States service under the Act of March 3rd, and have here a warrant for your arrest on the charges therein set forth."

"Why that can't be; you heard me speak in the orchard and I said nothing treasonable," said Huber, all his courage oozing out.

"You forget the *evening* meeting," said Leonine proceeding to read his warrant. The unhappy Knight seemed ready to faint.

"No one knows anything" — he began and then stopped.

"I advise you not to talk, Huber. Of course you

will go with me peaceably," said Leonine. Huber cast a glance around him as though contemplating a dash for freedom, but if he had such a thought he relinquished it instantly and submitted to his fate as gracefully as he could. Without speaking to any one he walked away with the officer.

"Freedom is dead now," said he to Leonine on the way down North Sixth Street.

"Oh, no, not that bad, Huber," replied the detective. "She certainly is said to have shrieked powerful when Kosciusko fell, although I wasn't there and can't say for sure just how that was; but in the present case I don't believe she'll even shed a tear. To tell the truth I saw her wink at me as we were leaving the foundry."

Leonine delivered his prisoner into the custody of his chief. His work for that day was however by no means yet ended. In the afternoon he and two deputies were seen driving out into Copton township and making their way to the house of Hans Prantman.

"I think there's our man plowing oats ground," said Leonine to his men, pointing with his whip toward Pete Prantman who was following the plow in the field adjoining the road.

"That's him," said our old friend Elijah Belsnickel. "I know him, and his sister too." Leaving Belsnickel in the wagon, Leonine and the remaining deputy approached Pete. The latter did not see the officers until they were close upon him. When at last he discovered them he turned a dirty ash color, for by a

sort of instinct acquired by the mishaps of the past two years, he divined that the presence of these strangers boded him no good. He recollected Leonine as having been present in the orchard two weeks before, in spite of the change in the officer's raiment.

"How are you, Peter," said Leonine pleasantly, offering his hand.

"Huh?" grunted Pete staring hard but making no motion to shake hands.

"Your name is Peter Prantman, son of Hans Prantman, isn't it?"

"That's so, clean down, but my pap isn't home. He went to Haltfest to get the *Eagle*."

"I have here an invitation for you to go with me to Reading, Peter," said Leonine blandly.

"Huh? I must plow this here oats ground and too I must go to-night to Katrina Galsch's house about something.—Whoa! Haw! Lincoln! you black"——

"Hold on, Peter, she'll wait for you," said Leonine, telling his companion to stop the horses. "Your country calls you now and her call you must heed. You no doubt remember reading in your Fourth Reader about the brave General Putnam in the Revolutionary War, how when he heard of the battle of Lexington he left his plow in the unfinished furrow and went to his country's help. And so you will have to follow his example and come with me." He then explained his errand to Pete and showed his warrant. The fellow nearly sank to the ground while the officer read the

latter and at the close burst into tears. The officers accompanied him to the house and gave him an opportunity to change his clothes. When Margaret Prantman learned what business the men were on she flew at Leonine like a lioness and came very near vanquishing the hitherto unconquered detective, her finger-nails leaving marks on his aquiline nose that lasted for many days. Not until he threatened to arrest her for resisting a United States officer did she desist. She gave her tongue free play, however, and Leonine declares that he never met her equal in the use of *Schimpfworte*.

About the same hours of this same day other officers arrested Doctor Isenhagen of Knocksdehudel township, Benneville Brechtbill of the township of Rattleton, and two others whose names are not remembered at this late day,—all prominent members of the Knights of the Golden Circle.

Early next morning Philip Huber in company with his fellow prisoners was on his way to the city of Philadelphia and, though raised so near the line, Pete Prantman for the first time in his life crossed the borders of his native county. The accused were to have a hearing before the United States Commissioner in Philadelphia and before leaving Reading they employed legal advisers to accompany them and defend them at the hearing.

Philip Huber was much cast down. To say nothing of the vanishing hope of future gains from initiates into the Golden Circle and the prospect of paying his counsel

a large part of his past profits to defend him against the tyrant into whose power he had at last fallen, freedom was shrieking in the townships of Copton, Rattleton and Knocksdehudel, and, with Fort Delaware looming up darkly before him, the chance of soon flying to her relief seemed poor indeed.

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE FAMOUS MARCH OF THE COPTON BRIGADE.

“The King of France went up the hill
With twenty thousand men.”

“They are gone and nobody knows where to,” said Mike Hahn in doleful strain at “The People’s Hotel,” late in the evening of that eventful Friday. “Hans Prantman wasn’t home when Pete was arrested. I went with him to Frisbie and then back and across to Schnarrafelsscheddel, but we couldn’t get any information. Huber and Pete both gone! Thou beloved ground! Who’ll be next? And Pete didn’t do more than some of the rest.”

“I think he talked out too much a little,” said Christopher Stettler. The next day the news of all the arrests became generally known and a cry of indignation was heard. It was not confined to the Knights. Many not connected with them joined in it. Party feeling had run very high for more than a month and now it became more bitter than ever. The epithets “black-snake” and “copperhead” were used freely between partisans and it was all the cooler heads on both sides could do to prevent outbreaks of violence.

Frederick Ruthvon and Jabez Chetwynde and their families — except of course Captain Ruthvon and Clinton Chetwynde — kept close at home and at night the out-

buildings were watched. Against the two exceptions named, together with Tom and Lovina Hartnagel, feeling ran highest, for it was naturally believed that they were the agents through whom the arrests were brought about. Tom — who was now generally known as the “cow-milker” because he did the milking at Chetwynde’s — went home to defend his sister and the family should it become necessary. Clinton returned to the city on Saturday and Captain Ruthvon attended to the mails. On Saturday evening he was obliged to draw his pistol on four men who set upon him as he came out of Fettig’s grocery.

That evening the Copton lodge of Knights held a session in Mehlhuber’s mill. The meeting appointed for the previous Saturday night had not been held, or if so, little was done, for Huber was absent, not daring to venture back so soon after the chase the boys of the 6th Pa. cavalry had given him. The lodge to-night was largely attended. The leading spirits were Hans Prantman and Mike Hahn. Even Christian Mehlhuber was much excited. He fully believed that what he had heard about the tolls was true and that unless something awful — he had not the least idea what — was immediately done, the toll-gatherer would make his appearance.

The Golden Circle was facing a great crisis. Because Huber and the rest were not rescued from the hands of the government, the whole order in Pennsylvania was ruined and liberty was dead. Could this be done by force?

Just now it was impossible. But might not a *show of force* effect their purpose. Huber had spoken much of that. Their leader was imprisoned at Reading no doubt, held by the city authorities. The latter would probably be overawed by a strong demonstration and without the striking of a single blow their chief and fellow-members could be set at liberty. The idea was no sooner broached than it received unanimous approval. It was voted that on Tuesday forenoon of the following week the demonstration should be made.

Should they go armed? Andrew Pfannkuchen and several others were in favor of going heavily armed but this was deemed unwise. It was agreed however, that whoever wished to do so might carry concealed weapons. In the hands of strong men like themselves good stout clubs would probably answer every purpose. Pfannkuchen concurred in this decision with poor grace. He said no execution could be done with clubs.

Who was to be the leader of the expedition, and who should present the demand of the people to the Mayor of Reading for the release of the prisoners? Hans Prantman was at once mentioned, but he was chary of jeopardizing his person and property even for his son's sake, and objected strenuously. But it was urged that as the father of one of the arrested men and one of the oldest members of the lodge, he was the most fitting person to lead. Thus pressed, and reflecting that if they were successful he would likely be in a favorable position to extort a good round sum from Philip Huber for

defraying expenses in Pete's case, he finally consented to march at the head of the column and to act as spokesman when the proper time came.

Who was to go? Should only members of the Circle be invited?

"That would never do, by Schinner," said Mike Hahn. "People would think that Knights only was interested. Let everybody be invited to join. We want a big crowd to go and it'll make more impression if the Mayor thinks it's a popular movement."

"But if we are so public," said Prantman, senior, "the news of our coming will get to Reading ahead of us and the Lincoln soldiers won't let us come in at all." To this the answer was that if they were armed with clubs only, no one could legally prevent them from entering the city. So it was voted that a public meeting be held on Monday night at "The People's Hotel." They could easily manage that its proceedings should be but an echo of their own. How could the meeting be made known? Some one suggested that Mr. Dox might be asked to do this from his pulpit next morning.

"He won't do it," said Prantman. "By my sex, I wish Heimer was our preacher. He'd announce it bad."

"If we all go up in time, we can tell a great many people at church," said Vorsteher Fettig. This was done and on Monday night Baltzer's tavern and the hall above the bar-room were thronged with people from near and far. The meeting was manipulated by members of

Copton lodge and everything shaped itself as anticipated. The enthusiasm was unbounded. Lincoln and his hirelings would be taught a lesson.

On Tuesday morning, April 7th, 1863, the clans gathered in the broad road in front of "The People's Hotel" in Haltfest. The expectation had been entertained that a thousand men would be in line when Prantman should give the command to move. Hence there was great disappointment when on counting it was found that only about three hundred persons had gathered who were willing to follow him to the rescue of the imprisoned Knights. No doubt, however, many would yet fall in line at different points on the way.

They were a motley crowd. Nearly all were farmers and the majority were Knights of the Golden Circle. Some had donned their straw hats already. Here and there a "Sunday" hat might be seen. One young fellow by the name of Donnerwolk who was inclined to be "dudish" actually had on a "high," or "stove pipe," hat, but most wore their every-day slouch hats. There were coats long and coats short, coats brown and coats blue. Cowhide boots garnished the feet of a multitude of the "Brigade" and in nearly every case the trousers were tucked into the boot-tops. Each man bore in his right hand a stout hickory club. Andrew Pfannkuchen slyly exhibited to Mike Hahn the butt of a pistol, a show of confidence which the latter promptly reciprocated in the same way.

"I hope something'll get in our road, Hartnagel for

instance," whispered Andrew. Hahn simply winked in reply.

The morning was cloudy and wet and mud was plenty, but the spirits behind Baltzer's bar helped things amazingly. At eight o'clock Hans Prantman took his place and yelled "Now we go once!" and the famous march of the "Copton Brigade" began.

When the procession passed Doctor Helfer's office a volley of hisses and cries of "Boo!" arose from the ranks. Schnapps, who was lying on the front stoop, was inclined to resent this as an insult to him and his master and ran toward the edge of the moving column barking. This furnished occasion for the first act of violence. Andrew Pfannkuchen drew his weapon and shot the faithful animal through the heart, exclaiming as he did so: — "I'd like to serve your Abolition master the same way." Shouts of approval greeted the cowardly act. Doctor Helfer had deemed it prudent to remain off the street in view of the present mood of the men; but when Davy Rauh Zahn, who stood inside the office and saw the whole transaction, called to him in the back room that Pfannkuchen had shot Schnapps he ran forth into the street hatless and called on the slayer of his dog to stop. But the rescuers were already well toward the lower end of the village and paid no heed to his frantic gesticulations and threats. It was only a dog that was slain but even that had to some extent roused the tiger said to lie dormant in every human heart, and the "Brigade" marched on with firmer tread and more resolute air.

When they arrived at Schauffler's tavern in Frisbie a shout went up — Hurrah for Ancoony! Hurrah for Huber!" — made full-orbed by two or three voices substituting the name of Jeff Davis for those mentioned.

"What is wrong? Where are you going?" asked the landlord in amazement when the marchers crowded into his bar-room.

"Huber is arrested and we're going to bring him home," said John Woods, a school-teacher who had joined the ranks. After encouraging themselves with what Schauffler's bar afforded the host passed on. But it was noticed that the numbers of the rescuers were considerably diminished; some had quietly disappeared and on one pretext and another others dropped out of the ranks between Frisbie and the river. Thus by the time the upper, or Harrisburg, bridge — which spanned the two canals and the Schuylkill river — at the foot of Penn street, Reading, was reached only about one hundred and seventy-five men were in line and when they entered the west end of the covered wooden structure a large proportion of even these elect ones heartily wished they had not left the unfinished furrow to engage in this adventure. Only the thought of vanishing tolls kept Christian Mehlhuber from dropping out at this point. Every man suddenly realized that the undertaking was assuming a serious phase when, the head of the column having reached the middle of the bridge, behold! there came into plain view at the eastern end a cannon, and pointed right at them too!

In those days the home of the Reading Hook and Ladder company was located on Penn Street only a few rods from the entrance to the Harrisburg bridge. In the forenoon of this historic day a number of the members of this useful organization sat in their house pleasantly discussing various topics, among others the probability of renewed efforts on the part of Gen. Lee to break into Pennsylvania. In the midst of the discussion a sound as of many men marching at the far end of the bridge fell on their ears and, full of the subject, without stopping to think of the unlikelihood of such a thing, they concluded that here indeed at their very doors were the ruthless invaders. In the building was an old piece of ordnance — a nine-pounder cannon — that had come down from the Revolutionary period and was occasionally loaded and fired on national festival days. Resolved that the daring enemy should not take the beloved city which they had so often helped to defend against fire without some resistance at least, the brave firemen sprung to the cannon, loaded it, wheeled it to the opening of the bridge and, pointing it so as to sweep the structure, awaited developments.

“They’ve stopped.” said Ben White, one of the Hook and Ladder lads. “I don’t see any bayonets and we’d better wait until they come nearer.”

Alarmed at seeing the cannon, Hans Prantman’s “Sacrament! What’s that there! Hold on once a little!” was hardly needed to make his followers halt very abruptly. They were facing a loaded cannon — some-

thing that but few of the drafted men from Copton township had thus far been called on to do. A hasty consultation was held between Hans Prantman and some of the most prominent men.

“We’d better go back, else we’ll all be made dead,” said an old farmer wearing No. 12 boots.

“Yes, go back, and all be drafted to-morrow,” responded Andrew Pfannkuchen who, having successfully shot a dog, was warlike.

“Hold on once!” exclaimed Mike Hahn. “We’ll fix their old cannon all right. Some of you get on the outside footway on the south side of the bridge and some on the north side, and if they shift the cannon, you can in a moment slip through the openings between the drive and the footways.”

This was done and the cannoniers were foiled completely. The latter did not retreat however but awaited the enemy resolutely. And the enemy came. But they were not Southern veterans — at least not all of them, — for some of the “Brigade” were personally known to the firemen as citizens of Copton township.

“Boys, I’ll stand treat all around,” said Ben White to his fellows when the Coptonites emerged from the bridge, “for I’ve been ox enough to take a parcel of Copton farmers for a regiment of Lee’s vets! Look at the Buschknibbel!* — Hollo, Hahn! What’s wrong? There’s no circus in town to-day and the Berks County fair doesn’t begin until September.”

*Country-lubbers.

“Philip Huber has been arrested and yet others too,” said Hahn, “and we’ve come to see about it — or, well — yes, maybe.”

“Huber!” cried the firemen in chorus. “Why, he and all of them were sent to Philadelphia Saturday morning already.”

“And from what I heard this morning,” added White, “I think he and young Prantman have both been shot by this time.”

“Ach Gott!” exclaimed Hans Prantman turning pale and going up to White. “Peter is my son. Are they shot sure?”

“If they ain’t, they ought to be,” responded the other. “At any rate you won’t find them here. If they ain’t dead, you’ll find them unable to go home with you anyhow.”

“Go away once!” shouted Pfannkuchen; “they’re trying to fool you. Come on!” and in a moment the “Brigade” was in motion again, going up Penn Street. The men kept no step or order but huddled together like a flock of sheep in fear of assault from a dog. To halt at the “Plow and Harrow” hotel on the corner of Third and Penn Streets was a matter of instinct, for it was headquarters for all Copton township. It looked so friendly, did the “*Bluke un’ Ake*.” Quickly the news spread through the city that a “Brigade” of Copton farmers had come in to rescue Huber, the great Golden Circle Knight, and by the time the march was resumed Penn Street was crowded with men, women and children.

“Copperheads! Copton Brigade! Buschknibbel!” shouted the street Arabs.

“Hurrah for the Ancoony!” came from dozens of Copton throats and once a shout for Jeff Davis was heard. Sergeant Thompson stood near the lower one of the two market sheds which then graced Penn Square. Through these sheds the invaders passed and the officer was recognized by Christian Mehlhuber.

“Its our turn to-day once,” said the miller spitefully.

“If I had just twenty-five of our boys here, with orders from the colonel to charge you, we’d soon see whose turn it is, you rebels,” retorted Thompson.

“Twenty-five, sergeant? What would you want with more than ten?” said a comrade by his side.

At Sixth Street the “Brigade” wheeled to the left and made for the Court House on that street a little above Penn. The Mayor of the city, an excellent gentleman, having been apprised of matters, had hurried to the Court House and when the Coptonites reached the gateway to the steps he confronted them. He knew some of them personally and when they halted he asked them very kindly what their desire was. Hans Prantman, hat on head, stepped forward and with a trembling voice asked him whether Philip Huber, Peter Prantman and the other arrested men were in the Berks county prison or in the Reading lock-up. The Mayor assured him they were not.

“They were sent to Philadelphia for a hearing,” said

he. "Glancy Jones and other lawyers have gone with them and I've no doubt they'll get justice."

"You lie!" said Andrew Pfankuchen to the Mayor.

"My friend, I'm telling you the simple truth," answered Mayor Hoyer. "Why should I wish to deceive you? Here is Lawyer Richards, whom you all know, and he'll tell you the same thing."

Thus called upon, John S. Richards, then one of the most eloquent members of the Reading bar, stepped to the front and assured the people that the Mayor had spoken the truth. He admonished them quietly to return home.

"Richards, you are a black Radical," answered Prantman excitedly, "and I wouldn't believe you under oath and we'll go home when we're ready. Sacrament!"

"Maybe you won't," replied Richards.

"Now, my friends, I ask you as good citizens to go home," said the peace-loving Mayor. "If you do not, I cannot answer for the consequences."

The Mayor perceived that if they did not quickly disperse, trouble was close at hand. But Pennsylvania Dutch inertia is hard to overcome. These Coptonites had started out to rescue Huber and could not readily stop. Their heads were filled with an idea and it could not be dispossessed. For Huber they had come and to go home without him and the rest was not to be thought of. The prisoners were here and they must have them. So they consulted together and then Hans Prantman said to Mayor Hoyer:— "We demand the uncon-

ditional surrender of Philip Huber and all the other men arrested last Saturday.”

“And we don’t want our tolls took,” added Mehlhuber.

“But I haven’t got these men and hence cannot release them,” answered the Mayor. “If you are bound to have them and will not believe me, United States Commissioner Olds is the man you want to talk to.”

But the invaders were not convinced. He was the Mayor, and surely he must have control of all matters in the Stadt. The more they talked the more angry they grew, and matters really began to look serious. So did Mayor Hoyer, for the crowd in the streets was every moment becoming denser ; ominous shouts were heard, and with the present state of party feeling the fair fame of the city seemed in danger. However, two elements that the official had left out of his calculation how to preserve the peace were at work and presently solved the knotty problem. One was United States Commissioner Olds, the other the Junior Hose Company. Whilst the former was busy preparing certain papers, the members of the latter were maturing a plan to bring to shame the men who had sympathy only for the South.

The Hose Company’s house was on Washington Street, above Sixth, not far from the Court House. The captain of the company with thirty-eight members behind him proposed to run their hose-carriage to a plug at Court and Sixth Streets, on the very edge of the

“Copton Brigade.” and then, turning the hose upon the latter, give them such a wetting as should speedily cool their ardor for Philip Huber and his co-conspirators. The plan was no sooner formed than its execution was entered on.

“Steady, boys, off!” cried the leader, and at the top of their speed the brave lads rushed down Washington Street, with their carriage. Whirling around the corner into Sixth Street, they bore down upon the city’s invaders, whose attention was at once attracted by the shouts of the firemen and the noise made by the carriage as it bounded over the stony street. Christian Mehlhuber’s sluggish imagination was still occupied with the vision of the cannon at the bridge, and when he saw the hose-carriage coming he was quite sure it was the same awful engine of death that had been pointed at them before.

“Dart kommt en Kanno!” he frantically yelled. “Dart kommt en Kanno! Ach Gott! Hol’s der Teufel! Du lieber Grund!”* The cry was taken up by the entire brigade, and in half a minute Mayor Hoyer and the eloquent Richards were left without an audience. Every one of the rescuers had turned and fled. Through the old market-sheds and on either side, down Penn Square they swarmed — cursing, pushing, crowding — with the terrible vehicle close upon them!

“Let ’em have it!” shouted Ben White, who, standing on the pavement, sought by adding as much as

* “There comes a cannon! There comes a cannon! O Lord! The devil take it! Thou beloved ground!”

possible to the fright of the flying host to recompense himself a little for his blunder at the bridge, of which he would never hear the last.

“Give it to 'em!” yelled the Arabs.

Believing these noises to be the prelude to the roar of the cannon whose hurrying ball would send half of them into eternity, the men of Copton ran as only they run who are escaping from death. The friendly “Plow and Harrow” was only a few blocks away. If they could but reach that, they would surely be safe.

“‘Plow and Harrow,’ ‘Plow and Harrow!’” cried Prantman, senior. The mud flew, and hats flew, and clubs flew. Christian Mehlhuber, who was as slow of foot as in his mental operations, puffed along as fast as he could, but by the time he reached Fifth Street he was unable to go above a walk. He was directly in the way of the Junior lads and in a twinkling he lay sprawling in the street, escaping the wheels of the carriage by a hair's breadth. He gathered himself up and with a bleeding nose hobbled to the sidewalk near Mishler's Hotel.

“Whose turn is it now?” called Sergeant Thompson in a rather uncharitable tone.

“Yours,” replied the miller laconically, limping ahead.

“Hollo, Christ,” said an acquaintance in the crowd jocularly. “How are you?”

“It must be good so,” he responded amid a shout of laughter. “I'll get the plagues, Huber may go into the bushes for all I care, and in my whole life I'll never

come to this here dirty city again!" and unhindered he continued on his way down Penn street wiping his still bleeding member.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

THE SQUARING OF THE CIRCLE COMPLETED.

“The King of France came down the hill,
And ne'er went up again.”

Reaching the “Plow and Harrow,” the discomfited Coptonites rushed pell-mell into the hostelry. Once under its friendly roof, they felt comparatively secure. The deadly cannon no longer pointed at them and the pursuit seemed to have been abandoned. Their courage revived somewhat. Having regained their breath, they began to patronize the bar quite freely. After taking two or three *schmaler* some of the braver spirits talked of returning to the Court House and renewing their demand for the release of the prisoners. Such disdained to keep within doors: they must needs show their courage by going out on the hotel stoop. André Pfannkuchen even ventured down the steps to the sidewalk a moment. But a great mob of angry men, and of women who had husbands and brothers in the army, was rapidly gathering around the hotel. Numbers of soldiers home on furlough were in the throng. These and many others had grown weary of hearing Jeff Davis lauded, and cheers whenever the Union forces sustained a reverse, and resolved that the fair city which had sent

out the first volunteers must be purged at least of the presence of outside sympathizers with the South.

Emboldened by the success of his first trip, Pfannkuchen went down to the pavement a second time. Flushed by the liquor he had drunk, he cried, "Hurrah for the Ancoony! Hurrah for Jefferson Davis!" but hardly were the words out of his mouth before several boys in blue were upon him. Desperately the giant fought but vainly. In two minutes he was bruised and battered from head to foot with fist blows, and when allowed to rise several hearty kicks helped him on as he staggered away in the direction of the Harrisburg bridge. During the excitement incident to this assault Deacon Caspar Fettig came out onto the stoop and said it was too bad to beat a man just for shouting for Jefferson Davis. Instantly he was seized and dragged down to the sidewalk.

"Get down on your knees and cheer for Lincoln, you rebel," said his captors, "else we'll treat you exactly as we did that other Johnny." It was bitter medicine for Fettig but there was no escape. Down on his knees on the hard bricks went he and gave a feeble shout for the hated President. Then he was permitted to get up and a brace of kicks sent him after Pfannkuchen.

By this time Mayor Hoyer arrived from the Court House. He at once ordered the landlord of the "Plow and Harrow" to close the bar-room and the order was promptly obeyed. Matters looked more threatening than ever. The mob had committed its

first acts of violence and its appetite was fast growing. The men of Copton beheld the signs of increasing danger and realized that their safely lay on the west side of the bridge. The east entrance was but three blocks away. Getting together as well as they could, they made a dash for that point followed by the howling, hooting crowd. The bridge was safely reached and, except a few boys, no one followed them beyond. The city was vindicated. That was enough.

Some of the "Brigade" were so intent however on getting out of danger that they were unaware the pursuit had been discontinued, and ran as though the avenger were close upon their heels. Yonie Zwiwwelberg ran six miles without a stop. Hailed and asked the cause of his hurry, he replied puffing and panting, but still continuing his flight: — "To-day — whew! — it will give — it's so hot! — many — dead — people — whew! — in — Reading — they have — my! a cannon — on the — whew! — street!"

Heartily frightened, heartily ashamed, heartily disgusted with all the world and especially with Reading, was this band of men as it straggled homeward. Once beyond Frisbie and in the bounds of Copton township, the pace became slower and they began to look around them to see who was missing. The miller was not there, Andrew Pfankuchen was absent, and Hans Prantman, Mike Hahn and some others were not found. Mehllhuber had sought shelter in a grocery kept by an old friend who at Christian's earnest request hid him among

some boxes and barrels in a back room so "that he might not be made dead." Pfannkuchen went across the bridge and then turned to the left down the road toward the lower, or Lancaster, bridge. He reached his mountain home during the night half dead.

But where were Prantman and Hahn? They both dreaded to make the dash for the bridge, much as boys shrink from making the first plunge into the water when they go swimming on a chilly day. They were just about to leave the hotel though when Elijah Belsnickel accosted the former.

"Mr. Prantman, I am sorry to trouble you again so soon," said the officer, "but I am a deputy marshal of the United States, and have here a warrant for your arrest."

"Huh?" said Prantman, and Belsnickel again explained.

"Is that there now so?" said the ex-spokesman of the "Copton Brigade," experiencing sensations never known before and mentally renouncing and forswearing Golden Circleism forevermore. Speedily the news was borne to the stoop and street that the leader of the Coptonites had been arrested and was even now in the sitting-room of the hotel. The next moment the ominous cry arose from hundreds of throats:—"Kill the Huberite! Hang the copperhead to a lamp-post!" Only a few policemen were in sight and no effort was made to disperse the mob.

No wonder that Prantman and Hahn turned pale as

death and that even the deputy was much alarmed. Instant action was imperative.

“Come with me, Prantman, and if you value your life, hurry,” said Belsnickel.

“Belsnickel, don’t let them make me dead! Hahn, stand by me!” exclaimed Prantman in beseeching tones.

“We have over four squares to go,” continued the deputy. “Whatever happens keep as close to me as you can. You may be of some use to your neighbor, Hahn, and can go along, but you must lock out for yourself. We’re going to United States Commissioner Olds’ office in Penn Street above Sixth, but to get away from that crowd out there we must go around.”

Hahn saw in the beginning that the presence of the officer would probably afford him the best measure of personal safety and was glad to be permitted to go along to the Commissioner’s room. With his prisoner and Hahn Belsnickel hurried out through the back entrance of the hotel, thence across the stable yard—the gates of which fortunately had been closed when the mob began to assemble,—and through the stables into Cherry Alley, now Cherry Street. The latter was deserted and the officer debated a moment whether to go west to Second Street and down to Franklin, or to dash across Third and continue up Cherry Alley to Sixth. The latter was the nearer route and as safe as the other if Third Street could be passed without discovery, and he resolved to take it. But they were seen

before they reached the cover of the alley above Third Street.

“Run now if you never did before,” said the marshal when he heard the cry of the mob. They had the start and the alley hid them from their pursuers a few moments. This fact with his intimate knowledge of the locality enabled the officer to do some effective turning and dodging, and the three arrived safely at Sixth and Penn Streets. From this point to their destination the distance was less than half a block but the foremost of the angry throng were now close upon their heels and their safety was by no means yet assured. Making a supreme effort, the Commissioner’s door was reached just as a tall fellow dressed like a mechanic was about to stop Hans Prantman’s career with a terrific blow of his fist. A sharp turn, and, not a second too soon, they were within the office.

“Prantman, you had better remained at home to-day and sown your oats,” said Commissioner Olds when the door was locked and the farmer sank exhausted into a chair. “It would have been more profitable and less dangerous. Look at that crowd out there and hear them yell! They fill the street clear over to the south pavement. My! if they had got hold of you and Hahn.”

“Lean on that, there would have been nothing but leberwurst!” ejaculated Prantman panting for breath. “Don’t let them in. I’ll give you my biggest pig if you won’t. Our oats is in but Huber and all the Knights

except my Peter may go into the bushes, ain't they may, Hahn ? ”

“ No, Prantman, ” said Olds, “ I won't let them in ; they might upset the spit-box if they got in, and I don't want your pig for keeping them out either. ”

“ You see I did not come down here to ” — Hans began, but Olds stopped him.

“ Now, Prantman, don't talk until you see a lawyer, ” he interposed.

“ Can I have a lawyer ? ” asked the prisoner very eagerly.

“ Why, certainly, half a dozen if you want them. ”

“ Sacrament ! I thought the Lincolnties — oh, my heart hurts me ! — would send me to the army right away. Oh, my heart ! ”

“ Your dear friend Huber has been fooling you — Belsnickel, are they dispersing out there ? — and telling you lies. I only wonder that sensible men like you, who know how to make money and to keep it too, should allow themselves to be deceived by such a shallow rascal as that Huber, ” said the Commissioner.

“ Huber got two dollars out of me and I subscribed three dol ” — Prantman started again.

“ Now wait, ” said the official. “ You'll have a chance to tell all that later. Whom do you want as your lawyer ? ”

“ I want the Ancoony ; he knows more than all the rest except Heimer, ” answered Prantman.

“ Oh, Ancona can't come, he's a Congressman, and

besides he isn't in the city now. He'll be far enough away when his friends are in trouble."

"Send for Glancy Jones then. He knows bad much too." Accordingly Glancy Jones, who had returned from Philadelphia, was notified and in due time presented himself, being however heartily hissed by the crowd that still lingered before the Commissioner's door.

"Mr. Jones," said the Commissioner, "I don't think it will be necessary to send Prantman to Philadelphia, but I'm obliged to put him under heavy bonds so as to keep him from injuring himself and others by talking treason. Belsnickel there is nearly dead now running him off from the mob."

"Yes, and my heart hurts so and my mouth I'll hold and Huber may go to the devil," said Prantman very emphatically. Olds could not help laughing at the earnestness with which his prisoner abjured Philip Huber."

"I think you are cured of Huberism," said he, "but I must have some assurance that you will hereafter keep quiet."

"How much bail do you want?" inquired Prantman's lawyer.

"Ten thousand dollars," answered Olds.

"That is excessive," said the attorney in surprise.

"It will probably be less trouble to find bondsmen in that amount than to stand trial at court," answered the Commissioner somewhat curtly. Jones noticed the

latter's determined manner and after a brief consultation with his client informed Olds they would try to secure the required surety. Hahn was ready to become one of Prantman's bondsmen and next day two more were found. Prantman was then permitted to return home to Copton after having spent a restless night at the "Plow and Harrow" under the surveillance of lynx-eyed Bradley Leonine.

For three months the seats of Vorsteher Prantman and Fettig in the old church were empty, and for many days "The People's Hotel" knew not the more prominent members of the "Copton Brigade." They were ashamed to show themselves even to such as sympathized with them in the object of their historic march, and when at last they ventured forth again they were obliged to put up with much chaffing and joking. But they had learned meekness and bore it all with quiet resignation. Doctor Helfer, Tom Hartnagel and the rest, were very considerate and seldom referred to the misfortunes of the "Brigade" in the hearing of any one whom they knew to have participated in its disastrous campaign. Helfer was indeed extremely angry over the untimely death of poor Schnapps and vowed to Davy Rauh Zahn, (who wept and for a long time refused to be comforted,) that he would do divers dreadful things to Andrew Pfannkuchen; but when he learned how fearfully the latter had been beaten in the misadventure at Reading he relented and regarded the ruffian's debt tolerably well canceled.

Pete Prantman was shortly released from his captivity, being regarded simply as a tool of others. He came home with some slight knowledge of Philadelphia and with somewhat broader ideas of the power of the government. All the other men arrested April 3rd except Philip Huber were likewise discharged. The leader of the Knights was held for trial. Abundant evidence of his guilt was found. Aside from the knowledge which Leonine and the Hartnagels possessed of his unlawful acts, Hans Prantman and Mike Hahn, embittered by what they regarded as duplicity, offered to testify against him. Then truly there was consternation among the Knights of the Golden Circle from Pennsylvania to Indiana. Strenuous efforts were made to suppress their testimony. Many prominent politicians and office-holders feared the consequences of the revelations they might make.

Notwithstanding, at a preliminary hearing held two and a half months after Huber's arrest both Prantman and Hahn swore that Huber had again and again violated the provisions of the Conscript Act of March 3, 1863, relative to resistance of the draft and of officers making it, and gave full particulars. Yet this man was not finally put upon trial. No government on earth ever dealt so leniently as ours with conspirators against its life. It was conscious of its power and believed that in the end lenity would prove the best policy. Finding therefore that Golden Circleism was dead in southeastern Pennsylvania, it deemed it wisest to release

Huber and leave him to his own disgrace. Huber at large would be less dangerous than Huber posing as a martyr in Fort Delaware. He was liberated and the course of the authorities was fully vindicated by the sequel. The Knight kept at home and his tongue lost its eloquence. After some years he went West and there lived in obscurity.

The meeting of the Copton lodge of Knights of the Golden Circle in Christian Mehlhuber's mill on Saturday night, April 4, 1863, was the last one held by the order in that section. Huber's arrest and the ignominious failure of the "Copton Brigade" to rescue him were its death-blow there. Thereafter Lovina Hartnagel might have listened at the knot-hole in the floor of her little room at Hahn's, and her brother and Sharp Billy and Bradley Leonine might have hid in Prantman's barn, but they would not have heard the voices of the Knights breathing defiance to the government. In the course of a short time former members of the Circle vigorously denied that they had ever belonged to it, and more emphatically still that they marched with the "Copton Brigade" on the eventful 7th of April, 1863.

The national government had indeed perfectly solved the problem which hitherto had been almost universally held to be insoluble: — *it had Squared the Circle*. It had found not simply the approximate contents of the Golden Circle of Knights in Pennsylvania, but had gauged them absolutely. They were ignorance, hypoc-

risy and treason. Let us fervently hope that in this country at least these three hateful elements may never again combine to form a Circle.

CHAPTER XLIX.

THE FORTUNES OF A NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS TOLD.

It remains in the concluding chapter of this narrative to follow a little farther some of its characters and reveal their fortunes.

Pete Prantman after his release from confinement, did not venture to come to Haltfest for several months. During that period he did however one evening go in the opposite direction and paid Katrina Galsch a visit. His faith in the fortune-teller's sincerity, if not in her powers, was entirely destroyed by the events of the past six months. He upbraided her with double-dealing and deception, and threatened to prosecute her for procuring money on false pretences. She returned threat for threat and they parted in anger. On Pete's part there was harbored a fixed purpose of revenge for what he imagined his grievous wrongs. While brooding over the matter the thought of the sibyl's treasure insinuated itself. His cogitations soon crystallized into covetousness. He resolved to rob her. He laid his plans with great caution and kept his secret even from his sister Ret. It would seem that he believed Sharp Billy to be away from home on the night when he attempted to carry out his purposes.

He came to Galsch's habitation late at night, his face

blackened and otherwise disguised. The door was locked. Hearing him call she recognized his voice at once though he tried to change it. She told Billy to come down quickly and get into the kammer so that he might hear what Pete wished to say. The latter was hardly admitted before he sprung upon her and proceeded to tie her hands, threatening to kill her unless she revealed the place where she kept her money. Sharp Billy softly emerged from the inner chamber, crept up behind the burglar as he bent over his victim and shot him through the head, killing him instantly. The lad was put on trial for his life, but in spite of the strong pressure brought to bear for his conviction it was so clearly a case of justifiable homicide that he was acquitted after a long and memorable trial.

A month later the fortune-teller was one morning found dead in bed by her ward. The excitement incident to Pete Prantman's attempt at burglary and his tragic death had no doubt hastened her end. Sharp Billy was almost distracted. He ran to Bodie's house to call for help and Bodie sent him after Doctor Helfer. Her sudden death caused much comment. The gossips said her time was no doubt up, and her master, so long her servant, came to claim his own during the night when she was asleep and could not help herself with her holy books. Certainly, the fortune of Katrina Galsch, the fortune-teller of the South Mountain, was told once and forever.

Those who anticipated that immense sums of money

would be found on the premises after her death were disappointed. Only about fifteen hundred dollars were discovered but gossips nevertheless insisted that she must be very rich. Some hinted that Bodie, who was alone with the dead woman until Sharp Billy came with Doctor Helfer, could tell something about the matter if he chose, while others said that no doubt Billy himself had secreted money here and there from time to time under his foster-mother's direction. A will was found by which, after the payment of all her debts and the expenses of a decent funeral, she bequeathed and devised all her property to William Puterberg, otherwise known as William Galsch or Sharp Billy. She likewise asked her heir never to forget his mam and forbade him ever to engage in the business of fortune-telling, witchcraft, or any related occupation, as all these things were a delusion and a snare.

Another document was disclosed among the effects of this woman. It was a confession relative to the murder of Felix Fetzter, James Fetzter's father, in 1851. It was similar to what fell from her lips and those of Hans Prantman during their last interview, related in a previous chapter. In consequence of the discovery of this paper Prantman, senior, was arrested but died very suddenly within an hour after his arrest. The sad death of his son together with the fact that his farm was heavily encumbered because of his connection with Golden Circleism, had aggravated an organic difficulty of the heart, and his apprehension for a crime of which his conscience

pleaded guilty and which had weighed on his mind for years, brought on a crisis in the derangement of the vital organ resulting in sudden death. Once more the heads and tongues of the gossips wagged. It was said that Hans Prantman and Katrina Galsch had employed the same servant and that the latter had simply taken his wages. But Hans had the regulation Pennsylvania Dutch funeral. The Reverend William Heimer preached the sermon and recounted the virtues of the deceased in eloquent language. He refrained however from mentioning that the subject of his eulogy had marched to Reading at the head of the "Copton Brigade." The fear of Commissioner Olds was before his eyes.

On a beautiful June morning Tom Hartnagel and Sallie Vonneida drove to Reading in a carriage and were quietly married. But on their return an innovation was witnessed in the old Ruthvon mansion: — a grand wedding supper was ready in honor of the happy couple. And we may be quite sure that besides Doctor Helfer, Susie Zweispringer, Blanche Chetwynde and other guests, Sharp Billy, dressed in a new suit of clothes, coat and all, was present at the table and that he sat next the groom on the left. Moreover, judging from the many beautiful and useful gifts — *Haussteuer* — received by Tom and his bride on the auspicious occasion, the promise that on their wedding-day they should not be forgotten was fully kept. They did not get the usual Berks County *charivari* though. The feeling against

Tom on the part of many was still so bitter that he and his bride were spared the doubtful compliment.

That evening Frederick Ruthvon said to his wife: — “Maria, I think maybe after all great-grandfather Ruthvon wouldn’t have scolded if he had been here to-day. I felt so good that I think he would have too. It was better than hanging by your hands to the eaves of the barn-roof !”

Within a week after his marriage Tom Hartnagel enlisted for state defence for the second time in response to a call from Governor Curtin of Pennsylvania. Lee was again in the Keystone state and a general engagement between the Union and the Confederate armies seemed imminent.

“I can’t stand this here thing any longer, by Schinnerhannes !” said he to Captain Ruthvon. “The rebels has got to be whipped. Them at home is pretty well used up now and I must help ’tend to them from the South ! Sallie cries over my going but she tells me to go and do my duty, and I’m going.”

In October there was another wedding. It was at the home of Yankee Chetwynde. That the principals were Captain Charles Ruthvon and Blanche Chetwynde need hardly be said. The house was filled with merry guests. The old pastor of the family in Connecticut, the Reverend Haggai Forsythe, was present by special invitation and united the happy couple. There was but one circumstance that threw a shadow over the festivities,—the absence of Clinton Chetwynde. Early in June

already he had been ordered to the front. Mr. Ruthvon and Mr. Chetwynde and their wives exerted themselves to keep the conversation at the bountiful wedding repast from drifting to war matters, but Susie Zweispringer's preoccupied look at intervals showed that whilst she tried hard to be cheerful her thoughts were far away with her absent lover and that her heart was filled with anxiety on his account.

This wedding created much unfavorable comment in the community.

"These Yankee notions is working bad hereabouts," said Ret Prantman, who voiced the general sentiment. "Such extravagance is awful and they'll be as poor as church mice yet. And our old minister wasn't good enough to marry the stuck up things either but they had to go and get a Yankee preacher to come all the way from 'Neticut, and I think once, by my sex, he couldn't do it any better than Dox, and not half as good as Heimer. And then they must take a trip yet, as they call it, and spend money bad. My! Such dumbness!"

"Maria," said Frederick Ruthvon to his wife after the carriage carrying Charles and his bride to the railroad station had disappeared from view, "how happy is this day compared with that awful night when Charlie was"——

"Oh, Fred, say nothing more about it," interrupted his gentle companion. "The dear Lord God has been very good to us and I thank Him for it."

“I knew something good was going to happen,” said Grandmother Ruthvon, who of course was at her grandson’s wedding and had come out into the yard with the rest to see the couple off. “I dreamed last night that a white angel stood at the foot of my bed, and it was just so, my son, the night before I was married to your father. It never fails.” And the old lady went home in a very happy mood.

They may laugh at you who will, grandmother, but we shall not. For we have been taught that the angels are “ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation,” and we are quite sure that the angels were with you when a few months later God summoned you from earth.

Clinton Chetwynde was in the battle of Gettysburg and on the third day distinguished himself by great bravery at the “Bloody Angle,” shortly after which he received a first lieutenant’s commission. He served gallantly to the end of the war and came home as Captain Chetwynde, bearing likewise on his person the scars of several wounds received in battle. When the first June after the war came it brought the day on which he and Susie Zweispringer were made husband and wife, and the Ret Prantman kind was once more scandalized because of the extravagance and Yankee ways that prevailed on the gladsome occasion.

“Susie is a dear child,” said Squire Zweispringer to Doctor Helfer the day before his daughter’s marriage. “She’s the very image of her mother dead and gone

and she shall have everything her own way to-morrow if it costs me a thousand dollars!"

"Ho! you are right, squire," responded the doctor in his old, hearty way, yet with a tinge of sadness in his voice too. "Susie deserves it all and, by the great Eulenspiegel, I wish I was in Clint Chetwynde's shoes. But I was too slow for the young rascal. I'll be at the wedding though and, mark it, you squire you, I'll kiss the bride!"

This resolution the valiant doctor carried out and neither Susie nor her gallant husband objected. He did not remain at Haltfest very long after the close of the war. His sincerity and probity, and his skill in his profession, were recognized and a wider field of usefulness soon opened for him, and to-day he is one of the most prominent physicians in the city of C——. He left Haltfest with much regret and remains a bachelor even until now. He took good care of Davy Rauh Zahn, who is now a rising surgeon and the junior partner in the medical firm of Helfer and Rauh Zahn.

What became of Sharp Billy? Well, in her will his foster-mother elected Doctor Helfer her executor and he discharged the trust faithfully. He took charge of Billy and gave him a good common-school education, and when the lad came of age there were several thousand dollars to his credit to help him start in life, and if you, kind reader, ever visit the township of Copton, you will be told that William Galsch is the contented and respected owner of the finest fruit-farm within its borders.

He says he told his fortune on his farm. And — will you believe it? — though three years older than he, Lovina Hartnagel is his wife! He declares that he always admired her brother Tom above all men and on the night Lovina made her famous leap from Hahn's window he admired him so much that he determined, as he could not be his brother, to be his brother-in-law some day. Presently he found that he admired Lovina even more than Tom and happily they travel the journey of life together.

Adjoining the farm of Sharp Billy — as we still love to call him — is that of Tom Hartnagel and the friendship between the fortune-teller's boy and the ex-soldier grows stronger with the passing years. Tom's oldest son is not as pugnacious as the father used to be, and within a few years he has been ordained a minister.

“William,” said Tom to the young man on the day of the latter's ordination, “proud as me and your mother is of you to-day, if you ever preach doctrine like that there inflated Heimer who I've more than once told you of, we'll disown you as sure as the world stands.”

Bradley Leonine, still living at a vigorous old age, continued to be a terror to evil-doers for many years after the war. Between him and Tom Hartnagel there was great congeniality from their first acquaintance and their regard for each other has not been lessened by time. About once a year there is a jolly gathering at Tom Hartnagel's house and besides Tom and his wife among those present Sharp Billy and Lovina, Bradley

Leonine, Captain Ruthvon and Carl Schlapphammel can always be found. Then the old incidents — the refusal to be initiated, the hidings in the barn, the leap from the window, and many others — are rehearsed, amid laughter on the part of the actors and the admiring wonder of the younger generation present. On these occasions Sharp Billy is not averse to singing some of the old war-songs and ditties and playing his fife, but when it is suggested that the young ones might like to hear the Indian he invariably declares that the savage is dead in earnest and will be heard no more !

The old Ruthvon homestead still remains in the family and is likely so to continue for generations. Charles Ruthvon occupies it and quietly pursues the farmer's peaceful calling, Owing to the wound inflicted by Jake Zellon he was not strong for several years and never returned to the army. Not very long after Huber's arrest he resigned his commission and took charge of his father's farm. Frederick Ruthvon is living with his son, loved and honored by his children and grandchildren. He is more than foreshore years of age now but is yet hale and hearty. Maria Ruthvon was recently laid to rest in the beautiful God's Acre by the old church on the hill, followed to her grave by hundreds of weeping neighbors and friends.

Squire Zweispringer and Jabez Chetwynde have also gone hence after having spent long and useful lives. Doctor Helfer was present at both burials and was deeply affected.

A few years ago while on a vacation the author visited Copton township. He renewed his acquaintance with Captain Ruthvon and from him learned most of these later events in the lives of some of the characters appearing on these pages. Inquiry concerning Catharine elicited the information that she lives at Uwehlan and that her name has long been Catharine Hinton.

In the course of his rambles he came upon the old mill in the defile and found William Rambeutel in full possession. He accepted the proprietor's cordial invitation to dinner and thus became acquainted with Vickey Rambeutel, née Hauser. Considering the way the miller listened to and obeyed his wife's little behests he concluded that if William was master of the mill, Vickey surely was mistress of the house. During the meal Rambeutel stated that Christian Mehlhuber died in 1876, whilst on a visit to the Centennial Exposition, and also mentioned Andrew Pfannkuchen and Hen Weinmiller. After the march of the "Copton Brigade" the former was a helper at "The People's Hotel" a short time, and was known as "the one-eyed hostler," in consequence of having lost an eye in his conflict with the mob in front of the "Plow and Harrow." One night he became involved in a drunken row in which he struck a man a blow that was at first believed to be fatal. He fled and was never heard of again.

"Dan Baltzer died about ten years ago," said Rambeutel. "Then Hen Weinmiller took charge of 'The People's Hotel,' his father helping him to buy the place.

Hen got back from the army without a scratch, but if you want to make him bad cross, just say 'draft' or 'Abe Lincoln' to him!—Ret Prantman? Why, she lives on the old place yet—what is left of it. A good many notes came in after old Hans died and a part of the farm had to be sold. She is the boss and the neighbors says she don't treat her feeble-minded brother Amos good. She is a wrinkled, sour-faced old woman."

Tarrying in Copton over Sunday, the author on the morning of that day went to the old church. Going early, he lingered in the graveyard and with a melancholy interest read the inscriptions on many of the marble slabs. Over a grave in an obscure corner he discovered an humble stone on which was written :

"Here rest the remains of Adam Sparger who lost his life in a noble effort to save a child from drowning, November 11th, 1863. This stone is erected over his ashes by a friend."

While reading this inscription an elderly man approached and abruptly volunteered the information that his name was Jared Katzbauer.

"That's Ad Sparger's grave," said he. "He and water never agreed good and it killed him at last. Doctor Helfer, who is now an awful big doctor they say, got this here grave-stone for him. It was well worth while for such a drunkard."

Perhaps poor Sparger will have some good standing to his account in the Youngest Day after all, Jared. Who knows? Meanwhile be careful and learn charity.

The tolling bell announced that the services were

about to begin. Entering the church, a beautiful building, enlarged and quite different from what it used to be in the war times, was found. The audience, too, had changed. Old faces had disappeared, new faces had come. In Vorsteher Fettig's place sat Carl Schlapphammel with becoming dignity and gravity of manner. Windkasten was not to be seen and the bellows-ropes no longer dangled from the ceiling. Nathan Geiger's seat at the organ was occupied by a stranger, and in the pulpit so long and so acceptably filled by the Reverend Ortho Dox stood a young man. The playing and the singing had improved greatly and the preaching was of a somewhat newer and better type.

When the services were ended the visitor went forth and once more looked over the lovely valley. The passions aroused by war had long been stilled and the thrifty and contented inhabitants were at peace with each other and with all the world. On the following morning he reluctantly bade adieu for a time to this old neighborhood and to his many friends in it. Meanwhile both it and they hold a warm place in his heart.

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