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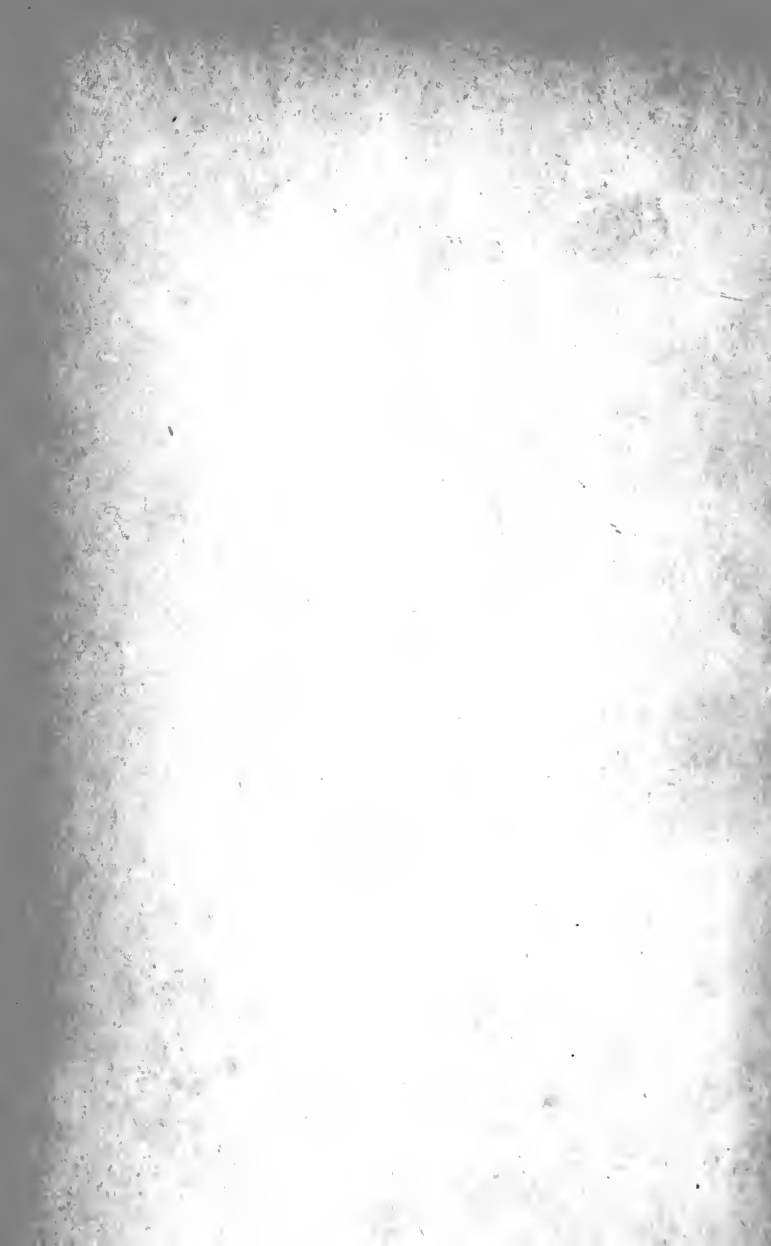
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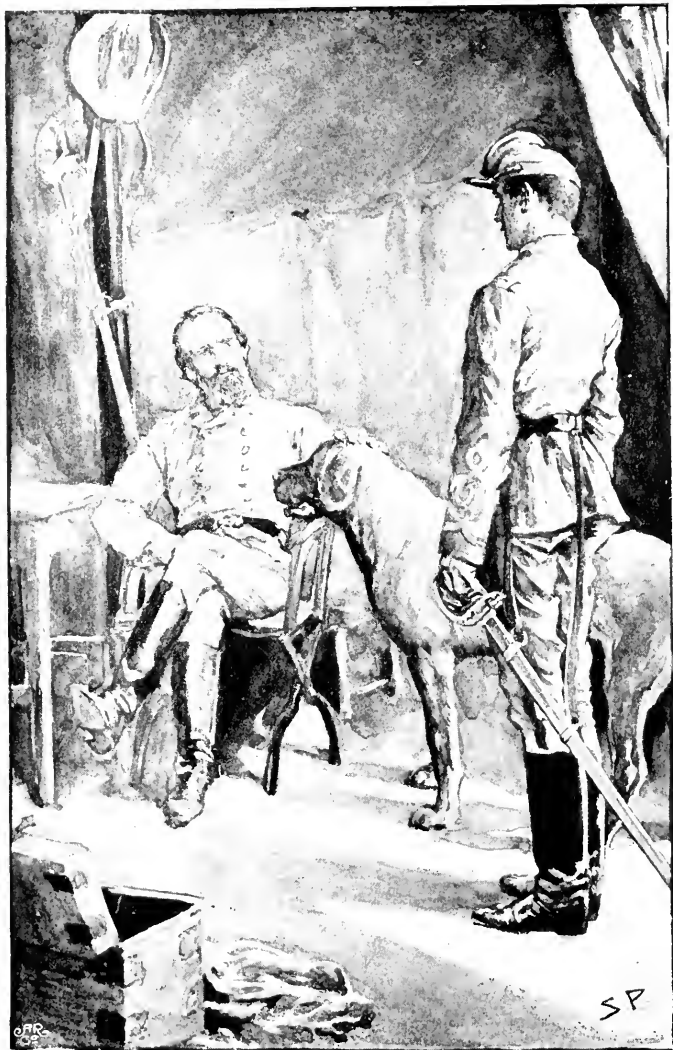
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"YOU ARE A TRUE SPECIMEN OF THE BRITISH MAN,"
SAID GENERAL STONEWALL JACKSON.

FOR LIFE AND LIBERTY

A STORY OF
BATTLE BY LAND AND SEA

BY

GORDON STABLES, M.D., R.N.

Author of "To Greenland and the Pole", "Twixt School and College"
"Westward with Columbus", &c.

WITH EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS BY SIDNEY PAGET
AND A MAP



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FOR LIFE AND LIBERTY.

BOOK I.

THE GATHERING CLOUDS.

CHAPTER I.

REVERIE AND ROMANCE.

THERE is a thread of romance in the warp or weft of nearly every boy's life. I should not care to have a boy as a companion in my summer rambles who did not have that blue vein of "romanticness" winding and curving through all his nature, like the blue line that runs through the best ship's canvas.

Well, I may be wrong, but it has long been my opinion that there can be no true bravery without a little dash of poetry, just to fire the blood. Even savages, in every land in which it has been my lot and luck to travel or sojourn—notably, perhaps, the Indians of the western wilds of America—possess

that quality, and this it is which gives dash and *élan* to their battle charges, and lends a kind of music to their voices as, spear in hand, they rush yelling on to meet their enemies.

Well, if this romance be not present in a boy's life when he is quite young, it will not develop as he gets older, and he will never become a true soldier, that is, a leader of men. There is another species of courage which I have found to be very common among the tribes in Eastern Africa, a courage that is born of a kind of dreamy indifference to life. They fight as fights the bull or the walrus, with a sort of stern stolidity that often leads to victory from its very doggedness.

This kind of pluck is not unknown among the rank and file of the British army, especially the English portion of it; the Celtic divisions, as represented by the Irish and Highland Scottish, having probably more poetical fervour and dash, though, as records can prove, not less staying power. But it is the very composite character of our army which, in my opinion, renders it the best that ever faced a foe or fixed a bayonet. It is an army, too, that has its traditions, and its long and glorious history to cheer it on and steel its heart for action; an army that, well-generalled and properly handled by its officers, is to all intents and purposes invincible.

But now my hero comes upon the boards, and you

will find him no exception to the general rule, for Osmond did possess romance, and a spice of poetry too. Mind you this, though, my hero's romance did not lead him to do anything very ridiculous. He never had any hankering after knight-errantry. It never occurred to him to sally forth from his father's house or hall for the purpose of rescuing distressed damsels from the power of their would-be captors, nor to live all alone, as I knew a boy do once, for a whole week in a ruined castle. Nor did Osmond's poetry find a safety-valve in deluging the table of unhappy editors with silly and unwholesome verses. No, his poetry and romance took quite another turn, and led him to long for travel and adventure.

You will not think this very strange when I tell you where he lived. Imagine to yourself, then, a bonnie glen or valley in the south-west of Yorkshire, with a brawling rivulet winding down through the centre of it, spanned here and there with strong old-fashioned Gothic bridges. Fields at each side surrounded with lordly trees, the black-budded ash, the sturdy oak, the broad-leaved sycamore, and the noble horse-chestnut whose splendid flowers of pink and white seemed to turn all the bees crazy in the merry month of May. Imagine these fields rising up and up, higher and higher, as they get further away from the stream till they end in a ridge of wooded hills.

This sounds romantic, does it not? So does the mention of sturdy old English mansions with chimneys peeping through the trees, that may be seen here and there on the brow of the glen. But low down, and near to the middle of the valley, stands a long row of brick houses. Well, they do not look so bad at a distance, and are quite in keeping with the scenery, but if you enter and walk through this village, romance and poetry take to themselves wings and fly away. The buildings, it is true, are strong and substantial, but the street itself is ruddy and black, the pavements are sadly out of repair, and at every doorway or in the gutters play bare-legged, naked-armed children, whose faces do not appear to have been washed nor their "tousled" hair combed for a month of Bank holidays. But here and there in this long street you cannot help noticing "palaces" about which the less we say the better, for they are devoted to the worship of Bacchus, and the men and women around their corner doors are far indeed from wholesome-looking.

Supposing the season to be summer, we should naturally expect to find the trees all smiling and green in the glad sunshine, and many a lusty trout leaping up here and there in the streamlet. Well, time was when such a state of affairs really existed, but it is not now, because for almost every mansion

there is a mill, and the smoke from the chimneys of these covers all the landscape with a sooty, black veil, while their effluxions poison the once clear stream so that ne'er a trout or minnow can live therein. So the trees, instead of being green and fresh, are grimy and almost brown, and even the grass itself looks dry and harsh.

All these mills may certainly serve to represent a portion of the wealth and riches of old England. I grant you they do, but nevertheless it is not in such a country as this that the goddess Poesy loves to linger.

Yet it was here where our hero Osmond lived at the time our story opens. Up yonder at the Mirfields he had spent most of his life, except just latterly when the greater portion of the year had been devoted to study in the classic old halls of Eton.

Was it any wonder, I ask you, that young Osmond, now in his eighteenth year, and reared among such surroundings, longed at times for travel and wild adventure? These longings were fed by the books he read in his father's well-stored library.

Mirfields stood (and still stands) well up among the rolling woods, higher up indeed than any other house in the valley, and seated at one of the broad windows of the library that overlooked all the wide glen,

Osmond oftentimes of a summer evening, while the sun sank livid or red through the western haze, would indulge in reveries or dreams that were very far from being unpleasant.

Sometimes his little sister Eva would steal in and seat herself quietly on a cushion at his feet. On the thick, old-fashioned carpet her footsteps would not be heard, and her presence for a time, at all events, appeared to be scarcely noticed by her brother.

Far, far beyond the Yorkshire hills—thus at times did Osmond's reverie run—there were oceans and seas on which his gaze had never yet alighted, sleeping blue and peaceful under cloudless skies, or, when wild winds blew, raised into billows, foam-topped and furious, and raced before the tempest's blast. Yet loud though the stormy winds might roar, the breath of the ocean was ever sweet and pure, so that the sea-birds screamed with delight as they were caught up and whirled from wave to wave.

And the countries beyond the seas, what delightful possibilities did they not present to this romantic boy!

The time at which my story begins is after the quelling of the terrible mutiny in India, and in the autumn of the year 1861. In those days there were fewer writers of boys' books than there are now; but on his father's shelves, nevertheless, Osmond found

many a story of travel and adventure that delighted and thrilled him, with the authors of which he went wandering away to far-off lands. He visited regions of lakes and streams and primeval forests in the very centre of Africa, and many an escapade he had among the dark-skinned and implacable savages, while lions not a few fell before the fire of his rifle by woodland and stream. In imagination he chased the fleet giraffe and stalked the lordly elephant through the dells and dingles of sunny Africa. He even engaged in deadly struggles with terrible pythons, and had his frail canoe upset by a huge ungainly hippopotamus in a river pool that was literally alive with horrid crocodiles.

O, a fine thing is a good imagination, I can assure you, reader! And Osmond could enjoy all the fun of a fight with Patagonian savages or with the cannibal canoe Indians of Tierra del Fuego without going a step beyond his father's library.

Yet with all his longing to see life—real life—and partake of wild adventure in foreign lands, Osmond was not a very tall nor even a very resolute lad to look at. For my own part I rather like to have tall and rather handsome heroes in all my stories—men, for instance, like Roualeyn, Gordon Cumming, the lion hunter, or stalwart Donald Dinnie, the athlete. I like such men, and yet I cannot forget that very many

of the world's greatest generals and conquerors have been men of medium stature. Said the poet:—

“Were I as tall as reach the pole,
 Or grasp the ocean with my span,
 I must be measured by my soul;
 The mind's the standard of the man.”

No, Osmond was barely of medium height, but he had a clear complexion of his own, dark blue Yorkshire eyes, and a fearless open and intellectual countenance.

Perhaps Osmond was his mother's favourite, and he spent much of his time in her society. Dick, on the other hand, who was older than Osmond, and his only brother, just as little Eva was his only sister, was always with his father in mine or mill, at church or market, or in the smithy itself. Two “buidly” chieils they were, and “Yorkshire” all over. People who looked after them, as they strode homewards together of an evening, used to say that they looked more like brothers than like father and son.

When I tell you that Mrs. Lloyd herself was a pretty but fragile-like little woman, and that Eva was just a juvenile edition of her mother, I have introduced the whole family to your notice.

Stay a moment, though; there is one other who deserves a passing word, namely Wolf, a splendid specimen of the true-bred British mastiff, grand and beautiful to a degree. Like a true-born Englishman,

Wolf was gentleness and kindness personified where women or children were concerned, but a very demon in fight, and a dog that would be faithful unto death in protecting his master's property or safeguarding his interests.

Eva was very fond and very proud, too, of her clever brother Osmond. Clever to her he undoubtedly seemed. Had he not gained honours at Eton? Could anything be more glorious than that? Then he could write fairy stories and verses also—poetry, Eva called them—which, though they were never published, he used to recite to her in the calm summer's gloaming, causing her to cry one minute, only to burst into peals of merry laughter the next.

Of course Eva loved Dick, her big, big brother also, despite the fact that he always treated her like a child; for when she ran down the avenue of an evening to meet him, he used to pick her up and seat her right on top of his left shoulder and thus march singing to the house with her.

Osmond, on the other hand, treated her as a companion and an equal. In his long walks through the woodlands in summer she was always at one side of him, and Wolf the stately at the other.

It is seldom that mastiffs take to retrievers' or Newfoundlands' work, but Wolf could not only swim well and powerfully, but fetch and carry also. Every

morning after breakfast, when the postman opened the gate at the foot of the lawn, Wolf went bounding off with gladsome sonorous bark to meet him. Then he received the bag, and came trotting back to the house with it. Nor would he deliver it up to anyone except his master—Osmond. So the young man always had the pleasure of sorting out the letters. There generally was one or two for his mother, and a whole batch for his father and for Dick, but occasionally there was one for himself also.

Now, young Osmond had cousins in America—cousins on the Southern side of the great struggle that was just then commencing, and cousins on the Northern side as well.

These cousins, let me tell you, were not much to Dick. He simply owned them, that was all, and if the coming civil war was to affect him in any way, it would be merely from a business standpoint.

But with Osmond, and even with Eva, it was totally different. They constantly corresponded with their cousins far beyond the sea, and the long letters they received almost every month were couched in language casting quite a halo of romance around the land of the greatest republic the world has ever seen.

And so, when one morning Wolf came bounding in as usual with the letter-bag and Osmond found therein a very thick letter with American postage-stamps on



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OSMOND GIVES EVA THE FIRST NEWS OF THE WAR.

it, his face positively glowed with joy and excitement.

He somewhat unceremoniously threw all the other letters on the table in front of his brother Dick, and with a meaning glance to Eva, who immediately followed him, ran off at once to the library.

“Why,” he cried; “why, Eva, what do you think?”

He had read a portion of the letter to himself.

“I don’t know—do tell me.”

“No, guess.”

“I can’t and won’t. Don’t keep me in suspense, Os. I know from your face the letter contains good news.”

“O, it isn’t only good news; it is glorious news! Glorious! Lie down, Wolf; what do you know about it?”

“First and foremost, Cousin William and Cousin Harry have both become soldiers, and neither of them is much older than I am, you know, if any.”

“O, stop, Os, stop, I don’t want you to tell me what is in the letter. That’s not the proper way to do. Just read it out, and Wolf and I will listen.”

“Well, here goes,” said Osmond.

Then he commenced to read.

CHAPTER II.

WRITTEN ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE.

HURRAH! Hurrah! Hurrah!” commenced Osmond, his eyes on his cousin’s letter.

But Eva laughingly interrupted him.

“Why, Os,” she cried, “the letter doesn’t begin like that, I’m sure.”

“Oh, but it does. The three words are written in large letters, and in one line right at the beginning. See for yourself.”

“So they are,” said Eva, laughing.

“‘Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!

“‘My dearest Osmond, likewise Eva, whom I am coming across the herring-pond to marry some of these days after we have finished whipping the Northerns. This is written on the field of battle and on the evening of a great victory. Stay, I declare that I have forgotten to write down the date. It is the 21st of July, 1861, then, a day that will henceforth be known as the glorious 21st.

“‘Every now and then as I write, the joyous shouts of my brother soldiers come pealing on my ear, and I have to leave off for a minute or two just to join them.

“‘Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!

“The wonder is that you haven't heard our shouts of victory, our pæans of triumph, even right away in the middle of dull and drowsy old England.

“N.B. The above, dear Osmond, is a joke; for out here in the sunny south of what was once the one great Republic, but is now virtually two, we all love England. And we sincerely hope and expect that before many weeks are over Great Britain, as you love to be called, will recognize the Confederates as a belligerent power, and who knows but that, after we have whipped the North, and become ourselves a nation, Britain and our new Republic may enter into an alliance, offensive and defensive. Then, Osmond, with you at one side of the Atlantic and us at the other, won't we make the world sit up, just!

“(No, thank you; I don't want any supper. I've had my fill of fighting and glory; but look here, Nathaniel, you may bring me about a quart of coffee. Just set it on the drum yonder. There is a bullet-hole right through the head, so we may as well make a table of it, for it will never sound the assembly again.)

“The above sentence, dear cousins, is spoken to Nat, my soldier-in-attendance—I myself am an officer, and so you'd soon be too, if you were out here. Why don't you come and join us? For honour and glory, you know. We have more than one soldier of fortune

among us who hails from England or Scotland. When I look up I see one now—a right good fellow. He has fought all over the globe, and I believe he bears a charmed life. Oh, can't he fight, just! And so coolly too! To-day, on the plateau, while the battle raged its fiercest, while cannon roared, while rifle volleys seemed to tear the very clouds into tatters, I happened for a second only to glance towards bold M'Clellan's corps. This corps was standing by to resist Keyes' charge up the slope. M'Clellan was standing on its right. He had tucked his drawn sword, which had already drank blood, under his left arm, as if it had been an old umbrella, and was quietly lighting a cigar. But next minute, nay, in less time than that, my Osmond, that sword was once more pointed aloft, and in the direction of the foe.

“‘Give it to 'em, boys,' he shouted. ‘Give 'em fits. Hurrah!’

“‘And Keyes was hurled backwards down the slope, bravely though he and his men had sought to gain the brow of that blood-stained plateau.

“‘And this brave fellow is now making coffee not far from where I write—making good coffee and frying-pan hagglety; and it was he who sent to ask me to come to dinner.

“‘My dear cousins, Osmond and Eva, you will, I am sure, forgive me if I write in a somewhat rambling and

disjointed manner in this letter. There is such a din all round me, and I haven't much light either. But I have far more to tell you than ever I could get into one single letter.

“ ‘William, who is captain of a company, is not far from me at this moment. His men, strangely enough, are nearly all Irishmen. In the field of battle none are more daring, none more steady. Your great poet says, they

‘Move to death with military glee’.

But to see them now, sitting or lying around the camp-fire, or cooking their rations, talking, laughing, singing as merrily as match-girls, you wouldn't think that not many hours ago they were hand to hand in fight with a desperate foe. I'm not sure either, Osmond, that there aren't what you'd call Irish rebels in that merry corps. Now, for instance, that song which yonder half-clad soldier is trolling forth, with manly voice and plenty of brogue, was never written for this war:—

‘Step together, boldly tread,
Firm each foot, erect each head;
Fixed in front be every eye,
Forward at the word

Advance!’”

Just at this portion of the letter Osmond lifted up his eyes. They were sparkling with excitement, and

in strange contrast to those of his sister Eva. There was a look in hers that spoke of wonder as well as sorrow. Eva, you must know, was barely fifteen, very pretty and very merry at most times, but a perfect little woman nevertheless, as most girls are who have no sisters and are the constant companions of their elders. Details of fighting and stories of war had not the same interest for her, therefore, as for her romantic brother. She was of a somewhat practical turn of mind too, so when Osmond now exclaimed with a considerable degree of animation:—

“Oh, Eva, wouldn't I like to be there, just, fighting side by side with cousin Harry in the glorious cause!”

Eva made answer, “But what is the glorious cause? What are they fighting for?”

“Eh! what?” replied Osmond, somewhat taken aback. “Ahem! the cause, did you say? Well, we haven't come to that yet. But you may be sure the cause *is* glorious, else Harry and Will wouldn't fight for it. I'll read on. Let me see, where was I?”

“‘Forward at the word Advance!’” said Eva, prompting him.

“Oh, yes, to be sure. Ahem!”

“‘I daresay, Osmond,’ the letter ran on, ‘you are like me. You don't care a very great deal about politics. Politics is a fine thing, I don't doubt, but I guess it's got to take a back seat as soon as the sword is

drawn, which it very courageously does; for most of the long-jawed buffers you hear shouting at Washington are said to be the biggest cowards out in the smoke of battle, unless they are allowed to get in behind a barricade, and lie face downwards! But, nevertheless, I daresay you would like to know how we, the Confederates, came to draw swords against the Union, and how my brother and I have donned the bonnie gray uniform, and drawn the sword; and how even my dear father, your uncle, though long past sixty, holds a command somewhere in Virginia.

“Well, Cousin Osmond, as far as I can make it out, we are fighting because the Northerners are trying to force upon us such laws as no one with the feelings of a gentleman would consider himself justified in obeying.

“Mind you this, cousin, none of us Southerners wish to uphold slavery in the very worst sense of the word. You may roam through almost all our fair land, and see or hear absolutely nothing of the misery, the moaning, the groaning, the clank of chains, and revolver-like crack of the lash, that Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe makes so much of in her milksop story of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.”

“Oh!” cried Eva, interrupting him, with tears in her eyes; “I love it, Os, I love it, I love it. He mustn't write so about dear Uncle Tom.”

“ So do I, Eva; but let me read on.

“ ‘ All that is moonshine, and even our ministers out here, cousin, tell us, and try to prove it too, that negroes were made and meant to be servants to white men. And they like to serve us too, I can assure you. Oh, dear Osmond, there wasn’t a happier race of blacks in all the States than ours were just before the outbreak of this cruel war. Massa, my father, was all the world to them, and so were the young folks—my brother Will, my sisters, and I. Dear old Auntie Lee, as we called her, and white-haired Uncle Neile, they nursed us when we were mere pickaninnies. We romped and played with their black children; rolled with them on the grass by the old cabin door; fished with them in the runs; hunted the woods with them and the dogs for the ’possums, and helped to eat the ’possums too in the cabin where old Uncle Neile had cooked them. Dear days that are gone, days of auld lang syne! Just because we are a little older, and the war has broken out. Only that and nothing else. But

‘ We hunt no more for the ’possum and the coon
By the meadow, the stream, and the shore.
We dance no more by the glimmer of the moon,
Near the bench by the old cottage door.
The day goes by like a shadow o’er the heart,
With sorrow where all was delight;
For the time has come when the darkies have to part,
Then my old Kentucky home, good-night.’

“‘But, cousin mine, the darkies are not going to part yet. You bet! But even were the tables to be turned, and were the Federals to whip us instead of our whipping them, and were President Lincoln to declare their emancipation, I feel sure we would be none the worse off, for not a black man, woman, or child would leave our plantation.

“‘But it does seem hard that a Southern gentleman should not be allowed to travel with his servants through the Northern States. We all felt the injustice of the laws they have been trying to force on us. We all feel it now, dear Osmond, and that is why we have left the old plantation. We have Davis—dear Jeff we call him—for our President, and we are going to fight for him and freedom as long as there is a shot in the locker or a cartridge left in our belts.

“‘Having drawn the sword, we have thrown away the scabbard, and I guess that means biz. It is sad for those we leave behind on the old plantation, sad for mother and sisters, I mean; but dear mum is, I think, a bit of a Spartan at heart, and although her tears may flow, she would rather we were here on the war-path than living at home in ease and luxury.

“‘The very last song I heard my youngest sister sing, Osmond, was that old Jacobite one with its sad, sweet, but brave air, ‘He’s over the hills that I lo’e weel’, and one verse I thought was so appropriate to

our cause and to our family, I do not wonder that dear Looie's eyes were moist as she sang it.

‘ My father’s gane to fight for him,
 My brithers winna bide at hame.
 My mither greets¹ and prays for them ;
 But ’deed she thinks they’re no to blame.’

“ ‘ Well, Osmond, this is the eve of our first real battle, but not of our first fight; and before I tell you what I know of Bull Run, I must tell you something about Fort Sumter, because the doings there really commenced the war.

“ ‘ Now, I think the capture of this fort was just a real plucky thing. But mind you this, Osmond, we mean to take all the forts and all the coast defences, and we mean to take the completest possession of the Mississippi River, and we mean to capture Washington, ay, and to hold it too, and to dictate our terms of peace to the Federals from the capital itself. You’ll see. But now about Fort Sumter.’ ”

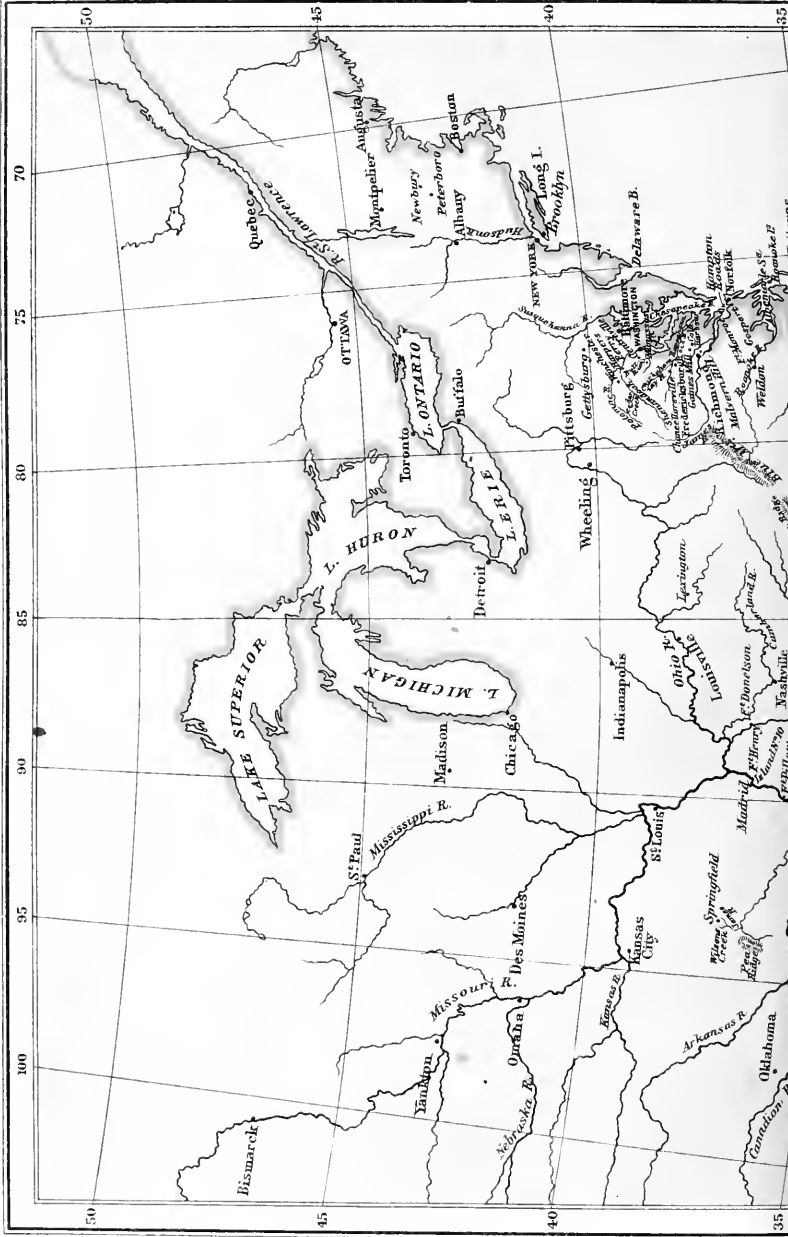
CHAPTER III.

FORT SUMTER FALLS.

EV A crept a little closer to the side of her favourite brother, so that she could lean one arm on his

¹Weeps.





knee and look up into his face as he read the rest of Cousin Henry's letter.

Wolf, too, appeared to be interested, for he sat at Osmond's left side, and rested his enormous head on his other knee. Thus encouraged, Os read on.

“I am sure, my dear cousin, that you don't know a great deal about the geography of the American States. If you do you must be a great exception to the general run of young fellows of your age. Therefore, I beseech you to possess yourself of a good skeleton map as soon as you can. Because you will then be able to follow the fighting¹. I say a skeleton map, because most of what are called maps are so stuffed with unimportant villages and towns that looking for the place you want is just like searching for a bit of orange-peel in a well-made and rich Christmas pudding.’

“Give me that big atlas,” said Osmond to his sister.

Eva rose and found it, and staggered back to the window with it, and Os opened it at North America, supporting its weight on Wolf's great head.

Wolf didn't seem to care a bit.

“‘Now, Os,’ the letter continued, ‘I shall suppose that you have a map before you. Well, you will easily find New York Bay. If, then, your eye goes

¹ The author has done his best to supply the reader with a map of this sort, in which he places *only* the towns, rivers, &c., that are needed to explain the narrative, and nothing that may tend to confuse the eye.

southward past Sandy Hook and Monmouth, you will soon come to the great Bay of Delaware. Southwards still, and you will round Cape Charles and find yourself in the wonderful Bay of Chesapeake. You will note that it goes stretching away almost directly north ever so far. Towards its head you will find the City of Baltimore, and you will be surprised to discover that Chesapeake here lies inland from the Bay of Delaware, the State of that name lying between lower down—south, I mean. You will please observe that the Potomac river branches off to the left, going onwards up to Washington itself. (The word Potomac has the accent on the second *o*, not the first. It isn't pronounced *Potomac*, as you Britishers call the famous river, but *Potohmac*.) Well, Osmond, dear coz, if you look in through the State of Virginia on the east—and you may as well do so now as at any other time—you can't fail to find Richmond. Spot that, please, because that is the Confederate capital. There is Fredericksburg also on the Rappahannock, and the Shenandoah River and the Blue Ridge Mountains. Better keep those in mind, because if ever the Federals get that way they're going to find some fighting in front of them; and I guess they'll leave their scalps lying about in these districts.

“But bring your gaze seawards again past Fortress Monroe and Cape Henry, and south away past Albe-

marle Sound, Wilmington, in South Carolina, and then Charleston Bay or harbour.

“‘What a long way south from Washington,’ you will naturally observe. ‘What right had the Northern States with a fort down there anyhow?’ Well, that is what I want to know.

“‘South Carolina, you must know, Osmond, has been called the Game-cock State because it seceded so boldly in the month of December, and by its courageous conduct forced the other and wavering States to follow its example.

“‘Well, the State of South Carolina having ‘seceshed’, as the Feds term it, the ‘seceshers’ naturally expected that the Northern forces would clear out of the forts bag and baggage, to prevent a collision with the Southern troops.

“‘But they were disappointed.

“‘You see Major Anderson was commander of the Federal forces at Charleston, and had had his headquarters at Fort Moultrie, but he now transferred his soldiers and his command to Fort Sumter, which he rightly considered a far stronger place.

“‘Well, the South Carolina folks, through their Governor, remonstrated with the Northern Government at Washington—Buchanan then being President—but in vain.

“‘By and by Lincoln came into power, and once

more delegates went to Washington, asking for a peaceable separation of the seceding States, and the removal of Federal garrisons from Fort Sumter and Fort Pickens in Florida. These two places of all the strongholds on the Confederate sea-board alone displayed the stars and stripes.

“‘Lincoln did not see his way to accede to the proposal, but the matter hung fire for a time, and the Carolinians had to subsist upon hope: not a very satisfying dish, I may tell you.

“‘Meanwhile, somewhat *sub rosa*, an expedition was being fitted out for the relief of Fort Sumter.

“‘You may wonder how I found all this out, Osmond. Well, it is only lately I have done so, and the birdie who told me may have been one of our prisoners, or I *may* have gained the information in a letter from our cousins Tom, John, and Charlie, who are fighting on the Federal side, you know. I am not going to tell you, Os, but if you ever come out here you will know all and more. As early as January a steamer called the *Star of the West*, under command of Captain John M’Gowan, had been despatched with provisions and men to relieve the garrison of Fort Sumter, but the batteries of the Confederates opened upon him, and he was obliged to retire.

“‘But now, on the 1st of April, President Lincoln determined to succour the fort at all hazards. Charles-

ton should no longer be a menace to the States of the Union. So he commissioned the big frigate *Powhattan* for service. She was then lying at New York. Captain Fox, a thorough navy sailor, was to have charge of the relief, and besides, was to command several other craft. They were a nondescript kind of lot, all of different sizes, and, singularly enough, they didn't all sail at the same time for the rendezvous. The *Powhattan* started about the 6th, and the others followed day after day up to the 10th, Captain Fox himself taking passage in the *Bristol*.

“Now the failure of this expedition and the consequent loss to the Federals of Fort Sumter seems to have been owing to treachery, or to some stupid mistake. A heavy gale of wind arose, but even this would hardly have prevented the relief of the fort and its half-starving garrison had the *Powhattan* arrived in time with the men or stores, and paraphernalia generally.

“All honour be given to a brave enemy, and I must say that Captain Fox did all in his power to assist the garrison, but when he arrived and got the rest of his fleet together he found that the battle was already begun.

“The facts are these, dear cousin, the President—Davis, I mean, that is our dear king, you know—got an inkling that Fox's expedition was on the wing and

hurrying south to the garrison's relief, so he at once sent General Beauregard, a well-known engineer, to take command of the batteries of Charleston.

“Finding them strong enough for anything, this brave soldier at once sent a message to Major Anderson, demanding his surrender. This was on the 11th of April, and the invitation to give up the fort was promptly but politely declined. At midnight an ultimatum was despatched, but this was also refused, and so at day-dawn of April 12th the shore forts opened fire on Sumter.

“Many a time the windows of Charleston had rattled to the fire of mimic warfare, but all was now deadly earnest, for the muttering thunder of those great guns proclaimed the outbreak of the terrible storm of civil war, that has now burst in such fury over our dear native land.

“The fort replied on both sides to the guns of the Confederate batteries, and shot and shells burst, and screamed, and roared over the water, the battle being described as furious.

“It was a bad time for the Federals in that fort, Osmond, for more than once it was seen to be on fire, and it turned out afterwards that although the garrison were short of ammunition, they were so afraid of an explosion, that they threw much of what they had into the water.

“Well, all that day the battle raged, and though peace reigned when darkness fell, the bombardment was recommenced at daybreak with redoubled fury.

“All this could only have one ending; and so, having done his duty, like the brave soldier he undoubtedly was, Major Anderson surrendered. But not before the stars and stripes were actually shot away amidst a perfect storm of shot and shell.

“Several times, I am told, Captain Fox, who must have spent a terribly anxious time, attempted to come in upon the 13th, but a heavy sea ran, the fog was rather thick, and the forts were all enveloped in a cloud of dense smoke. Moreover, without the *Powhattan* frigate he could do absolutely nothing.

“So on the 14th, the day after the surrender, Major Anderson and his garrison embarked on board the *Baltic* and sailed away to the north, while our fine fellows took possession of the fort, the first-fruits of victory in what is going to be a glorious though terrible war.

“So fell Fort Sumter, Cousin Osmond, and having told you so much, I shall re-trim my lamp and drink my coffee.

“That coffee was good, Cousin. Ah, there is nothing like war and the excitement of battle for giving one an appetite!

“ Well, Os, as soon as the news of the fall of the fort got up north, I am told that the *furor* it excited was simply immense. War! war! war! was the cry. War to the knife! War to avenge the insult to the brave old flag that had been so ruthlessly dragged in the dust!

“ War, yes; and they are going to have it too, more than they may care for. But I was told also that the enthusiasm of the Federals was now really very great, and that each Northern state vied with the other as to which should send the largest number of recruits, and send them most quickly. President Lincoln, it is said, only called for seventy-five thousand, but over one hundred and ten thousand presented themselves for enrolment!

“ Probably the next bloodshed in this war—though it could not be called a battle—took place in Baltimore.

“ This happened only six days after the fall of Fort Sumter. The first division of volunteers was hurrying from Massachusetts in the far north to the Federal capital, and were marching through Baltimore streets towards the station for Washington, when they were attacked by a furious mob. They fired, and then the riot became a terrible pandemonium. The Federals had to fight their way to the station, and even after they had embarked they fired upon the mob on the platform from the carriage windows. The mob replied

with pluck and determination, riddling the carriages with bullets, and killing or wounding not a few of the Federal volunteers. But the train got steam up at last, and comparative peace succeeded her departure.

“‘Baltimore, you know, Osmond, or will know if you glance at your map, is a charming city in Maryland, and it was thought for a time that it would join with us.

“‘Kentucky, you will note, lies to the west and a trifle to the south of Virginia, part of which country is on the sea-board, so to speak. The governor of Kentucky has done a very foolish thing, as you should know. In this state the younger men are wild for war, but the older and more sedate prefer to remain in the union. And so the governor has declared the state neutral, and warns us that we must not fight in his sacred territory. Just as if any state so situated could be neutral in a great struggle such as this is going to be.

“‘But we shall soon see.’

CHAPTER IV.

A BRAVE BUT RAGGED REGIMENT.

WELL, Osmond,’ the letter went on, ‘calling for recruits is a game that two can play at, and our brave and kindly Jeff Davis has not been behind-

hand. He, too, called for recruits, and so quickly was he answered, that very soon indeed this President had an army fit to cope against any force the Northerners were likely to bring.

“I’ll never forget the excitement in the little town that lay not far from our plantation on the north-western borders of South Carolina, ay, and the enthusiasm on the plantation itself, when the order for recruiting reached us. I believe that father, Will, and I were among the very first to join. Yes, we would have to leave our dear old home behind us, leave mother and sisters in sorrow and tears, but we were going to fight for our native state, fight for our freedom, and, indeed, for our very lives, and the lives of all that were dear to us. We would not be away long, we told those dear ones. Victory would soon be ours, for against us no enemy could possibly make a long stand.

“The slaves, we knew, would remain loyal whatever happened, and there was big, brawny John M’Donald, our manager, whom they looked up to as a kind of second master.

“I’ll be a father to them all,’ he told us as he shook hands. ‘And I only wish,’ he added, ‘I could gang wi’ ye mysel’. Man, boys! my very fingers are itchin’ to get a grip o’ some o’ they Feds.’

“And so we left. I say nothing more about the

parting, the kisses, the prayers, the tears. It is all too recent, and tends to unman one.

“The streets of our town, when we reached it, were filled with the populace, and they seemed to have taken leave of their senses.

“They were shouting, singing, waving their arms aloft, shaking hands, ay, and weeping in their very excitement. But, Osmond, I am proud and happy to tell you that I scarcely saw a single young fellow under the influence of drink.

“It was night when we joined the depôt. We knew the commandant, and he did all he could for our comfort. Our beds were not beds of down, however, nor have they been since, nor will they be until we whip the Federals finally, and make peace in Washington.

“We were paraded next day, and drill was commenced in earnest. Well, it was somewhat of a rough parade. Accustomed as you are, my dear cousin, to your faultlessly dressed regiments, with snowy belts, glittering accoutrements, and coats of scarlet, you would have stood aghast on first beholding our parade.

“We had arms served out to us that first day, but it was more for fashion's sake than anything else. It would have been better to serve out jackets, shirts, hats, or shoes. But then there weren't any, you know; and most unkempt, uncouth tatterdemalions some of

us were. But one thing would have pleased you—the look of determination and defiance on every face.

“After we had been put through our preliminary facings, the commandant, a gray-bearded old soldier, made a kind of a speech, as he puffed away at a big cigar.

“‘Boys,’ he said, ‘I guess we ain’t a great deal to look at, just yet. But such as we are, President Jeff Davis is welcome to us. We ain’t much to look at, but we’ll trim down, you bet. We’ve got to march in a few days’ time to the north and the east, and by and by we’ve got to meet the Yankees. They call us Rebs. Wall, I guess we’ll show ’em what Rebs can do. We’ve got to beat ’em, we’ve got to lick ’em, we’ve got to whip ’em into teetotal skirrie-mush, and if there’s a single man in this here regiment that feels he hasn’t the heart to take part in the whipping-match, why, let him fall out. What! nobody falls out? Boys, we’re all going to fight. Hurrah!’

“The commandant waved his cap aloft, and such a wild cheer rent the sky as I never heard before, and haven’t since. The street urchins joined in, and the girls too, yes, and the very babies in arms waved their wee red chubby fists, and joined the wild shout and laughed and crowed, as if it were the best fun imaginable.

“Well, to make a long story short, father and Will

and I got each the rank of officer, and in a few days' time we were *en route* for the neighbourhood of Richmond.

“Our ranks were swollen as we marched onwards, and very soon we were a very respectable little army—in numbers, that is, and, I may add, in spirit and in daring as well.

“I do not mean to say, Osmond, that every man among us was imbued with a purely patriotic spirit. Far from it. There were in our ranks both good and bad. There were spirit-drinking ne'er-do-weels who had joined the service by way of a change, or because they were stone-broke and hadn't a cent wherewith to bless themselves; there were tramps by the dozen, the wretched and idle castaways of the world, who had joined us as a mere matter of business and speculation, that is, with a lively eye to booty; there were men who had quarrelled with their wives—poor fellows!—and boys who had been jilted by their sweethearts—these last were fond of meandering around the camp alone after nightfall and quoting poetry by the furlong—and last, if not least, there were desperadoes from Texas, from Mexico, and the far south generally, swaggerers as a rule these were, but fond of fighting, even for fighting's sake.

“On the whole, however, I think that in our regiment the good prevailed.

“‘I must say that we all set ourselves heart and soul to learn the drill, and all the outs and ins of camp-life as soon as we possibly could, and the first time we were inspected by a real live general he expressed himself very pleased with our appearance and, as he phrased it, ‘our soldierly bearing’. I know that these last words made our rank and file proud. I looked along my company as the general uttered them, and I was proud to see—yes, proud is the word, my boy—to see every man, mechanically, as it were, brace himself up more squarely, while every eye grew brighter and every brow was lowered, as if each man had registered a vow there and then to do or die in the glorious cause.

“‘We had not been a week on the road before stragglers began to drop in from the north. Mostly deserters these were from the Federal ranks. Now deserters as a rule receive no very gushing welcome from the regiments they honour with a visit. But these men were not ordinary deserters. They really were Southerners at heart, who had enlisted in Federal regiments, but had taken the earliest opportunity of getting away.

“‘But they brought with them some ugly stories of the Northern soldiery, which I am sorry to say, Osmond, were greedily listened to and unhesitatingly credited.

“‘The Federals, they said, looked forward to victory.

They believed that we could never fight, never stand before them; that we possessed no more courage than as many boarding-school girls; that we were mere butter-and-bread soldiers, and would fly before the Northern army. And, said the new-comers, the determination of the Northern soldiers, officers as well as men, is to plunder, to slay, to sack, and to burn. They had only one motto, and that was:—

‘Booty and Beauty!’

“‘This is horrible, but I for one do not believe it, neither does Will; and, besides, I am sure that our dear cousins in Northern Ohio, Tom and John and Charlie, would never fight side by side with men who had such a dreadful motto as that.

“‘But oh, dear Osmond, does not civil war seem to be a terrible thing, when one has to draw the sword against one’s own flesh and blood? Soon may it end, I say. That is, you know, the sooner we beat the Feds out of their skins the better.

“‘Well, dear boy, if I have given you to believe that to-day’s battle is the first real fight, I think I am right, but more than a month ago the deserters told us that success had already crowned the arms of our foes.

“‘This is the news they brought.

“‘Our people have been obliged to abandon the

attempt they at first considered feasible,—that is, of marching right into, and seizing Washington.

“Secondly, on the south bank of the Potomac, and about fifty miles north-west of Washington, lies, or rather stood, the arsenal of Harper’s Ferry. The Virginians—our fellows—attacked this place, and the officer in charge set fire to it; but after despoiling it, the Southerners abandoned it to the Federals. Folly!

“Thirdly, although the Virginians seized the great navy yard of Gosport near Norfolk they, curiously enough, left Fortress Monroe on Chesapeake Bay in the possession of the enemy. This fortress would have been, if held by us, of the greatest advantage, strategically considered. *N.B.*—You will note, my cousin, that I am quite a soldier already. No one but a soldier could use such a scientific phrase as that last—‘strategically considered’.

“But, joking apart, Os, the capture of the navy yard is something immense. It contains foundries, docks, ship-building yards, and a huge arsenal. About a million pounds of gunpowder have fallen into our hands, five hundred Dahlgren guns, and any quantity of shot and shell. Hurrah! for our brave Virginians.

“Fourthly, if the deserters are to be believed, General M’Dowell, the commander-in-chief of the Federal forces, has been driving our troops like as many sheep right before him down south.

“The last news brought by a runaway would have been funny if it had not been quite so sad. I give it to you for what it is worth, Osmond, and I myself am willing to believe just half of it—the second half, mind you. But first I want you to write three names upon the tablets of your memory, because you’ll hear of the men again—

General M’Clellan.

General Rosecrans.

General Butler.

“Well, the first half of the story is this:—The Generals M’Clellan and Rosecrans, about the first week in July, defeated the Confederates, that is our side, at Rich Mountain, killed two hundred, and captured seven guns, and a thousand prisoners. But the deserter who told us this, and said that he himself was in the fight, told us also that the Federal forces were as ten to one, so the North has not much to boast of, even if it be true.

“The second half of the story is the one generally credited by us, and it is just here where the fun comes in. For there was lying within ten miles of Hampton—the headquarters of the Federals—a Confederate camp of about a thousand men. On the 9th of June, bold General Butler determined to attack this camp. So he issued from Fortress Monroe at night in two strong divisions. These two took different routes in

order to surprise the 'Rebs' from two directions, and so confuse and confound them.

“‘As ill-luck (for Butler) would have it, neither of the two divisions found the 'Rebs'. But they found each other, and, forgetting the watchword, naturally supposed they had met the foe. So at it they went, hammer and tongs, and many were killed on either side before the mistake was discovered. The pity is, Osmond, they did not annihilate one another like the Kilkenny cats.

“‘After the mistake was discovered they combined, and, coming upon the position of the Confederate camp, attacked in force, but the Federal Major Winthrop, while gallantly leading the charge, was shot dead by a Confederate drummer-boy, and soon after this the Federals were in full flight back to their fortress, badly beaten and wholly demoralized.

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“‘And now, Osmond, we come right away to the battle at Bull Run. And I am just going to tell you all I know about it straight away. But this, mind you, isn't a very great deal, because no one can be in two places at the same time, and one can't describe much more than one actually sees.

“‘But before beginning this I happened to saunter towards our General Beauregard's headquarters. He was writing a despatch on the top of a drum, but gave

me a kindly welcome, and told quite a deal that I didn't know, and this information I am now going to impart to you."

CHAPTER V.

THE BATTLE OF BULL RUN.

WAIT a moment, Osmond," cried Eva, her eyes sparkling with a kind of merry mischief.

She rose as she spoke, and going to the sofa, picked up a newspaper, with which she returned to her seat by her brother's knee.

"Can this be true?" she said, smiling.

"Read it, Eva, and I'll tell you."

"It is printed in the *Daily Tickler*, anyhow, and is headed:—'The Battle of Bull Run', and runs as follows:—'This terrific fight between the almighty Federal forces and the tatterdemalion legions of the sunny South might better have been called the battle of cows' run. At first both armies appeared equally surprised that they had met at all. Then it seemed to occur to them that they had met to fight. So they went for each other with all the vim and pluck of a pair of pug dogs. By all accounts the fighting was awful, for they kept on from morn till dewy eve, with the splendid result that no less than five were killed

and nine wounded. But for the presence of some Scotch and Irish, it is stated that no one would have been either killed or wounded. At sunset, both armies were in full retreat in opposite directions. The consequence is that both claim the victory, and both are welcome to it; but at this rate the Civil 'War' must last for a thousand years at least, then the millennium will come.'"

"Well," said Osmond, laughing, "the *Daily Tickler* goes in for being a funny pennyworth, and no doubt an occasional joke improves a paper of this sort; but let me read more of Harry's letter."

"Go on, then," said Eva.

"'I fear,' continues Cousin Harry, 'that you are already heartily tired of my long letter, but I'll be as brief as I can. One's first battle, you know, must always be considered an event in one's life, like a girl's first ball.

"'I daresay, Osmond, I must tell you the meaning of the name 'Bull Run'. A 'run' is American for a smallish river, and Bull Run, rising among the mountains away west and Shenandoah way, and receiving several tributaries in its flow, falls into the wide part of the Potomac below Washington and Alexandria.

"'The course of the stream Bull Run is about from north-west to south-east, and latterly due east. It receives from directly north the Cub Run, and this

flows past the village of Centerville, then held by Federals.

“Our position before the battle was on the south side of the Bull Run, with the railway bridge on our right, and a stone or turnpike bridge on our left.

“Right athwart our rear ran the railway from Shenandoah Valley through the Gap to Manassas Junction. Now Johnston, one of our generals, had been sent to the Shenandoah to defend it against a supposed advance of the Federals in that direction, the Federal general, Patterson, being opposed to him; but finding it was only a feint, he made haste to get back on to Manassas Junction with the troops, to assist General Beauregard of Sumter fame, who there had an army of 20,000 men, with his right stretching towards Alexandria and the Potomac.

“The Federal general M'Dowell had nearly 25,000 men in front of Washington, extending from the Chain Bridge to Alexandria. As early as the 16th, M'Dowell had received orders to attack Beauregard, and he advanced with 25,000 with this intention. We are told by prisoners that on his way to Centerville, which we had fallen back from, the weather was terribly hot, and the army, which was little better than a mob in gay uniform, moved on singing and joking, sometimes even stopping and scrambling for blackberries by the wayside.

“M'Dowell's game seemed to be to turn the Confederate left with all the power he could command, and thus strike at the railway, and prevent Johnston from getting up. Many of his troops, however, who had been only enlisted for three months, discovered that their time was up, and took French leave. Fighting was not to their taste.

“However, it appears that M'Dowell did all a brave man could under the circumstances. His two generals, Tyler and Hunter, were perhaps a little slow in their movements. Had they been able to come to the scratch on the 19th, or even the 20th, matters might have ended somewhat differently; at any rate, the Federals would have had a better chance. But on the 20th Johnston had already joined Beauregard, a fact of which M'Dowell was not cognisant.

“Well, Osmond, our left flank extended up the stream past the stone bridge towards the ford called Sudley's Spring, and you see the plan was this:—Tyler, and M'Dowell's other generals, Hunter and Heintzelman, were to be on the move on Sunday morning, the 21st, by two o'clock: Tyler was to march upon the stone bridge, and hover about there as if making ready to cross, but in reality only feinting, and waiting till the other Federal generals, with a strong force, should get up and cross the stream at Sudley's Spring. He would then commence to cross in reality, just as

Hunter and Co. 'came down like a wolf on the fold', attacking us in left flank and rear.

"It was prettily arranged. But we were not going to be idle, for we knew that as soon as Federal General Patterson, who had been keeping Johnston in check in the Shenandoah Valley, missed him, he would hurry down to join M'Dowell. Our plan, then, was to try to smash M'Dowell first.

"But we were not quite in time to take the initiative.

"I think you must know, Osmond, that some of our fighting ancestors, Scotch and English, would have pushed on over the stream that very night—it was moonlight, and there were several fords. However, they lay still in camp.

"Both Will and I knew that a great battle was to take place next morning. About ten last night I met my dear brother, and all by ourselves we went for a stroll in the moonlight. We knew the pass-word, so of course there was no danger.

"We passed quietly through a portion of the great camp. The men sat or lay here, and there, and anyhow, mostly smoking and yarning. A few, I believe, were praying. But the men, as a whole, gave us the impression of being unusually hilarious. Laughing, joking, and singing were heard on all sides.

"Mostly bluff,' brother Will said to me quietly.

‘They are trying to hide their anxiety and fears for the morrow.’

“‘I said nothing, and presently we climbed a little eminence and sat down on a stone. I looked upwards. The sky was mostly clear and starry, but ever and anon a cloud passed over the moon’s clear disc. Before us was the valley of the stream, with a yellow haze lying close over the water; behind us the forests around Manassas, and away to the west, and but dimly seen, the everlasting hills.

“‘But for the murmur uprising from the camp the silence would have been striking, for not a leaf or blade of grass stirred in the air.

“‘Mostly bluff, brother!’ Will repeated.

“‘Don’t you feel afraid, Will?’ I asked.

“‘Henry, I know you do. Nay, I shall not call it fear, but only anxiety, and though older than you, I do not wish to die to-morrow. I am not ready. Nor do I wish to leave my sisters and mother.’

“‘I was silent.

“‘Harry,’ he said presently, ‘let us kneel down beside this stone and pray. We needn’t pray aloud.’

“‘We did not pray aloud, Osmond, but you know that God, who heareth in secret, can openly reward.

“‘After we sat up we sang a simple psalm. It was not one of those that invoke the God of Bethel to pour down destruction and vials of wrath upon our

enemies. Our enemies, after all, were our countrymen and our brothers. And there, last night, beneath the moon and holy stars, we could not help feeling this.

“‘What shall we sing?’ I said.

“‘*Be merciful,*’ answered Will laconically. ‘Tune *Martyrdom,*’ he added.

“‘And so we lifted up our voices and sang:

“‘Be merciful to me, O God;
Thy mercy unto me
Do Thou extend; because my soul
Doth put her trust in Thee:

“‘Yea, in the shadow of Thy wings
My refuge I will place,
Until these sad calamities
Do wholly overpass.

.

“‘O Lord, exalted be Thy name
Above the heavens to stand;
Do Thou Thy glory far advance
Above both sea and land.’

“‘The last notes had hardly died away when we were conscious that we were not alone. A footstep advancing was heard behind us. We grasped our revolvers, and stood on the *qui vive*.

“‘No need, Osmond, no need. It was Father!

“‘Dear boys,’ he said, ‘and so I have found you?’

“‘I don’t know, dear cousin, what came over me just

then, but I grasped the hand he extended to me, and burst into tears.

“‘But I must do myself the credit of saying, Os, that I did not weep to-day. Many there may have been who shed tears last night as well as myself, but in the battle of to-day I saw nothing but deeds of valour all around.

“‘Well, although Tyler did not get to the Stone Bridge so soon as he expected, nor Hunter and Co. to Sudley’s Spring, they reached these points quite early enough for us. A feint had been made at Beauregard’s right, which might, however, have developed into a battle-centre had he weakened his force at this point to come to our assistance. Though he soon discovered that the main attack was to be on our left, he feared to help us.

“‘So by mid-day our flank was turned, and we were being thrust back before one o’clock. It was at this critical moment that our brave Jackson, who was in reserve, was ordered up.

“‘He took possession of a pine-covered ridge or plateau betwixt our main army and Sudley’s Spring, where we were being discomfited. Up the slope towards this plateau came the stragglers from our left, fleeing—I fear that is the right word—before M’Dowell’s furious Federals. Bee, one of our generals, addressed Jackson,

“‘They are beating us, general,’ he cried.

“‘Then we’ll give them the bayonet,’ answered Jackson.

“‘The words inspired General Bee. Sword in hand, he now rallied his men.

“‘Yonder,’ he cried, ‘stands Jackson like a stone wall.’

“‘Hurrah for Stonewall Jackson!’ shouted the men.

“‘This turned the tide of battle, and when at last sturdy ‘Stonewall Jackson’, as the men are going to call him, was reinforced by Kirby Smith with 2000 fresh soldiers, and Beauregard ordered a general advance, the battle for a time became furious.

“‘But soon the Federals appeared cowed and panic-stricken, and began to retreat. That retreat ended in a rout, Osmond. Oh, we were wild, wild now, my cousin. Our swords and bayonets had drank blood. All fear was banished; in its place was wild enthusiasm or exultation.

“‘How the cannons thundered! How deadly was the song of the rifles, and the zip–zip–ziping of the bullets. Just then, Osmond, war seemed to me the most natural thing in creation, and certainly the most glorious.

“‘But our victory was soon assured.

“‘Our cavalry put the fear of death upon the enemy, and they fled for dear life. We pursued them towards

Leesburg and Centerville till the darkness of night hid them from our view, capturing arms and field batteries and standards.

“I must now close my letter, dear cousin, for the night is far spent, and none of us knows what the morrow may have in store for us.

“Our loss did you say? About 400 killed and 1500 wounded. The enemy lost more. But, oh, Osmond, I thank the dear Lord to whom we sang last night that Father and Will are safe and sound.

“God bless you, Os, my boy, and my sweet little cousin Eva.

“Good-bye, good-bye! Hurrah, hurrah!”

So ended this heroic letter.

If it seems in some degree bombastic, the reader must remember that the writer was little more than a boy.

CHAPTER VI.

OSMOND DETERMINES TO MAKE FOR AMERICA.

IT was the middle of August when Eva and Osmond received that long, bold letter from their cousin Henry, and Osmond soon after began to make preparations for entering Oxford. At least he was supposed to be doing so. Indeed, he ought to have been studying all summer

I fear, however, that study was not very much in Osmond's way. The weather, he told his mother, oppressed him very much, and he seemed to be always under it. When it was hot and sultry he could not read. It was so much better and more delightful to take his stick in his hand and, with great Wolf by his side, journey far away over the hills to another glen, where there was no smoke and plenty of wild birds and wild flowers. He generally took a botanical case over his shoulder, thus making himself and other people believe that he was studying botany. The botanical case was full when he started, for it contained his own and Wolf's luncheon, but I fear it was empty when he returned. Well, after all, hot weather does make one sleepy, and books of science appear doubly dull when one feels thus.

When it rained Osmond gave up all thoughts of work, and preferred remaining in a room ironically called his study. He just lay on the sofa and read books of adventure or Walter Scott's novels or poems.

Nice preparation this for entering the university in October, you will say. Perhaps, but between you and me and the binnacle, when the end of August came, Osmond had no idea of entering the university at all.

The truth is, that since he had read that letter of Henry's, the desire to cross the Atlantic and to become

a soldier in the Southern cause had become almost too strong for his reason. He fought and struggled against it, but all to no purpose. Even in his dreams he was fighting side by side with his American cousin and gallantly leading on a company of "the boys" to death or victory.

One autumn day he sat poring over a book of higher mathematics until his senses began to reel. I question very much if he understood anything of what he had been reading. Anyhow he shut the book with a bang at last, and then flung it right to the other end of the room.

Wolf got up with rather a sad expression of countenance, and, after retrieving the book, laid it solemnly on his master's knee.

"Look here, Wolf," said Os, "I tell you I won't and can't. I am going to be a soldier—I am bound to be a soldier. There is no use fighting against fate any longer. What think you, Wolf?"

Wolf wagged his tail.

"My father and mother won't consent to my going over to help Cousin Henry, I know. They want me to enter one of the learned professions. They have given me my choice. But what care I for learned professions. The law is too harsh and dry. Medicine is too sloppy, and as for the Church—why, I'm not good enough. So there! And," he went on, laying

his hand on his great dog's head, "you remember, Wolf—of course you do—these lines in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*:

“‘There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune:
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.’”

Again Wolf wagged his tail as if the matter were as plain to him as a pikestaff.

“I'm going straight away over the herring pond, Wolf. I don't know yet how I'm going to get there. I only know I am going, and you can come too, if you're a good dog.”

Wolf jumped up, put a paw on each of Osmond's shoulders, and licked his cheek.

“Very well, Wolf—a bargain's a bargain. Now, here is a letter from Kenneth Reid, a very dear Eton friend of mine, inviting me to Liverpool to spend a few days with him. Wolf, I'm going there, and after that we'll trust to something turning up.”

Osmond's parents had no objection to his Liverpool trip, though little Eva was very sad.

He packed his traps that day.

Ah! little did his mother think when she kissed him good-bye next morning, that long eventful years must elapse before she would see her boy again, if ever she did.

But as for Eva, coming events seemed to cast their shadows before, and she threw her arms around his neck and melted into an agony of tears when he came to say farewell.

“O,” she wept, “I shall never, never see my brave brother again. I know where you are going, Os—O, I know, I know.”

“Hush, hush, Eva. O, pray don’t breathe a word of what you think to father, mother, or Dick.”

Her grief almost unmanned Osmond, but he managed to tear himself away at last, with a terribly big lump in his throat, and more moisture in his eyes than he considered it right that a soldier of fortune should show.

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Kenneth Reid was at the station to meet him, and a carriage was waiting to drive the two of them away to Kenneth’s home in the suburbs.

His welcome here was a very warm one. Kenneth was about Osmond’s age, but he had many younger brothers and sisters, and all were rejoiced to see one whom they had heard so much about.

That very night in their bedroom, Osmond made a confidant of Kenneth.

He commenced by reading to him the whole of Henry’s heroic letter.

Then he painted a soldier’s life while on the war-

path, until Kenneth's eyes sparkled and his face glowed with excitement. Osmond fired his best shot last.

"And I'm going out to join, Harry!" he said.

"You, Osmond,—you, old fellow!" cried Kenneth.

"Yes, me," said Os, in beautiful defiance of grammar, "me and Wolf there."

"Have you money? And how will you go, and will your parents permit you?"

"I haven't much money, Kenn. But I have £13, 12s. 6d. saved from pocket money. I have a good kit. I'll go in the cheapest way I can. I don't care if I have to work my passage out. I'll write to my parents just before the ship sails, and ask their forgiveness."

After this and till long past twelve o'clock, Osmond continued to tell his friend all about the honour and glory attached to a soldier's life.

"Are you asleep, Kenn?" he said at last.

"No, old man, only thinking."

Then Kenneth got up out of his own bed, and approached that of Osmonds.

"Osmond," he said, and he looked very serious as he held out his hand, which his friend took in his.

"Yes, Kenn."

"Osmond, you're not going alone."

"No, I'm taking honest Wolf there."

"Yes, and you're taking me!"

.

That night I believe both those boys—well, they were little else—slept only to dream of

. . . . battles, sieges, fortunes,
 of most disastrous chances,
 Of moving accidents by flood and field,
 Of hair-breadth 'scapes i' the imminent deadly breach.

Yet, strange to say, when they awoke next morning, instead of the sunlight banishing all their romances and resolves, it appeared but to confirm them.

It is due to myself to say, and to say in this very place, that I am but the historian of Osmond and his friend Kenneth, and that I by no means approve of their determination to go abroad in search of adventures without the consent of their parents. Yet such things have been done before, and I greatly fear they may be done again. I have only one thing to say on their behalf—namely, that the American Civil War took great effect on the minds of juvenile Britain. I was a boy in those days myself, and well remember it.

Now, just three days after they had made their romantic resolve, Os and Kenn had a kind of an adventure down at the docks, where they had taken to wander, in order to look at the ships and build castles in the air.

One very large and handsome steamer, lying a little way off, and evidently taking in cargo and preparing for sea, particularly attracted their attention. She

was a screw, and was well rigged with tallish iron masts, and evidently meant to do a good bit of sailing when wind and weather permitted.

“Look!” said Kenn, who was more of a sailor than Osmond. “She has already hoisted the Blue Peter, which means, you know, that she will soon sail.”

“That’s so,” said Osmond.

“And this is a boat coming from her,” continued Kenn. “Evidently the captain’s. That is he sitting, tiller-ropes in hand, in the stern-sheets.”

Presently the boat—a very prettily painted one and almost new—rasped alongside of the steps, and the officer sprang on shore. He was a tall, powerful-looking man of apparently fifty years of age, with a sprinkling of gray in his pointed beard.

“Hullo! young fellows,” he said, as soon as he came up the steps. “Excuse me addressing you, but I couldn’t pass that dog without a word. May I pat him? He won’t scupper me, will he?”

“No,” said Osmond proudly. “Wolf is very kind, but when there is any reason to fight, why he goes at it like a steam ram.”

“Ha! ha! ha! Just like an Englishman. Well spoken, boy. I like the looks of you as well as your dog. Wish I had a score of young fellows like you on board the saucy *Kathleen O’Mara* yonder.”

A sudden thought occurred to Osmond like a flash.

“Are you going to the States, sir?” he said.

The officer didn't reply, but he looked Osmond up and down.

“Why do you ask, boy?”

“We're not boys—we're young men, and I want to go to the Southern States to be a soldier, because I have cousins there, and Kenneth here is my friend, and is coming along for company's sake.”

“Is that true? No tricks? No kid?”

Osmond's face flushed with anger.

“We are gentlemen's sons,” he answered, “and we would not tell a mean lie to save our lives.”

“Forgive me, boys—forgive me. I am going to my lodgings not far from here. Come with me and we'll talk it over.”

They were soon all seated together in a cosy room, the captain of the *Kathleen O'Mara* indulging in a weed.

“Well, now,” he said, “I don't like taking you, but if I don't some one less respectable may. And I would be kind to you. Yonder is my ship—a Britisher, and bound, cleared in fact, or nearly so, for the East Indies. But if you come with me, not forgetting that lovely dog, you shall walk the decks of a ship bound for Charleston in less than a fortnight. When can you be ready?”

“When must we?”

“To-morrow night.”

“We’ll be here.”

“Bravo! You’re true Britishers. Shake hands with Captain Brewer, of the *Kathleen O’Mara*—and, look here, say nothing about this interview to any one.”

Then they talked for half an hour on different subjects, after which they parted.

“I say, aren’t we lucky?” were the first words that Osmond spoke to his friend when once more on the street.

“That we are. And now we have only to prepare. I have £15.”

“O!” cried Osmond, “I do believe, Kenn, we never asked Captain Brewer what our passage money would be.”

“Well, really no. How stupid! But with one thing and another I quite forgot.”

“Never mind,” said Osmond, “we’ll meet the captain and chance it. He seems a decent fellow. We will just tell him all, and if he turns us back, why, it can’t be helped.”

That night they quietly packed their boxes. They also wrote letters—long ones—to their parents. Osmond wrote to Eva also.

Next morning at breakfast they announced their intention of running over to spend a few days with a friend near New Brighton.

Alas! that heroes of mine should ever tell a fib—even a little white one. Just for the time being I am a trifle ashamed of them.

But the letters they wrote went some way towards making amends, and I hope their future conduct as soldiers of fortune will not be such as shall cast a slur upon the proud name of Englishman.

CHAPTER VII.

AFLOAT ON THE WIDE ATLANTIC.

IT was late before Osmond and his friend Kenneth got on board, but soon afterwards the *Kathleen O'Mara* slipped away from her moorings and began working seaward.

The night was beautifully clear, with a bit of a breeze blowing straight in from the west, and a bright, round moon fighting aloft with little clouds that ever and anon tried to obscure her silvery disc, but seemed to melt away as they touched her.

Osmond and Kenneth were both on the quarter-deck, and the captain was on the bridge, but as soon as he had put things a bit straight, and had finished piping orders down to the engine-room, he came below.

He approached the young men—as they chose to be considered—laughing and rubbing his hands

“Look here, lads,” he said, “you’re enjoying the moonshine, I reckon.”

“It really is a goodly sight, as Byron would have said.” This from Osmond. “That moon, sir, sailing through the snow-white clouds.”

“O, bother the moon!” interrupted Captain Brewer. “She’s a fraud. You must know that I always understood she was made of green cheese. Well, young sir, being at Greenwich last summer, I had the chance of a peep through a big Observatory spy-glass. ‘Shall I turn her on to Jupiter or Sirius?’ said the boss-in-waiting. ‘Jupiter and Sirius be blowed!’ says I; ‘turn her on to the moon; I want to see for myself if she is made of green cheese.’ Well, young friends, I had a look accordingly.”

“And was it green cheese?” said Osmond laughing.

“No, sir, not a bit of it. It was Gruyere, right enough. I saw the holes¹ as plain as you please, sure as I’m a living soul and my name’s Ben Brewer.

“But come, lads,” he continued, “I didn’t drop down from the bridge to teach you astronomy, but to warn you to turn in. Osmond, I know you are a poet by the build o’ your figure-head, nevertheless I assure you that Father Neptune doesn’t respect even poetry and romance. Soon’s we open out a sea-way, and that

¹The surface of the moon is indented with what appears to be the openings of extinct volcanoes.

won't be long with this wind, it'll be a bit choppy, and then—well, you had better turn in. I'll give you half an hour to chat with my wife and little daughter; you'll find them below, then you'll bunk up. Hear?"

"Yes," said Osmond, "but I had no idea there were ladies on board. And we haven't any dress clothes, have we, Kenn?"

"Never a stitch!"

"Ha, ha!" laughed the jolly skipper. "I knew I'd take the wind out of your trysails, and bring your square sails all a-shiver. But keep your minds easy, boys. We don't dress for dinner on board the bold *Kathleen O'Mara*. Down below with you. Off you rip."

The saloon was a very beautiful room indeed, though by no means large, and most tastefully furnished with mirrors, flowers in vases, and curtains; it looked as much like a lady's boudoir as anything else.

Mrs. Brewer, book in hand, was reclining on a sofa, but she raised herself and gave the boys, who looked a little shy, a smiling and kindly welcome.

Osmond noticed that she was beautiful, with soft dark eyes, red full lips, and teeth like pearls. Not at all old looking, although, strange to say, her hair was as white as snow or nearly so.

"Mrs. Brewer, I—" began Osmond, and then stuck fast.

“Mrs. Brewer, I—” began Kenneth, but he stuck fast also, and blushed a little, as innocent boys will sometimes.

Mrs. Brewer laughed a silvery laugh.

“You didn’t expect to meet ladies on board?” she said.

“No, really I—I—I—”

“Let me introduce you to my daughter, anyhow.”

She waved her hand as she spoke.

The boys looked round.

Sitting on a big easy rocking-chair, with her legs drawn up like a kangaroo’s, was a very pretty child some twelve summers’ old. Yes, I must say summers; winters could have had nothing to do with Lucy Brewer’s life, surely.

Her long hair—very long and straight it was—hung carelessly on her shoulders, and her eyelashes swept her cheeks as she looked down to carefully fold a leaf in her book before she shut it. Then she turned her large Spanish-like eyes first on Osmond, then on Kenneth,—so coolly too!

“Boys,” she said, and she looked as wise as a little old woman—“boys, you don’t look over happy, either of you. Now just take stools right away and sit down as close to the fire and me as you can get without fighting about us. I can make you both feel at home in less than no time. Dr. Peter Podophyllon has got

to murder old Miss Wanlace before Mother moves off that sofa. So she won't be in the ring to-night."

"Murder?" said Osmond. "I don't understand."

"O, you funny boy! But, there, don't look so scared. It's in the story-book she is reading."

"Now I understand."

Osmond was about to sit down when with one bound Lucy sprang off the chair, leaving it swinging to and fro. She darted past the boys, and next moment was kneeling beside great Wolf,—who had just looked in,—with both her arms around his neck and her cheek to his ear.

"Oh, what a darling!" she cried. "I declare the tears have come to my eyes. This is the dog Father told me about. O, Mother, look!

"Now, boys, make room for Wolf on the bear's skin. I hereby install him as first favourite on board the brave ship *Kathleen O'Mara*."

And so this strange child rattled on for fully five minutes in a way that would have astonished, perhaps even shocked, the British Mrs. Grundy. But nevertheless, both Osmond and Kenneth soon found themselves perfectly at home. The time flew very quickly by.

The black steward came in all too soon, Osmond thought, to say that the lamp was lit in their stateroom.

So they took the hint, said good-night somewhat reluctantly and retired, Wolf following close at their heels.

Fires were banked, and the *Kathleen O'Mara* went staggering down the Irish Channel on a beam wind. The sea was choppy or lumpy, and the breeze so high that it quite blew the wave tops off, and sent them flying inboard like spray from a cataract, as high as the top of the funnel itself.

Osmond and Kenneth had not forgotten to bring oilskins with them, and natty little sou-westerns. They were on deck next morning, before breakfast, with Wolf, but, truth to tell, neither had very much appetite. They determined to fight Mr. Mal de Mer¹, however, and this is really the only way to get clear of the gentleman. Just bounce him, and he'll be bounced. Give in to him, and he'll stick to you like a thistle-burr to a Highland plaid. Wolf didn't know what to make of the situation; he went flopping and walloping about in the most uncouth and wondrous fashion, but when the sailors laughed at him, Wolf laughed too, and he had a splendid big mouth. When he smiled the smile seemed to extend all the way down to his tail. This was more apparent than real.

By and by Lucy came up. She was arrayed in a very pretty ulster and sailor's hat, and as she looked

¹ Sea-sickness.

a little subdued Osmond thought the child must be ill.

He lifted his hat and hoped she was not. As he did so the ship gave a lurch that landed him on all-fours in the lee scuppers. Then Lucy laughed, till the binnacle seemed to ring.

"Oh, no," she answered, "I'm not ill. I'm a regular old sailor. But, poor boys, you both look pale. Oh, I know what will make us all happy."

"What?"

"Breakfast."

The black steward came up just then and rang a big bell, and the quarter-deck people went below at once.

Wolf went too.

But for the fact that the cups and saucers and delf generally were rather fidgetty, the breakfast was a most comfortable one, and everybody seemed to do justice to it. When it was over, Captain Brewer lit his cigar, and beckoned Osmond and Kenneth to follow him. He led the way into an after cabin or office, where a tall, raw-boned man was seated with a slate on his knee working out a sum of some sort. So thought Osmond, but it really was the reckoning.

"My mate," said Captain Brewer, and the mate returned the boys' salute.

"Be seated, lads, and we'll talk. Osmond, I know you want to ask some questions."

"Yes, I do," said Os promptly.

"Well, heave round."

"We want to know how much our passage money will be. We are poor, and should like to work it."

"Passage money? Eh? Why, boys, I and the Southern States will be in your debt very much indeed. So consider yourselves our guests."

"A thousand thanks. Kenneth, aren't we in luck?"

"That we are," said Kenn.

"Now, sir, one other question. We shall indeed be sorry to leave this ship, but we should like to know where and when we are to meet the Confederate vessel."

"Look here, lad, this is the *Kathleen O'Mara*, and she is loaded with the munitions of war. We touch first at Nassau, and there you will soon find yourselves on board the good ship *Mosquito*, bound across the herring-pond for Charleston harbour, where we hope to land you safe and sound. Meanwhile, keep your mind easy about parting. We like you; and, believe me, lads, the we includes my wife and Lucy both. Ah! there isn't much to beat an Englishman, after all. But how do you like the looks of our crew?"

"I'd rather not say."

The mate looked up and laughed.

"Well," said Os, "with a few exceptions they're a cut-throat looking lot."

“Never mind; they are only twenty-two. We were obliged to take Spaniards, Italians, and Finns, just dock refuse; only, among them there are three good Englishmen and one brave and brawny Scot.”

In good time the steamer made the port of Nassau, and here additional cargo, in the shape of rifles, was taken on board. Quite a large consignment of cases.

Osmond looked in vain for the *Mosquito*. But on the third day, and a short time before sailing, all hands were called aft.

“Is steam up?” said Captain Brewer, addressing the assistant engineer.

“Yes, sir.”

“Then go ahead.”

The vessel under the mate’s pilotage began at once to forge ahead.

“They’d have fleet steeds that would follow,” said Brewer, waving his hand shorewards.

Almost at the same moment up from the saloon came Lucy herself. She was dressed all in white, with flowers in her hair, and looked, as Kenneth afterwards told Osmond, as pretty as a pantomime.

She bowed to all with perfect *sang froid*, then, with her father’s assistance, she mounted on top of the skylight, while her mother handed her a little bottle of wine.



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"I RE-BAPTIZE THIS GOOD SHIP THE *MOSQUITO*," SAID LUCY,
AND DASHED THE BOTTLE ON DECK.

She lifted this high in the air, while in her childish treble she spoke as follows:—

“*I re-baptize this good ship the Mosquito;*” here she dashed the bottle on deck. It was port, and the stream that flowed leeward from the centre of the deck Osmond could not help thinking was very like blood. Little did he think, however, that the snowy whiteness of those timbers was before long to be stained with real blood.

“Men,” continued the child, raising her voice, “you are now in the service of the Confederate States of America, and we trust you will serve your new country right loyally and faithfully. Up with the bonnie blue flag. Hurray!”

Up went the flag in a ball that broke prettily at the gaff and went floating out in the breeze, while at the same time a gun was fired. Everybody joined that cheer, repeating it again and again.

Then Lucy leapt down, and Osmond hastened to congratulate her, telling her how charmingly she had spoken, and how pretty she looked.

Lucy did not seem to pay much attention, but went off romping along the deck with Wolf.

It is needless to say that Captain Brewer at once ordered the black steward to splice the main brace.

That very afternoon the *Mosquito* showed her teeth, for two Dahlgren guns were mounted on the quarter-

deck and a very large pivot gun forward. Ammunition too was got up, and it was evident to our heroes that if any Northern privateer ventured to chase them the *Mosquito* might run away, but even while running she would sing a song that would considerably startle the Yankees, or at all events astonish them.

The good ship *Mosquito*—the name was already painted on her bows, and on her boats and life-buoys—now stood straight away across the Atlantic, keeping well to the south, however, for the captain had no wish to meet many ships, whatever they might be.

Even the Confederate flag, having done its duty and asserted itself, was once more furled, and everybody on board appeared to settle down to the ordinary quiet routine of ship life. A good look-out, however, was kept both night and day, and whenever a strange sail was seen, she was scrutinized most anxiously, and if she looked at all suspicious, orders were given to give her a wide berth.

Meanwhile, our young soldiers of fortune found life on board very pleasant indeed. Lucy made no secret of her partiality for Osmond and Wolf. She was altogether very innocent and naïve, this child of the Southern States; and yet she had the queerest ways with her and said very droll things at times. It has always appeared to me that an American girl of only

seven knows as much and is quite as clever as an English or Scotch lassie of fifteen.

After a spell of silence, quite unusual for Lucy, she one day said to Osmond, who was reading *The Lady of the Lake* to her on the quarter-deck:

“I *should* like so much to know Eva, your sister.”

“Why, Lucy?”

“Because I envy her so. Oh, shouldn’t I like to have you for a brother! You are so handsome, and I’m sure you’re brave. Only,” she added after a pause, while a far-away dreamy kind of look came into her eyes, “who knows, but that when I grow up you may take it into your head to marry me; and I’m sure a husband is ‘even nicer than a big brother. But read on, Osmond, where were you? Oh, yes, I remember, and I’m sure so does Wolf—

“‘Oh! still I’ve worn
This little tress of yellow hair,
Thro’ danger, frenzy and despair!
It once was bright and clear as thine,
But blood and tears have dimmed its shine.’

“Read on, Osmond. Read on.”

CHAPTER VIII.

MUTINY ON BOARD THE BLOCKADE-RUNNER.

FOR a whole week the voyage of the *Mosquito* was quite idyllic.

So, at all events, our romantic Osmond considered it; while Kenneth himself appeared to be almost as happy as the day was long. Wolf spent most of his time romping up and down the deck, and retrieving belaying-pins thrown for him by some of the hands, or sunning himself on the weather-side of the quarter-deck.

Strangely enough, Wolf had his favourites among the men, and they were chiefly the men whom Osmond himself liked and felt he could trust. Dogs are indeed readers of character, and they seldom if ever make a mistake.

The weather continued to be all that a sailor's heart could desire. Hitherto it had been unnecessary to get up steam since the day the good ship left Nassau. A spanking breeze blew some points abaft the beam, the sky was clear and blue, and the sunshine laughed in every rippling wave.

It would be wrong to say that Osmond and Kenneth did not let thoughts of home intervene at times to mar their happiness. They often spoke of those they had left

behind, and who perhaps still mourned their strange departure. But they assured themselves, and told each other it was all for the best, and it would all come right in the long run.

Youth, you see, is ever hopeful.

One night, about eight days after the *Mosquito* had lost sight of land, and shortly after Lucy and her maid—a faithful little black lass—had gone to their cabin, Osmond was coming along the main deck from forward. He was threading his way through a dimly-lighted passage between the ship's side and the boxed-up engines, and got midships, when he heard his name called, the voice coming from above his head.

Here was a cabin, Lucy's in fact, though Os had never known of its whereabouts before.

He looked up, and lo! there was Lucy herself leaning head and shoulders over a kind of port, that opened into the passage. She was in her night-dress, and laughing right merrily.

"This is my cabin and nursie's, you know. She sleeps in the bunk right below me.

"I cannot ask you in," she continued, with innocent politeness, "because I'm in bed, you know; but oh, Osmond! wouldn't it be jolly to do *Romeo and Juliet* just here. The balcony scene, you know. I remember most of it, don't you?"

“A little, I think,” said Osmond, smiling.

“Well, I’m Juliet, and I’ve just called you back like this:”

Juliet. Romeo!

Romeo. (Osmond.) My dear!

Juliet. I have forgot why I did call thee back.

Romeo. Let me stand here till thou remember it.

Juliet. I shall forget, to have thee still stand there,
Remembering how I love thy company.

Romeo. And I’ll still stay, to have thee still forget,
Forgetting any other home but this.

Juliet. ’Tis almost morning; I would have thee gone:—
And yet no farther than a child’s pet bird,
Who lets it hop a little from her hand,
And with a silk thread plucks it back again.
So loving-jealous of his liberty.

Romeo. I would I were thy bird.

Juliet. Sweet, so would I:
Yet I should kill thee with much cherishing;
Good-night, good-night! Parting is such sweet sorrow,
That I shall say good-night till it be morrow.

Romeo. Sleep dwell upon thine eyes, peace in thy breast!

How much more Osmond might have said may never be known, for within Lucy’s cabin a voice was now heard uttering words that I have never read in any edition of Shakespeare.

“You naughty chile! Lie down and sleep this mome’n’, else I go plenty quick dileckly and tell you modder! Lie down, chile!”

Lucy disappeared so speedily that it amounted to a

sudden withdrawal of the play, and so the scene ended.

.

Romeo and Juliet is a love drama, but an actual tragedy was to be enacted on board ere morning light—woe in my heart that I should have to speak of it!

When a boy, on reading of massacres and mutinies which had taken place long ago, I have sometimes asked my tutor, "Could these things happen nowadays, sir?"

"Oh, no!" he used to reply, "the world is far better and far wiser in our day."

But many a time and oft since then have I come to the conclusion that though our laws are more numerous and more stringent, the human heart is quite the same, and human passions only require to be let loose to make many murders possible, and that massacres and atrocities on a far greater scale, and even more devilishly cruel than any that have ever occurred in the middle ages may take place, even in this year of grace, eighteen hundred and ninety-five.

Now there is, it seems to me, a Providence that watches over those who trust therein. At all events, men, whatever they may propose, appear to be under the dispensation of God. 'Tis He who fixes our destiny.

Osmond had reached his own cabin, and found that

Kenneth had already turned in. He had nearly undressed when he found that he had dropped a small trinket from the end of his watch-chain. It was of no great worth, but he valued it very much, because it had been Eva's gift to him on his last birthday.

He told Kenn of the loss, adding—

“I remember playing with it as I talked the balcony scene with Lucy. I'll run back and see if I can't find it. I shall put on my coat of darkness and my shoes of silence,” he added laughing, as he drew on a brown dressing-gown and a pair of list slippers.

He walked very gently and softly, lest he should disturb Lucy. He soon arrived beneath the balcony, as he called it in his own mind, and, bending down, felt around, for the light was now extinguished in the passage.

Yes, here it was, all safe and whole. How lucky! he thought, and was just about to retire when the sound of low voices fell upon his ear. They came from two figures he scarce could see, and who were standing well forward; but as the speakers were well known to him as two of the worst men in the ship, one a Finn, the other a hulking black-browed Italian, he thought himself justified in trying to listen.

He crept nearer to them, hugging the bulkhead of the passage as he did so.

Their backs were towards him, and this was fortun-

ate, for doubtless the fellows were armed, and the knife between his ribs would have been Osmond's portion had he been discovered.

"Der iz no time like de prizent." It was the Finn who spoke. "Ha, Antonio, if faint-hearted you iz, I zay—bah!"

"And it is ol ready you are?" said the Italian.

"Reddy? Yez, we iz all reddy. We iz vivteen (fifteen) men to seven. Ha, ha, victory iz ours, zure enough."

"Den I veel come too. It ees not murder."

"No, we takes ze ship from our enemies. We takes her in ze name of ze Federal navy. Ha, ha! We kills men, p'r'aps. Bah! again I zay it iz but in fight. No, Antonio, it iz not murder, it iz war.

"First," he added, "we kills ze tree Englishmans and ze ugly Scot."

"Bravo! And de time and place?"

"Four bells, ze middle watch. Voxle head."

Osmond started.

How nearly that start was to being his last!

He dropped Eva's charm.

He dared not stoop after it, but hugged the bulk-head more closely, and stood there trembling.

"Hark! I heard von zound."

"No, no," said Antonio, "it was but de little one stirring in bed. She you veel not slay?"

“Bah! Come, Antonio. Come, in two hour we go on ze deck. Let uz sleep.”

“Wretches!” thought Osmond, “who can go quietly to sleep and awake but to commit foul murder.”

He waited until the coast was clear, then glided silently aft once more, not, however, before he had stooped again and picked up his little sister’s keepsake, which he would ever more look upon as indeed a charm.

He dropped into his own cabin first, and in whispers told Kenneth about his discovery and the projected mutiny.

He next sought out the captain. Luckily he had not yet turned in, but sat in the saloon smoking.

“The cut-throat villains!” said Captain Brewer. “It is easy to see what they mean. They want to seize the ship and take her as a prize to New York, hoping to receive a great reward. I will hang them at the yard-arm!”

“We will have to catch them first, won’t we, sir?” said Osmond quietly.

“Yes, and catch them in the act. Thank God, we shall be prepared.”

At first Captain Brewer thought it would be best to make the Finn and Antonio prisoners at once, but this plan was given up as unpractical. They thought

of another, and this other was carried out to the letter.

By and by, therefore, Osmond bade the captain good-night, and retired to his own cabin. He put out the light, and soon after Brewer himself rang for the steward. While telling him quietly to extinguish the lights, he managed at the same time to give him an inkling of the state of affairs, and hinted also where he would find revolvers and cartridges.

Soon after the middle watch—in which were the principal mutineers—was called, all was silent on deck save the steady tramp, tramp of the men on duty.

The three Englishmen and the Scotchman had turned in. As they were respectable, faithful fellows, the captain had given them a cabin to themselves, for they did not care to mix with the common herd.

And now Brewer went creeping forward himself, and entered Lucy's cabin. He was successful in waking the nurse without frightening her.

He quickly told her of the coming mutiny, and bade her follow him. He lifted Lucy up and bore her aft, placing her in the cabin beside her mother. The poor child did not once awake.

The next thing was to arouse and bring aft the Britishers.

This the steward—big Sambo—undertook to do. Meanwhile, fully armed and prepared for either battle

or siege, the captain, with Osmond and Kenneth, waited anxiously in the dark saloon. If they spoke at all, it was but in whispers.

But how very anxiously they listened now, near the doorway, for Sambo's signal.

Luckily it had come on to blow a little, and the watch on deck were shortening sail. Yet, doubtless, a watch was being kept below, and, if in awakening the Englishmen the slightest noise was made, matters would doubtless be precipitated with a terribly fatal result.

What a long, long time Sambo seemed absent! Would he never, never come! Hark! though, there is a gentle tapping with nails on the saloon door, a password is whispered, and Sambo enters.

"Yes, sah," he whispers, "all heah, sab, and de two injuneers too, Massa."

"Good, Sambo; I won't forget you."

They were now twelve in all, including the mate, and the mutineers, with two stowaways and the cook, would number about twenty.

The odds were heavy, for those cut-throat fellows were desperadoes of the worst water. They would be fighting, too, with the rope around their necks, and doubtless it would be a hard and hand-to-hand tussle, a fight to the very knife's hilt.

It wanted still an hour to the time of rendezvous,

and to facilitate their plans the mutineers had evidently made the ship very snug by taking in all necessary sail.

It had just gone two bells.

“Another weary hour to wait!” whispered Osmond to Kenneth. “My heart is beating muffled drums. Are you afraid?”

“Yes, I am anxious.”

Hardly had he spoken before a wild shout arose near to the fo’c’s’le-head. It was evident that the fellows had missed the Englishmen, and thus found out that their plans were discovered.

The noise and the shouting came aft and aft and aft. Now footsteps are heard running overhead and descending the saloon companion.

“Surrender! Bail up!”

That is the command as the butt-ends of rifles thunder at the barricaded door.

A volley aimed at the door by those within changes the aspect of matters somewhat. One man is heard to fall. The others, with terrible threats and curses, draw off.

The saloon has at each side of it a doorway. One is the first mate’s cabin—the second mate is a mutineer—the other is the office, and a third door leads to the store-room. The captain quickly passes the word to take possession of these rooms.

None too soon. For a volley is quickly fired in through the skylight, which has been hastily thrown open; a most unlucky thing for the mutineers, for the moon has arisen, and their heads can be seen.

No one below is hurt, and they need no command to cause them to return the fire. *Rack-rack-rack-rack* go the revolvers, like the noise a rent and riven mainsail makes in a gale of wind.

More than one mutineer is killed, and, horrible to relate, hangs dead over the skylight.

The silence that follows is broken only by the groans of the wounded on deck, and by the patter of blood on the saloon table coming from the corpses hanging above.

What would have been the next move of the mutineers I cannot pretend to say, for something now occurred which was altogether unlooked for.

The boys' cabin or state-room was just outside the saloon and forward from the mates', with only a bulk-head between, and it would seem that some of the would-be murderers had intended entering this in order to fire through the bulk-head.

Little did they know how it was guarded. For brave Wolf had been forgotten, and was the sole occupant of the state-room.

As soon as Osmond heard the wild and frightened shouts of the men and awful "habbering" noise of

Wolf, who had evidently seized a man by the throat, "Oh, my dog, my dog!" he cried.

"Kill him! kill the beast!" shouted the mutineers.

There was now the sharp ringing of revolvers, but Wolf's "habbering" still went on, though in the midst of it the poor dog had uttered a half-smothered cry of pain.

"They're killing my dog!" cried Osmond now. "I'll save Wolf or die!" He seized a lantern that had been darkened, turned the light on the door, undid the fastenings, and, sword in hand, rushed out.

All this took but a few seconds.

"Hurrah, men!" shouted the captain. "Now for the charge! Sambo, hold up the other light!"

Sambo did as he was told, and so determined was the rush now made that the mutineers broke at once, and fled on deck, pursued by the captain and his followers.

The foe rushed forward, but stopped when about midships and fired a volley.

Alas! the head engineer dropped dead at Brewer's feet, and Osmond himself fell, shot through the body.

The volley was returned with good-will nevertheless, and the shrieks forward told that it had taken effect.

Next moment big Sambo with a capstan-bar was

laying around him like a giant, and more than one man fell beneath his blows.

"We surrender! We surrender!" This was now their cry.

"Lay down your arms then. I'll hang the first man that dares to move a muscle after I say one, two, three."

"One, two, three."

Rifles and revolvers fell rattling on the deck, and in ten minutes' time all the mutineers not killed or wounded were securely bound hand and foot.

When daylight appeared, a census was taken, and it was found that no less than five of the enemy, including the second engineer, were killed, and three wounded.

The engineer was the only one killed among the defenders, but one Englishman was so seriously wounded that he died before night. The two other Englishmen, with Sambo and poor Osmond, to say nothing of honest Wolf, who had a bullet wound in his leg, made up the list.

The unwounded prisoners were set free as far as their legs were concerned, and led aft.

"Now, men," said Captain Brewer sternly, "you can see that your game is up."

"We do. We do."

"Well, you can have your choice. I will either

permit you to return to duty, and give you up when we reach Charleston, or hang you now, one and all."

"Let us go to duty. Let us go to duty."

"Yez," cried the Finn, "zat iz best."

Captain Brewer promised furthermore that if they were faithful and obeyed every command, they should be leniently dealt with by the Confederates at Charleston.

"And now," he continued sternly, as he turned to the first mate—the second mate was dead—"the ship will not be safe while those two men are alive."

He pointed to the Finn and the Italian as he spoke.

"Let the others free and let them at once reeve block and tackle to the main-yard arm and hang these villains."

In spite of their pleading cries for mercy, in less than twenty minutes' time the unhappy wretches were swinging dead in the cool morning air.

CHAPTER IX.

CHASED BY A NORTHERN CRUISER.

OSMOND'S wound, though a very painful one, was not dangerous.

It threw him on his beam-ends for a time, however.

Yet many a young fellow, I believe, would go through as much to be so tenderly nursed and cared for as he was, both by Mrs. Brewer and gentle Lucy.

And Lucy had another patient, namely Wolf. The captain had managed to extract the bullet from his thigh, an operation to which he had submitted quietly.

Steam was now got up, for the ship, owing to the deaths in the mutiny, was somewhat short-handed for sailing.

Kenneth volunteered to do what he could, and a very able assistant engineer he made.

There was no attempt to renew the mutiny, and so, fine weather continuing, in due time they found themselves within a measurable distance of Charleston.

They had to be doubly on their guard now, for Yankee cruisers were plentiful enough in these waters, watching the commerce of the Southern States.

When not in his friend Osmond's state-room, Kenneth Reid was very frequently with Captain Brewer, either walking the bridge or on the quarter-deck, and very much indeed did the lad enjoy his conversation and the yarns he used to spin. Brewer was exceedingly good-natured and kind-hearted, and had taken a great fancy for Kenneth and Osmond, as well as for Wolf.

Wolf reciprocated the skipper's affection, and seemed to be quite content to walk steadily alongside of him for a whole hour at a time. Big, brave men are often

quite childish in some little matters, and Wolf's evident attachment to Captain Brewer pleased the latter very much.

More than once he stooped down—he had not very far to stoop—to pat the dog's great head, and with moisture in his eyes said to Kenneth:

“The poor fellow does love me, you see, and I can assure you it will be a sad day for me when I have to part with him.”

Brewer told Kenneth among other things about all his escapades with the Yankee cruisers and his running the blockade.

Although I have called them yarns,¹ I must tell you that all the captain's stories were from the life. Sailors, as a rule, if they have been long at sea have no need to fall back upon fiction. They have only to describe the adventures they have taken part in, and these will take them long, long years to tell.

“Well, sir,” said Kenneth one day, about a week after the fearful mutiny, “do you think you will run much danger or risk in getting into Charleston?”

“To tell you the truth, dear boy, I am not going to take much risk. Not that I should mind it a great deal, but my orders are to avoid danger, because, you

¹ The word “Yarn” is generally supposed by landsmen and “long-shore lubbers” to mean a fictitious tale. It is not necessarily so; indeed, when sailors at sea are “yarning” they usually are but describing events in their lives just as they happened.

see, our cargo is so precious that if captured the loss to my side and the gain to the Federals would be almost immeasurable."

"But, sir, if I am to believe what I read in our English newspapers, the Federals have no fleet at all worth a cent."

"Then you'd better not believe your English newspapers. I wouldn't of course discredit a statement simply because I found it in a newspaper, but in this case they've gone a little astray.

"When the war broke out, or sometime before it, the Federals had no home navy at all, unless you consider that the steamer *Brooklyn*, of twenty-five guns and a store ship or two, constituted a navy. But, my young friend, you never know what you can do till you try. Stand and look at the wheel and you'll never alter the ship's head a single point; put your shoulder to the wheel, and round she goes, and round goes the ship's head as well. I cannot tell you exactly how many ships the Northerners had, or were supposed to have, when war actually commenced,—perhaps forty; but all in foreign parts. I'll give the Yankees their due, however. They are a smart people, and have set to work with a will, so that now they must have a navy of at least a hundred and twenty ships afloat."

"Already?"

"Yes, lad, already. And they are going to blockade

all our ports in the South, so that they may starve us—they never can lick us.”

“Well, I should be sorry,” said Kenneth.

“I know you would. You and your brave companion, whom may God soon restore to health, have thrown in your lots with us, and I know you will fight with *vim* for the country of your adoption.”

“Below there!”

It was a shout from the main-mast cross-trees.

“A sail in soight, sorr.”

The captain grasped the bridge railing and looked up.

“What do you make of her, Paddy?”

“Sorra a bit av me knows, sorr.”

“What does she look like, anyhow?”

“Sure I can’t tell at all, at all, for though she’s in soight, sorr, she ain’t visible.”

“Then how in all the world,” roared Captain Brewer, “do you know there is a ship there at all?”

“A long line of durty smoke along the blue say, sorr.”

The captain went aloft himself now.

In twenty minutes he came below and gave orders for the course to be altered at once. So instead of being steered west, the *Mosquito* was soon heading away south-south-west.

“Could you make her out, sir?” ventured Kenneth.

“Eh! What, my boy—make her out, did you say?” There was a dark cloud on Captain Brewer’s brow. “Yes, indeed, I’ve been chased by her before. She is the *Delaware* frigate of thirty guns, and can steam two knots an hour more than we can. Ay, and she’ll make it three knots more, if she burns all the pork she has on board.”

“You think, sir,—you think she’ll capture us?”

“I think it is all up with our chance of Charleston. I shall now make for Port Pickens in Florida. But if it doesn’t come on to blow, I guess we’ll see New York first. If I see I am to be taken, I’ll pitch every gun overboard first, even if they hang me afterwards.”

Kenneth went below now to the engine-room, to see if he could be of service.

“No, min,” said the Scotch engineer, “I’ll keep the watches mysel’ till the cruise is a’ over. Thank ye, though, a’ the same.”

Then Kenneth went to Osmond’s state-room.

His friend was pale, but made no complaint, and the child Lucy sat on a chair near the port reading aloud to him, with Wolf at her feet on a skin.

“Shall I leave the room?” she asked.

“No, my dear, no. I only came to tell Osmond the wonderful news. We’re bound for the south, Os, my boy. There will be no Charleston, but there may be a New York. We’re being chased by the frigate

Delaware. I hope I haven't frightened your patient, Lucy?"

Osmond made answer.

"I'm not much worth at frightening," he said, smiling, "but your news is stirring. Oh, shouldn't I like to get on deck, just!"

"But don't think of it."

"Oh," said Lucy, with the air of quite an elderly person, "I should require to be consulted first!"

"Well," said Kenneth, "I shouldn't mind having a bullet skate all round my ribs to have such a pretty and careful nurse. By-bye; I'll report from time to time. Don't be scared if you hear a gun or two."

And off went Kenneth.

The excitement fore and aft was now intense, for in less than an hour it was pretty evident to everyone on board that the *Delaware* was coming up hand over hand.

There wasn't a cloud in the sky that afternoon. The sun blazed from a dry, hot, milk-white sky, and there was an oily gloss on the calm, heaving sea that told Brewer plainly there was little chance of wind. He would have thanked God, as he looked around him, could he have seen the smallest catspaw on that leaden ocean surface. But not a breath blew, and the smoke from the funnel lay low on the waves, as if it had been a huge coil of rope laid there and left.

Kenneth had returned to the bridge; Captain Brewer was pacing to and fro, still with lowered brows and an expression of anxiety on his face.

Kenneth did not dare to address him.

Presently, however, the captain stopped abruptly, and took firm hold of Kenn's arm. He was smiling, but somewhat grimly.

"It is very good of you not to speak to me," he said, "although I know you are burning to ask me if I mean to fight. The answer is 'Yes'; I'll fight when I've finished running away. But listen; I have another cause of anxiety."

"And that is, sir?"

"The mutineers, or the men who were mutineers, and may be again when the push comes. You see it would be far more satisfactory for them to fall into the hands of the Federals than the Confederates."

"True, sir, true."

"Yes; well, I have reasoned out the whole matter in my own mind, and I mean to have a turn at diplomacy. The safety of the ship compels me."

"Call all hands!" he shouted to the officer on duty.

As soon as all the men had come on deck, Captain Brewer took a note-book from his pocket, and leaning over the rail of the bridge told them to lay aft.

Then he addressed them in that very straight style

of language for which I have always given the Americans the greatest praise.

“Men,” he said, “I have in this note-book the names of seven of you who were taken red-handed in the terrible mutiny on board this ship. I had meant to give them up to justice when I reached a southern port, with, however, a recommendation to mercy. But I cannot forget that, since the mutiny, they have returned to duty and done their duty well. I am, therefore, inclined to forgive them, and not give them up at all. We are now being chased by a Yankee frigate, and very likely to be captured, but I’m going to fight after I’ve done running away. It is my duty to resist, though I don’t expect to reap any advantage from it. I’m making you this speech because I have not a doubt the men whose names are here inscribed imagine they would be more leniently dealt with for their participation in the mutiny by the Feds than the Confeds. They would not be—I could see to it they wouldn’t. Now, I offer them terms. If they work with a will till the chase or battle ends either way, I shall never mention mutiny to them again. They shall go scot-free whether we win or lose; but, on the other hand, any man or men I find attempting to hamper the movements of the ship, or remiss in duty, shall be shot through both shoulders and thrown overboard to feed Brer Shark. Now choose!”

One man only stepped out.

"Sir," he said sternly, "may I come upon the bridge for one minute?"

The captain looked at him narrowly.

"Yes, you may come," he replied.

He was a bold and daring-looking man, very tall, and rather handsome than otherwise.

He scrambled up the ladder and advanced with a defiant swing to the place where Captain Brewer stood.

Kenneth was behind the captain, and his hand stole round to his revolver pocket. But Brewer never moved a finger.

And now the two men stood within a yard of each other, eye to eye and foot to foot.

Thus they stood for ten long seconds at least.

"I'm Jim Jackson," said the giant. "I never told a cowardly lie even to screen a pal, and I never went back on my word. I'm here, Captain Brewer, with the consent of my mates, to tell you that we respects you, and that we'll run from the Feds, or we'll fight them, but that we are with you, sir, heart and soul."

Here he stuck out a hand nearly as big and hard as the capstan head.

"There is Jim Jackson's hand," he said, "will you shake it?"

"I will, my good fellow," cried the captain, with

moisture in his eyes. "And now," he added, "I forgive you all."

"Hurrah! Hurrah!"

It was a shout, that, floating over the still, grey sea, must have been heard even on board the *Delaware* frigate.

"Now, lads," cried Captain Brewer, "load the Dahlgrens, and we'll show these Federal fellows that mosquitoes can bite, and even draw blood!"

CHAPTER X.

THE FIGHT WITH THE "DELAWARE".

THE sun was still high in the heavens, and there was no more sign of wind than ever, saving one black cloud, but little larger than a house, that had lately risen rock-like on the western horizon.

The men had been busy for hours getting up the stores which the captain had determined to throw overboard, and still they worked with a will.

But by this time the *Delaware* was hardly three miles astern, and still coming up hand over hand.

Now I should tell you that both Osmond and Kenneth had been in the Volunteers since the movement—then but a young one—had commenced; Os in the rifles, Kenn in the artillery. With somewhat of par-

donable pride the latter had told the captain that he was considered the best shot in his corps, and that he should like very much to try his hand at peppering the *Delaware*.

“By all means,” returned Captain Brewer, “for we haven’t a decent shot in the ship.”

Kenn was indeed overjoyed then, and he must needs run down below to tell Osmond about his promotion.

Osmond was as pleased about it as his friend.

“I’m so glad!” he cried, his cheeks flushing with joy. “Hit straight, Kenn, hit straight.”

“I’ll try, my boy; but now I’m off.”

“Oh, wait—do wait one minute!” cried Lucy, running out of the state-room.

She was back in a brace of shakes. In her hand she held a bonnie blue rosette. This she pinned to Kenneth’s coat.

“You are my hero,” she said dramatically. “Go forth to battle. Come back with your shield or on it.”

Kenn laughed and ran off.

The guns were being loaded and run out.

Presently a puff of white smoke with a point of flame in its centre told those on board the *Mosquito* that the Federals had commenced the battle. The boom of the gun came angrily over the water; then a shot that fell far, far short of the stern, ricocheted about a hundred yards and sank.

There was no more firing for half an hour; then the *Delaware* was seen to slue round. She fired a broadside. Shot flew everywhere about the *Mosquito*. Some were very close, but none struck her. The *Delaware* lost time, however, and it was unlikely she would repeat the experiment.

On she came again. Flames as well as smoke issued from her funnel.

"She's burning pork," cried Captain Brewer. "Stand by, Mr. Kenneth Reid, and give her black pepper."

Presently the roar of a great Dahlgren gun shook the ship from stem to stern.

Poor Lucy seemed quite like a little mother to Osmond. She rose from her seat by the port, and stole gently to his side, placing one tiny hand on his brow.

"Don't be afraid, dear," she said, in a low voice; "it will soon be over. Then you'll have a nice sleep."

Osmond made the child's hand a prisoner for a short time.

"I couldn't be afraid," he answered, "with you there, Lucy dear."

B-r-r-r-ang!

That was another shot. The smoke of it as it rolled past quite darkened the state-room. But after this, Lucy and her patient heard something that hadn't

followed the first shot, namely, a wild and exultant cheer.

It had been a glorious shot that. It had gone smashing through the *Delaware's* funnel, and carried away the mizzen mast almost by the board. Two shots were returned from the enemy's bow-chasers, but without doing any injury to the *Mosquito*.

"Bravo, Kenneth Reid!" cried the captain.

Then down the communicating pipe he shouted: "Do you think you could put another knot into it?"

Half a minute after the engineer himself, all black, greasy, and grimy, appeared on the bridge. He was wet and steaming with perspiration.

He touched his cap.

"Yes, sir, I can," he said; "if you give me a few sides of bacon."

"I give you a free hand; do as you please."

That Scotch engineer took the captain at his word.

He ordered big Sambo, who was standing at the pantry door, with his arm in a sling and his skin looking rather loose around his eyes, to send him down two sides of the fattest bacon, "right off the reel", as he phrased it.

Sambo's eyes grew bigger.

"I tink, sah, you go mad," said Sambo.

"No, no, Sambo, niver a mad. It's to cut up and put under the biler. D'ye see?"

"I see now, sah; plenty mooch."

"Noo, lads," cried the Scot, when the bacon came down; "cut it up and feed the fire. I mean to make her rip. Sambo, you're doing nothing," he continued, looking up to the doorway where the steward was standing staring wonderingly down. "Sambo, you're doing nothing, and you're heavy and broad in the beam. Just come along here and sit on the safety valve."

"An' s'pose de injin she bust, sah, where pore Sambo be den, sah? Tell me dat. No, tank you, I want to go to hebben vely much, but I no like to go in dat fashion."

And off went Sambo.

B-r-r-r-ang! One more shot, and presently another, and then cheering again.

The Yankee was catching it; for the *Delaware's* bowsprit was splintered and hung in pieces around the bows, quite impeding her way.

"Now, lads," shouted Captain Brewer, "up with the bonnie blue flag, for here comes a breeze at last. Give them one more cheer, and we'll show them a clean pair of heels. Hurrah!"

Once more the *Delaware* slued round, and a broadside was fired, half the shot of which never reached the ship, while the other half played harmlessly around the *Mosquito*.

“Shall I try a shell or two, sir?”

“That you may.”

But Kenneth was less successful with shells.

Meanwhile the sun was going down, and wind and sea were rising.

“Thank God,” said Captain Brewer, “we have shaken her off at last!”

It was a very dark night that followed, and almost a stormy one; but southwards over the sea the good ship ploughed her way, with never a light showing on deck, and with tarpaulins over hatches and sky lights.

When the sun rose and shone red over the wind-tossed ocean, there was never a sail in sight.

But Captain Brewer determined now to give up all thoughts of Charleston, and make the best of his way to Pensacola Bay, in the Mexican Gulf, and extreme end of Florida.

Here, it is true, was Port Pickens, but lately revictualled and regarrisoned by the Federals. It was not forts, however, that Captain Brewer feared, but ships; and he rightly guessed there would be far fewer Federal cruisers hovering around in the south than in the north.

The weather began to get sensibly hotter now, and before the good ship reached the beautiful Bahama Islands, the wounded were nearly all well. Though

very weak as yet, Osmond, still ministered to by his little nurse Lucy, was able to come on deck every day.

As the wind had gone down, steam was once more in force, and sea and sky, both noon and night, were beautiful in the extreme. The sun would rise in crimson glory, shining over the sea in a triangular track of dazzling blood-red light, a triangle that had its broad base in the far-off horizon, its apex near the ship. If there was any morning haze it soon cleared off, and when the awning was spread across the quarter-deck Osmond could recline on his chair, and with dreamy half-closed eyes gaze on an ocean whose beauty of colour,—its pinks, its opals, its greens and greys,—was more lovely than pen can describe. Sometimes away on bow or beam a green island would be descried, seeming to hang on the horizon, or be suspended in the air itself like a veritable fairy land.

The sunsets likewise were inexpressibly beautiful. There was a new moon now, and when that glimmered like a golden scimitar, and the stars were all aglitter in a sky of dark and deepest blue, the scene was not only tranquil but even holy.

Captain Brewer, in order to avoid even the chance of another chase or another battle, kept away to the east of the Bahamas, but he doubled Andros at last, then skirting the northern shores of Cuba he bore

boldly up through the Gulf of Mexico for Pensacola Bay.

Before daylight in the morning he made an attempt to run the blockade, but finding this was impossible, and that he would only succeed in drawing a fire from fort and ships that would sink him, Captain Brewer withdrew — luckily without being perceived — and made off to sea again.

It came on to blow high and hard from the south towards sunset. Well, it is an ill wind that blows nobody good. Captain Brewer was a very excellent sailor, and knew the Bay and channels of Mobile well. So, banking fires, he made straight for the eastern opening. The Federals, he reckoned, if any ships were there, would hardly venture out on such a night, and if they sighted him, would scarcely dare to give chase for fear of running on shore.

The city lies at the top of the Bay to the left, and although the *Mosquito* would be welcome there, any Federal ship daring to follow would have it hot.

There were Federal vessels in the Bay, however, and more than one.

Captain Brewer could have wished a darker night, for the moon shone all too brilliantly. Never mind, it was to be life or death. So on he went. I think his very courage was his safety. Fortune favours the brave.

When he got within range of the ships at anchor, they opened fire. One shot made a lovely hole in the funnel, another smashed a boat.

Captain Brewer made no reply, but went dashing on.

The danger soon seemed past and gone. Clouds had banked up in the East and obscured the moon, and it was now almost dark. The Captain had his after-guns double shotted and run out in case of need.

This proved to be a wise precaution, for in an hour's time a perky little gun-boat seemed to drop out of the sky, so suddenly did she appear.

"What ship is that?" was the hail.

"The Confederate cruiser *Brunswick*, twenty guns. Who are you?"

There was no reply, but the little vessel went away on another tack and seemed to fly across the water like a Mother Cary's chicken.

"Give her a touch, Kenneth," cried Captain Brewer, and a few moments after the Dahlgren gave voice and a shot flew over the water.

It was but a chance shot, but terrible in its effect. In a few seconds, then, the roar of an explosion was heard on board the gun-boat, rays of fire and rolls of white smoke rose heavenwards, with broken spars and timbers and—all too visible to those on board the

Mosquito—dark masses that could only be the bodies or limbs of men.

Kenneth put his hand to his brow and eyes. He was horrified at the results of that shot, and felt he could have shed tears. He was very young, you know, and as yet had seen but very little of the horrors of war.

“Haul the main yard aback!”

It was Captain Brewer’s voice.

“All hands on deck! Call away the whalers to save life!”

Two boats were quickly lowered, Brewer himself going in one, Kenneth in the other.

The sea was rough, the waves were houses high, and broke in seething masses of foam at the top, which were caught up by the wind and carried in sheets across the boats; yet boldly and manfully were these rowed.

They reached the scene of the catastrophe in time to save no less than seven of the crew, two of whom were officers.

At last they prepared to return. But just at that moment the rattle of oars in rowlocks was heard, and the moon, suddenly escaping from behind a cloud, revealed the presence of no less than three Federal man-o’-war boats.

“Would they, could they, or should they fight?”

Captain Brewer asked himself. "Nay, nay, all are brothers in a scene like this."

He now hailed the advancing boats.

"We sank your gun-boat," he cried, "and we have lowered boats and picked up all that have not disappeared."

"Thank you," was the reply. "Can you transfer, or do you wish to take those you have saved as prisoners?"

"Prisoners? No, no, sir. But the sea is too rough to transfer here. Come with us to my ship."

In less than half an hour the *Mosquito's* boats were drawn up, the half-drowned men were being seen to on board; the Federal boats lay on the lee side, and the Federal officers were down below partaking of hospitality in the saloon.

The lieutenant in command was but a young man, but handsome and bold-looking. He extended his hand with a smile to Captain Brewer.

"You are one of the bravest and most generous men," he said, "I have ever met. I trust to God, who rules all things, that I may some day have an opportunity of repaying you for your kindness to our poor fellows. Many a ship's commander would have gone on and left them to their fate."

"I hope," replied Brewer laughing, "you never may have the chance of repaying me for what after all was

a duty. But come, you will stay to supper. By the time we have discussed that your men's clothes will be dry."

"Supper, Captain—er—er—."

"Brewer, at your service."

"Thanks, we'll gladly stay for supper."

In the *deshabille* of borrowed dressing-gowns and slippers the two officers picked up from the gun-boat joined the mess, while their rescued shipmates made merry round the galley fire where their clothes were steaming.

"Sambo," cried the captain, "splice the main brace forward. Don't forget the men in the boats alongside. Hand them down pork and biscuits also."

The officers remained on board the *Mosquito* for three hours, but never a word about the war was spoken. Tales were told and songs were sung, and the lieutenant in command took Lucy on his knee as if she had been his own child.

And yet these men hob-nobbing and smoking so happily are sworn enemies. Who could believe it?

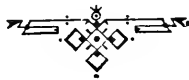
"Oh dear! Oh dear!" said Captain Brewer, as the Northerners rose to depart. "How sad it is that brothers such as we are cannot agree!"

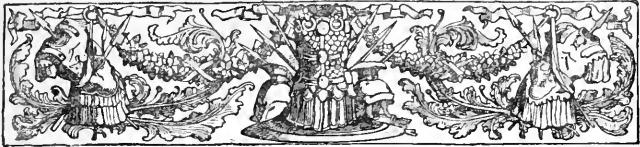
"Alas! The pity of it!" answered the lieutenant. "To-night we're good friends and hand in hand, to-morrow mortal foes, at daggers drawn."

"Good night, little sweetheart!" he said, laying his hand on Lucy's head. "Don't forget Lieutenant Sellar. Who knows but we may meet again in happier times! Mrs. Brewer, good-night! Thank you for the music! I've spent such a jolly evening, and all so unexpectedly! Captain Brewer, you're every inch a sailor. May God reward you! Adios!"

And over the side they went, receiving a cheer as they pulled off, and returning three times three.

Next morning, after her long cruise and strange and terrible adventures, the *Mosquito* was safely anchored off Mobile.





BOOK II.

THE BURSTING OF THE STORM.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE LONG MARCH NORTHWARD.

TWO months have passed by since the arrival of the *Mosquito* with munitions of war at Mobile. Osmond and Kenneth have bidden their good friends the Brewers farewell, with many a heartfelt hope that they would all meet again in happier times.

Both our young heroes were burning now to get on to the front. Before leaving England, Osmond had written to his cousin Harry telling of his determination to come out and to join the war as a free lance or soldier of fortune, and also of the good luck he and his friend Kenneth had met with, in getting berths on board the *Kathleen O'Mara* and the promise of a Confederate ship to convey them to Charleston.

He could not be certain, however, that this letter would ever reach his cousin.

It did so, however, and Harry, after a month, had been in daily expectation of hearing from Charleston. He was astonished, therefore, when he received a letter one day from the city of Mobile, in which Osmond enlarged on all his adventures.

“My wound is almost well now, however,” he said, “thanks to the tender nursing I received on board from Mrs. Brewer, but more particularly from her charming little daughter Lucy. Oh, she is only a child, Harry,” he continued, “or, I declare to you, I should be heels over head in love with her! Stay, though, cousin mine, I must be candid with you. I must ask myself the question, is it possible for a young fellow of eighteen, of the poetic temperament and romantic—whimsical, my dear brother Dick used to call it—to fall in love with a young lady who won’t be in her teens for another month? I know you are laughing at me, Harry, but really my heart is strangely touched by this child’s tenderness and affection. And she is not like other children. To me she seems ever so much older, and I have often found myself talking to her and asking her advice on subjects quite serious. What a silly I must be! Was that what you said, Harry?”

“But oh, cousin, our parting was the saddest on earth! I was taken to a lovely villa in Mobile belonging to a friend of good Captain Brewer, and I believe half the good people in the city called on me and

Kenneth. It was so good of us, everyone said, and so gallant to come out from England to fight for the freedom of the Southern States. At first I wasn't able to go out at all, but there was scarcely an evening Kenn wasn't at a ball or party. I think you will love Kenn, though he isn't so romantic as I. But every night he came back with the same story, 'Fallen in love again, Os.' And it was with a different lady each time.

"But no one has been able to prevail upon Lucy to go anywhere. She wouldn't go to ball or party, she said, but preferred to nurse her brother. That's me. Never mind grammar. 'That's I' would be more correct, I know, but it sounds so stilted and stuck up.

"Poor Lucy! when she came to say good-bye at last she fairly broke down. She hung around Wolf's neck, and wept. She was quite the child then. So I lifted her off Wolf and soothed and kissed her, and told her I should never, never forget her. Well, well, well—it's all over now. And next comes the war and fighting. They say—that is, some poet said:

'The paths of glory lead but to the grave.'

"Well, I declare to you, Harry, that if I thought I was never, never going to meet gentle Lucy again I should follow the path of glory to the grave, and welcome the rest. Good-bye till we meet."

In about two weeks' time the good ship *Mosquito*

left Mobile. She would have to run the gauntlet of the Federal cruisers once again, and Osmond prayed for her and all that were in her day and night.

There would be little fear, however, of another mutiny. Captain Brewer, of course, kept his promise to the cutthroat portion of his crew and did not give them up to justice, but he did not again ask them to go back with him on his new cruise to England.

Osmond and Kenneth had plenty of invitations to join regiments preparing to go to the front. They were even offered commissions. But as they were determined to join the corps in which Harry and Will were fighting they steadfastly refused. However, they journeyed up north with a regiment, and a wild and strange march it was. They learned a deal about camp-life, however, and sleeping as they did every night within tents that hardly kept out the weather, they both got as brown as half-ripe bramble-berries, and about as hard in muscle as the main-stay of a jolly old frigate.

The men they had to chum with on this march were rather a rough lot, but hearty and jolly withal. For the first time in his life Osmond realized the real meaning of the term "Republicanism". Why, when off duty in this bold squad, Tommy was as good as his master; the private, indeed, was sometimes much more of a gentleman than the officer, and smoked and drank

coffee with him on equal terms. But on the line of march, or at any time when ordered to fall in, the men were most obedient.

Through woods and wilds, through valley and glen, over morass and moorland and prairie, across stream and through many a dismal swamp, they journeyed on right cheerily day after day, northward, ever northward.

The men were somewhat unkempt, and certainly spent but small time at their toilet, but Osmond noticed that they were exceedingly careful of their clothes, especially their boots and shoes, which, during the day, most of them slung over their shoulders.¹

Both Osmond and Kenneth followed their example, though they had each a bag or kit slung to the side of pack-mules. They had been offered the use of horses, but refused. They wanted, if the truth must be told, to show that Englishmen were quite as hardy and fit to stay when on the war-path as even Americans. And I believe they quite succeeded.

Our young soldiers of fortune were, on the whole, somewhat hazy and uncertain as to their future. This question occurred to them more than once, Were they right in giving their services to the Confederate army? Or were they thus committing some breach of neu-

¹ Many of the privates preferred to wear tweed jackets and slouch hats to uniform, and when a Federal or many Federals were killed they were quickly divested of their boots.

trality, for which, if made prisoners by the Federals, they were liable to be shot?

Osmond one night, while seated by the camp-fire, put this same question to the captain of the company, under whose protection they were travelling.

He was a tall, raw-boned, brown-skinned soldier, with long hair, and a very broad sombrero sort of a hat.

He was sitting with his back to a form, and now and then throwing a handful of withered needles on the fire to make it blaze up.

He took two or three whiffs of his huge cigar before he replied:

"Wall," he said, "I guess it's like this, young 'uns. Es long's you keep with us you're mighty safe; but if the yellow-skinned Yanks cotes ye, yer backs against a wall and half a dozen cartridges will put ye out o' yer misery. But, bless yer souls, it's the quickest and easiest death out. Have a drink."

He handed them a bottle as he spoke.

"It's the best old rye," he explained.

The young fellows shook their heads, but thanked him all the same.

So he had a long pull and a strong pull himself, then lit a fresh cigar.

One night something occurred that showed Osmond and Kenneth how lightly life was valued by men like



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"YOU MUST DIE AT DAYBREAK," SAID CAPTAIN STUART;
"TAKE HIM AWAY, CORPORAL."

these. They and the commandant—Stuart was his name—were being made much of at a farmer's cosy fireside. Osmond had just been asked for a song, and was commencing, when a loud knocking was heard at the door.

The farmer's buxom black-eyed daughter opened it, and two armed men came in. They dragged after them a handsome young dark-bearded man, whose arms were firmly bound to his chest with pieces of stout rope.

"Sergeant Simpson, isn't it?" said Captain Stuart, without taking his pipe from his mouth.

"That's my name, sir," said Simpson, boldly.

"What's the charge?"

"Found him two miles from camp, sir, planning an attack on us at midnight. We shot the two Federals, and took the traitor alive."

"You lie," shouted Simpson; "I'm no traitor. I'm a Federal, and true to my government, even if I have followed you rebels."

"Then I guess you're a mean cur of a spy."

"Call me so, sir, if you like."

"No bluff; ye know you are, and you must die at daybreak. Take him away, Corporal. Stop, have you any favour to ask, prisoner?"

"None from you, old Reb. But if that young fellow here"—he looked at Osmond—"will put his hand in

my pocket, he'll find a letter to my young wife in Richmond. Maybe, being an Englishman, he'll have the goodness to deliver it."

Osmond glanced at Captain Stuart, and received a nod of acquiescence.

As he was taking the letter out, the unfortunate man half-whispered in his ear, "Tell my wife when you get to Richmond that I died like a man, and kiss my child for me."

There was moisture in his eyes as he spoke, and a sad look in his face, the only evidence of weakness he evinced.

"Now then, Mr. Osmond Lloyd," said Captain Stuart, when the prisoner and his guards had gone; "now for your song."

But there was no more singing in Osmond that night.

At no great distance from the camp stood a large oak, and across a limb of this, at early dawn, a long rope was thrown. Soon after sunrise the spy was led out. They had given him a cigar, which he was quietly smoking. He was somewhat pale, but otherwise resolute and firm.

"Boys," he said quietly, as he stood under the branch, with the ugly bight of rope round his bare white neck, "long live the Union! Now, lads, catch a hold; you stick to your end o' the rope, and I guess I'll stick to mine. Good-bye; see you later on."

Osmond and Kenneth were inexpressibly horrified at the whole proceeding; but far more so when next moment the rope broke, and the wretched man came to the ground with a dull thud. He was coolly raised to the sitting position till a fresh rope should be bent, and presently opened his eyes and gazed around him dazedly.

"This can't be heaven," he muttered, with a faint smile. "Too many rascally Rebs around me."

The next attempt was successful, but the death was a cruel one; and for long minutes the body was convulsed, while dark blood trickled from mouth and ears.

Ah! war is a terrible thing, and civil war is the very worst kind!

It was a lovely morning when the corps resumed its march to the music of the band; the sun had been up some time, and a kind of purple mist hung all over the woods and the distant hills.

As they passed the fatal tree Osmond looked up. The corpse, to his astonishment, was still swinging there, moving to and fro in the breeze.

Captain Stuart noticed the young fellow's look of astonishment.

"We never hardly buries 'em," he said, smiling. "Just leaves 'em a-swinging. Ah! you'll get used to it all by and by."

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In a few days' time, the little army, which now numbered quite a thousand, reached a rather wild forest land, but a land of hills and streams also, on the borders of Tennessee.

Beautiful though it was, the population was limited; but the people seemed comfortably off and well-to-do.

In this district Captain Stuart assured Osmond he felt sure of finding a great many recruits.

"I guess," he said, "I'll quite swell my little army out o' here."

Well, it was evident enough, at all events, that no one had as yet gone from this forest land to swell either the ranks of Federals or Confederates.

The niggers appeared to be a little lazy, and perfectly contented with their lots.

"Bress de Lawd," one old white-haired slave said to Osmond, "we dunno nuffin about de wah down heah. We jes mos happy to lib wid Massa and the young white folks, and when we dies we done go to Jesus."

Osmond had met the old man coming from the woods up through the large clearing, in the middle of which stood a beautiful log-house, with verandahs on two sides; and although it was the beginning of December, flowers were still trailing over it. In this clearing Stuart's troops were encamped for the night.

The nigger was leading a little black girl.

“Dis piccaniny am my gran’chile,” he told Osmond.
“She happy too.”

“You happy, sah?” he continued, suddenly turning questioner. “I go down on my knees and pray foh you, sah?”

Osmond hastened to tell him there really was no occasion.

“Den,” he said, “we march along togedder to de ole log-house, and I sings to you all de time.”

Osmond couldn’t object to that. So on they went together. The negro’s song began somewhat as follows, but I forget how it ended:—

“Der is a land ob pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign;
Infinite day succeeds the night,
An’ pleasures banish pain.”

Near to the garden that surrounded the old log-house, a neatly-dressed white child of fairy-like beauty came bounding to meet the negro, her arms outstretched and her yellow hair floating on the wind.

“Uncle Tucker, Uncle Tucker!” she cried, “I’s so glad you’ve dot back. Such a lot of pretty soldier men, and boo’ful swords and guns, have comed. Run, Uncle, run and see them.”

Uncle Tucker didn’t run. He stopped, though, and placed his huge black spade of a hand on the child’s head.

“Bress de Lawd, my chile, foh all His goodness, but dese men am all goin’ to fight and spill specious blood! Come, we will sing to His praise, Miss Lizzie.”

And once more Uncle Tucker commenced his song. But he had taken Miss Lizzie up in his arms, and as he marched along her soft peach cheek was leaned lovingly against his snow-white head, and her long hair fell over the nigger’s shoulder.

It was a pretty picture.

Osmond’s welcome by the host and hostess of this log mansion was very hearty and sincere. Captain Stuart was there too, of course, with two of his lieutenants and Kenneth.

Before he retired, the commandant, much to his joy, had succeeded in rousing the warlike spirit in two of the planter’s sons. To-morrow they would be certain, he thought, to join the ranks.

That night, however, he and his men had an enemy to fight they little dreamed of encountering.

CHAPTER II.

FIGHTING THE FOREST FIRE.

IT must not be supposed that all the Confederate or seceding States were made up wholly of people unfriendly to the Union. No, quite the reverse; and

throughout all this long march, especially as they got farther to the North, Captain Stuart and his men had to look out for foes and for treachery even in his own camp.

His corps now, however, was big enough to defend itself against any open attack either by night or day, or against roving bands that appeared now and again, and kept up a kind of guerilla warfare.

Still, for the catastrophe that occurred this particular night, Stuart was no doubt right in blaming Federal foes.

All had turned in; and sleep reigned among the footsore and weary soldiers, who had put in a very long day's march. Only the sentries and pickets were very much on the alert indeed. The last thing that Osmond remembered as he covered himself with his rug and lay down, was the bright and holy stars shining in through the door of the tent.

He dropped off almost as soon as his head touched his pillow of grass, and was dreaming of his home far away in Merry England. Eva was in that dream, and they sat together as they used to sit in the dear days that now seemed so long gone by. They sat in the old library with Wolf by their feet. Suddenly it grew very dark, he thought, and Wolf began to whine and press his great head under his arm. He felt suffocating too, and so he suddenly awoke. He

awoke coughing. Sure enough, Wolf was by his side.

The tent was filled with smoke.

As he rubbed his eyes and tried to think he could hear a wild shout of—

“Fire! Fire! The forest on fire!”

Next minute the drum beat to arms, and the bugle sounded the assembly.

Osmond and Kenneth dressed hurriedly and rushed out. For a few moments they could see nothing, as the smoke was everywhere, but soon a red glare was visible far away to the west, rising in sheets, higher and higher, till it reached the zenith, then dying down once more only to rise again in a minute’s time redder than before, as if the fire beneath was increasing in fury.

Osmond found himself beside Captain Stuart. He was busy enough giving orders, but did not hesitate to answer the question put to him.

“Is there danger?” Osmond had ventured to inquire.

“Danger! Yes; lots of danger. It is the work of incendiaries, and if they only succeed in firing the forest in front as well as behind us, we will be hemmed in and burned or smoked like rats in a blazing stack-yard.”

“Can we be of any service, my friend and I?”

Captain Stuart replied quickly enough:

“Yes, you can. I am despatching men under the command of two sergeants to the right and to the left to try and find the incendiaries before they set fire to our front. Go with them, boys, one of you to each party. The sergeants are old scouts, and as clever on the war-path as Sioux Indians.”

“We are ready. Which is my party?”

“That yonder. And this is yours, Kenneth. My orders to you are, if the incendiaries be caught they are to be tied to trees that the fire they have raised may reach them and their fat go to feed it. The cowardly villains!”

This was an order, however, that Osmond had no intention of obeying, should they succeed in trapping the fire-raisers. But there was no time for argument.

Fire, when it succeeds in getting the upper hand, is indeed a terrible thing. But no one who has not seen a forest or a prairie on fire can judge of its fury and its merciless power. In summer-time or in early autumn it is more frequent in the wooded districts of Western America than in winter, and may even rise spontaneously, probably from the rubbing of one branch of a tree against another in a breeze of wind. In early winter the trees are leafless and bare. The forest, for instance, which Osmond and his party now entered was composed for the most part of pine trees, oaks, chestnuts, and beeches with a rank growth of

underwood, and in such a forest at such a season of the year, fire could hardly originate spontaneously, scarcely even accidentally. It must have been the work of men, whom Stuart could hardly have been blamed for calling fiends incarnate.

Many of the trees, moreover, were old and covered with withered lichens; and in the more open spaces among the pine trees, the ground was thickly covered with the needles that had fallen from above, season after season, for many years.

Captain Stuart had now only one thought, namely, how to escape with his little army, and to save at the same time the people at the log mansion where, but a few hours before, he had been so kindly welcomed and entertained.

There was no time to lose, therefore, so the camp was struck at once and the heavy baggage loaded on the pack-mules. These mules were less sensitive and less timid in the presence of the awful danger than many of the horses, that were snorting and rearing and plunging in deadly terror. One or two had already escaped and dashed wildly away to the woods.

When a forest fire, like that which was now raging and spreading every moment, is fairly alit, it rushes onwards with terrible speed, at fast at times as even a horse can gallop. It heats the air, too, far in front

of it, so that by the time the fire reaches the trees, they are dry, hot, and ready to blaze.

The party that Osmond accompanied was soon swallowed up in the black depths of the forest.

It was a mystery to our hero how the sergeant scout managed to steer in the right direction. He had but the glare of the fire to the west, and now and then the gleam of a star in the east, to guide him. Yet on he went, his men following, silently, in Indian file.

Nor was the sergeant trusting to blind chance. He had his plan of action. He was crossing the forest, and his object was to find a trail—the trail of the incendiaries. In his left hand was a tiny bull's-eye lantern, which he opened now and then, turning its light earthwards or on the bushes around.

“Ugh!” he said at last. The slight exclamation caused his men to close up around him. He was standing in a little glade and pointing downwards. There, sure enough, on the moss, were footprints, and a little way farther on were some broken twigs where bushes had been pulled roughly aside. “Now, boys,” he cried, “may the Lord guide us, and we'll soon have our hands on the throats of the murdering villains!”

A strange kind of prayer, thought Osmond.

“Follow in silence, but we'll have to run,” continued the sergeant.

In two hours' time,—and what a long weary two hours it was,—they came up with those they were in search of. Seven or eight of them there were, but so busily engaged raising a pile of half-dry brushwood and trying to light it, that they did not hear the approach of the sergeant's party until they were quite surrounded.

The fire had already begun to blaze, and its ruddy light shone in the face of the startled incendiaries and on the stern, set countenances of the determined Confederates.

"Time's up!" shouted the sergeant. "Resistance ain't in it. Up with your hands, or we fire!"

"Surrender to rebels! Never! Charge, boys!"

The *mêlée* that followed was sharp and terrible. It was soon over, however, for the sergeant's party was three to one. Rifles rang out. The sharp crack of revolvers followed, and then the fight was finished with knives.

It was well, perhaps, that in the excitement of the terrible "tulzie" the commandant's order to catch them alive and tie them to trees had been forgotten.

Not a man was left alive. Dreadful to say, however, the breath could not have been out of some before they were tossed into the fire.

The action of one powerful negro who had come with the party was something that Osmond could

never forget. He seized the man that had last fallen beneath his blows, and swinging him round his head, commenced to extinguish the flames with him. He had clutched him by the legs, the wretched man's arms flew loosely round as if he were alive, which it is to be hoped he was not; while the gigantic negro, thus fighting the fire, looked like the very incarnation of evil.

In a few minutes it was all over; so far, the danger was past.

As they returned—it was now nearly daylight though the sun could not be seen—they struck the main road that led from the planter's farm. It was evident that the corps had pressed on, so they rode after and soon overtook them.

Osmond was astonished to hear that the planter himself had determined to brave out the fire-storm.

"He is a gone coon," said Stuart. "We did all we could to induce him to come along, but he wouldn't budge, and his niggers remain with him."

Let us now revert for a moment to Kenneth and his party.

They searched the wood for hours in vain for a trail, and then returned towards the plantation to report. Finding that the regiment had gone, bag and baggage, they made their way as well as they could to the planter's house. It was getting darker and darker

every minute with the rolling clouds of smoke, though now well on in the day.

At the farm-steading they found that all was confusion and excitement. Kenneth met the planter's wife and younger children at the door of the house. They seemed almost distracted with fear.

They would be burned alive, she said. She had seen forest fires before, but never anything like this. Mr. Stallworthy, her husband, had trusted to the stream that ran through the woods to stay the progress of the fire, but it had leapt over that barrier, and was now rapidly approaching the plantation and farm-steading.

Kenneth found Stallworthy himself at last. He was making hasty preparations for flight, angry with himself now that he had not done so sooner, and accompanied the soldiers in their hurried march.

Kenneth and the men under the sergeant helped to harness the frightened horses to the wagons, and to hold them after they were put to. This last was the more difficult part of the business, for the poor brutes were trembling and perspiring with terror.

"I am a ruined man," said the planter; "I can save no property, but shall thank Heaven on high if I can but save the life of my wife, my children, and my dear old mother."

The fire was now making rapid progress, and so dark had it become with the smoke, that when Kenneth and three men left the out-buildings to assist Mrs. Stallworthy and children to reach the wagons, for a time they could not find the way.

They succeeded at last, however. The mother was bed-ridden and had to be carried out wrapped up in a blanket.

It was terrible to hear the moaning of the frightened cattle, that doubtless thought they were to be abandoned to their awful fate.

The negroes of the plantation, while preparations for flight were being made, worked like heroes, not only in helping to pack the few valuables that an attempt was being made to save, but in fighting the fire. Yes, it had come so near now, that flaming balls and fiery, glowing pieces of bark weré falling all around, and these the niggers actually jumped upon and extinguished with their naked feet. All this, too, mind you, amidst a gloom and darkness that was almost like that of midnight.

At last the wagons are ready, and the women and children on board.

But the cattle, they must be released now. The sergeant and Kenneth with a few negroes volunteer for this service. As they rush towards the out-houses, to Kenn's surprise they came across old Uncle Tucker.

He was on his knees praying aloud to God to avert the dread calamity, and save the old plantation, "pore ole Massa's propetty".

"Come with us! Come with us!" cried the sergeant. "You'll be burned alive. You must work as well as pray."

Thus adjured, and after being actually lifted to his feet, the old negro consented to come along.

At the first byre or cow-house they came to, a fearful fate nearly befell three of the slaves who had gone in to let loose the poor, frightened cattle. For the first few set free closed the door on themselves, and no strength that those who were outside could bring to bear on it, could force it open.

"An axe! an axe!" cries the sergeant. Yes, but who knows where to find one.

The roof, too, of an adjoining barn is already in flames, and that of the cow-house covered with flying, fiery cinders.

At last, and only just in time, they find a fallen tree, and with this they dash the door in pieces, and both men and cattle are saved.

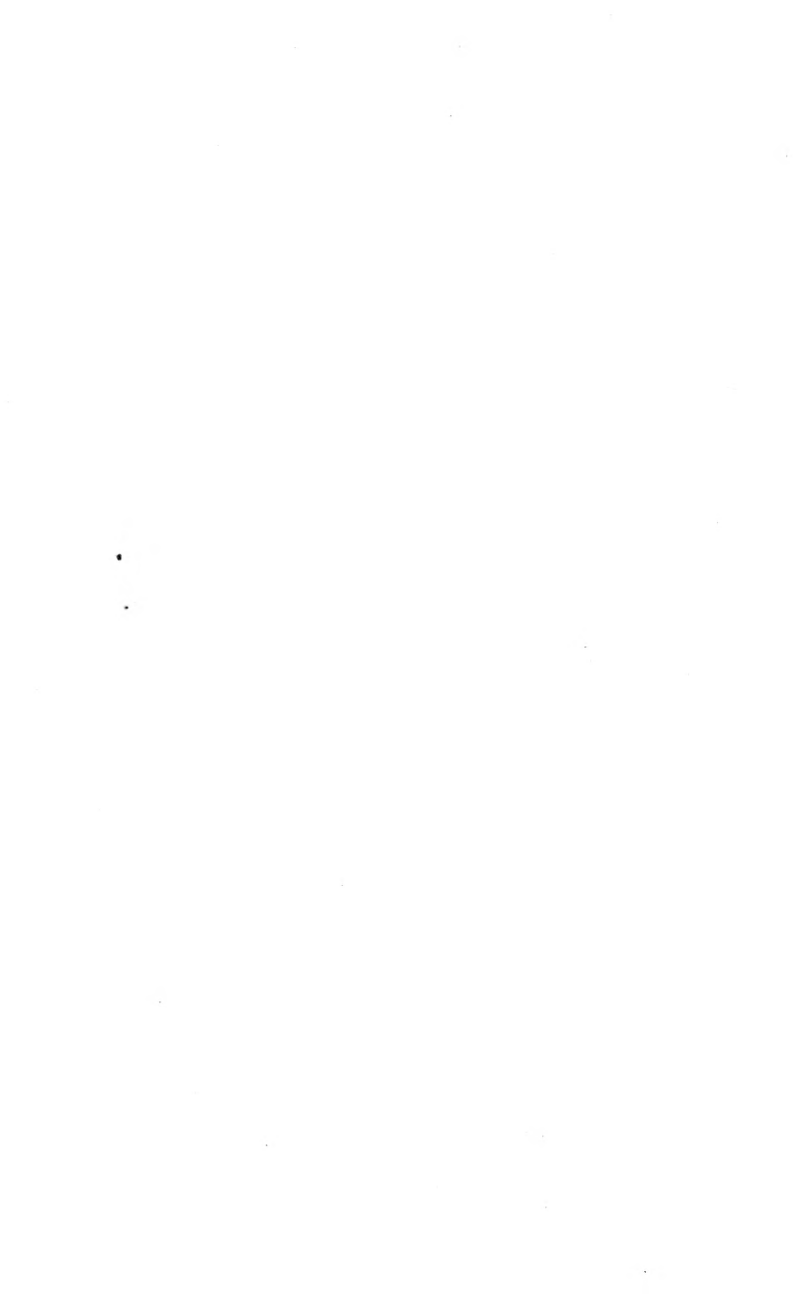
No sooner are the beasts free, than they madly stampede away towards the eastern forest, and Kenneth and party, with innocent old Uncle Tucker, have now to fly for their lives.

Oh, indeed it is a race for life! They have retained



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"ON AND ON THEY DASH AT A BREAK-NECK GALLOP
THROUGH THE FOREST FIRE."



one wagon, and in this, with two horses driven by Kenneth, off they dash.

It seems impossible, however, that they can escape. They have found the road, it is true, but what a road it is! Bumpy, ruddy,—terrible. And the woods at each side have caught fire, the branches of the pine trees blaze like gigantic torches, their stems are like molten gold, the underwood is a sea of flame, and on the high, gusty wind sparks and fiery cinders are blown along on the rolling clouds of smoke, as thick as snow-flakes in a wintry storm. On and on they dash at a break-neck gallop, trees falling on each side and the roar of the flames drowning the rattle of the wheels. No danger could be more extreme, yet our young hero Kenneth seems to rise to it, and with it. He sits firmly on his seat, firmly does he grasp the reins, and firmly feel his horses' mouths; for well he knows that if one stumbles and falls, the forest fire will win the race, and their blood will be licked up by the awful heat, and their bodies turned into cinders even before the fire can reach them.

On, on, and on.

On and on for one long hour. And at length the horses have won, and all is saved! But the danger Kenneth and his new friends have come through is one they will never on earth forget.

CHAPTER III.

AT THE OLD PLANTATION.

OSMOND'S arrival at the old plantation, as Cousin Harry called his home, was as sudden as it was unlooked for by those upon the place.

It was as much a surprise for Osmond as for anyone else. He had had no idea he was so near to it. He and Kenneth had fallen some distance to the rear, for the scenery all round was beautiful in the extreme. The two friends, after the mid-day halt, had climbed a hill to enjoy the view, while Captain Stuart and his men rested and smoked.

An old negro whom they found fishing in a stream volunteered his services as guide.

"What a charming country!" cried Osmond, after they had gained the summit of the hill. "Who would not live in such a land as this? Who would not fight for it, die for it? Why, Kenneth, I had expected to find the country about here all prairie land, or partly prairie, partly swamp. But oh, look, Kenn, look! Look at the rolling woodlands, the mighty stretches of forest land, the grand old river meandering through the wide and well-cultivated valley, and broadening out as it reaches the far-off lake. We have no such lakes in our country, we have

no such rivers, no such still, green rolling forest. And look, too, at these mountains away in the west yonder, raising their purple summits in the blue ethereal sky. Kenneth, don't you feel inspired?"

"Os, old man, haul your foreyard aback. Come off your high horse and talk plain English. I wouldn't give London, nay, nor Liverpool itself, for all I yet have seen in America. We may not have hills like these, nor such forests either. But we have forests that are better far—we have forests of masts. Ay, and we have hills too with which, lovely as they are, these we see here can but ill compare, for every wave that rolls around our island home is but one of a watery chain of mountains that protects the pride and honour of dear old England."

"Bravo, Kenn! Bravo!" cried Osmond. "That is good; good—er—for you."

Kenneth laughed and turned to talk to the negro.

"And you live not far from here, Uncle Tom, don't you?" he said.

"I lib not fah from heah, sah, for true; but, sah, my name am Uncle Neile, not Uncle Tom. You see dat beautiful plantation, sah, not fah from de green wood. You see de verandahs all aroun'. Wid de glass you see de white missies play in de garden. Dat am my proud home, sah. I'se gettin' ole an' stiff now, and my hair is bery white, but de ole massa's

chil'en dey lub poor Unele Neile, and Uncle Neile he nebber leave dem now. No, sah, no.

"S'pose," he added, "de Yanks come and dey 'man-cerpate us, all de same I lib wid massa and de chil'en. But pore massa, with Harry and Will, they done gone fight de Federal sodgers."

Osmond now pricked up his ears, figuratively speaking.

"An' oh, young gemlems, it am bery, bery sad; dere am no one lef' at 'ome but Massa M'Donald to—"

"Uncle Neile, is it possible," cried Osmond, "that I am near to my cousins' plantation? What is your master's name, the owner of that beautiful farm?"

"Massa Bloodworth, sah, foh true."

"Kenneth, Kenneth!" shouted Osmond. "Hurrah, Kenn, why, we're home at last! Shake hands, Unele, shake hands, old man. I am the cousin of Harry and Will. I have come out all the way from England to fight side by side with your young masters."

Old Uncle Neile was speechless for a moment, but the tears rolled down his cheeks.

"Bress de Lawd! Bress de good Lawd!" he cried. "It was de Lawd, sah, who sent you heah."

There were no more thoughts of scenery now in Osmond's head. With the old negro the two young men hurried back to camp and told Captain Stuart of their discovery.

"I guess you must wait here for a day or two then," said Stuart. "Give my love to all at the plantation. No, no, 'twouldn't do for me to wait. My country needs my men, and any day or hour now we may have to fight. Off with you! Come on to Richmond as soon as you can. Bye-bye! Ah! we're bound to meet again."

So farewells were said, and in less than an hour Osmond was sitting in the cheerful drawing-room of Brookland Manor, with his aunt and cousins around him. It is needless to say that Kenneth was there also.

Everything in and around the Manor looked thoroughly English, even the dresses of his girl cousins. They were all young—the five of them, the eldest being but sixteen—and all pretty.

And how much like being at home it all seemed! The children were at first a little shy with Kenneth, but Osmond was a cousin, and they treated him like a brother from the very first.

Wolf too was an object not only of love, but almost adoration, and the honest dog seemed to know he was among friends, and behaved accordingly.

"O, you must not go to-morrow!" cried sweet Katie, the eldest.

"Nor for a week," said another.

"Oo must stop a whole monff with us, oo must," said the youngest little cousin.

Osmond laughed.

“Kenneth,” he said, “war or not war, I think we must stay for just a week.”

“War or not war, we will,” consented Kenneth.

What a happy evening that was, and how thoroughly the young folks, and even Mrs. Bloodworth, enjoyed the company of the strangers!

“And still,” she said, “you don’t seem like strangers. Osmond, dear, your name is a household word with my poor boys, and it seems as if we had known Kenneth all his life.”

And songs were sung and tales were told and games were played, and when the silver-toned clock on the marble mantel-piece at last chimed the hour of twelve, nobody would believe it, and it was unanimously agreed that they should stay up another hour. What did time signify on such a night as this!

But before they retired, late though it was, a hymn was sung and a prayer was read, then away to their room marched Osmond and Kenneth, Mrs. Bloodworth herself showing them the way, in quite a motherly fashion, to make sure that everything was comfortable.

As soon as she had said good-night and retired, the boys drew their rockers close up to the cheerful fire that burned on the low hearth. To be sure, the beds,

with their snow-white curtains and drapery, looked very inviting, but Osmond had a letter to read that had been sent from Harry at the seat of war to await his coming.

“Listen now,” said Osmond. “Listen, Kenn, and you, too, Wolf. We must read this before turning in, mustn’t we?”

“I should think so, indeed.”

Wolf knocked his great tail against the floor three times. It was as long and as thick as half a flail.

That was Wolf’s way of saying “Yes”.

““Camp, near Manassas,
““November, 1861.

““My dear old cousin Os,—You’ll receive this at Brooklands. And what a welcome you’ll have! Oh, wouldn’t I like to be there to meet you! But, dear Os, we haven’t whipped the Federals half enough yet. So make haste to help us. Why, I often say to Will, and he quite assents, that if we but saw you among us it would give us extra courage and go. Now, don’t let my sisters detain you! You know what girls are. Every day is precious. Father has written to Richmond headquarters, and he has got two of our best generals to add a postscript. You are sure of commissions, both of you. We are half sorry that your friend Kenneth has determined to join our navy or

fight only in forts—(this part of the letter referred to a communication Kenn had made to Osmond's cousins)—but as he is so good a shot with great guns, it is doubtless all for the best.

“‘And now I am going to tell you a little about how things have gone since you left England.

“‘Mind you, we haven't been victorious all along the line, but there is no repelling our advance, and in six months' time you'll find that the remains of the Federal army will be flying for their lives back to Brooklyn and New York city.

“‘There are many things you will have heard that I need only mention in this short letter, and I'll tell you more when we meet.

“‘Have you heard of the battle at Wilson's Creek? That is over Missouri way, you know. A great state is Missouri, and if you consult your war map you'll find St. Louis, and away north of it, in Illinois, lies Springfield. Now, General Lyon commanded the Federals about there, and was one of the bravest generals the enemy had. All honour to the brave, Os, even if they do belong to the foe. Colonel Sigel was another officer. Well, the two of them combined to attack our forces that were then pouring northwards over Missouri. The two armies met at Wilson's Creek, and the fight was hot and desperate. It is said that the Feds had 13,000 men, and that our side num-

bered 8000. But, Osmond, this is but a Yankee version of the story of this fight.¹

“‘ Anyhow, Osmond’—are you listening, Kenneth?”

“Of course,” said Kenn. “I’m listening.”

“But,” said Osmond, “it was Harry who spoke. The words are here in the letter.”

“‘ Anyhow, Os, we thrashed them, and they fled in disorder, leaving 1200 dead and wounded. Our losses were little over 1000.

“‘ But poor Lyon, the brave Federal, fell sword in hand. Though wounded, he was leading his troops bravely on when a ball struck him dead from his horse. Remember what your Macaulay says, Cousin Os,—

“‘ But how can man die better
Than facing fearful odds,
For the ashes of his fathers,
And the temples of his gods?’

“‘ Yes, my boy, even the Confederates seemed to mourn the untimely death of brave Lyon, for, mind you, lad, we are real soldiers now, and we already know something of

. . . ‘The stern joy that warriors feel
In foemen worthy of their steel.’

“‘ I will now come nearer home, and describe in a

¹Allowance must be made for Harry’s enthusiasm. I doubt if the Federals numbered over 6000.

few brief sentences a fight in which Father, Will, and I took part.

“The city of Lexington—high up on the Missouri River—was laid siege to by our fellows, and for a time gallantly defended by the Federal Colonel Mulligan, but on the 20th of September he was obliged to give up his sword to our bold Price, who, like the gentleman he is, returned it to him as a well-merited testimony of his valour.

“Then came the battle of Ball’s Bluff on October 21st. This Bluff lies on the southern side of the Potomac, ’twixt Washington and Harper’s Ferry.

“I am sure we thought we were safe from attack that night in camp. It was on the 20th of October, and bitterly cold. Harry and I sat long that evening by the fire, for the boys were merry. Songs were sung, and yarns spun, as your sailor friend Kenneth would say, and we drank unlimited coffee to stimulate ourselves, but nothing stronger, I assure you.

“At last we turned in, Will and I. Whenever we have a chance we sleep in the same tent and the same rugs keep both of us warm. Dear Father belongs to another corps, and so we seldom see him, but every night we pray for him, and for you too, Os, and all at home.

“Now, this battle speaks well for our courage and our *elan*, for next morning the enemy was on us

before we had cleared up breakfast. They advanced across the fields.

“We, on the other hand, took possession of the woods, and our fire was fierce and furious. It was no part of our intention, however, to remain concealed, so while the enemy’s artillery fire filled the air like iron hail, while shells burst around us on every side, while war’s thunders roared and clouds of smoke rolled over wood and field, we dashed upon the foe.

“Never yet have I seen so spirited a charge! Our yells spelt victory long before we crossed sword or bayonet with the Feds, and in a very short time we carried everything before us, and the routed enemy was hurled down the bluff into the river. It is here where, the Feds tells us, the tragedy came in. They say we massacred them, that we swamped or sunk the boats in which they strove in vain to escape, and shot them like seals in the water.

“Ah, me, Osmond! there may be some truth in this.¹ But our men saw red, they were for the time being battle-mad, and so—it is best to draw a veil over this part of the fight.

“It is true, however, that the Feds lost 894 killed and wounded, and that their rout need not have been so complete had they fought more like men and less like boys. . . .

¹ There was, I fear.—*Author.*

“The next thing I have to report to you is one that will interest your friend Kenneth. If you will glance at your map, then, cousin mine—and I am sure you never go about without one—and allow your eagle eye to sweep down the Atlantic coast past Charleston in South Carolina, before it reaches Savannah it will strike Port Royal.

“This is a port of no small importance—I’m not making a pun, cousin—to the enemy, for alas! the enemy has occupied it in spite of all we could do. The fact is, Osmond, that although we have the best army, the Federals have the best navy, and it is getting greater and stronger every month, so I am told. Well, with their navy they will blockade all our ports as completely as they can. On the other hand, we are not going to be idle, even at sea. So we are getting ready fast cruisers. Several of these will be built in America, and several—whisper it, Osmond—in Great Britain. So it will be a kind of double game. The Federals will try to keep us poor and starve us with their blockade, but we shall try our level best to sweep their commerce off the seas.

“However, as to Port Royal, you must know that I wasn’t there myself, only a birdie who was on board the *Wabash* has written to tell me. If I were perfectly sure that this letter would reach you safely I would let you know who the birdie is, but we are never sure

into whose hands letters may fall, even when they pass through friendly lines.

“As to getting communications from the enemy’s fleet and army, I can assure you that it is not half so difficult as some may suppose.

“But let the birdie speak for himself.

“Dear old chum, I don’t know how often I may have a chance of writing you, but the mere fact of our being enemies is not going to prevent us from remaining fast friends. I’m not going to give away any secrets, however. Just you bet your bottom dollar on that. So I shall only speak of the past, and let you know as occasion offers what we have done, not what we mean to do.

“Well, Chummy, you know by this time all about the blockade we are instituting all along your coasts. We are going to keep the rebels in their holes. So our good President Lincoln—God bless his homely face!—determined to have a great central long-shore depôt midway on the coast for the storage of everything our blockading fleet might need, not only powder shot and shell, but grub and grog and ice, to say nothing of coal, surgical stores, and nasty-nasties in the shape of quinine, salts, senna leaves, and mustard plasters. So old Abe thought that Port Royal would suit right down to the heel. And then, lad, he fitted out a monster fleet in Hampton Roads. It was just

about the biggest thing in fleets the world has ever seen. If we had been at war with the all-fired Britishers, and had encountered them with a fleet like this, I figure and calculate that we'd have sent their ships all to the locker of Davie Jones, Esq., in the twinkling of a binnacle lamp; and you know we Yankees never boast.

“Well, first there was the grand and invincible frigate *Wabash*—that's my ship—and then we had fifteen fighting gun-boats, five-and-thirty steamers with guns, and five-and-twenty sailing ships. The whole show was run by Admiral Dupont, and our chief soldier is a man who is going to give you fellows fits before many months are over. His name—don't you forget it—is General William Tecumseh Sherman, and he had 20,000 troops under his command.

“Well, Chummy, if your Southern prejudices can stand it, I'll tell you more.”

CHAPTER IV.

THE FEDERAL FLEET AND THE FORTS.

I'VE been often told, Osmond,” said Kenneth Reid, drawing his chair a little nearer to the cosy fire, “that the Northerners weren't given to drawing the

long bow, and that letter of Birdie's is proof positive they don't boast."

"Shall I read on, then, or are you getting sleepy?"

"Sleepy? No. Heave round, lad."

"Well, Chummy mine,' Birdie's letter went on, 'we got up anchor and tracked away from Hampton Roads. Now, middies on board a man-o'-war are expected to be all eyes but no ears; I couldn't help, though, listening to what the admiral said to the captain when he came on the quarter-deck that first afternoon. It was my watch, and I had business aft.

"The admiral had a squint round with his glass first.

"Keeping well together, are we?' he remarked.

"The captain gave a little light sort of a laugh.

"Well, yes, Admiral, I'm not sure that at present we aren't a trifle too close together. I hope this isn't going to be a kind of a Spanish Armada on a small scale.'

"Eh? What? Spanish Armada! What are you getting at?' said the admiral, looking somewhat uneasily around him at sea and sky.

"Only this, sir. The glass is going tumbling down, and every now and then we have bits of puffs of wind. They ain't what you'd call squalls, they don't raise white horses, but they're just what we'd

expect to precede a gale. And note, sir, how red and angry-looking the sun goes down.'

"'Well, well, well,' said the admiral, 'you're right to be careful. So make the signal to shorten and trim sail.'

"'The *Wabash* set the example, and in half an hour's time every ship in our great fleet was as snug as a bran-new hammock.

"'But the captain was right, old man, and when I turned out to keep the middle watch I was glad to get into oil-skins and sou'-wester. It was blowing a sneezer, and no mistake.

"'We were close-reefed and as close-hauled as we could be. The orders to the whole fleet had been to keep a good offing, and it seemed to me the old *Wabash* was going tack and half tack out to sea. But the *Wabash*, mind you, is a beautiful creature, and can walk to windward of about anything with a keel to it.

"'My beautiful eyes, Bill and Harry, but it did blow just. I had a green sea fair in the teeth when I got first on deck, but I staggered bravely on to the quarter-deck and received my orders. Speaking trumpets that night were a necessity of life, lad, for what with the row and turmoil of the dashing waves, the flapping of canvas, the tumbling of the ship and groans of her timbers, to say nothing of the rattle of

rudder chains and wild howling of the wind through rigging and shroud, no man's voice could have been heard half a fathom's length from his lips.

“I don't think we made much way, and we didn't want to. We didn't want to walk away from the rest of the fleet, you know.

“I'm a good sailor, Chummy, but I can tell you this, I wasn't sorry when eight bells were struck and the other watch was called.

“Didn't I sleep sound, though, after it, but lo and behold! when I went on deck next morning it wasn't blowing quite so much, yet there was hardly a ship of all our fleet in sight. It had been a sad night for some of them, for several transports were run on shore or dashed to pieces on the rocks.

“Well, Chummy, that was the storm; now for the battle.

“The *Wabash* was off Hilton Head, on the south side of the entrance to Port Royal, on the 4th of November, and soon after we bumped over the bar. Yes, bumped is the right word, lad, for we touched ground more than once, and with such force too, that even the guns seemed to jump sky-high, and men on deck were thrown on their faces.

“With the exception of our four lost transports, we had now got all together again, and a brave array we made. It made my heart beat kind of proudly,

I can assure you, to look around me and behold so gallant a fleet. Ah! Chummy, when the Northern States alone can make so brave a show at sea, what is it that North and South combined could not do? But this is what it has got to come to.

“Now, my chum, at Hilton Head was a mighty earthwork (Fort Walker) with five-and-twenty huge guns, capable, if well-manned, of doing thundering execution, and right across here on the northern side, about two miles away, was Fort Beauregard. We had to smash these two forts, and off Parry Island, higher up, was your Confederate fleet of seven ships of war.

“Eight hundred of your plucky South Carolina soldiers manned these forts when the fight began.

“My station was on the foretop, and my duty to see and report everything going on in your lines. I daresay your gun-boats wanted to come out, but they couldn't. We sent enough of our ships to scare them.

“It was as pretty a sight as ever I wish to behold. We sailed right up the centre, firing at both forts; then put about and came thundering down in line past Fort Walker, giving them fits ship by ship, first our pivot-guns and then our broadsides; then we put about again, and repassing Fort Walker at a closer range, so as to confuse the beggars, gave them first pivot and then port.

“Our ships, you see, thus described an ellipse, and soon caused an eclipse, lad, for that fort, by the time we had come round on the third tack, was knocked into smoorach, the guns anyhow, and the gunners—dead, wounded, or flying for their lives.

“Then we went to settle our score with Fort Beauregard. But the Fort Beauregardians—pretty guardians they were!—hardly waited to fire a shot, and so they got away with their scalps all on and no holes in their skins.

“Don’t imagine that this was a bloodless battle. We had over fifty killed and wounded—in the whole fleet, I mean. One cannon-shot knocked our port bow to skirrimush, another deluged our quarter-deck with gore, and I saw them hauling dead men to one side, and the surgeon, all smothered in blood, and with his coat off, putting tourniquets on the wounded. I had begun to think that the battle had come to an end, and was thanking my stars I was in so safe a position when a beggarly old shot, that seemed to have lost its way, came along humming a song to itself. It made straight for the foretop, and carried away part of it. My eyes! Chummy, if I hadn’t been a Federal, wouldn’t I have been frightened, just!

“The admiral himself, seeing me pitched out of the top, and thrown half-way down the rigging, to which I clung like feathers to tar, looked up.

“‘Are you killed, Mr. Midshipman?’ he said.

“‘No, thank you, sir,’ I replied, ‘not very much.

“‘The admiral laughed, and the battle raged on.

“‘Well, Chummy, I now finish off this letter by telling you that the Rebs lost five times as many in killed and wounded as we did.’”

This was all the extract that Harry gave from his friend’s letter, and his own said little more, simply ending by praying Osmond and Kenneth to be good boys and hurry up to the front.

.
It was late next day—that is, it was nine o’clock—before Osmond and Kenn got down to breakfast.

The family were all there, and so was big brawny Scotch M’Donald.

“Ah, boys,” he remarked, “you’re going to the front to fight the foe. May Providence protect you. But I’ll be happy when this awful war is over. O, sirs, it’s a fearful thing when brother draws knife on brother. D’ye mind what the Psalmist David says, and ye know, boys, he was the sweet singer of Israel—in my mind, he ranks far above Shakespeare and Milton, and next to Burns himself—

“‘Behold, how good a thing it is,
And how becoming well,
Together, such as brethren are,
In unity to dwell!’”

“Will you ask a blessing, Mr. M'Donald, for I'm sure the boys are hungry?”

Thus adjured by Mrs. Bloodworth, the manager pulled a very solemn face, and, with his great broad Scotch bonnet in front of his broad Scotch face, asked a blessing as long as an evening prayer.

The boys listened reverently, however, but I am bound to say that they ate almost ravenously when it was done.

.

For five days Osmond and his friend remained on the beautiful plantation, and many a delightful picnic and ramble they had with the girls, and, let me add, the dogs, by meadow and lake and stream and through the great forest itself.

The dogs were of all sorts and sizes, but chiefly terriers.

At times a fishing expedition was got up on the lake, and if they didn't catch many fish they enjoyed the rowing, and returned home, happy and hungry, to dinner and to spend a long and pleasant evening in the drawing-room.

It was a jolly time, but, O, so brief! Somehow, happy though he was, Osmond could not help feeling that he was doing wrong by staying so long. His place was at the front.

Since their arrival in America many a long, long

letter had both lads written home to parents and friends. From the former they had already received replies, and, O, gladsome news! they were forgiven!

One day Kenneth found Osmond very earnestly and energetically engaged with needle and thread and a patch. It was in the bedroom that Osmond sat, and close to the window.

Kenneth burst out laughing.

“O,” he cried, “could you not have got some of the black maids to do your sewing. Old Aunt Neile has put on a whole lot of buttons for me.”

Os didn't laugh.

“This is something no one but I can do,” he replied. “There, you see, it is nearly finished.”

“Why, it's a pocket on the under and left side of your waistcoat!”

“Yes; and do you know what I'm going to stow away therein?”

“Your pocket-book?”

“No, old man, but mother's last letter and Eva's.”

“Nobody else's? Come, out with it, you old humbug. You're blushing like a tramp at a twopenny roll.”

“Well—yes, a dear wee childish letter from little Lucy Brewer.”

“O, by the way,” said Kenneth, sitting down by his friend's side, “talking about being in love, you know—”

“But who was talking about being in love?”

“Don’t be silly, Os, but listen. Now, do you know your Cousin Katherine is about the nicest girl that ever I have met during all my long and eventful career?”

“Long and eventful fiddlesticks, Kenn. You’ll tell me next you’re in love with her.”

“Yes, and truth it is. But I wouldn’t say so to her for all the world.”

“Ha! ha! How absurd!”

“And how about sweet Lucy Brewer—is that absurd?”

“A child. Come, old man, we’ll change the subject.”

“Changed it is, then. Uncle Neile is going to take you and me to a ’possum hunt this afternoon.”

“Hurrah! But I daresay it will be rough on the ’possum!”

“Maybe, but they were given to the darkies for food, and they will hunt them.”

.
At seven o’clock—a bright moon shining in the south—Uncle Neile, with Os and Kenn, and the dogs, started for the forest.

It was pretty evident that the dogs had been there before, and knew the lay of the land. Anyhow, they speedily treed a ’possum. That was got down and killed—poor beastie! and then another. After this, I

think Uncle Neile was about the happiest old nigger in all the Southern States.

“Makes me most laugh to tink ob it,” he said. “Now, you, and two tree ob de leetle missies, you come down to-night to ole Uncle Neile’s cot, and you jes’ toast ’possum foh de fust time, and you nebber, nebber fo’get it.”

“We’ll be there, Uncle,” cried the boys cheerfully. “Nine o’clock? All right, we sha’n’t forget”

Nor did they. There was Osmond himself and Kenn, and the three eldest cousins, and as they marched away in the moonlight towards Uncle Neile’s little cottage, singing and laughing, they seemed as happy a little crew as one could wish to see.

Even Wolf thought so, for after running on a little ahead he would come trotting back and bark at them most gleefully.

Then he would cock his great head and listen; for an echo—only it was an Irish one—sounded from every part of the plantation, beagles, terriers, and collies were barking in response.

Uncle Neile had lit a few extra candles that night, and fastened them in candlesticks round the walls; these candlesticks were simplicity itself, for they were fashioned out of pieces of dried pumpkin. But there was a bright and cheerful fire burning on the hearth, and a real table-cloth on the table, which was beauti-

fully laid out with real knives and real forks and a few horn spoons. There was real cider too, and seats for all. Auntie Neile herself presided. But old Uncle had been the cook.

Well, really, I must say that the smell of that 'possum was very appetizing, and there was pork as well as 'possum, and big dishes flanked the banquet containing vegetables, greens and floury, sweet potatoes, and pumpkin pie.

Before serving out the dainties, Uncle Neile said grace. But it wasn't a long one like M'Donald's. I have met many niggers, good and holy, but I never yet knew one who spent a long time in asking a blessing when there was a dish of steaming 'possum right beneath his nose.

"Bress de gibber ob all good. Bress His holy name. Amen, Amen, Amen."

That was Uncle's grace.

"Now, chil'en," he said, seizing the knife and fork, "I'se goin' to serve he out. Dis pore 'possum nebber climb de trees no more. Mammy, you serves out de pork, and your turn for 'possum'll come soon's de chil'en all served. Bress de gibber ob every good thing."

The "chil'en" being served, Uncle Neile helped Auntie and finally himself most liberally. For a time he was silent, and so was Auntie also, but it was

evident they were thoroughly enjoying themselves, nevertheless.

“Dis am a feast ob fat things,” he said at last, but in a reverential tone of voice. “When de prophet he speak ob a feast ob fat things, what he mean, Mammy? He mean pork and ’possum. Dis am what his mind am a running on, pork and ’possum. Chil’en, put you’ plates all roun’ a secon’ time. Den arter dat de pore big dog he eat up de fragments.”

But Wolf had already come in for a good share of tit-bits, so had Cousin Katie’s Scotch terrier, and Uncle Neile’s cat.

Well, on the whole, it must be allowed the young folks did make a hearty supper.

After this old Uncle must sing a hymn, which I believe would have been almost beautiful had not Auntie joined in with cracked and quavering voice all out of tune.

It would have done your heart good, reader, if you are at all fond of dogs, to see the satisfaction displayed on Wolf’s great honest face after he had eaten every ’possum bone and licked the plates.

Uncle Neile looked down, with a critical eye, at these dishes.

“Well, Mammy,” he said, “de dishes won’t hardly need no washin’. Bress de gibber ob ebery good thing.

“And now,” he added, “the chil’en will dance.”

He took down his old fiddle as he spoke, and screwed it into tune, and started a plantation jig forthwith.

Wolf took the hint and got out of the way, and there were two hours of just as hearty fun as any one could wish to see.

“Now,” cried Kenn, “I too can play a jig. Give me the fiddle, for, Uncle Neile, I won’t be happy unless I see you dance with old Mammy.”

“Come erlong then,” cried the old man. “Dere is life in dis old darkie yet. Come along, Mammy.”

“You mustn’t stop till the music stops,” cried Kenn. Then he struck up a rattling Irish jig, and at it the old couple went.

Such a jig it was too. Osmond confessed the whole scene was better than a pantomime, and I fear Kenn played longer than he ought to have done, for the ancient couple were obliged to sink at last exhausted into their rocking-chairs.

Well, by and by “Auld Lang Syne” was sung, then good-nights were said, and so the parting came.

John M’Donald had come to see them home.

“On the whole,” he said, “what d’ye think, boys, of our plantation and our slaves?”

“I think,” said Osmond, “your slaves are ten times more happy than our Yorkshire mill-hands.”

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The moon had sunk behind the western hills before Os and Kenn retired that night. But they were up betimes next morning, nevertheless.

It was their last morning at the old plantation, for a time at least, for a party of volunteers passed that day for the front, and our heroes joined them.

After they were a long way on the road they looked back, and there in the verandah were all Osmond's cousins waving their handkerchiefs.

Then a wood shut out the view, and they saw them no more.

CHAPTER V.

WAR BY SEA AND LAND.

MANY months have gone by since Osmond and Kenneth ate 'possum in Uncle Neile's cot at the old plantation.

It is June once more—June, 1862. Osmond has had the exceeding good luck to be appointed lieutenant in the corps in which his two cousins, Harry and Will, are serving as captains. He purposely joined this regiment as a private, and remained so for over three months. He did so rather than take a commission in another regiment that would have deprived him of the company of those he so loved and respected. Besides, he wanted to see service in every phase.

Very eventful months these had been in more ways than one.

The Federals, by this time, had well recognized the fact that if they were to beat the Southerners at all, the victory would not be a mere walk-over. It was going to cost them deep and dear in blood as well as in money.

Well, if the North and South now hated each other more than ever, they had likewise begun to respect each other. There was far less boasting now than when the war began.

If the Federals lost a battle, they did not deny it.

“We were well whipped,” they would have told you, “but we’re going to win next time. You watch and see. And,” they would have added, “we’re going to win in the long run too—never mind what it costs us—and when the cruel war is over we’ll take the South by the hand again and say right heartily, ‘Brothers yet!’”

The New Year of 1862 may be said to have begun well for the North, for although they had to give up Messrs. Mason and Slidell, whom they had taken off a British ship, they won the battle of Mill Springs on the 19th day of January.

The immortal General Grant, whom Scotland rightfully claims as a son of her soil, had come upon the stage, and the fight for the Mississippi had begun.

There wasn't much, apparently, that was going to stand long in the way of the great Ulysses S. Grant.

The fight, I say, for the Mississippi had commenced.

"That river is going to be ours," said the North.

"Not if we know it," said the South.

I would like the reader to take a glance at this mighty river from its source right away up to nearly its mouth. A capital exercise in geography, I can assure you.

Well, as far back as the 7th of November, 1861, Ulysses S. Grant had got down nearly to Belmont. Here he encountered a force of Confederates, much smaller than his own, and had made up his mind to utterly annihilate them, when up dashed brave Ex-bishop Polk, and the Federals had to retire, Grant as well.

Ah! but Grant was the man to make sure and certain. He was a canny as well as a daring Scot.

Well, the Confederates now got together a big army in Tennessee, and they also fortified Fort Henry on the Tennessee and Fort Donelson on the Cumberland river. They also strengthened and garrisoned Fort Pillow and Island No. 10.

And now the next move of the Confederates was a bold dash upon the Federals near to Mill Springs, in the south of Kentucky.

As usual the rush and charge made by the "Rebs",

as the Federals usually called them, was bold and spirited in the extreme. The fight took place early on a cold wintry morning, the 19th of January, 1862, the movements of the Southern army of about 6000 having been entirely concealed by the thick white mist that lay over all the land.

Perhaps the Northern army, under General Thomas, heard their enemies before they saw them, for the latter advanced at the double—I might almost say the triple—like the Highlanders of old, with yells and wild slogans.

The Federals could not withstand so terrible a charge, and fled in disorder. Not all, however. There were brave Western men there from Illinois and Iowa, who stood shoulder to shoulder against all the South could do. General Zollicoffer, who bravely led the "Rebs", fell dead from his horse, but again and again they hurled themselves against the sturdy backwoods-men. In vain, in vain! and so they fell back at last, tired, disheartened, utterly defeated.

They lost over 400 killed and wounded, and their retreat to their entrenchments was very like a rout. Here they were shelled, and the Federals, in course of the day being greatly enforced, determined on an attempt to surround and capture the whole force, but during the darkness of the night that followed, the Confederates succeeded in escaping.

Perhaps they had been too sure of victory. *Elan* and dash are grand factors in a fight, and have won many and many a battle, but staying power is of even greater importance, and the backwoodsmen of Iowa possessed this. In fact they did not know what it was to be beaten. They had come there to fight; very well, they stood there and did fight. That was all.

Fort Henry was next captured by Grant on the 6th of February, and the other fort, Donelson, surrendered ten days afterwards to the same general.

Next came the capture of Nashville, the capital of Tennessee itself.

I must, however, say a word or two about Donelson Fort, because its capture was really a great victory for the North.

Soon after the fall of Fort Henry the Confederates had increased the garrison in Donelson until it is said to have numbered about 20,000 men.

It was found impossible to reduce the work until it was first and foremost bombarded by Admiral Foote's gallant little gun-boats.

Grant had an army of 27,000¹ before the fort, and he relied upon Foote doing quite a deal to assist him, but his gun-boats did very little damage indeed to the stronghold, and they were so badly battered, that for a time they were obliged to lie off.

¹ Some authorities give his strength as nearly double this.

The Confederates had done many a plucky thing, but they were soon to learn that even pluck becomes foolhardiness when not tempered with common sense.

Grant invested the place now; laid siege to it, in fact. He was all the more anxious to capture the whole army within it, because one of the generals within was Floyd, who had left the Washington Cabinet branded as a traitor.

Grant wanted to talk a little to this man; perhaps he meditated hoisting him to some handy tree. However that may be, he wanted him.

But little did Grant know, even then, of the desperate courage of these Southerners. They made a sortie just one hour before sunrise on the 15th of February.

And for a time they succeeded all too well for the comfort of Grant and his merry men. They penetrated into the very centre of the camp of the enemy, driving regiment after regiment before them in the direst confusion, and covering the ground with dead and wounded.

Meanwhile the gun-boats had got the range, and played hard and heavy on the Confederate squadrons, while Grant, the undaunted, rallied his men, fighting as only he could fight, and finally driving back the Southerners yard by yard into the fort.

In a day or two after this, seeing that only death

by starvation would be their doom, the Confederates surrendered.

Could they have held out longer? The answer, I think, is "Yes". Think of Plevna and many another notable siege besides.

Floyd escaped. He fled. Flying was his strong point. Ulysses S. Grant is said to have lowered his brows when he heard the news, and bit his lips till the blood came. I don't believe, however, that anybody does that sort of thing except in books.

Well, this capture or surrender of Fort Donelson caused deleterious changes in the location of the Southernns.

As I have already said, Nashville was evacuated, and Generals Beauregard and Johnston had to fall back through Tennessee to the very borders of Mississippi and Arkansas.

The next fight of any importance in the war was the battle of Pea Ridge in Arkansas. It was really a three-day fight, and here fell the brave Confederate General M'Culloch.

It was indeed a terrible tulzie, but ended in the retreat, and therefore in the defeat, of the Southernns. But victory had cost the Northernns over 1000 men.

Still more furious and terrible fighting was soon to follow, and did follow on the 4th of April.

Before, however, saying a word about the clash of

arms at Pittsburg Landing, I must tell you the story of the *Merrimac*.

Kenneth Reid had joined the Confederate navy, after having been stationed for some time in a coast port. He joined with the rank of lieutenant. Nowadays he would be dubbed gunnery-lieutenant in my own service—the Royal Navy—and he really was an excellent gunnery man.

My information concerning the doings of the *Merrimac* are culled from letters that now lie before me from Kenneth to his friends. No portion of any of these letters has ever yet been published, but I am under no restrictions to suppress anything they contain, and indeed most of their contents belongs to history itself.

The letter is dated May 15th, 1862.

“Dear Boys Three,—At long last I have found time to write you. Twenty times, if once, I have before now begun a letter to you and assured myself it was going to be a long one, but, alas! it never advanced farther than a few lines.

“Well, while you are still ‘in camp and tented field’ I am afloat in a gun-boat. Yes, a gun-boat, boys. Terrible down-come you will say from life in the brave, big, though ugly *Merrimac*, with which we had determined to humble the pride of the North at sea. But heigh-ho! I sigh to her memory. The *Mer-*

rillac is the pride of our hearts no longer. She is gone, and I and my brave messmates are like the children in Mrs. Hemans' poems, you know—

“‘Severed far and wide
By mount and stream and sea’.

I daresay that you have already heard of some of our bold doings in and with the *Merrillac*, but my version may be more home-like.

“Well, boys, it appears that the Federals have been for a long time labouring under the impression—delusion I call it, and I think I am not far out—that they have just as many friends in the South as in the North. They evidently quite made up their minds about North Carolina. If they could but succeed, they thought, in landing an army there, the people would welcome them right and left, and flock around their standard.

“And so, you see, General Burnside—and a right brave fellow I believe him to be, albeit an enemy to our cause—was despatched from Maryland early in February with a perfect armada and an army of 20,000 men. They sailed south and away along the coast till they came to Roanoake Island, and round this they steered to land in Albemarle Bay by the Croatan Sound, the strip of water 'twixt the island and the mainland. They had, however, our forces by

land and sea to reckon with. We had three forts on Roanoake and a fleet of gun-boats behind a long line of piles and sunken ships. Instead of coming on to fight us by sea, the Federal armada contented itself with bombarding our forts from sea, one of which they set on fire. So the desultory fight went on all day long, and in the afternoon some of Burnside's troops attempted a landing under the protection of the guns of the ships. It was a plucky thing to attempt, for just where they struck land was a dismal swamp, while the shore was mud. There was but little resistance offered by our few soldiers, who depended more on the forts and gun-boats.

"A dark and dismal night closed in shortly after sunset. The rain came down in torrents, but still the disembarkation was continued until nearly 10,000 troops were in the marsh.

"I suppose General Burnside thought that anything would be a pleasant change to the gloom and discomfort of so awful a night, so the order to advance on the fort was given. They marched in three divisions, one along the road, preceded by a howitzer battery, the other two through the swampy woods on each side.

"Let an evil story be soon told, boys. The Confederates, under a heavy fire, rushed boldly forth to attack the centre of the attacking force, and fought

for a time without perceiving that they were outflanked on both sides by the right and left divisions.

“Victory soon declared itself now on the side of the enemy, and we were driven to the mainland. But Burnside, in the capture of Roanoake, had made himself possessor of five or six forts, with all their guns and small arms, and no less than 2000 prisoners.

“This was a very good beginning to a winter’s morning. The Federals made themselves as snug as possible now for a few weeks, and I don’t blame them.

“By and by they landed on the mainland, and near Newbery encountered us once again. Our positions were well entrenched, but though we fought like wild cats for three hours and a half we were whipped again.

“Heigh-ho! it sounds as if it were all whipping, doesn’t it, soldiers?

“But wait a bit till I tell you about the *Merrimac*.”

CHAPTER VI.

THE STORY OF THE “MERRIMAC”.

THE *Merrimac*, you must know, then, boys, was a resurrection ship, to begin with. Don’t you understand? Well, the fact is, that at the time the

navy dockyards at Norfolk came into the possession of the Confederates, this very ship, then a powerful frigate, was sunk. But she was raised again by our clever engineer, and converted into a splendid ironclad, with guns of extra power, and sides so slanting that the enemy's shot would glance off her like rain off a duck's back.

"I can tell you, lads, I was a precious proud young fellow when I found myself appointed to this iron ship of war. My commander was Captain Buchanan, a thorough sailor, and a dashing, dare-devil fellow. No one could have been better suited for the work.

"It took quite a long time to get all ready, but on the 8th of March we came down the river Elizabeth, accompanied by two steam tenders, and made for the mouth of the James River, where, at Hampton Roads, were anchored the Northern navy ships *Congress* and *Cumberland*.

"As we came down the river and made for the open water, people who saw us rubbed their eyes and stared—rubbed them and stared again. Well, we certainly looked a grim and awful spectre. Never mind; we were going to fight, and not a heart on board was there that did not beat high with hope and expectation.

"The *Merrimac* as yet, remember, was but an experiment. How could we tell that the broadsides of

the enemy would not tip the plates from off one side, and cast us on our beam ends, or cause us to turn turtle and sink like a stone?

“It was well on in the afternoon before we got round to Hampton Roads.

* * * * * *

“That little line of stars, boys, is put down there by way of giving me breathing time. I call them stars; printers, I think, call them asterisks; girls call them kisses. This is a joke; but ah! friends, friends, when I think of that terrible fight in Hampton Roads, there is little joking in my head. Till that afternoon, when we steamed up to and past the *Congress*, I had known but little of what the horrors of naval warfare could amount to.

“I shudder, boys!

“Was it murder? Again and again do I ask myself that question.

“Is war after all but legalized murder? Who legalized it? Not God, oh surely not God, Osmond! But listen.

“We cared but little—nothing, in fact—for the broadside of the sailing ship *Congress*. The shot fell around us, they struck on hull and sides, they glanced from off our armour like peas from a boy’s pea-shooter.

“The *Cumberland* was our first quarry.

“We were the hawk; she the helpless bird.

"Go ahead at full speed!"

"Buchanan's eyes seemed to flash fire as we bore rapidly down on that doomed sloop of war.

"We were received with a fire that would have sunk a wooden ship or riddled her fore and aft. The *Cumberland* was a vessel with five-and-twenty guns, and nearly four hundred men all told.

"And now a cheer rises from the bold and daring fellows that form our crew. It is half-smothered, because we are nearly all below, but even the men in the engine-room know what is coming, and grasp at the nearest supports.

"Then our guns ring and roar. Every piece of ordnance we can get to bear upon the enemy we fire. We rake her from stem to stern. Then the *Merrimac's* head is turned a few points—next moment—crash! our ram has struck her beneath the water-line, the blazing coals fly out from under the boilers, our stokers and engineers are nearly smothered, but, wrapping their heads in wet cloths, bravely do they stick to their work. We back off now; our awful work is finished, yet still our great guns roar, and the *Cumberland* reels backwards and forwards under the force of our iron hail.

"Those on board the *Congress* look on aghast, as do the officers of other ships. That, they think, is no ship—it is a fury from regions infernal.

“Yet all honour to brave Captain Morris, who fought the *Cumberland* so well, and to the last. Ah! but see, she is sinking now, and now she is down; yet, strange to say, the water has not quite engulfed the topmasts, and the stars and stripes are left fluttering bravely out in the breeze.

“Is that a bad omen for the Southern cause, I wonder?

“But oh, the pity of it, boys! for the sick and the wounded sink with the living on board that doomed sloop of war.

“Meanwhile the *Congress* has been run on shore, but though this saves her from our terrible ram, it does not shield her from the fury of our guns. She is soon on fire in several places, and in the confusion and darkling of the night more than half her crew of well-nigh 500 men perish, are killed or drowned, or—horrible!—roasted alive.

“At midnight she blows up. But long before this, one by one her guns, as they become heated, had gone off. There was something solemn in the sound. It was like a death-knell for the departed heroes. Would you believe it, Osmond, there are tears in my eyes as I pen these lines? If it were you, my romantic friend, this would be something not altogether marvellous. But for me—plain, matter-of-fact Kenn Reid—But there, I'll tell you what has brought those tears to

my eyelashes. It was by reading a poem by Longfellow on the ill-fated *Cumberland*.

"I know not whether it is yet published; I have it here in manuscript. Shall I write it for you?"

"Oh, you dear old stupid Os, I know you answer 'yes'.

"At anchor in Hampton Roads we lay
On board of the *Cumberland*, sloop of war;
And at times from the fortress across the bay,
The alarum of drums swept past,
Or a bugle blast
From the camp on the shore.

"Then far away to the south uprose
A little feather of snow-white smoke:
And we knew that the iron ship of our foes
Was steadily steering its course,
To try the force
Of our ribs of oak.

"Down upon us heavily runs,
Silent and sullen, the floating fort;
Then comes a puff of smoke from her guns,
And leaps the terrible death,
With fiery breath,
From each open port.

"We are not idle, but send her straight
Defiance back in a full broadside!
As hail rebounds from a roof of slate,
Rebounds our heavier hail
From each iron scale
Of the monster's side.

“Strike your flag!’ the rebel cries,
In his arrogant old plantation strain.
‘Never!’ our gallant Morris replies;
‘It is better to sink than to yield!’
And the whole air pealed
With the cheers of our men.

“Then, like a kraken huge and black,
She crushed our ribs in her iron grasp!
Down went the *Cumberland*, all a-wrack,
With a sudden shudder of death,
And the cannon’s breath,
For her dying gasp.

“Next morn, as the sun rose over the bay,
Still floated our flag at the mainmast head.
Lord! how beautiful was Thy day!
Every waft of the air,
Was a whisper of prayer,
Or a dirge for the dead.

“Ho! brave hearts that went down in the seas!
Ye are at peace in the troubled stream.
Ho! brave land! with hearts like these,
Thy flag, that is rent in twain,
Shall be one again,
And without a seam!

“Well, boys, on board the *Merrimac*, we were as happy as school-boys, or as happy, Osmond, as old Uncle Neile at his ’possum-feast—Oh, don’t you remember the old man’s face, Osmond, and the delicious savoury steam of the ’possum? Wasn’t it just too awfully lovely for anything?

"But bad luck was in store for us.

"Our intention was now to capture the *Minnesota*. She, however, had got aground while passing up a channel, so we could not get near enough to board her, although her tenders were crowded with troops for this purpose.

"Little did we know what we had to encounter. For a turret-ship suddenly slid ghost-like into view, and another vessel, called the *Ericson*, also came up to do battle with us.

"Brave Buchanan, my captain, had not hesitated to expose himself on the night before, and consequently he was wounded. So I myself, Osmond, was second in command.

"The turret-ship was the *Monitor*, and she seemed perfectly invulnerable.

"Again and again we tried to ram this terrible vessel. Again and again our object was defeated, while the shots we poured into or on her did little harm. They glanced off her decks or off her turrets, just as Longfellow expresses it, like hail off slates.

"My new captain, in lieu of poor Buchanan, was the first lieutenant, Catesby Jones, and surely never did man fight better. We were really engaging three at one time. The odds were too much, and after doing unquestionable damage to all the ships, and killing and wounding not a few men—though we ourselves had

two killed and twenty wounded—we were obliged to retire.

“ We got to Craney Island sadly down by the stern, and expecting every minute to sink.

“ If we have done more good, Osmond, than sinking the *Congress* and *Cumberland* it is seen in the fact that the Federal Commander-in-Chief M'Clellan will hardly now venture to make his way to Richmond by the river.

“ Meanwhile I am without a ship proper, for we had after all to blow up the dear old ram after M'Clellan's success at Yorktown.

“ Not even on paper must I tell you yet, dear Osmond, and boys all, where my gun-boat is bound to. But as soon as I can you will hear more.

“ Thine, dear lads,

“ OLD KENN.

“ P.S.—By the way, Osmond, I have heard from the old plantation, from Mrs. Bloodworth herself, and inside was the shortest and sweetest little note you ever read from Katie. I believe, Osmond, I shall adopt your plan, and go in for an inner pocket on the left side of my waistcoat.

“ Kiss Wolf's great head for me. May the Lord keep and guard us all, and change our bad luck, for

really, Osmond, for the time being our cause seems to be under a cloud."

A cloud had indeed fallen over the fortunes of the Confederates.

The Mississippi was lost to them.

I want you to bear this in mind, reader, and just consider for a moment what a loss this was to the brave Southerners!

I beg of you to bear it in mind. I think my friends—and every reader of mine is a very dear friend indeed—I think, I was going to say, that my friends will give me the credit of not being a mere matter-of-fact, dry-as-dust teacher of history. I want to tell my story as I go on, and show what brave young fellows like Osmond, his friend, and Osmond's cousins can do in a cause they consider righteous and good. But the whole story of the American Civil War is a mighty romance, and a tragic poem from beginning to end.

Hurrah! Then on we go down the Mississippi with the Southerners. I told you about the fall of Fort Donelson and about the three days' fighting at Pea Ridge, which cost the Federals so much of the blood of their very bravest men.

Well, Beauregard, our old friend, took command in the West. He was cautious enough to restrain himself until he had thoroughly reorganized his force. He

said that he had come for the express purpose of bringing the Federals to book for the reverses they had caused to the South.

General Albert Sidney Johnston was put in supreme command of the army of the Mississippi, and with him were Generals Polk and Hardee.

Those names are difficult to stow away in one's memory if one is a Britisher, but we must try, because they may pop up again now and then when least expected.

And now came a little ray of light through the dark cloud that was hovering over the Confederate fortunes.

Grant, after recruiting till his army was well-nigh 50,000 strong, crossed the Tennessee, and established himself at Pittsburg Landing.

"The enemy is not so powerful," he told one of his generals, "as to attempt to attack us."

"No," was the reply; "they are not such fools."

As it turned out, it was good for the Confederates that Grant was of this opinion.

But at dawn of day on April the 6th the Southerners, under brave Beauregard, came up, and fell like an avalanche upon the astonished Federals.

It may be observed that the Confederates were fond of an early morning attack. In this respect General Beauregard resembled Bonnie Prince Charlie when he went to interview Johnnie Cope at Prestonpans. The

Highlanders were down upon Johnnie before he had time to rub his eyes, so he at once made his feet his friends and ran.

But Grant himself belonged to an old Highland clan, and there wasn't much run about him. To use an Americanism, "he didn't scare worth a cent".

Yet so sudden and terrible was the onslaught that there was not only no time to strike tents and form into battle array, but these were actually riddled with bullets, and officers were shot in their beds, the wounded lying helpless and glued to the ground with their blood, through all the fearful two-days' fight.

Federal General Sherman—who hasn't heard of this hero?—was worth an army in himself. It was his corps that had to withstand the first and most awful shock of battle, but on his horse he was here, there, and everywhere. He was wounded at last, however, and then his shattered regiments retired in confusion.

In this hot battle, and in the centre of it, was bold young Osmond Lloyd, and not far off were his cousins Harry and Will.

Osmond's sword had already been drawn on the field of strife, but this was in reality his baptism of fire and blood.

What a day that was! The battle had lasted for twelve long hours, and Grant and his Federals were

utterly routed. He had lost his artillery, and over 3000 prisoners were taken.

What a day! Yes, and a sad one too, for the Southerners had their head General, Albert Sidney Johnston, killed in the fight. Sword in hand fell he towards the close of the battle.

And the boy-soldiers, Harry and Will, had to sit that night beside the prostrate form of their dear father. He had been shot through the thigh while bravely leading a charge, and surgeons had amputated the limb on the ground where he lay.

The Confederates slept on the field of fight, Beauregard, who had now assumed the chief command, having determined utterly to annihilate Grant and his forces next day.

Beauregard swore he would.

Alas! man but proposes; it is God who disposes.

During the night, while the Confederates lay asleep among their dead and wounded, Grant received the reinforcements he had been waiting for, and thus the Southern general had next morning to fight a fresh army.

He was forced, therefore, to retreat to Corinth, whence he had come.

The Confederates retired slowly, and in good order. There was no rout, no Bull Run business, but, on the whole, the two days' terrible fighting

can only be looked upon as a disaster to the Southern cause.

If you cast your eye on the map, reader, well up the Mississippi, about the place where Kentucky, Missouri, and Tennessee meet, it will alight on the city of Madrid, and near it at an elbow of the great river is Island No. 10. That isle was so strongly fortified that it was termed the Key of the Mississippi. It was given up by the Confederates, after a lengthened bombardment, about the same time as the great battle was raging betwixt Grant and Beauregard.

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The Federal gun-boats on the Mississippi were quite a feature in the American Civil War. It was chiefly owing to them that the key to the river had to be given up, though between ourselves, and in my poor judgment, it might have been defended for an indefinite period.

CHAPTER VII.

HARRY IN THE ENEMY'S CAMP.

WHEN the Confederates retreated once more to strongly fortified Corinth, which, from its position, was considered one of the strategic points of

the Mississippi campaign, they meant to hold it against all the power that could be brought against them.

So said Beauregard.

Most, if not all, the wounded were borne back to Corinth. Their comrades nursed them as tenderly as if they had been children. But deaths from the fearful nature of the wounds occurred every day.

Seeing the anxiety of Harry and Will for their poor father, the young surgeon, who amid the roar and din of the battle had so skilfully amputated the limb, was kindness itself to them.

But Major Bloodworth's case seemed for many days to be almost hopeless. He had not only lost much blood to begin with, but had lain long on the battle-field before it was possible to move him.

Few, indeed, can imagine the sufferings that wounded men left unattended on the field of battle undergo. They are struck down suddenly, they fall as a rule in a heap, or outstretched, with arms extended, and probably face downwards. If they are insensible their chance of life is small indeed, for they are oftentimes supposed to be dead because motionless, and may then be trodden under foot by advancing men or horses. But supposing even that their regiment passes on and leaves them in the rear, it may be quite a long time before the ambulance company finds and bears them away. And during the time they lie there their

physical sufferings may be acute and even extreme. They may writhe, and groan, and bleed, sometimes biting even their own hands to the bone in their agonies, while thirst is sometimes so great that they will suck their very jackets in their vain efforts to assuage it. The cry of the severely wounded is nearly always:

“ Oh, water! water! water!”

Some poor wretch not far off may have a canteen, and if he can crawl towards another wounded brother he never fails to do so, and holds the vessel to his head that he may drink.

Wounded men who cannot be immediately attended to will sometimes try to assist each other to the extent of binding a handkerchief around a wound, or putting on a rude tourniquet with a pocket-handkerchief and a piece of wood.

So much for physical pain, but mental suffering is nearly always great, anxiety at times extreme—that is, among those who are sensible. Others rave about their far-off homes and relatives—their wives, their sisters, or their sweethearts; while others again are past all that, and on the battle-field it is not an uncommon thing to hear ravings that are almost, if not quite, maniacal, or wild bursts of laughter alternating, in the same individual, with sobs of hysterical grief and tears.

I do not think that the sufferings of the wounded on a great battle-field ever could be graphically told; but were this possible, few who read such a narrative would long for their country to go to war with a foreign power.

Would Major Bloodworth die?

Over and over again did both Harry and Will put that question to the surgeon. He only shook his head. Doctors are not omniscient. He would rather not venture on an opinion. Their father's age, however, he told them, was somewhat against him.

Either Harry, Will, or Osmond sat in his tent all night with the poor major. He was never insensible, even from the first. He knew his sons, knew Osmond, and knew even big Wolf, who, singular to say, had never left the wounded major's side for half an hour at a time, night or day.

One evening, while Osmond sat quietly reading by the light of a lantern, Major Bloodworth awoke. He had been dozing uneasily.

"I'm very cold," he said. "Is it you, Harry?"

"No, it is Osmond."

He feebly stretched out his right hand, which Osmond took in his.

It was as cold and hard as marble.

"Os," he said, in a voice so low that our hero could scarcely hear him, "you are good and brave. May

God bless you, boy, and help our bleeding country—I—feel I am dying.”

“Would you like to see the doctor, dear uncle?”

“No—the boys. Go.”

Osmond, with sorrow and fear at his heart, rose and silently left the tent.

It was a beautiful night, a half-moon shimmering white and low in a rift of darkest blue near the horizon; away to the south and the east the stars shining as brightly as ever he had seen them.

It was mild and warm too, and the few trees about were dressed already in garments of silken green.

But this was no time to stay to admire scenery. He must haste to his cousins' tent. Both were sound asleep as usual beneath the same wraps and rugs.

He must wake them to grief and sorrow.

“Boys! Cousins!”

They started up at once.

“Your father, I fear, is—is not so well.”

“He is dying!” cried Will at once.

Harry had burst into tears.

“Oh, Father! oh, Father!” he wailed, “and must we lose the dearest dad on earth?”

“That you won't.”

It was the voice of someone right behind Osmond, and next moment the doctor's cheerful face looked in.

“Come if you like, boys,” he said; “but I’ve just been at the major’s tent, and he has taken a change.”

“He will die?”

“On the contrary, with care he will live.”

“The Great Father bless you, doctor.”

The boys hurried on their topcoats now, and back all four went to the tent.

Major Bloodworth had fallen into a kind of a doze, but when Harry put his finger on his wrist he opened his eyes.

He was quite sensible now.

“It was foolish and selfish of me to take you from your rest,” he began.

“No, no, no, dear Father,” from both boys.

“And,” Harry added, “we sha’n’t leave you to-night. No, Osmond, you can finish your vigil; but after we have talked to Father for a little we shall both bunk up on your floor, and I guess that is the correct thing to do.”

“You feel a little better, Father?”

“Not so cold, boy, not so cold. If I die you will see to the old plantation when this wicked war is over, and to mother and your sisters. Oh, Harry, I would give all I possess to be at home just for one brief hour.”

“For one brief hour, Father?” said Will. “I move that we talk of home, and it will be almost the same.”

And so they did.

But this was the turning point in the wounded major's sad case. Every day now he got stronger, and some days before Corinth fell, which it did on the 30th day of May, he was well enough to be moved. But whither? This was determined by Harry himself, with the sanction of his general.

Corinth was not much over 200 miles from the old plantation. Why, thought Harry, should he not be taken home.

An orderly entered General Halleck's tent one morning with a strange report. The general, I may mention, was chief in command of the Federal army, that, after the great battle of Pittsburg Landing had crept slowly, on to Corinth after the Confederates. Grant had been placed second in command, having incurred Halleck's displeasure. Halleck blamed his foolhardiness for bringing about the great two-days' fight. Had he but waited for his reinforcements, the Southerners, said Halleck, would not have gained the first day's battle. Probably they would not have attacked at all.

Halleck was right, I believe, but nevertheless he himself would have been none the worse for just a little spice of Grant's fire and impulsiveness. Had he possessed this, instead of crawling to Corinth he could have dashed on it and captured it easily, for though the battlements extended out and in for about fifteen

miles, the place was not so strong as it looked, and many of the guns were what is called "quakers". Quakers at their meetings only speak when the spirit moves them. Well, no spirit would ever move these guns to talk, for they were wooden dummies.

"A Confederate officer with a flag of truce?" said Halleck, looking up from his writing. "Show him in; he may be a spy. Better take every precaution, sergeant."

"That's so, General."

Next minute Harry entered boldly and made his bow.

The general seemed pleased.

"You are very young to be fighting against your country," he said.

"For my country," answered Harry, smiling.

"We'll waive that. Your business, boy? Has your general made up his mind to surrender?"

"General Beauregard doesn't surrender worth a cent, sir. No, I have presumed to come here on business of my own."

"You are brave!"

"Fairly, I think."

"And how do I know you are not a spy?"

"General, you are a student of character, and you know I am not."

Harry then told his story, simply but pathetically.

He wanted a pass that would take him with a few men as escort through the Federal lines with his wounded father.

General Halleck laughed heartily, but not unfeelingly.

"Sit down, boy, sit down. There are cigars and brandy. What, you touch neither? Well, I admire your filial devotion and also your courage. You have indeed put your head into the lion's mouth. Had I doubted you, I'd have had you shot at sunrise. Yes you can have the pass. Heigh-ho!" he sighed, as he began to write, "pity such brave young fellows as you should ever be lost to the Union."

The pass was written, and with a happy heart now Harry thanked the general over and over again and took his leave.

The pass was worded to take him and his escort to his father's home, and on thence to his regiment whenever that might be, for he and Osmond had been but lent to Beauregard.

Osmond was the first to meet him on his return, and Wolf greeted him most effusively. The great dog had evidently known from instinct that Harry had gone on a dangerous expedition, so his joy at his return knew no bounds.

"You'll let me choose your escort, Harry," said Osmond; "won't you?"

“Certainly, Os, if you wish to.”

When, therefore, the spring cart with its sturdy horse, in which the wounded major was to travel, drew up at the tent door, and with Will and Harry’s assistance their father was laid tenderly within it, only three of the escort presented themselves.

But the other came immediately after.

It was Osmond himself, dressed in sergeant’s uniform.

“I could not help it,” he said. “I’ve got a leave, and felt I must come with you.”

“Well,” said Harry, “wonders will never cease.”

There were more wonders to come, for after they had got fully three miles eastwards and away from the Federal lines, just at a place where the road took a dip into a wood, and a clear, purling spring of water came laughing and singing and gurgling with seeming delight from a crevice in a rock, they found an old white-haired nigger quenching his thirst, while near him on the mossy bank was a negress that looked like his wife.

Osmond, Harry, and two of the escort were riding, the other man driving the cart. But now the whole cavalcade reined up.

Harry leapt from his horse at once and extended both hands to the negro.

“Why, Uncle Neile,” he cried, “this is a joyful surprise!”

“Eh! What? Is it Massa Henry? My ole eyes not done gone deceive me? Auntie, Mammy, look, look! Heah am young massa, and heah in de cart am ole massa too. Bress de Giver ob ebery good thing. Bress—”

Old Uncle Neile could say no more. He just burst into a flood of joyful tears.

Then he seemed to recover himself all at once.

“Jes’ one moment, Massa Henry,” he said, “till I ’gage in prayer.”

And down he knelt by the spring to engage in prayer. He was up again in a very short time.

“I jes’ done go thank de good Lawd briefly,” he explained. “By and by I thank him mo’ and mo’.”

Mammy was as happy as Uncle, and hardly could she take her eyes off Harry except now and then to have a look at Osmond.

“Boys, you does grow, for sartain!” she said at last.

After Uncle Neile and Auntie Mammy had talked for a short time to Major Bloodworth, who had begged of Harry to raise him up that he might feast his eyes on the old couple, they condescended to briefly account for their presence.

Mrs. Bloodworth’s grief on receipt of the intelligence concerning her husband’s dangerous condition had been very great.

“Oh, my poor husband!” she had wailed. “Could I

be but near him. I would walk the distance on bare feet but to look on his face once more!"

Then, when more composed, she had sat down to write.

"This letter may never reach him," she mourned, as she sealed it up.

"An' den," said Uncle, addressing Harry, "I jes' step fo'ward. At fust she think she no let me go. I die on de road. I too ole. De snakes kill me, and oder things kill me. I die in many different ways. All de same, she let me come, and heah we are. Fust I want to come all by mysel', but Mammy she not heah ob such a thing. 'No, no,' she cry, 'w'ere you goes, I go. De dangers ob de road am not suited fo' a pore ole nigger like you wit'out your Mammy.' So Mammy come erlong. Ah! I not know what I do but for Mammy!"

Then Uncle Neile opened his two coats—winter or summer the old man always wore two, and sometimes three—and took therefrom letters for the Major, for Harry, and also for Os.

"Oh, I tell you what I propose," cried the latter. "Don't read your letter now, Uncle, till we halt for the forenoon."

"Good idea, boy, good idea!" said the Major, and the letters were kept.

But Mammy was now accommodated with a seat

beside her invalid master. Very tired the poor old woman was, though she was too spirited to own it. But their long and tedious, not to say dangerous, journey, proves, I think, that in those days even slaves could spare love for a master and mistress who treated them kindly.

And yet the foundation on which slavery was built was one of blood and tears. There is, I think, no gain-saying that fact.

CHAPTER VIII.

A TUSSLE WITH ROAD-AGENTS.

THERE was far more danger to Osmond and his party on this strange and adventurous journey than there had been to old Uncle and Mammy. The woods in some parts were known to be infested with road-agents, *alias* filibustering robbers. Their real home was in the Far West, but vultures ever hover round where blood is spilt. The roughest highway-man, however, that ever rode would hardly have harmed the old negro and his companion. Their very innocence was their best protection. But now, as Uncle trotted along beside Osmond and Harry, he kept them very much interested indeed with a relation of his adventures.

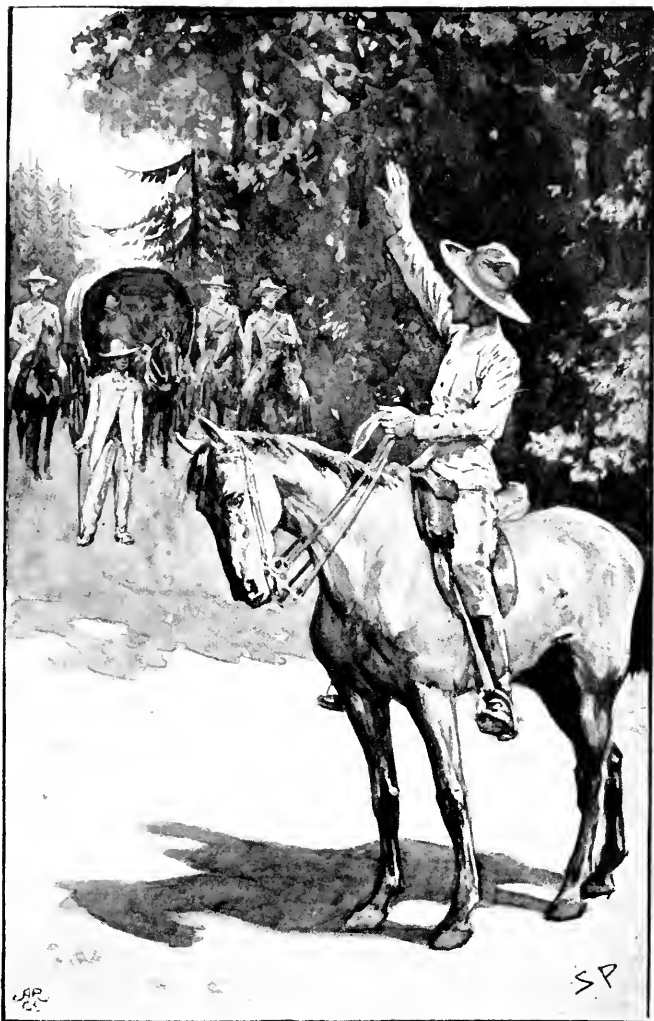
"Nobody ever refuse Mammy and dis chile a good supper," he said. "Den we always find a bed, mos'ly wi' odder niggers, sometimes in a farmer's barn. Oh, eberybody good to us, bress His name."

"And even the road-agents didn't molest you?"

"Oh, no, not edzactly moles', you know; on'y one night we bery, bery late, and de road bery, bery lonely. I think dat night we had to sleep on de road-side among de snakes. But by 'n by we see a light in de wood. Fust we a leetle 'flaid, but all de same we bery hungry. So we enter de wood hand in hand, jus' like two chil'en. Yes, dey were ribbers right 'nuff, and dey all sit roun' de big fire and laugh and talk and drink. Dey laugh much mo' when dey see us. But dey kind 'nuff all same. Dey call us de darkie patri-archs, den dey make us eat and drink, too much wine p'laps, 'cause arter dat dey make us sing. I try one hymn, but dey not like he, so I sing 'De Ole Plantation Home', and Mammy she sing too. Den eberybody laugh. Dey gib us mo' wine, and make Mammy dance. Oh, Mammy did dance! and de robbers tumble up their heels, dey laugh so much. Den—"

"Well," said Harry laughing, "what next?"

"Oh, nuffin next. Somehow it come mo'nin' all at one, and de fire out and de robbers gone, but dey hab leab us plenty to eat. Bress de Giver ob ebery good thing."



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“SUDDENLY HARRY, WHO WAS RIDING ON AHEAD, CRIED ‘HALT!’”

The sun was shining very brightly from a sky of ethereal blue, the ferns and flowers nodded in the woods, and the birds filled every glen and dell with their wild sweet music. It was a day to make the saddest heart rejoice, a day that brought one nearer to Nature and into closer union with Nature's God.

Perhaps it was some feeling of the kind that kept Osmond silent now for quite a long spell.

Suddenly Harry, who was riding on a little way ahead, cried "Halt!" and the cavalcade drew up under the welcome shadow of a huge clump of trees. What a tanglement of beauty it was, to be sure, for a cluster of pines grew side by side with oaks and chestnuts, and over all ran gigantic wistaria, adorning even their topmost branches with huge bunches of lavender-coloured flowers.

As they were dining in this delightful sylvan shade a party of Federal soldiers on foot suddenly swept round the bend of the road.

Harry made no movement, satisfied in his own mind that they would respect the little white flag that fluttered from the cart.

And so they did. The captain of the party, after looking at Harry's pass, throwing himself down and talking both pleasantly and friendly while he smoked a cigar.

"Wall," he said, with somewhat of a Yankee drawl,

"I guess there's errors on both sides. Pity ever we should have drawn the sword! But have you heard the latest?"

"I don't know what you may call the 'latest,'" said Harry.

"Oh, there's lots of latest. 'Way down South, you know, Admiral Farragut has given your navy fits, smashed and burned every one of them, and he's captured New Orleans. He, I mean, and Butler and Porter.

"Well, Farragut is on his way up-stream to Vicksburg. That's going to come down by the run."

"Query," said Harry.

"Never a query, captain; and your Fort Pillow in Tennessee falls too in a few days, and Memphis goes next. Oh, I 'low Vicksburg is going to take a bit of potting, but it's going to be ours. Then we'll have captured the whole Mississippi."

"Any more news?"

"Oh, lots. Just listen. I'm betraying no confidences, ye know; only relating accomplished facts. Wa-al, then, I 'low you've got a good man in your Stonewall Jackson and a brave, and he's been doing all a brave man can do in the Shenandoah Valley. Ah! there'll be more fun there yet. But your Stonewall had to retreat when he tried to cross swords with us near Winchester—not at Winchester; I'm coming to that.

“Meanwhile,” continued the Northerner, “our M’Clellan is proving himself a hot one. Your *Merrimac* iron ram spoiled him from getting up the James River or to Richmond. Here it is.” The Northerner was drawing a rough plan—“Washington, the Potomac, Richmond—Manassas, all as plain as your big dog’s head. And here you see is the Peninsula between York and James Rivers.

“Well, with the army of the Potomac our M’Clellan comes straight on to Manassas. He thought to find your fellows there. But you had fled.”

“Retreated, eh?”

“Wall, I guess that is a trifle more polite. But with his whole army Mac now sailed down the Potomac here to the Peninsula there; and there he landed 60,000 strong, and soon he was nearer 80,000. A glance at my map here’ll show you he had only to clear the rebels—ahem!—pardon me, the Confederates out of the Peninsula to march eastward across to your capital.’

“That was all,” said Harry, smiling. “Not much, was it?”

“Ah, well, there were 15,000 of your fellows to bar the way, and I must say that your Magruder, who commanded them, was worth about 10,000 more.

“Now, sir, here was your Magruder’s trick, and he played it prettily. Wa-al, as you don’t seem to like

the word trick, we'll call it strategy. He extended his army across the Peninsula in such a way that M'Clellan was too cautious and canny to assault. He trusted to siege. So Magruder played him as it were, while an army was being got together for the defence of your City of Richmond—soon to be ours.”

Even the invalid Major laughed at this.

“Wa-al, I guess it is, but never mind. When Magruder had played his cards he quietly retreated.

“After this our M'Clellan seized Yorktown on the edge of the Peninsula, and then on the 5th of May we met—yes, I was there under Fighting Joe¹—a whole legion of Reb—er—Confeds at Williamsburg, led on by your General Joseph Johnstone—your brave Albert Sidney Johnston fell in battle, you know, at Pittsburg Landing.”

“Where poor Father there was so fearfully wounded.”

“Well, General Joseph fought like a panther, and I guess you know, if we hadn't been reinforced 'twould have gone hard against us. But he retreated after dark, and our M'Clellan followed him up toward Richmond.

“And that's all the news of importance,” continued the captain, “and now I'm off. My name's Spott, with two t's, and if ever we meet again, why, we'll know we've met before. *Au revoir*. So long.”

¹General Hooker.

He lifted his hat, his men sprang up, and in a few minutes all had disappeared.

Letters were now read, and for a time there was silence in the little wayside camp.

One of Osmond's was from his mother, the other from Eva, and there was also a brief business-like epistle from big, honest Dick. I need hardly tell you what Eva's and Mrs. Lloyd's were like, loving and longing, as such letters always are. Oh, what would life be worth to the soldier, sailor, or wanderer, were there no dear ones at home, no old-fashioned fireside to look back to wherever one is, in African wilds or Indian shores, or far away in the wild, wild north, or in regions of ice and snow.

"My dear boy," said Dick, "you were always an impulsive young rascal, and fonder of the greenwood tree than your books. Ah! well, anyhow, your dear daddie and I are glad you are safe and doing so well. Think of us often, and don't forget to pray. You'll return some day to the old home, and won't we welcome you just. But, boy, business is slack with us now. The dust you are raising out in Yankeeland is smothering us here, and if things don't take a turn, we'll have to close the grand old mill. You would look astonished, wouldn't you, if you saw your brother Dick march into your camp some day? Well, well, we hope for the best. Father sends his love. There was damp-

ness on the old man's eyelashes, lad, as there nearly always is when he speaks of you. Ah! how he loves you. Your mother says I am to tell you to keep out of danger—just like a mother, ain't it?—I told her that I'd give you the message, and that you'll be certain to hide in a tree on fighting days till the battle is over. Good-bye, boy. Come back when you can."

When he looked up, he found that Harry was gone.

"Got bad news," his father said, and the poor Major himself looked sad.

He pointed to the wood as he spoke, and Wolf and Osmond went to look for him. Wolf took his master straight to the tree at the foot of which his poor cousin sat.

He had been crying, and even now, though there was a smile on his lips, he looked as if a single word of sympathy would cause the tears to flow afresh.

"Poor Charlie and John!" he said, as he handed Osmond the letter.

"Nay, I cannot read it." Osmond's own eyes were swimming now. "Are they—?"

"Dead! Yes, both fell fighting together back to back in the thickest of the battle. Oh, the bitterness of this cruel war! But our cousins fell as men, Os, and as Englishmen. For they were true Blood-worths."

Osmond stood up now erect and manly. He brushed his hand across his eyes.

"We have our duty to do, Os," he said; "let us not think of grief till—till night. Our cousins died a soldier's death and are now far beyond the reach of woe. I for one would not seek to recall them."

"Nor I," said Os. Then the cousins shook hands, and as their eyes met they felt nearer to each other now than ever.

It was at the battle of Winchester that their cousins had fallen.

"Thank God we were not there to fight against them," said Osmond.

"Amen!" said Harry.

The fact is that on the 18th of May the immortal Stonewall Jackson had won a great battle at the place mentioned.

The movements of this spirited soldier were daring in the extreme. He had been keeping at bay four armies—M'Dowell who commanded at Fredericksburg, Sigel at Manassas, Milroy on his left-hand side, *i.e.* west among the mountains, and Banks in the Shenandoah Valley in front of him.

Now, readers, just think of the dilemma this warrior was in. If he went north up the glen to fight Banks, Milroy from the left would close in on the rear, and if defeated he would be caught like a rat in a sack;

and if he retreated then Banks and Milroy would join and he should lose the valley which he had determined to keep at any price.

So he resorted to a stratagem worthy of the greatest general that ever lived.

He pretended to retreat eastwards through a gap.

“Ha!” cried Banks to one of his generals next day, “so Stonewall Jackson has gone, bag and baggage!”

“Yes, he’s off, sir. We will follow him to Richmond?”

“That we will,” said Banks, “as soon as Milroy tails on. Now we’ll give the Rebs Jericho!”

Stonewall Jackson, however, described an ellipse, and surprised Milroy on his march to join Banks.

“‘Mercy! how they fought and struggled and bled! It was here’—I am quoting from Osmond’s cousin Tom’s letter—‘where my dear brothers fell, and here where they lie buried near a great oak-tree on which I have blazed a cross and their initials.

“‘Well, Stonewall Jackson smashed Milroy, and afterwards Banks himself—first one part of the army, then the other, and larger.’”

“So,” said Osmond, “we are not so much beaten as Captain Spott with two t’s would have us to believe.”

“Perhaps,” said Harry charitably, “he had heard

nothing of all this. But Banks's whole army of 15,000 is all but totally annihilated, and all the stores and ammunition fell into our hands."

I must add as historian that in Turner Ashby Stonewall Jackson had an officer who has well been designated the bravest of the brave. But he exposed himself all too freely, hardly realizing the value of his own life to the army.

He was here, there, and everywhere, sword and revolver in hands, wherever the fight raged most fiercely.

And so he fell near the very spot at which Charlie and John were cut down.

After the total defeat of Banks, Stonewall Jackson went to prayers. "After battle, prayers." That was one of Stonewall Jackson's mottoes. He was a Puritan of the good old school. A soldier every inch, but a Christian. He was in some ways like our own brave Gordon, in other respects like Cromwell.

He had a "way" with him, people said, and the following verses from an old newspaper will describe that way:—

BRAVE AND GOOD STONEWALL JACKSON.

" We see him now—his old felt hat
Cocked o'er his eyes askew;
His shrewd dry smile, his speech so pat,
So calm, so blunt, so true.

The 'Blue Light Elder' knows us well;
 Says he, 'That's Banks—he's fond o' shell,
 Lord save his soul! We'll give him—ahem.' Well,
 That's Stonewall Jackson's way.

“‘Silence! Ground arms! Kneel all! Caps off!
 Old Blue Light's going to pray.
 Let ne'er a man, now, dare to scoff.
 Attention!’ It's just his way.
 Appealing from his native sod
 In *forma pauperis*, to God,
 ‘Lay bare Thine arm, Lord, stretch forth Thy rod,’
 Amen!
 That's Stonewall's way.

“Ah! maiden, wait and watch and yearn
 For news of Stonewall's band.
 Ah! widow, read with eyes that burn
 That ring upon thy hand;
 Ah! wife, pray on, sew on, hope on,
 Thy life shali not be all forlorn,
 The foe had better ne'er been born
 That stands in Stonewall's way.”

Onward and eastward day after day marched Harry and his little cavalcade. Everywhere they met with civility and courtesy, even from the Federals, and very seldom indeed had they to camp out all night.

But one adventure which they had is worth relating. Luckily some of old Uncle Neile's experiences prepared them for meeting it.

They were in a very lonely part of the country and were passing through a deep, wooded ravine.

Just near to the place where a roaming stream is spanned by a wooden bridge, and at a turn of the road, the old slave negro addressed Harry.

“Now, Massa Henry, you keep you hand on you’ revolver, sah. Jes’ ’bout heah—”

He never finished that sentence.

Seven men in slouched hats sprang suddenly from under the trees.

“Hands up!” was the shout, and rifles were levelled at Harry’s and Osmond’s heads.

Rack—rack—rack—rack went the revolvers in reply.

But for Wolf, however, either Osmond or his cousin would have been a dead man.

In the faithful dog the Road-agents had met a foe they had little reckoned on.

He “downed” the leader, cutting him fearfully in the jaws, then sprang on the others.

“Bress de Giver ob ebery good thing!” shouted the sturdy old nigger.

Next moment he leapt from the cart.

“You do de prayin’, ole Mammy, I do de fightin’ foh true,” he cried.

A blow from the butt-end of a rifle he had wrenched from the leader of the gang emphasized the last words, and another robber fell.

Then on came Osmond and the others.

Flight was almost the only thing now that these cowardly highwaymen could think of. They left behind one man dead and two wounded, while Wolf pursued the others, and returned at last with his chops dripping gore.

No battle with highwaymen was probably ever more speedily decided.

The dead man was dragged off the road and left, the wounds of the prisoners were seen to, and they were handed over, bound, to justice that very afternoon.

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The joy of Mrs. Bloodworth and her daughters on seeing husband and father once again is something I shall not attempt to paint. I should be certain to make a mess of it, and some scenes are far better left to the reader's imagination.

But when the slaves gathered round "ole Massa" to shake his hand, the poor major could not keep the tears back. It was impossible.

The slaves found relief to their feelings, however, by shouldering Mammy and Uncle, and carrying them right away down to the little hut among the bushes.

And that evening a great 'possum hunt and feast were given in the old man's honour. Osmond and Harry, with his sisters, were there, you may be sure, and it was twelve o'clock, and the stars shining high

and bright, before the young folks all got back to the cosy sitting-room, and long hours after that before the boys said good-night and retired.

There was so much to speak of, so much to tell.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BATTLE OF MALVERN HILL.

FAIN would I dwell for a time with my young heroes in the peace that reigned at the old plantation. But events centre for a time around Richmond.

Richmond, you will remember, with Charleston on the Atlantic and Vicksburg on the Mississippi, were the three pillars of the Southern States from the Federal point of view. It is no wonder, therefore, that fierce and terrible fighting took place to capture or to keep these cities.

From all directions President Jeff Davis was hurrying up troops for the support of Richmond, while after the retreat of the Confederates from the Peninsula M'Clellan advanced towards Richmond. He encountered General Johnstone at Fair Oaks or Seven Pines. The first day's fighting, that of May 30th, was all in Johnstone's favour. He whipped the Federals, and next day meant to annihilate M'Clellan. But General

Sumner got to the front, and things were altered. At all events the Southerners withdrew, and poor Johnstone was desperately wounded.

He had, therefore, to give up command. And now the redoubtable General Robert E. Lee steps upon the stage.

Johnstone had made his mark, however, for in this battle of Fair Oaks the Federals are said to have lost no fewer than 6000 men and the Confederates 8000.

Stuart's strange wild ride round the army of M'Clellan with 1500 cavaliers is a matter of history.

These brave fellows positively swept like a tornado round the Federals. They never, we are told, quitted saddle for two days and more, namely, from the morning of June 14th till noon of the 16th. In this ride they defeated a Federal regiment, burned 200 wagons, sank transports and captured horses, stores and ammunition, and nearly 200 prisoners.

Verily there was plenty of romance as well as courage on the Confederate side.

M'Clellan, still advancing on Richmond, made a kind of semi-investment of the place on the north as well as on the east.

Now, never dreaming that in the event of his defeat M'Clellan would retreat south on the James River, the Confederates who lay betwixt him and Richmond

determined to strike him on the north, and thus cut off his retreat to the York River.

Meanwhile where are Osmond and Harry? This is a question easily answered. Much though they would have liked to have tarried a little longer at the old plantation, impatience to be once more in action and to join their old regiment and comrades made it impossible for them to stay.

They hurried on, therefore, to the north and east. Old Mammy was in tears at their departure, and so were Harry's sisters. When would they meet again, and how would it fare with poor Will, by this time in full retreat with Beauregard from Corinth?

But bah! such questions are unworthy of soldiers. War permits no sentiment to interfere with her awful course. Her march is ever onward, through fire, through blood, through tears.

After innumerable adventures our heroes found themselves among Jackson's pickets. Strangely enough, the first officer they met was one they knew well, for they had fought by his side on more than one blood-drenched field.

It was about the 22nd of June, and Stonewall Jackson was hurrying back from his glorious campaign in the Shenandoah to assist A. P. Hill.

Meanwhile, the latter general made a terrible onslaught on the portion of M'Clellan's army here

stationed. It was a fearful fight from the first, and finally the Federals retreated or withdrew to Gaines Mill, farther to the east. Here, on June 27th, another terrible battle began. The struggle was the most ghastly of any yet fought 'twixt North and South.

Osmond and Harry, each at the head of a company, fought almost side by side, though they hardly knew it.

But so bravely did the Federals defend themselves, that the Confederates began at last to yield.

I have to record here—and it is with pleasure I do so—an exploit of my hero Osmond. He was rushing forward with his company, at the head of which already three officers had been slain. Honest Wolf was by his side, and this made him all the more conspicuous. The dog was covered with blood from head to tail, showing how well a British mastiff can do his duty on the field of fight.

Perhaps Osmond had never looked better than he did at that moment, with his gore-stained sword pointing onwards, and his head half-turned to where his fellows were rushing forward for a bayonet charge.

But on top of a small hill he encountered a portion of the Confederate army that had lost heart, and were being pursued to the ridge by the Feds.

“Back, men, back!” cried Osmond, still waving his

sword. He felt the fire of Stonewall Jackson in his veins just then. It was his gestures more than anything else that stemmed the tide of flight.

The Confeds turned, and though scores and scores fell dead and wounded on that ridge, every attack of the enemy was bravely repelled, and many were hurled down the bluff with terrible slaughter.

But Osmond's ranks are getting sadly thinned. Can he hold out? But little longer, I fear. He himself is faint and tired and hoarse. Shall he retire? Shall he retreat? And the same brave words that once were uttered by a far greater man than he came to his mind as a reply to the question, "*What would they say in England if we are beaten?*" Now, backwards down the hill again must be hurled the pride of the North.

Osmond seems to find voice once more.

"On, men, on! Down with them! Hurrah!"

Wolf utters a sound that is half a bark and half a yell, and dashes at a man in front who had levelled his revolver straight at our hero's head.

The "gun", as the Americans call a pistol, dropped from his hands as he fell to the ground in a death grapple with the now half-mad dog.

But hark! that cheer away to the left. It is repeated again and again, followed by the rattle of rifle-firing and the deeper bass of artillery.

“It is Jackson! Stonewall Jackson. Hurrah! Hurrah!”

I confess, reader, I have often envied even as I joined in the thunders of applause that welcomed the appearance of some great actor upon the stage. But tenfold more do I envy the honour and glory accorded to the hero that wild cheers herald, as he is seen riding, sword in hand, to a blood-stained battle-field.

And that very name, and he who bore it, was worth ten thousand men. It rallied the battle-weary braves, it stirred the blood in the faintest heart, and everyone felt and knew that victory was now assured.

The hero had come!

“Stonewall Jackson! Stonewall for ever! Hurrah!”

The victor of Shenandoah has not even to speak. He but smiles grimly, and with gleaming sword points to the Federals' right.

Now the fighting is indeed fearful. But backward, and still backward are borne the serried ranks of the Federals. They stumble, they stagger, they fight, and in fighting fly. And soon it is all confusion, all a mad rush to the rear, and victory belongs to the Southern flag.

Victory, yet not pursuit.

For a brigade of brave Irishmen prevented that, as they stood 'twixt the victors and the fleeing foe,

staunch, undaunted, true, else had Gaines Mill been M'Clellan's Sadowa.

There is a river, reader, near where this battle was fought called the Chickahominy. M'Clellan hastily took his badly-beaten army across. But he had to fight his pursuers again on the 28th.

Surely Osmond was having his fill of fighting now, and in this fresh battle he proved himself no less a hero than in the last. With his dog near him always, as if he were a guardian spirit, he was conspicuous wherever he went. Many a rifle was aimed at him and his companion, but they seemed to bear charmed lives.

Just once on this day of fearful slaughter, and in the midst of a field, damp with recent rain, soaked with the blood of the slain that lay about in every conceivable posture amidst broken arms and accoutrements, Osmond and Harry met.

Both were bespattered with blood and mud from head to heel. Both looked hungry, gaunt, and gray. There was barely time to shake hands and exchange friendly courtesies.

"I would not have known you," said Harry, "but for the dog. Dear old Wolf! He, too, has done his share."

"God help us, Harry; we must all do that. But how pleased I am to see you safe!"

“Meet me to-night if you can.”

“If alive—yes. Good-bye.”

“Harry!” cried Osmond. His cousin was already moving off.

“Yes, Os, old man.”

“Ever heard of the Kilkenny cats?”

“This does indeed resemble it,” said Harry.

Then, with a sudden impulse which under the circumstances was amusing, he added:

“There was nothing left but a bit of fluff, Os. Never mind, it shall be our bit of fluff. Hurrah!”

There was no meeting that night between Harry and Osmond. I don't know when Harry slept, but after finding a morsel of food for himself and Wolf, Os lay down on the damp field under a bush, through which the wind sighed dismally, and the faithful dog served him for a pillow.

Surely he had not slept an hour. But it was daylight, and the bugle was sounding.

Now came the tug of war. It began with a fearful artillery battle, and ended on the part of General A. P. Hill—who on this occasion commanded the Confederates—with a wild bayonet charge. But at eventide McClellan, though he could not score a victory, had succeeded in holding together the shattered remains of his army.

And he now tried to make good his retreat to Mal-

vern Hill, that overlooked the James River, on which he hoped, if he could but keep the enemy at bay, to re-embark his army, or what was left of it.

“ Ill fared it then with Roderick Dhu
That on the ground his targe he threw.”

I don't exactly know why these lines from Scott's poem, descriptive of the fight 'twixt Fitzjames and the Highland chief, should come to my mind at this moment, unless it be that pride seems to have been at the bottom of M'Clellan's seven days' disasters before Richmond, just as contempt for his foe had instigated the chieftain to throw away his targe. M'Clellan had meant to sweep all before him in two-handed, Highland claymore fashion.

Behold him now fleeing in despair to the one advantageous point on which hope still burned beacon-like. For there, on the river beneath him, were his own gun-boats, and they could aid in supporting him.

The James River flows directly south from Richmond—then goes winding in and out through woods and swamps eastwards. At Malvern Hill it forms quite an elbow. It had been flowing right north before this, but the hill said, “No, you don't”; so the stream broadened out, and back it goes again directly south; then—much wider now at City Point—it goes sweeping eastwards away past Harrison's Landing.

The gun-boats, remember, were stationed a little to the west of Malvern Hill, on the river's elbow, and as the Confederates come from the west as well as from the north-north-west, these tubs of war could, if they found the range, do considerable execution in their ranks.

Let me tell you what Malvern Hill was like. I must quote from a letter from Tom to his Cousin Harry. How it reached him I never knew. It is dated from Harrison's Landing, and gives a full account, from a Federal's point of view, of the battles I have all too briefly described. Then it goes on to describe the march—the Confederates called it a race—for Malvern Hill, where the terrible fight raged on July 1st.

“HARRISON'S LANDING.

“This hill, my dear old misguided Harry, lies, as your troops know to their sorrow, on the northern bend of James River. But I was there long before your fellows. We were all there on the grand stand, as it were, before you had a chance of showing front. We waited for you—most of us smoking. I heard many of our men thanking heaven there was a bit of tobacco left to chew and smoke, for you know you kept spoiling our dinner every day, and only sheer fatigue could have enabled us to get any sleep at all.

“But, oh! that awful march to Malvern Hill—all

through the woods and swamps, by day, by night, our poor fellows tottering as they walked, wan and hungry, sick and sad, burned up by the summer's sun or drenched by dews at night! Many a weary soldier fell out and laid him down to die. We had to leave them on moor or marsh and still press on.

“On and on for Malvern Hill. For here we should make our last stand!

“Then down to Harrison's Landing. Could we but reach the bend in the river our transports would save us. Ah! right well we knew you wanted to capture and to crush us. As weary and tired you must have been as we ourselves. But then, dear Harry, you were the victors. You had the thoughts of former triumphs to stimulate you. We felt as if death itself would be a blessing. Every day we had fought a battle—every night, instead of rest, we had to push on only to fight again when night was fled and the sun that we almost hated re-summoned us to arms.

“And we knew, too, that all your bravest generals had marshalled their forces to cut off our retreat to Harrison's Landing. Your terrible Stonewall Jackson, your Ewell, Lee, and Hill—and last, though not least, your bold Magruder.

“On and on we push and scramble, the men as brave as men can be, the officers doing all they can to encourage them.

“While still miles from our grand stand that was to be, I remember passing a house, to the door of which ran several half-dressed pretty children to cheer us. They knew not nor cared whether we were Feds or Confeds. A woman came to take them in, but she too must wave her hand. A pretty picture this of peace in the midst of the demons of war.

“At last, at last! We are on Malvern Hill. To rest? Ah, no! we must fortify it.

“The top of the mount was a broad and long plateau, about two miles by one were its dimensions. The sides next the river no soldier could climb for its steepness. But the front towards Richmond was an inclined plane, lawn-like and green; and behind these green fields were pine-trees. Up this, from fields and bush below, your troops would have to come, if come they dared, or could, for we soon had it covered with our guns that terraced the hill-sides and bristled on its top. We could fire 300 cannon at you, and did so when the terrible battle began.

“Not far down beneath, on the banks of a creek, screened by bushes from the fields you would have to cross, we had massed four brigades of our brave fellows.

“We had worked all night long. How glad I was in the gray dawn to be able to get a few hours' rest! But I leapt to my feet at last. There was a kind of

weight at my heart that for a minute or two I could not banish. I think it was the sight of brave but war-worn M'Clellan riding hither and thither on horseback along the plateau that helped to cheer me.

“All the forenoon we could see your regiments deploying, marching, or standing waiting in wood and field. Oh! that awful waiting! how your true soldier hates it. A little desultory firing had already taken place to the left—our left—but this died away, and it was evident that your generals were getting to learn the work before them would indeed be awful.

“We now see a long line of your skirmishers advance from among the pines, and commence to fire across the fields towards the creek beneath the hill. Fain would they learn what we had hidden for them in this direction; they run, they creep, and wriggle like centipedes, till a volley from behind the bushes sent them back to the shelter of the woods.

“All they can report is that they have left several dead and wounded in that field, and that they could count at least two hundred great guns, and see our men in line waiting to do battle in earnest.

“And, at about one hour past noon, they felt the whole force of those guns, for it was then that your daring men—was it Magruder who led them?—made a dash from the woods in a double line of battle. But they had to cross that awful open space before they

could reach and assault even our first line of defence.

“For just a moment there was a death-like stillness. We could see your flags flying, and your accoutrements glittering in the glorious sunshine of this summer day. Then all was thunder, smoke, and fire around, and beneath us. The shells tore through the air; the very hill shook and quivered from end to end to the explosive roar of our cannon. Shot and shell crashed through your lines of battle, but the gaps were speedily closed up and on and on you came, leaving the shot-torn field behind you strewn thickly with your motionless dead, and your writhing, tortured wounded.

“When your lines were but a musket-shot distance from the bush-hidden creek, where lay our brave brigades, but not before, a line of fire belched forth and whole regiments seemed swept away. We could see only hundreds of the grays staggering back to the pine wood from which thousands had just emerged.

“Again and again throughout the afternoon were just such charges made. Again and again, Harry, we saw you thrust back, nay, almost annihilated, and my heart sank with dread as I thought that you, dear cousin, or our English cousin Osmond, might be among the slain, or what would be far worse, among those writhing piles of wounded; for it was over them your

fellows had to march in these charges, just over the dead to almost certain death. The gun-boats all this while were doing what they could to assist the work of red-handed destruction.

“All the afternoon this desperate struggle went on, but it was at six o'clock that you seemed to try to do your best or your worst.

“Oh, then, who shall describe the furious pandemonium? But it was all in vain. You had fought like furies, almost like fiends, and darkness closed the dreadful scene.

“And the darkness, dear Harry, saw us victorious, yet in full retreat.

“And what a night that was! How wildly the wind raved and how mercilessly fell the rain!

“There was no time for pity, Harry, nor for sentiment, and yet I could not help sorrowfully thinking of the thousands of poor wounded wretches that all night long, in anguish and agony, were left on the fields and in the dismal woods, no help nigh, none to ease an aching head till their very movements, in many cases, caused arteries to gush out afresh, and the sleep of death to steal over them.

“Our retreat to Harrison's Landing, though the distance was but eight miles, was one long toilsome suffering dream to me, and I am sure to most of us. In the darkness of midnight, and all against the pelting

of this pitiless storm, our war-worn soldiers tottered or groped their way onwards.

“Victors we called ourselves! How bitter the title! Here around me was the confusion of a routed and beaten mob. And yet there were those among us who cursed what they called the cowardice and folly of M‘Clellan for not, after all, staying to attack you next day, conquering you as these men felt they could, and then sweeping on to Richmond.

“Good-bye, good-bye! At present we are being bundled and pitchforked on board the transports. Good-bye!”

CHAPTER X.

THE GREAT STRUGGLE ON THE POTOMAC.

POPE, the Federal general in Missouri, was placed in command of a new “Army of Virginia” and the Northerners expected he would do “big licks”, as they termed it. He himself said that he would ride to Richmond easily, and that till he had secured that city, his head-quarters should be in the saddle.

Jackson—old Blue Light—warmed him at Cedar Mountain, anyhow, and caused him to fall back across the Rappahannock. He hoped to be joined on the

other side of the river by M'Clellan, of Malvern Hill, who had landed once more with his army.

But he had not counted on the tactics of Stonewall Jackson and of Longstreet and Lee.

Stonewall, by a forced march, out-manceuvred him, and occupied Manassas. Pope, in despair, turned at bay, and thus another battle was fought at Bull Run, which, despite a telegram that Pope sent to Washington claiming victory, ended in his total rout and discomfiture.

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Things were certainly looking brighter now for the Southerners' cause, and so they determined to carry the war to the very gates of Washington itself.

Lee advanced north, therefore, and cut the railway 'twixt Washington and Harper's Ferry, where a Federal army still lay. He then crossed the Potomac.

Stonewall Jackson and General A. P. Hill were next sent to do battle on Maryland Heights and attack Harper's Ferry.

To the consternation of the whole of the North, they were completely successful, for, after a terrific bombardment, and against the wishes of the garrison, the commander surrendered. Owing to this surrender of Brigadier-general White, Stonewall Jackson captured 11,000 prisoners, 73 pieces of artillery, and unlimited ammunition and stores.

By the end of September it may be said that the Federals were everywhere losing.

But although M'Clellan had to return unsuccessful from his ill-starred peninsular expedition and campaign, President Lincoln neither degraded nor deposed him. He knew the man's worth, and knew, too, he was the only general he could really rely on to defend Washington.

He, therefore, made a call for more recruits, determined that he would defend the Stars and Stripes to the last. No less than 300,000 men were asked for. It is true that large bounties were offered to volunteers, but, putting this on one side, I am of opinion that patriotism had as much to do with the successful raising of this fresh army as filthy lucre.

M'Clellan was put at the head of it, and it soon began to swell to very large dimensions indeed, for soon we find the general marching from the capital with an army that, all told, could not have been much under 100,000. He was going to fight General Lee, and this good old soldier had an army of barely 70,000 to oppose M'Clellan.

Then, on September 14th, ensued the battle of South Mountain, in which Fighting Joe Hooker succeeded in turning the Confederate left and gaining a victory. The Southerners were commanded by General D. H. Hill, and were in all not more than

10,000. He was not only out-flanked, but crushed by weight of numbers, so had to retreat upon the main body under Lee. The fight was a fierce one while it lasted. All fights were fierce and terrible now, and nothing like the first battle of Bull Run.

General Garland, a Confederate, and General Reno, a Federal, had been boys together at school. Both fell in this battle, each fighting desperately for his own side.

So sad a thing is civil war!

Next comes the fight at Antietam Creek. This was one of the big battles of the war. Who would win it? Would the Confederate successes continue, or would M'Clellan have his revenge and hurl Lee and his forces "off the face of the almighty universe", as some of his generals averred they would?

Now, a good map will give you this Antietam Creek or stream, on the west or west-south-west of which Lee's great army was drawn up to await the attack of M'Clellan. He had the river Potomac in his rear, so that in this way his position was a risky one.

There are critics who would say that he ought to have crossed back over the Potomac, made a sham retreat, as it were, and then turned on M'Clellan with the old dash and fire of the Southern soldiers.

But Lee's position seemed well chosen, and as he did not decide to retire, he was right not to advance.

The creek in front was not very winding, and it was crossed by three bridges, one in the centre, one well to the left, and another to the right. Stonewall Jackson had come from Harper's Ferry, and having crossed the Potomac at William's Port, took up his position on the high ground to Lee's left.

The cannon, too, were well posted, and everything looked bright for the battle of next day (September 17th) as far as the Confederates were concerned.

Fighting Joe Hooker had crossed the north bridge on the 16th, and had a little skirmish with the Confederate left before sunset.

"That's nothing," said Fighting Joe to one of his officers after dark—they were encamped that night on the open field—"nothing, sir, nothing; only a kind of preliminary sparring to test the enemy's guards. But to-morrow, gentlemen, we'll fight the battle that shall decide the fate of this great Republic."

I may state here that the valour and dash of young Osmond had come under the personal notice of Stonewall Jackson in more fights than one.

He had sent for him one evening, and the order was that he was to bring Wolf with him.

The great general was in his tent, and his welcome to Osmond was so cordial that the young fellow's

face crimsoned with delight. Wolf went shyly up to Stonewall and licked his hand, receiving a loving pat on the head for his reward.

Then Stonewall Jackson shook hands with our Osmond.

"This," said the general, smiling, "is a true specimen of the British mastiff, isn't he?"

"Yes, indeed," said Os brightly.

"And you are a true specimen of the British man! Whatever possessed you to come out to us?"

Then Osmond found voice and said simply:

"I daresay, sir, it was first and foremost because I have cousins in the army of the South; secondly because I am somewhat of a romantic turn of mind; and thirdly, because your cause is so just and true."

"Spoken like a man. Well, I won't detain you. I hope to see you again and often, and your noble dog too, and may God protect and guard you both, Lieutenant-colonel Lloyd!"

"I am captain, General, not lieutenant-colonel."

Stonewall laughed.

"Hurry off," he said, "hurry off. You are promoted, *vice* Plunkett, killed this day. Fear the Lord, Colonel. Fear the Lord; fight and pray."

But his Cousin Harry was now a major, and to Osmond's inexpressible delight both would be attached to the same regiment, and thus fight side by side.

The night before the great battle of Antietam was exceedingly beautiful, and Harry and Osmond sat up longer than perhaps they ought to have done, considering the dangers and fatigues they would have to come through next day.

When they turned in at last, hardly had they been two hours asleep when the bugle call, resounding all over the heights and wooded hollows, awoke them.

The battle it seemed was already begun, and hardly had our heroes time to eat a humble ration, washed down with water, than it was time to fall in.

For yonder was Fighting Joe advancing in force against Stonewall Jackson.

Two great heroes had met, and the very earth shook to the rattle and roar of their battalions.

“That fellow Hooker,” Stonewall was heard to remark, “is a madman. The Lord will deliver him into our hands.”

Fighting Joe, however, had considerable method in his madness; for, finally, even the redoubtable Confederate hero had to give way before him and seek the shelter of a wood. On to this pressed Joe, his men wildly cheering as they rushed—to almost certain death. For those woods suddenly vomited forth fire and a very hail of destruction. Then once more Jackson charged, and but for the arrival of Federal

General Sumner, Fighting Joe and his plucky fellows would have been annihilated.

But Fighting Joe on his white horse became a mark for showers of Confederate bullets, one of which at last pierced his foot, and he had to retire, all his hopes of capturing this wing of the Confederate army, or driving it into the Potomac, having failed.

This was the forenoon's fight on the Confederate left, but after this the battle raged wilder and wilder. The hosts on hosts of straggling men extended southwards and east for miles.

When Burnside crossed the southern bridge on his army's left he was opposed by Hill and his gigantic forces, and against fearful odds had to struggle on and up a hill or eminence. He gained this. He could not hold it, however, Backward borne now towards the Creek, Burnside feared annihilation, and sent to beg reinforcements from M'Clellan. M'Clellan could not spare a man. The word brought back to Burnside was that he should hold the bridge.

"The bridge! the bridge! If that is lost defeat is ours. I pray you, hold the bridge."

And brave Burnside resolved to do so to the last man, even should that man be himself, his own good sword in hand. But oh, the butchery! the slaughter! It is saddening to think or write of it.

Then fell night, and both armies sought repose.

Who would begin the morning's attack? Neither army did. Neither army dared.

So Lee crossed quietly over the Potomac.

Poor Wolf had been wounded in the shoulder, his master slightly in the wrist. Both wounds were ugly-looking gashes, but when the surgeon dressed Osmond's the latter declared that he would not go on the sick list. So the left arm was put in a sling. Then the doctor dressed Wolf's wound.

Wolf submitted patiently, frequently licking the surgeon's hand.

"It's nothing," he seemed to say, speaking with his eyes. "Yes, stitch it up, I won't bite; but if I could only reach it with my tongue I'd soon have your stitches out."

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Meanwhile how fared it in the army in which Harry's brother Will was serving after their repulse from Corinth?

Certainly not over well.

The Confederates determined, in an evil moment it would seem, to retake Corinth. Their General Price had, after being once defeated by the Federal General Rosecrans with the loss of nearly 200 men, managed to unite with Van Don and with Lovell, and brought their forces—a great army of well-nigh 50,000 men—to bear upon Corinth on the 4th of October.

That was a sad struggle and a terrible day of slaughter and butchery for the Confederates; Rosecrans disposed his guns right well in his trenches, and as the Southerners came on like an avalanche they were mown down in hundreds, nay, thousands, for their numbers—killed and wounded—must have exceeded 5000. Never before perhaps had such piles and heaps of slain been seen in front of an intrenched position.

When the Confederates at last drew off in despair, when the cannon's roar no longer mingled with the yell of the charging foe, and the smoke of battle lifted up and drifted away to leeward, it revealed a scene so sickening and so dreadful that even brave men among the Federals viewing it burst into tears.

At the battle of Perrysville, fought by General Bragg shortly after this—October 8th—the Confederates once more suffered severe losses, though they may have been said to gain a victory.

The poor Southerners were certainly to be pitied. Just think of it, reader—Bragg's soldiers fought as few men ever fought before, but they were hungry, ragged, and tired, hardly shoes to cover their feet, hardly a hat to keep the sun or weather from their heads, hardly clothes to cover their nakedness.

“Emerging,” says a writer, “from the shelter to

which they had retired after their first repulse from this portion of the line, they advanced in heavy masses towards our position. Their appearance as regiment after regiment and mass after mass came forth from beneath the woods and advanced down the slope of the hills was imposing in the extreme. Distance concealed the rags composing their uniform; the bright sunbeams glancing from their bayonets flashed like lightning over the field, and the blue flag with a single star waved all along their lines. At their head advanced a general mounted on a white horse and surrounded by a numerous staff, all having horses of the same colour."

Ah! reader, even as I sit here in my study writing, I think I can see that grand though ragged array. Yes, and I hear too their wild cries as they come on at the double, and wonder not that before such a charge the Federals were hurled back like chaff before the wind.

But Bragg was unable to sustain a grand combined charge, and so fell wearily back and away.

They left one poor fellow behind them of whom I must speak in my next chapter.

CHAPTER XI.

THE DEATH OF CAPTAIN WILLIAM BLOODWORTH.

JUST as the hosts of the Confederates were emerging from the woods for their second grand charge, and rifle bullets began to zip-zip and sing around them, Captain William Bloodworth, who was rushing on, sword in hand, at the head of his company, was struck, threw up both arms, and fell heavily on his face.

He was dead, his fellows thought,—if indeed there was time for thought. So they dashed on past him, over him, some, I fear, even trampling upon him unwittingly.

Will was not dead, though.

In a few moments he sat up, sick and faint and thirsty. He pulled aside his ragged coat and shirt, and tried to staunch the flow of blood from his chest. In this he was only partially successful, a fit of coughing came on now, and the blood poured from his mouth. He managed to reach his little canteen. There was water in it. Then he crawled foot by foot, inch by inch, back towards the wood. He sought shelter from the blazing rays of the sun, now pouring down remorselessly on his hatless head. What a distance away that wood appeared to be, although he had bounded there-

from but a few minutes before, full of life and elasticity!

Will he never, never be able to reach it? He feels, or fears, he will die. Yet life never seemed more desirable than it does at this moment. He, so young, so lately full of health and vigour. So—

What was that sound?

“Water, water, water!”

A faint and weary cry; for here close to the wood lies a wounded comrade. Will crawls towards him.

“I have a mouthful,” he says, “I will share it with you, comrade.”

“Is it you—sir—you, captain? You are—wounded too. We have fallen—we have—”

“Drink, poor fellow, drink.”

He holds the canteen to the dying soldier's lips.

“God bless you—we'll meet—soon, we'll—”

He said no more. The head fell back, and Will closed his eyes with blood-dripping fingers.

Then he painfully crawled away once more on hands and knees. In under a darksome juniper bush he crept. It was soft beneath this—soft and cool. He drank the rest of the water—there was but a spoonful—then the canteen slipped from his hand, and the deep sleep of debility stole over his senses.

When he awoke again it was night.

Night, and the stars all shining. But silent now is

the cannon's roar; silent the shouts of his brave companions; silent all; silent, dark, and cold. An owl hoots mournfully in the wood behind, the wind sighs sadly through the pines, and now and then faintly borne along upon the breeze comes a sentry's call:

"All's well!"

Will tries to rise. It is impossible. He is glued to the ground with his own very life's blood.

Oh, merciful sleep, that steals over him again, and brings with it dreams of his mother, his father, and sisters in their far-off old plantation home!

But once more he wakes.

There are voices near him now, and a lamp is flickering from bush to bush like a fire-fly. Presently he sees forms around him, but their coats are blue. He tries to speak, but cannot. It is an ambulance man that is bending over him now with kindly, pitying gaze.

"Here is another poor fellow," he says. "Lift him gently, gently, comrades; I guess it is all up with him."

Again the wounded hero slumbers, and next moment—so it seems to poor Will—he opens his eyes in a tent. A Federal surgeon is holding water and wine to his lips. He sips a little and now finds voice.

"Am I—am I dying?" he whispers.

The doctor turns away to hide a tear. Yes, even an army-surgeon's heart may be as tender as a loving child's.

“You are a brave man,” he says. “Can you bear it?”

“Yes, yes.”

“You are going, then, to a land where there will be no war, no horrors, no bloodshed; where all will be peace and joy and love.”

The surgeon took from his pocket a little well-worn, war-worn Bible, and while the lamp above swayed to and fro with the gusty night wind, and the canvas flapped dolefully ever and anon, this kindly medico read passages of comfort from that sacred volume.

The words, however, that seemed to bring the greatest comfort to dying Will were those, “*Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.*”

Alas! when the surgeon looked at the cot again, his patient himself had passed away. But there was a peaceful smile upon his face, that death itself had not removed.

The kindly Federal doctor found a half-written letter addressed to Harry and Osmond in poor Will's pocket and took possession of it, also a fully addressed letter to his mother at the old plantation.

(Long, long months after this Dr. Rae, for that was his name, placed both epistles in the heart-broken and weeping mother's hands.)

As Will had closed the dead soldier's eyes on the field of battle near the wood, so did Dr. Rae now close his.

"Poor fellow!" he said to himself. "So young, so brave!"





BOOK III.
TO THE BITTER END.

CHAPTER I.

LINCOLN PROCLAIMS FREEDOM TO THE SLAVES.

THE year 1862 wore slowly to a close without victory leaning very decidedly towards either North or South. At the same time, the fortunes of the Federals, it must be admitted, had fallen to rather a low ebb.

They had hearts like lions, however. They had staying powers, they had munitions of war, money, food, and clothing. The South was already impoverished. How then would it all end?

Colonel Osmond Lloyd's sword, it seems, had no chance of rusting in its scabbard. General Lee, as I have already said, drew quietly off across the Potomac, but M'Clellan thought himself too weak to follow up his victory. Some Pennsylvanian regiments, however, did what they could to make it warm for Stonewall Jackson, following him up and irritating him beyond control.

Now Stonewall wasn't the man to stand being followed or dodged.

"Colonel Lloyd," he said to Osmond one morning, "let us put back and give these fellows fits."

"I'm ready," said Osmond eagerly, "and all my boys too."

So turn they did. It was at Boteler's Mills, and was indeed a bloody tussle while it lasted. A hand-to-hand fight. But badly indeed did it end for the brave Pennsylvanians. They fought to the last, and their regiments were almost completely annihilated.

Stuart, who rode round the whole of M'Clellan's army before, must have been a most daring fellow. He made a raid one night right into the centre of Pope's camp. So plucky a thing had seldom been done before. What he meditated was to abduct the General, to make him prisoner in his bed, and to carry him back, in his shirt, to the Confederate camp.

"I'll have him, boys, right enough," he cried, as he rode off.

But Pope succeeded in escaping, and brave Stuart and his companions were disappointed. However, this cool, courageous Scot determined to give "old Mac", as he called M'Clellan, another turn.

"I'll ride round him again," he said, "just to astonish his weak nerves a little bit more."

So he once more chose 1,500 brave cavaliers and a small battery and crossed the Potomac into Maryland where Stonewall Jackson had crossed it in coming to

Antietam Creek, well to the west of Harper's Ferry. It was a daring exploit, for Stuart crossed Pennsylvania past the right of Mac's army, then east to Gettysburg and away to the rear of it, and back to his own camp. He had ridden 120 miles without an accident, broken up the Federal communications, and captured as many horses and stores, &c., as would suffice to mount and provision a regiment of foot or horse.

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It would seem that, on the whole, the Federals had not much faith in any of their generals; for we find now that in the Western Army, Rosecrans, who hurled back the Confederates from Corinth, superseded Buell in command, and that M'Clellan, on November 5th, was superseded by Burnside, the man who so bravely held the bridge at Antietam Creek.

Burnside determined to prove the truth of the old adage which tells us that new brooms sweep clean. He reorganized his army as soon as possible, and dividing it into three, gave commands to Generals Sumner, Franklin, and Fighting Joe Hooker. Its base was well down the Potomac at Aquia Creek.

If you look on the map, reader, you cannot fail to see Fredericksburg, on the south of Rappahannock and away to the north of Richmond.

Now Burnside was a courageous and a fiery Federal. But in giving battle to Lee, who, with 80,000 men under Longstreet and Stonewall, was posted on the

heights behind Fredericksburg, he had reckoned without his host.

After bombarding the pretty town, however, and almost destroying it, the Federals got over the river, and on the 18th of December attacked the heights.

It was a beautiful day for a fight, sunshiny and warm; but woe is me for Burnside's hosts! Every assault was repelled, and the carnage was fearful. Had Burnside been able to thrash Lee, he meant to march right away into Richmond.

He didn't. His repulse was complete, and his losses, dreadful to say, must have been over 12,000.

I cannot help here quoting the words of an English newspaper correspondent who was himself an eye-witness of this monster battle. It is concerning the splendid courage of General Meagher's Irish brigade he is speaking, when he says:—

“Never, either at Fontenoy, Albuera, or Waterloo, was more undoubted courage displayed by those sons of Erin, than during those six frantic dashes they made against the almost impregnable position of their foe. There are stories that General Meagher harangued his troops in impassioned language on the morning of the battle, and plied them extensively with whisky found in the cellars of Fredericksburg.¹ But after witnessing the gallantry and devotion exhibited by his troops and viewing the hillside for acres strewn with their corpses, the spectator can remember nothing

¹ I refuse to believe this. Irishmen need no Dutch courage.—*Author.*

but their desperate courage, and regret that it was not exhibited in another cause. That any mortal man could have carried the position before which they were wantonly sacrificed, seems to me idle for a moment to believe. But the bodies which lie in dense masses within forty yards of the muzzles of the Confederate guns are the best evidence what manner of men they were, who pressed on to death with the dauntlessness of a race which has gained glory on a thousand battle-fields, and never more richly deserved it than at the foot of Mary's heights on the 13th of December, 1862."

The most important city and bulwark on the Mississippi—please note this, reader, and take a glance at your map—was Vicksburg. Because if it could be captured by the Federals under Farragut, with his fleet that had come up the river, and Sherman, with his army, railway communication would be severed between it and Richmond—the western from the eastern portions of the Southern Confederacy.

Vicksburg lies between the Big Black River and the Yazoo, two tributaries to the great Mississippi, and it was up the Yazoo that Sherman steamed with his forces with which he had dropped down stream from Memphis. He landed his huge army in the rear of the city of a hundred hills, and laid siege to it about the latter end of December.

Here the land is very marshy. Sherman made four

determined attacks on the Confederate strongholds, but all ended only in slaughter and defeat.

Two hundred miles down the great river below Vicksburg lies the important stronghold of Port Hudson. By means of this the Confederates were in a measure not so much affected by the blockade of their ports, because, by way of Port Hudson, they could keep open their commercial relations with the outer world through Mexico.

General Butler had been superseded down south by Banks, and the latter, with thousands of negroes in his army, made a tremendous dash at Port Hudson. It failed, however. They were beaten, especially the blacks, against whom the Southerners were terribly incensed. They closed with them, and while it is said the emancipated slaves fought literally with tooth and nail, the Confederates used their bowie-knives, and covered the ground with their writhing and dusky forms.

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About the first of the new year, 1863, Rosecrans and Bragg had a terrible fight at Murfreesboro', but the Federal proved himself the more skilful soldier, and Bragg had to retire. Murfreesboro' lies on the Stone River, and the railway between Nashville and Chattanooga runs through it.

As if fortune wished in a measure to make up to the Southerners for their great losses in this fight, Magruder, down in the South of Texas now (though

mind it is the same Magruder who more than decimated his division in those splendid but foolhardy dashes against Malvern Hill held by M'Clellan's forces) attacked Galveston. This was a battle both by land and sea, but the place fell, January 2nd, and the port was then declared open to commerce from every part of the world.

On April 7th another terrible attack was made by the Federal fleet against Charleston. It was a failure. So this may well be scored a victory for the South.

Now nothing sickens a young man, with the active and romantic disposition which our hero Colonel Osmond Lloyd possessed, more than inactivity. Let Osmond be in a fight every day, waving that slashing old sword of his, and I don't think he would devote much time to meditation as to the rights or wrongs of the cause for which he was fighting. And, furthermore, I am quite certain that so long as he could be at his master's side, Wolf—faithful and true—would have asked no questions.

But here, near to Fredericksburg, had Lee's army been lying now for three long months, without doing anything, and with the Federals just over the water.

Latterly, you must know, the Northerners had got tired even of Burnside. M'Clellan had assured the Cabinet in his day that he would march straight into Richmond from the Peninsula. He was ignominiously kicked out by his friend, the enemy. He got another

trial from another direction, but his overcanniness now caused him to fail again. Then Burnside had a trial, and we have seen how his over-rashness led to his getting beaten and driven back from Fredericksburg. So Burnside had to give up command next, and another new broom was tried. This was our old friend Fighting Joe Hooker.

Lee, though, could not maintain an army of 100,000 men behind Fredericksburg; besides, assistance was wanted farther south, and so, during the first three months of 1863, while Fighting Joe was busy reorganizing his army, Lee's army had dwindled down to 50,000.

But Joe planned the march of another army from the Peninsula to the east of Richmond under Keyes; while Stoneman was also to make a dash behind Lee—that is, between Richmond and that general—and destroy his communications.

That was how things stood about the middle of April.

Well, as to Osmond; he was one day writing a long letter in his tent to Eva, far away in England, and after he had finished it and sealed it, wondering meanwhile if it could ever reach her, he put to himself this question; or rather, I should say, he put it to Wolf:

“Have we been fighting in a just cause after all?”

You see Osmond had been thinking.

Wolf heaved a big sigh, and wagged his tail.

“I’m willing to fight anybody you fight, master,” he seemed to say, “now that my shoulder is well again; but between you and me and the tent pole I’d rather be romping with my mistress, little Eva, on the lawn in front of dear old Mirfields.”

“Slavery is a fearful thing!” Osmond said aloud.

“Hullo! Hullo!” cried Harry, bursting into the tent, “what was that I heard you say?”

“I said slavery was a fearful thing.”

“But, Osmond,” said Harry, “we can’t go against Scripture, my dearly beloved silly old cousin.”

“Scripture?”

“Ay, Scripture, boy. Wasn’t there always slavery in Bible times. Doesn’t God make some men for honour and some for dishonour? The slave who does his duty has a soul that will be saved and go to glory just as sure as yours or mine will, Os. But Heaven has set its seal upon him as far as this world is concerned. It is the brand of Cain, the black skin!”

“A mere accident of birth, Harry.”

“Never mind, there it is. Nothing is made in vain. Society in this country is built of two different kinds of stone, the lower is granite—that is the slave; the upper marble—that is the white man.”

“Heigho!” sighed Osmond, speaking again to Wolf apparently. “It does seem a terrible life a slave must lead if he has an unkind master. It is a delightful one on your dear old plantation, Cousin Harry, but on others’ the slave is as likely to be ill-treated as

the owner's ox or mule. His master owns him, body and soul, can beat him, starve him, ay, or torture him mentally or bodily, can take even his wife away or the children he loves, and sell them. And now, I cannot help somehow seeing the hand of God himself in this proclamation of Lincoln, emancipating the negroes."

This proclamation came into force on the first of January, 1863, and created intense disgust in the Southern States. It was designated a gross violation of the usages of civil warfare. It was an incentive to insurrection of the most awful kind.

All sorts of terrible proposals were brought forward by way of retaliation. Had they been adopted they would have been as foolish as they were fiendish. The "black flag" was to be unfurled, and a war *à l'outrance* declared. No quarter on battle-field or anywhere else was to be given or asked. No Federal prisoners were to be taken, all were to be massacred, and even the wounded on the fields of battle to be knocked on the head.

"The hand of God, did you say, Osmond?" said Harry sadly. "O cousin, retract that sentence."

"No, Harry, I will not, I cannot. Come, my boy, don't misunderstand me, I'm not going to desert your cause. No, no, no. And I hope to see this cause triumphant, and the power of the North hurled back and crushed; but I shall live in the hope that when the South and North are different nations—for together they are far too large to be one—the Confederates,

for whom I fight, will see their way to free their slaves."

Harry was thoughtful for a moment, then he stretched out his hand to Osmond, who grasped it most cordially.

"Osmond," he said, "for a few minutes I did think that a little cloud had arisen betwixt my brave English cousin and me. Thank goodness it has passed and gone, and the sky from zenith to nadir is clear once more. Now listen, dear boy. Of late I myself have had my doubts about the justice of slavery, and when I have a plantation in our own dear sunny southern land, there will not be a slave in the place. Darkies, Osmond, there will be by the score, because I have been reared among them, and love their droll and innocent ways, but they shall be paid for all they do. Is that fair?"

"It is; may God bless you, dear cousin, for that promise! Now you and I are better friends and more loving relatives than ever. I have always loved you as a cousin, Harry, now you are a brother. I shall live in the hope of visiting your plantation in that future, which I hope is not very far distant. Then, Harry lad, I will expect to hear you say with Cowper the poet

"I would not have a slave to till my ground,
To carry me, to fan me while I sleep
And tremble when I wake, for all the wealth
That sinews bought or sold have ever earned."

CHAPTER II.

WHERE WAS FIGHTING JOE?

WHERE is Chancellorsville?" said Osmond to Harry next day. "How far from here?"

"Well," laughed Harry, "you're a pretty colonel not to have all our towns and villages engraven on your mind."

"O, bother them!" said Os impatiently, "I'd rather fight your foes any day than be bothered remembering your long, and for the most part stupid names. But Hooker's intrenched at Chancellorsville, and we're going to fight him there, I expect."

"Grand! we'll have some fun. Oh, the village is only eleven miles to the west of us, and it is south of the Rapidan, which flows into the Rappahannock, you know. But who is going against Hooker?"

"Why, you and I, Wolf, and Stonewall Jackson."

"It is good of you to put me first, and Wolf before Stonewall. But, I say, what will Fighting Joe do? Scrunch us all up, eh? You know he has an army of 150,000, and we have but 50,000!"

"Never mind, we're going to try."

"It is really," he added, "General Lee's desire to crush Hooker's right, and Stonewall is going to do it."

On the second of May, accordingly, Stonewall managed to get into the rear of Fighting Joe's army, while Lee engaged the front.

It was eventide when the gallant Stonewall came down on the astonished Federals. They were expecting no such attack, but were quietly preparing their supper, when the wild slogans of the Southerners rent the air in their rear.

Osmond, with Harry not far off, led a portion of that grand bayonet charge, one of the most terrible battles of the whole war.

After some hours' fighting, Hooker was beaten and driven from his lines.

Alas! though, this victory cost the South dear, for in the dusk of the evening, while riding some distance from his men, reconnoitring the enemy, Stonewall Jackson saw a body of Federals coming up, and rode quickly back to give the alarm.

He was mistaken by outposts for one of the foe, and fired upon. No sadder thing happened in all the war. What made it still worse was that the Federals charged, and the fight for some time raged around Stonewall's fallen, bleeding body. He was twice shot while on the ground, and when at last the enemy retired, and poor, brave Stonewall was carried in, the doctors shook their heads, for it was evident the hero was doomed!

Lee next turned upon Sedgwick, who threatened him. This general had been left near Fredericksburg with 30,000, and finally got possession of the heights there. Lee sent Early to get him down. Early got him down with a vengeance, and the

slaughter was fearful, Sedgwick losing about 5000 men.

Well, Hooker had to recross the Rappahannock; Stoneman, who had intended to do such great things, ran; and Keyes, who, as I said before, was to march upon Richmond from the Peninsula, let off a few fireworks, and then made his feet his friends as fast as he could lift them.

Surely then, Lee had proved himself a great general, thus beating three Federal armies which together numbered more than 125,000 well-fed, well-clothed men: and all this with about 60,000 Confederates.

Osmond had become very much attached to his great general, Stonewall Jackson, and when he heard that he was unlikely to live he was so much affected that he shed tears.

He was allowed to see the brave and redoubtable hero, and, quietly where he lay, Stonewall thanked him again for having come to fight for the Southern cause, and gave him much good advice.

"Trust for ever in the Lord, dear Colonel," were his last words to Osmond.

Our young hero dared not trust himself to reply, for silently down his cheeks the tears of grief were coursing, but he took his general's hand and kissed it, then with bent head went sadly away.

He met Harry next day.

"So poor Stonewall Jackson is dead, Harry," he

said. "I feel an aching void in my heart that it seems impossible ever to fill. I don't think I'll ever fight with such courage again."

"And I, too, am sad," answered Harry, "and not a man is there in our corps that does not feel he has lost a personal friend, nay more, a father."

"Poor Stonewall, he will be mourned by North as well as by South—for even our enemies respected him—yes, Harry, and, in England also, and all throughout the world."

"My dear Osmond," said Harry Bloodworth, "there is, I note and have often noted, one particular fault you have in common with nearly all your countrymen."

"Only one fault, cousin? I'm sure I have fifty. But out with it, Harry.

"O, I mean to, I assure you. I mean to let you have it straight. Well, the fault is this: in speaking of Britain you always call it England. You speak of the English army and the English navy. There is no English, only a British, army or navy. Is it fair, I put it to you, is it chivalrous to that country of warriors to which you are allied, wedded, amalgamated—put it as you choose? There may be a spice of jealousy in it. But why need there be? Although Scotland was the enemy of England so long, and always fought her one to five, sometimes even one to seven Saxons, and often whipped her, still England as England need be jealous of no people or land on the face of the earth. England as England is a land of chivalry and

worth, but England, side by side with Scotland—Britain, in other words—is the grandest nation, bar America, the world has ever known.

“How would you like,” continued Harry, “if the Scotch were to talk of Britain as Scotland and of the Scottish navy and Scottish army?”

“It would sound silly.”

“It might sound silly, but Scotland, pardon me, whom England never could conquer, fell heir to England and its crown; the Scottish people therefore have infinitely more right to give a name to Britain than you English have.”

Osmond was silent.

“Our best generals, Osmond, dear cousin, in the North as well as in the South, are Scotch, the next best are Irish.”

And Thomas Jefferson Jackson (Stonewall Jackson), reader mine, was both Scotch and Irish, and, as all the world knows, in his character he evinced the very best qualities of both these noble peoples! Stonewall might be called a soldier-born, for at the early age of nineteen he was a pupil in the Military Academy at West Point. At this college studied the immortal Grant, brave M‘Clellan, Burnside, Foster, and others.

He afterwards went to the Mexican War as lieutenant. His good conduct, courage, steadiness, and daring soon led to his promotion. He was attached to Magruder’s battery, of which—strange how things turn out!—Fighting Joe Hooker, who, at the date of

poor Stonewall's death, commanded the Potomac army, was the adjutant.

Hear what Magruder said of him in Mexico:

"If industry, devotion, talent, and pluck are the highest qualities of a soldier, then is he entitled to the distinction which their possession confers."

After Stonewall returned from Mexico he became Professor of Natural Philosophy at Lexington.

I am not writing Stonewall's life—though some day I may tell you all his story—so must rein up by saying that this true hero was a true Christian in thought, in word, and in very deed.

Apart from the death of Stonewall Jackson, probably the event of the month was General Grant's decisive victory at Champion's Hill.

After Grant ordered Sherman to proceed up the Yazoo to the north of Vicksburg and to attack Haines' Bluff from water and land, he himself took the rest of his army south for seventy miles, and near the Black River crossed the Mississippi. It was a stroke of genius, for while the Confederates at Vicksburg were all eyes and ears watching Sherman, Grant swept up north upon them, fighting battle after battle, and being victorious in each. He threw himself on Port Gibson, and captured it and one thousand prisoners.

He fought the Southerners at Raymond, twenty-one miles south of Vicksburg, his bayonet charge being one of the prettiest on record.

He had to fight a harder tussle at Champion's Hill,

but although Pemberton, the Confederate, with his splendid artillery, fought like a lion, he was crushed and routed at last, and all his guns fell into Grant's hands.

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It is, meanwhile, with Lee we have most to do, and with our heroes Osmond and Harry. Nearly every hour the two young men could spare they spent in each other's company, and many a night by the camp fire, or apart from the noise and bustle of the camp, under some green tree or high up on a hill-top, did they sit and talk while moon and stars were shining.

They had, it is needless to say, plenty to speak about. There was Osmond's home far away in England, Osmond's loving, gentle mother and sister—he had portraits of each—Osmond's steady matter-of-fact but honest father, and his sturdy brother Dick.

“Ah! we'll see them all one of these days, Harry, when the war is over, for home to England with me you are bound to come.”

“If I'm not killed.”

“We're not going to be killed, Harry. I'm determined we shall not.”

“And still you expose yourself wherever you fight more, I think, than is necessary.”

“Nonsense! Besides, dear old Stonewall, my warrior father, taught me.”

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Lee's army kept increasing now, for an invasion of Northern territory was determined on.

This was a new campaign in reality. Stuart and his gallant, dare-devil cavalry were sent to keep Hooker back from the fords of the Rappahannock, and Lee sent his Generals Ewell and Longstreet along the south bank of the river to cross the Blue Ridge Mountains and get into the historical Shenandoah Valley. Milroy defended, but Ewell thrashed him soundly, and, crossing the Potomac, advanced upon Pennsylvania.

General Hooker followed Ewell, and so by and by Lee got his whole army marched into Northern territory and encamped at Chambersburg.

No wonder the Northerners were now at fever-heat with terror and excitement, for even Baltimore itself—at which city Lee would have been welcomed by at least half the population—was threatened.

Where was Fighting Joe? Had his right hand lost its cunning? Well, these were questions that everybody was asking up North. Everybody had trusted so much to Joe; he had promised so well, he had so much fire and dash and all the other good qualities, that when he was appointed everybody made sure that Lee would be smashed, and that Joe would soon be drinking wine, or whatever his favourite tippie was, in Richmond.

But now there seemed to be no Fighting Joe; and so the Federals grumbled and growled as Federals will.

Meanwhile President Lincoln called for 100,000 more recruits, and soon afterwards he deposed poor

Joe, and appointed General Meade—who was said to be sombre, sober, meditative, and modest—in his place.

Ever hear of Gettysburg, reader? No? Well, the town lies in the south of Pennsylvania, and has so many roads converging on it from all directions that it has been likened to the hub of a cart-wheel.

And it was at this village, and on the heights near it, that one of the most important battles of this great war was fought, July 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, 1863.

To gain those heights both Meade's and Lee's armies had a race.

Meade won the race.

Alas for the power and the pride of the South! Meade also won the battle.

Oh, a terrible battle it was, reader, though I dismiss it thus curtly.

Perhaps the hero of the awful fight was Pickett—he had once been a free lance, yea, even a filibuster, but here he led Longstreet's splendid corps. His division was all but annihilated. It is said that no less than fourteen field-officers were struck down in Pickett's division, and two-thirds of his whole force!

Was there rejoicing in the North after this? Need we answer the question?

The Federals went wild, and when news came next to Washington that Vicksburg itself had fallen their cup of joy was indeed full.

Port Hudson, too, had fallen, having capitulated to Banks on the 2nd of July.

The Confederate iron-clad *Atlanta* was captured by the *Weehawken*. Morgan, the great free-lance cavalier, was made prisoner. Fort Sumter was destroyed by the Federals, and Morris Island given up by the Confederates.

No wonder the Yankees believed that now or very speedily Richmond itself would open her gates for their triumphal entry.

Both Osmond and Harry had fought well and determinedly at Gettysburg, to say nothing of Wolf. However, our hero had not been in Pickett's division, and this may account for him and his cousin coming scot-free from that terrible fight.

CHAPTER III.

A TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

OH, I say, Harry," cried Osmond one day, "what do you think?"

"I'm sure I couldn't guess. We haven't won another battle down South, have we?"

"No; but I've had letters, from whom? Just guess."

"I can easily guess by your face. Well, I've had letters, too, from the old plantation, and Father is well, and Mother and sisters, to say nothing of Uncle Neile,

and Mammy, who wants us to make haste and whip the Yankees, and come home to eat 'possum and pumpkin pie.

"Your letters are from the Brewers?" he added "Am I not right?"

"You are. Well, here is Wolf, who wants a run. Let us get away from the camp. The day is bright and clear and warm for October. Look, how lovely the trees are taking on their autumn tints, and see, there are the flowers still in bloom! Harry, I could write verses to-day, though you know our recent check at Bristol Station, by that dare-devil Meade, has almost knocked all the poetry and romance clean out of my system."

"Well, anyhow, Os, we stopped the rascal from trotting on to Richmond, at Mine Run."

They soon reached high ground, with a view, stretching out far at their feet, of woods and wilds, and rolling waters that, under the sunshine of this bright October day, was beautiful in the extreme.

"First, then," said Osmond, "there is a letter from Lucy herself."

"Lucy herself! Ha! ha!"

It was really rude of Harry to laugh, but I dare say he couldn't help it.

"Well," said Os, bending down to pat Wolf, who had thrown himself at his feet, "I suppose you wouldn't care to hear that. It is, nevertheless, the sweetest little thing in letters, and the most innocent I ever read."

“Yes?”

“Yes; and all filled with good advice, and interlarded with quotations from Shakespeare, and from Holy Writ.”

“Poor innocent! Doesn’t read much like a love letter, I should think?”

“Well, n-no, not exactly, perhaps. But it is very—er—motherly, and all that. She tells me I must be sure not to get my feet damp. Oh, Harry, look at my boots, and my ragged nether garments!”

“And look at mine,” said Harry, holding up his feet. “I got these off a deceased Fed. Of course, he had no farther use for them.”

“Well, they are very much down at the heel, Major Bloodworth, I must admit.”

“Wait till we get to Washington. But, meanwhile, go on.”

“Oh, Mrs. Brewer writes a few lines. She says that Lucy talks about me every day of her life.”

“It is nice to be you, Osmond. Well?”

“Well, then comes Captain Brewer’s letter. It is just like himself—straightforward, bluff, and jolly.”

“Let me see,” said Harry; “where do the letters hail from?”

“Oh, they come, of course, like yours, straight away from the old plantation. I think it was a good idea giving everybody your home, Harry, as my permanent address.”

“Ah! I wish it was going to be your permanent

address, my boy, and that we were never going to lose you."

"But," said Osmond, "the Brewers are now at Charleston."

"What, in the old *Mosquito*?"

"In the same old ship, and they safely ran the blockade not so long ago. But let the captain speak for himself.

"'We are safe enough for the present, dear young friend,' he says, 'but the blockade seems to get more and more difficult to run every time. We have been five times chased since you left us, and sometimes I used to wish that your friend Kenneth was on board, just to give them a touch of our old soda-water bottles, as he used to call them.¹ But as he wasn't on board, we did as little fighting as we could, and just as much running away as the dear old ship could stand up to.

"'Oh, bother the Federals anyhow, Osmond, and yet between you and me and the binnacle, this blockade running has made a man of me. Terribly dangerous work it is, I must own, but—well it is extremely lucrative; and as soon as the war is over, and you fellows have taken Washington, and dictated terms of peace to the Northerners in their own capital—how will they like it, I wonder?—I mean to settle down on shore, and have a pretty house, and a nice garden, and a lot of horses and dogs—oh, I tell you, Os, I have it

¹ The dahlgren guns were something like a soda-water bottle in shape.

all mapped out. Often and often I think of it when lying in my bunk, especially on stormy nights, rocked in the cradle of the deep, you know.

“Well, now listen; I sometimes think of something else. I think that if, while running a blockade, a Federal shell were to burst inside our poor ship, what would become of us. I care little for my own life, young friend. We’ve all got to die, you know, and the difference of a few years isn’t much. But, though I’m a sailor, I cannot bear the thought of my wife and Lucy perishing before my eyes.

“So, Osmond, I have made up my mind now to leave them at Charleston till the war is over, though they would rather be out farther west, in the cool green country, I know, and I could run out to see them after every cruise. However, I must bow to fate and fortune, and I fear Charleston must be the home of my darlings for a time.”

At this moment, Harry clapped his hand on Osmond’s shoulder.

“Look here, Os.”

“I’m looking.”

“Then listen, as well as look. Charleston is not going to be the home of Captain Brewer’s darlings. Not a bit of it.”

Osmond was smiling now. Something told him what his cousin Harry was going to propose.

“Write straight away to Charleston, and tell your dear friend Brewer that he is to take his wife and

Lucy to Brooklands, our old plantation, that he will there get the very heartiest of welcomes, and that there his darlings must make their home till the war is over. I'll write to Mother at once."

"It is awfully good of you, Harry!"

"Not a bit, man."

"And I'll write at once, too, to the Brewers. I sincerely hope my letter will reach before the old man goes upon another trip.

"Well," the letter continues, "I haven't very much more to tell you. But one thing I must mention. My wife and Lucy, and also myself, got tickets in the middle of June last for a grand water picnic. It was going to be just about the biggest thing out.

"We were going outside in two nice comfortable steamboats in the wake of the *Atlanta* ironclad. And where was the *Atlanta* going? you naturally ask. Why, she was going to whip the Federal turret-ship *Weehawken*.

"We—that is the brave *Atlanta*—were going to whip her all to pieces, and either sink her down, down to Davy Jones' locker, or take her in tow into the harbour. The captain of the *Atlanta* assured us he would, and we had the utmost confidence in his word.

"We were all so happy and so merry, you wouldn't believe! Nothing would suit Lucy, who was dressed quite sailor-fashion and looked beautiful, but to get right up into the rigging, with her glasses, to see the turret-ship sunk.

“We were all happy, and hob-nobbed with each other, and the popping of champagne corks was for all the world like platoon-firing.

“It was very, very early in the morning, but a lovely day.

“Just outside the Sound the duel began. Alas! and again alas! in less than half an hour after the battle commenced the show was over. It had been a tragedy in five acts, with a shot from the turret-ship ending each.

“Act I. Top of *Atlanta's* pilot-house blown off.

“Act II. The shutter of a port-hole smashed, and the crew badly scared.

“Act III. Another big shot. One man of *Atlanta* killed and fifteen wounded.

“Act IV. The *Atlanta* run on shore. Wild cheering from the Monitor's crew, which, owing to their being confined under iron hatches, sounds like the humming of bees under an old tin pail. Firing continued.

“Act V. The biggest shot of all. The *Atlanta's* ribs smashed. Lowering of the Confederate flag.

“Curtain.”

“Well,” said Harry, when Osmond had concluded this letter, “your friend Captain Brewer doesn't seem to take on much about it.”

“Not he. Captain Brewer always was a philosopher, I believe, and isn't the man to let fate crow over him. But now comes the last letter of the batch, and it is from Kenneth Reid.”

“Well, I'm sure you are pleased.”

“Yes, indeed I am, for you know I imagined he was dead long, long ago; dead and buried in the bottom of the deep blue sea; that the mermaids had sung his dirge, and—”

“Come off,” cried Harry. “I don’t want poetry, but fact.”

“Yes, cousin, fact is a fine thing. Well, here goes. I sha’n’t read it all, because it is too long, but just a few bits.”

“Fire away, then. Can’t you see I’m all impatience? You are like the Highland piper, Osmond, who took longer to tune his pipes than to play his tune.”

“‘I.S.A. *Alabama*,

“‘Off the Cape of Good Hope, August, 1863.

“‘My dear old Osmond,—I owe you ten thousand apologies for not writing you before. I’m not going to make one, however, because if you are still alive and not cut up into mince-meat long ago by the Feds, I know you will forgive me as soon as you look upon this scrawl of mine.

“‘My word, Os, what times we’ve been having! I’ve been just too busy for anything, lad, and where on earth or ocean is it we haven’t been, flashing meteor-like across the waves, and sweeping the commerce of the Northerners off the seas.

“‘Os, lad, when I was a boy going back and fore to school in Liverpool, I dearly loved sea-yarns, but stories of pirates best of all. Little did I imagine

that I myself would one day turn pirate or corsair; but that is just what we are, and what I am.

“But let me tell you how I came to join her. First and foremost then, I was stationed at Morris Island. I didn't half like it. They sent me to Fort Sumter. This was worse and worse, or, as the Scotch say, 'waur upon waur's back'. The commandant, however, of this fort was a very jolly fellow, and so was one or two of the other officers.

“But, bless my eyes! being in Fort Sumter was like being in prison and in bondage, so I told the commandant I was going to do what the bad little school-boy did—run away whenever the fine weather came.

“He laughed, but I told him I would. It was terrible to be in the midst of the sea, yet never feel the motion; to see ships sail past us day by day, yet never to tread their decks; to hear by day and by night the scream of the sea-gulls singing 'free-free-fre-er'; to feel the glorious breeze blow in my face, yet not be able to hoist a sail. And I, too, so fond of the sea! Couldn't I say with Byron:

“‘And I have loved thee, Ocean! and my joy
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward: from a boy
I wantoned with thy breakers’?

That was at Birkenhead, Osmond, or New Brighton, where I did my wantoning with the breakers

“‘And trusted to thy billows, far and near,
And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here.’

“No, as I couldn't do there. There was plenty of the ocean's mane about Fort Sumter when it blew about half a gale from the east, but you couldn't lay your hand on it, though it sometimes leapt up and cut you square in the teeth.

“Hark! It is the rattle of the drum beating to quarters. There is a ship in sight, my man tells me, and it may be a foe! I'll finish this letter when I come below.

“Dr. L— has just rushed past my cabin, looking awfully solemn and business-like. He is going to spread out his surgical tools and things in case he may have a leg to lop off. *Pirr-rr-rr-rr!* How that old drum does rattle, to be sure, and I hear the manly voice of Captain Semmes shouting orders from the quarter-deck.

.
“I'm down below again. It was a false alarm. Nine out of every ten of our alarms are false ones. The vessel that hove in sight this time was the British gun-boat *Penguin*, and we hoisted flags and kissed hands to each other as we steamed past.

“Let me see, where was I? Oh, yes! When the drum began to beat I was at Fort Sumter getting a green sea in the teeth.

“Well, one day a stern-looking but kindly-faced sailor came off from Charleston to dine with our commandant.

“We spent a very pleasant evening, and about nine

o'clock, while we all sat smoking under the light of the newly-risen moon, the commandant pointed to me.

“‘See that young fellow there?’ he said.

“‘Umph!’ grunted Semmes.

“‘There was no need for a longer reply, for I was as plain as a door-knocker.

“‘Well, he’s the best shot in the fort.’

“‘Glad to hear it. I hope you like the fort, Mr. Reid?’

“‘Like it, sir?’ I answered. ‘Indeed, indeed, it is all the other way. I hate it. I want more excitement. My commandant himself says I am a good shot, but, oh, Captain Semmes, what is the use of being a good shot if you have nothing to fire at oftener than once in a blue moon? I’m a sailor at heart, sir, and I want to feel the deck move under me. The deck of this old fort never does move.’

“‘Semmes laughed heartily at this explosion, as he called it.

“‘Bravo, young fellow!’ he said. ‘You’re an Englishman out and out, and I believe a plucky one too. Well, I’ll steal you from your commandant, if he’ll let me.’

“‘I suppose I must,’ said the latter; and I flatter myself he sighed.

“‘I’m going across to Europe before long to take charge of a little craft there. Mr. Reid, will you come along? I’ll show you fun, and fighting too.’

“‘Captain Semmes,’ I cried, jumping up, ‘you have

made me the happiest young fellow on this side the Atlantic.'

“‘And nothing would suit me but to shake hands right off the reel with my new captain. And that was my first interview with Semmes, Osmond.

“‘Now read on if you're not tired.’”

CHAPTER IV.

WILD LIFE AT SEA—THE “ALABAMA”.

I WAS now to be third lieutenant of the *Alabama*,' continued Kenn's letter, 'though till I left Charleston I had no idea what my ship was to be.

“‘But just before I started, whom do you think I met on the street? Ah! I know you have guessed already. Well, there she was all by herself, a perfect little—not so very little now though—self-possessed lady, looking neither to the right hand nor to the left. How beautiful she was! Don't be jealous, Osmond. Pretty and clever though she be, I would not give Katie Bloodworth's little finger for the whole of her.

“‘I just went quietly up behind and said 'Lucy!' She started, then turned quickly round, and when she saw me she positively crimsoned with pleasure. But while she welcomed me with open—ahem!—well a hearty and modest little hand-shake, I could see a

kind of far-away look steal into her eyes, and presently she said:

“Where is dear old Wolf and Osmond?”

“I told her all I knew, and we walked home together to her father’s hotel. How delighted both Captain and Mrs. Brewer were to see me! We dined together, and we talked together till midnight, and then I said farewell.

“God bless you, boy!’ were the captain’s last kindly words. ‘Be sure to write us and let us know where you are.’

“Next day I started, and in a week’s time Captain Semmes and I were crossing the broad Atlantic.

“Now about the *Alabama*. Just fancy! she was built by the Lairds of Liverpool, my own dear old shippy home, or at Birkenhead, and it is much the same.

“Captain Semmes wasn’t a bit communicative till we had nearly reached across.

“Well, we weren’t going to join the *Alabama* at Liverpool, of course. She was there though when I arrived, and I had a look over her. The name of our immortal craft then was merely *The 290*, and when I saw her first I did not think a very great deal of her. She was rather small to please me, and then, of course, she was all in a litter, as ships are in harbour, you know.

“Well, I had not announced to my parents that I was going to pay them a visit. I just walked quietly in one day. I thought my dear mother would have

fainted, and I do believe she would have, had not a flood of tears come to her relief.

“I don’t think I ever appreciated my dear parents’ love fully before, Osmond. But at the end of a week I had to tear myself away again.

“I wasn’t going to leave England, however, till I had paid a visit to your dear old home at Mirfield. I wrote to Eva and told her I was coming, and your brother Dick—what a giant he is, Osmond!—drove to the station to meet me. I like him very much, though he is altogether your antithesis. So is your sturdy Yorkshire father. But you are like your mother, and that sweetest of sisters, Eva. She has promised to be my sister too, so that is all arranged.

“But your people really didn’t know how much to make of me, and I had to repeat all the story of our wild adventures over and over again, and tell them all about you and Wolf.

“Eva was shedding downright sisterly tears when she bade me good-bye.

“Another sad parting, you see! In heaven, they tell me, there will be no more partings. Ah! that will indeed be joyful.

“Well, *The 290* steamed away. (I only wonder the British government allowed her to leave.) *The 290* steamed away, and we (Captain Semmes and myself) followed her in another ship. So did one other vessel, and we all forgathered at Terceira.¹ The other vessel

¹An island in the Atlantic, one of the Azores.

contained her armament, and we soon had the guns on board.

“A few days after we had steamed away from port Captain Semmes appeared on the quarter-deck in the full uniform of a navy captain of the Confederate States of America, and lashed to his sword.

“With all due decorum and respect the British flag was hauled down, and in its place was unfurled the Confederate ensign. Captain Semmes now, in a short speech to his assembled officers and men, declared the vessel to be the *Alabama*, and our mission to sink, to burn, or bond every merchant ship belonging to the Northern States that we could sight and come up with. Guns now thundered forth a salute, and our men shook the ship with a wild and thoroughly British cheer.

“After this Captain Semmes shook hands with his officers all round, and several of us dined with him that night.

“We were all very jolly, but we officers being every one of us British, were not prepared for a proposal our Captain made after dinner.

“Gentlemen,’ he said, ‘I’m going to take you here, there, and everywhere all over the world. Our very safety will lie in our being ubiquitous. Our motto must be a double one, *Ubique et nusquam*,—Everywhere, yet Nowhere. We shall be everywhere when not wanted, but nowhere if we are likely to be caught and blown sky-high by a Federal craft double our own

size. At the same time, if we meet a man-o'-war of our own tonnage, or even half as big again, why, I'm going to fight; and I think I can rely on the trusty hearts that surround my little table to-night.'

"'Hurrah!' cried my messmates. 'You can, Captain Semmes, you can.'

"'But now,' continued the captain, looking a little more grave, 'I have one thing to propose, and that is this: Let us put wine and spirits on one side entirely while cruising. Let us never touch, taste, or handle any stimulant that is not prescribed by our worthy surgeon there. At sea we shall be always in danger of meeting Federal cruisers, for, depend upon it, when they hear of our doings—and with these doings the world shall ring—they will do their very utmost to capture, and probably hang us. You smile, officers; but I tell you the Feds are capable of any atrocity in creation. Let them never say, anyhow, we are wine-bibbers; and if we never drink while at sea we shall always be clear-headed and in fighting trim, even should the enemy heave in sight just after dinner. Gentlemen, I have made my poor little speech.'

"'Captain Semmes and messmates,' said the first lieutenant, 'I for one agree to your proposal.'

"'And I.' 'And I.'

"'There wasn't a dissentient voice around the table.

"'The *Alabama* therefore is virtually a teetotal ship.

"'My dear old Oswald, I'm not going to pose as a poet, I can assure you, unless it be in borrowed plumes,

but I can assure you, lad, when I found our ship bounding o'er the waves like a thing of life, with the glad sea sparkling around us in the bright autumnal sunshine, our decks as white as ivory, our guns like solid jet, our brasswork like burnished gold, and every snow-white rope coiled and in its place, the words of Byron's spirited and beautiful poem would keep crowding in my mind:—

“O'er the glad waters of the dark blue sea,
Our thoughts as boundless and our souls as free,
Far as the breeze can bear, the billows foam,
Survey our empire, and behold our home!
These are our realms, no limit to their sway—
Our flag the sceptre all who meet obey.”

“Yes, Osmond, and now the world was all before us where to choose. And I for one was just as jolly as a nigger boy in a sugar hogshead, or old Uncle Neile eating 'possum and pumpkin pie. Bless his old black face! Don't I long to see it once again, and Mammy's too.

“Well, lad, I don't think our brave sailors missed their grog at all after a day or two, and I am sure their yarns were just as pithy and the songs they sung as heartfelt, for I used to listen to them after sunset around the fo'c'sle head.

“But you know they had plenty of good tea, coffee, and tobacco. And we should not fall short of either; Captain Semmes would see to that.

“Hark! that shout from the masthead!

“Sail O—O!”

“Where away?” cries the officer of the watch.

“What do we make of her? Why, a Northerner, Os. It is the 5th of September, and a never-to-be-forgotten day.

“The captain himself comes up, and it hardly needs the rattle of the drum to bring us all to quarters.

“Yes, a Federal. We fire a blank shot, but she keeps on.

“She walks the waters like a thing of life,
And seems to dare the elements to strife.”

“Ah! we soon alter all that. A round shot goes tearing through her rigging, and in five minutes or less she has hauled her fore-yard aback, and soon we are alongside.

“The first lieutenant’s boat is lowered, and away she darts across the water, and ere long is back, with the skipper in the stern.

“She is a prize! She is condemned! She will be burned! It is Semmes himself who gives the order, with a nod of apology to the skipper. He, however, is taking it very coolly, and is smoking a very large cigar.

“The crew and officers of the doomed ship are taken on board of us, with their bags and valuables. Then we do a little private looting under the rose, and by and by rolling smoke and flames arise from the captive, masts soon fall hissing into the sea, and down

sinks her blackened hull with a plunge that can be heard on the *Alabama's* decks, though we are nearly a mile away.

“The captured officers are admitted on parole, the crew is made as comfortable as possible; but our own safety demands certain restrictions.

“Dear Osmond, that is our method, and in two months' time we had made no fewer than twenty-one captures!

“From every vessel taken we brought away the chronometer, just as hunters bring back with them the tail of the poor fox that has been broken up by the hounds.

“I am writing this off the Cape, Osmond, and at this moment Captain Semmes has in his cabin sixty-and-five foxes' tails; no, no, I mean chronometers.

“When I meet you next, Osmond, lad, I'll tell you all our adventures, many of which you will find romantic enough to please even you. For, mind you, ladies both young and charming are often among our prisoners, and have had to make quite long voyages with us, and some of our fellows have fallen in love.

“To ladies Captain Semmes is extremely chivalrous and polite, and we officers have often given them and the children the use of our cabins, while awnings have been spread expressly for their comfort. But at first when they come on board they look upon us as pirates or cannibals. A day or two alters all that, and then

the *Alabama* is like a ship off for a picnic at sea; the children playing about the decks, riding on the guns, and having grand games of romps with the men on board.

“ ‘ Sometimes the ladies have pets, a parrot, a dog, or even a cat, and these are treated, like themselves, with the greatest courtesy. A lady, whom with others we landed at Cape Town only the other day told me that her adventure was one she wouldn't have missed for anything, and she would ever remember the kindness she had experienced on board the *Alabama*.

“ ‘ We gave the Cape of Good Hope people a treat one day not long ago. We had captured a Federal not far off the shore, and we burned her that night just outside the three-mile limit. It had got whispered around that we were going to do so, and the hills were crowded with sight-seers.

“ ‘ Our life at Cape Town and Simon's Town, in the charming and romantic bay of that name, has been quite idyllic.

“ ‘ The little *Georgia* and *Florida* have also been anchored there, and the three of us formed quite a dashing little fleet.

“ ‘ Had we met the big *Vanderbilt*, who is in search of us, it would indeed have been a bad day for her. But single-handed we shall give her a wide berth.

“ ‘ The officers of the navy ships here at Simon's Town are exceedingly good to us, and many a long drive and shooting expedition have we had together

among the gorgeous mountains that spread in crimson and purple glory 'twixt there and Cape Town.

“Good-bye, dear lad, my watch has just been called.”

CHAPTER V.

A DANGEROUS UNDERTAKING.

HOW is it all going to end? Was that what you said, Colonel Lloyd?”

It was Captain Trouville who spoke. A man of forty. An American by birth and a Southerner, a handsome, daring, dark-haired officer who had lately joined Osmond's command. Trouville was French by extraction, with a dash of Scotch blood and a suspicion of Spanish. A strange mixture of races, you may say. True, and yet although great families in Britain put their faith in old stock, I am not sure but that a little dash of foreign blood does good. Is it not its intermixture of nationalities that has made America what it is, and Americans what they are?

When Osmond put the question, he with his cousin Harry and this brave and handsome soldier of fortune were lying on rugs close to the camp-fire sipping their coffee. Trouville was rolling cigarette after cigarette, and these disappeared one by one about two minutes after he put them to his lips.

“Well,” he added, “that is a question nobody could

answer just straight away. I myself, Colonel, keep on fighting, you know, and leave thinking alone. I guess if I was general now I'd have to fight and think too. Thank goodness I ain't. I don't take any responsibility, I don't, except just to see that my sword is sharp and my revolvers clean. Well, I've fought pretty much all over the universal earth, and fighting has become a kind of second nature to me. Why, sir, if an expedition was started to sail off to the planet Mars to conquer that bit of a world I'd join to-morrow. It would be a change, and I reckon we'd make the Marites sit up. But about this war—and it is the biggest thing by chalks ever I've been in—I don't know for certain how it's going to end, any more than this honest dog of yours, Colonel. 'Tween you and me and the moon, though, I shouldn't wonder if we get licked."

"Never!" cried Harry impetuously. "Never, while there is a man left to wield a sword or bayonet in the Southern States, shall we yield or rejoin ourselves to the accursed North. Even were our armies defeated, routed at every point of the compass, broken and disintegrated, for ten long years, ay, for a score, if need should be, we'd carry on a guerrilla war against our foes—a war so bitter, so harassing, that in time the Feds would submit to separation, and the star of Liberty should shine o'er all our darling native land."

"Well spoken, Major," said Trouville quietly; "but spoken, pardon me, like a young man."

“I can’t help being young.”

Trouville held out his hand, which Harry took half-reluctantly.

“Glory in it, sir. Glory in your youth, but never deny that if a man walks through life with his eyes open till he verges on forty, he gains experience, and can afford to laugh at the will o’ the wisp he used to chase at twenty, and took for solid reality. A man of my age, Major, who has fought everywhere, is going to keep his eye on the balance when honour and glory is put in the scale just to see how much they really weigh. Again, a man at my age knows when he is beaten, and takes it easy, and he doesn’t hesitate to accord honour to whom honour is due, even if it has been gained by a foe.

“Now, friends, when last year closed things were looking uncommonly bright for our cause. There wasn’t a Federal general we hadn’t whipped, some of them over and over again. But ah! boys, haven’t the tables been turned, or got twisted somehow? Just remember, we have been worsted by Meade. Just remember that Vicksburg and Port Hudson have been taken, that Grant has whipped us at Chattanooga—Jeff Davis himself has admitted that—ah! boys, that is a serious blow for the Confederacy, the thin end of the wedge that may split us up. The two chief towns in Mississippi and Arkansas the Feds have a firm hold of, also of Tennessee and Louisiana. The great father of waters, too, the Mississippi River, is theirs

from source to sea. We are beaten, boys, beaten on land, beaten upon the ocean wave. And, mind you, I have fought on both. And in February—it is now the end of March (1864)—we find that Lincoln has called for a new and terrible army of 500,000. Doesn't that mean business, boys?"

"What about the battle of Olustee in Florida?" said Osmond laughing.

"Ah! yes, the Federals got left there, and your old friend Beauregard, marching straight from Charleston, just whipped them prettily; but, ah! that is but a drop in the great bucket, lads, and I tell you this, if the Confederacy is to be saved, we've got to have more luck, and do more furious fighting than ever we've done before."

"I half believe," said Harry, somewhat haughtily and huffily, "that you yourself, Captain Trouville, have leanings towards the Federals."

Trouville quietly rolled another cigarette and lit it before he answered.

"Fifteen years ago, Major, had any brother officer made such a remark to me I should not have been content till I had wiped it out in blood. To-day I am older, wiser, but you may one day find that you are mistaken; then, as you are a good-hearted though hot-headed lad, you'll be sorry."

Trouville had got up. He stooped down to pat the dog, then bowing to Osmond, walked quietly away into the outer gloom of the night.



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CAPTAIN TROUVILLE TURNS UPON HARRY, AND READS HIM A LESSON.

"I think you were wrong, Harry," said Osmond.

"Well, perhaps you're right. I feel rather sorry now," said Harry. "I shall apologize when I see him again."

"Alas!" said Osmond sorrowfully, "that may never be. In a war like this one knows not what a day or an hour may bring forth."

I am of opinion that when Lincoln appointed General Grant commander-in-chief of all the forces of the United States, which he did in the month of March, 1864, he had placed the right man in the right place at last.

Henceforth and to the bitter end it would be Grant and Lee—two of the greatest generals that the world has ever seen. Grant *versus* Lee. Who shall win?

I should be sorry at present to even seem to give either name the preference.

Well, Grant had made up his mind now to march forth and cross swords with this truly great warrior, who never had been beaten without inflicting greater losses than he received, and from whom so many noted Northern generals had fled in wild disorder. The warrior was now on the Southern side of the river Rapidan with his splendid army of nearly 80,000 soldiers. War-worn, weary, ragged, and not over-well fed were they, yet the blood of the south leapt in every vein, and in their hearts a deadly hatred of the North and a determination such as the Scots had at the field

of Bannockburn to "do or die". But think of Lee's danger and the terrible odds against which he would have to fight. For on the opposite bank of the Rapidan was Meade, whom he had already checked in his mad rush on to Richmond. And Meade's army consisted of no less than 95,000 real soldiers, good and true, not raw recruits, but men that had fought, many of them at all events, from the very commencement of the great struggle.

Behind Lee was the "Wilderness", a tangled forest—a region of worn-out tobacco fields, covered with scraggy oaks, sassafras, hazel bushes, and weird-looking pines, the whole intersected with narrow roads and deep ravines.

It was towards this wilderness to do battle with Lee, with whom he had not yet crossed swords, that Grant was advancing.

All this was well known to Lee, but no fear, no doubt, was in his mind. Strategy, he knew, was half success, and he determined that though he might be outnumbered, he should not be outgeneralled or outmanœuvred.

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That Captain Trouville was grievously hurt at the innuendo thrown at him by hot-headed young Harry Bloodworth had been evident enough. But it was not on this account that the captain had volunteered his services for outpost duty in the Wilderness. He simply liked such duty, and considered himself—as

indeed he was—eminently fitted for it. So for a whole week neither Harry nor Osmond saw anything of him.

Meanwhile Osmond himself had volunteered for service of quite a different and far more dangerous character. Lee required a trustworthy and reliable man to reconnoitre. Unusual stir and bustle had been observed in the camp of the enemy for some days. The question Lee wanted to solve was this: Had Grant crossed the Rapidan, or was he expected? The general had asked Osmond to recommend him a man.

“He must return to me, if not slain, within two days,” said General Lee.

Then the thought had at once occurred to Osmond to undertake the duty himself. Here was a chance of relief, and a romantic one too, from the dull monotony of camp life.

“General Lee,” he said boldly, “I will go on this reconnoitring expedition.”

“Do you know that you will be shot as a spy if you are discovered. Besides, I am unwilling to risk the life of so valuable an officer as you, Colonel Lloyd.”

But Osmond was bent on the adventure. He quickly formed his plans, and at last General Lee consented.

Desertions to the enemy's forces were of everyday occurrence, sad to say. The men who so deserted were perhaps Federals at heart, or they were traitors. At all events, in Meade's army they saw the prospect

of good food and better clothing, with a better chance of life perhaps, and far fewer hardships.

Osmond laid his plans well. As he bade good-bye to Harry late one night in early May he patted his faithful dog.

“Take the utmost care of him, Harry. Be a good dog, Wolf.”

These were his last words. Then he passed out alone, and made the best of his way to the river. He exchanged signs and words with the sentries by the banks, then plunged quietly into the stream.

Osmond was a strong swimmer, and there were the lights of the camp fires on the other side to guide him.

By arrangement, his own sentries shouted and fired at him, the bullets of course going very wide of the mark. But they put those on Meade’s side on the *qui vive*, and presently they assisted in dragging from the river a very wretched-looking figure indeed.

It was Osmond—Osmond in disguise—he was bare-footed, bare-headed, and in rags, and shivering too, or pretending to shiver.

He was dragged rather unceremoniously towards the fire-light, and presently brought before the officer on duty, who was writing in his tent. On looking up he eyed Osmond for a few moments rather haughtily and suspiciously.

“Who or what are you?” he said.

“I’ll tell you what I am first,” replied Osmond, quietly returning the other’s gaze. “I’m precious cold

and precious hungry. If you have any kindness in your soul you'll let me exchange these rebel rags for something warmer by the camp fire yonder. When I've had a bit to eat I'll tell you all you want to know, and more."

"You are a bold young fellow," said the officer. "Take him away," he added, turning to a couple of soldiers who stood near his chair. "The poor devil's teeth are chattering. He is dying of cold. See to his comforts. He is either a deserter or a spy; bring him back in an hour."

This order was obeyed, and when he again presented himself and stood at attention before the Federal officer he looked a very different being.

"Now then, perhaps you'll be good enough to tell me something of your antecedents and the circumstances to which we are indebted for your visit."

Just then, and before Osmond could speak, a sergeant stepped forward.

"We found this broken bracelet attached to one of his wrists, sir," he said.

The bracelet was portion of a handcuff.

"Ah! young fellow, you've been a prisoner among the Rebs? Why?"

"Because I tried this game before."

"Desertion? Eh?"

"You may call it so; I don't. I am no rebel." Osmond held up his head with pride and pretended anger as he continued. "I am an Englishman, I have

been forced into the rebel army and compelled to fight against my will."

"And now you want to fight on our side a bit? Eh?"

"No, sir, I have no desire to do that either, but I don't mind, if it will result in my being sent home, or even as far as New York, where I have friends."

"Stay," said the officer, "can you give me any proof of what you say? For aught we know, you may be a spy."

"I can show you a letter from my sister. We belong to a good family; but I ran away from home—like a fool!"

As he spoke, he clapped his hand to his breast. Then with an appearance of chagrin he turned quickly to his escort.

"The letter is in the pocket of those rebel rags of mine. I hope you haven't destroyed them."

The sergeant laughed. "We didn't keep them for their value," he said, "but they were too wet to burn. Here is the letter; I kept that. It's a bit damp, sir," he added, placing it on the little tent table.

It was Eva's letter. It had been addressed simply to Mr. Osmond Lloyd, to the care of Mrs. Bloodworth, &c. Before leaving his own side, however, Osmond had changed the word Lloyd into Flogden.

The letter itself was one that nobody could have forged. Truth and innocence breathed in every word of it. The officer's eyes were really moist with tears as he handed it back.

“I cannot help believing you after that,” he said. “What a gentle, loving sister you have! You shall see General Hancock on parade to-morrow, and all that is possible will be done for you. We shall expect you to fight with us, however, for some time. Good night!”

“Good night, sir! A thousand thanks!”

And Osmond went off with his new comrades.

But the real ordeal had yet to come.

CHAPTER VI.

CONDEMNED TO DIE.

IT was late next afternoon before Osmond was brought before General Hancock, who stood in front of his tent. All the day he had been left pretty free, although in reality watched, and many were the observations he had made and stowed away in the storehouse of his memory. For late that very night he meant to make his escape, and swim back once more to his own camp.

General Hancock was too busy to waste much time over a deserter.

“You’re quite sure, Captain Brown, he is a deserter? Well, that is enough,” he said.

Then he put several questions to Osmond as to the strength of Lee’s army, to all of which our hero

answered truthfully, for well he knew that Hancock had long ere now obtained the information from other sources.

"Take him away," said the General.

Osmond was congratulating himself inwardly on the success of his adventure.

He saluted General Hancock, and was just turning round, when, to his horror, he saw Wolf in the distance.

Next moment, the faithful animal was barking and leaping around his master in the wildest exuberance of delight.

Osmond had turned deadly pale. The game, he feared, was lost. He was certain of this when, next moment, an officer stepped up to the general.

"Pardon me," he said, "this man is a spy."

"A spy!"

"Yes, sir. I felt half sure before. Now, I am cocksure. He fought against us, he and his dog, at Malvern Hill, and in two battles before that."

"His name, then?"

"Lieutenant-colonel Osmond Lloyd."

"Is this true, sir?"

"True in every word."

"And I am truly sorry for one so young. But duty is duty. You die at sunrise."

"I am ready. And the dog, sir?"

"Yes, the dog. He must die too."

"General Hancock," said Osmond, and his voice was trembling somewhat now, "I have one favour to ask

nay, even two. I should like to write home, and like that my dog and I should be together till sunset and—together die.”

“Granted!” And the General turned away.

Poor Osmond! He had been brave enough while still in the presence of the general, and surrounded by his foes, and not even till the shades of night began to fall around the tent in which he was ironed and confined, did his heart begin to sink. He had written his last letters home, and hard indeed had he striven to make them consolatory, even cheerful. It was to his dear mother he had written principally, with notes for his father, for Dick, and Eva. That loving and gentle sister of his! He felt that he had never loved her before as he now did. But he told them all that he was going to die the death of a soldier, and prayed them for his sake not to mourn too much; the thought, he said, that they would obey this last request of his was all he had, save the sweet consolations of religion, to keep him from despair. He begged their forgiveness for having ever left home, and concluded by assuring them that in a few short years,—that would not seem long when they had passed away,—they would all meet in the land where there would be no sorrow, no pain, and where God the Lord would wipe the tears from every eye. He wrote to Harry a long, kind letter, and to General Lee a brave one. His mission had failed. No one was to blame.

He—Osmond—had taken all the risk, and he now gladly took the consequences. This letter ended with the words:

“God save the Southern States”.

But to Lucy Brewer he wrote a letter of a different character. A long one it was, and as he wrote it, all the romance and poetry of his character seemed to come uppermost, and I think, nay, I am sure, this letter was sadly blurred with his falling tears. What did he say in it? Oh, I could not tell you all, but he told her only the truth. Since that night when she and he had played the balcony scene from *Romeo and Juliet* in the dear old ship *Mosquito*, he had loved her. She was his ideal of all that was best and most beautiful in her sex. It was no boy's love his, and his dream had been ever since that night that she would have—He broke off here and signed the letter hurriedly.

Then a man entered and took the letters away.

So fell night and darkness, and to-morrow he must die.

Oh what a comfort it was, however, even in this hour of sorrow and grief, to have honest Wolf by his side! Poor fellow! Little did he know that his very faithfulness was soon to cost his master his life, and that he too would be shot at sunrise.

Osmond was confined in a tent that stood on high ground, not far from the river, but away from his camp some little distance. The night had closed in

dark and starless, and the wind ever and anon shook the tent, causing the canvas to flap.

An armed sentry paced round it every two or three minutes, and sometimes looked in. But the prisoner was so heavily ironed that chance of escape was impossible. In two hours' time that sentry was relieved by another, and shortly after, Osmond fell asleep, his head pillowed on the dog's body, as many and many a night he had slept before in the happy times for ever gone.

It must have been long past midnight. Osmond was dreaming that he was back at Mirfields in the old library, with Eva by his side and Wolf by his feet, when suddenly the dog growled low and ominously.

"Hist! hist!" said a voice. "Keep the dog quiet."

Osmond was for a few moments utterly bewildered. Presently, however, a light was flashed along the iron bar to which he was made fast. A minute more, and both Wolf and he were free.

"Lead the dog. Grasp this cord, and I will lead you. Follow silently."

He and his tall guide, who loomed before him like a spectre, were soon threading the intricacies of a dark forest. On and on they went for a whole hour, Osmond never daring to break the silence.

At last they reached a bend in the river. Here he could dimly see a skiff with a man in it.

"Good-bye!" said his guide. "You are safe. I must hurry back before I am missed."

“God bless you, sir! But whom shall I thank? Your name, that I may breathe it in my prayers?”

But the tall figure glided from his side without a word.

Wolf and he now entered the little boat, and in ten minutes' time were safely landed. But not until he and his boatman reached the Confederate camp did he know that the latter was none other than Captain Trouville.

“How shall I thank you, Trouville?”

They were now at Osmond's tent. It was well lit up, and Harry was waiting.

“Trouville,” he said, as he welcomed Osmond and Wolf with open arms, “whom I so grossly insulted, did all this. He crossed the river and penetrated the camp to our Cousin Tom's tent, and—and you know the rest.”

“And was the tall form who set us free really my dear Cousin Tom?”

“No other. Sit down and eat.”

Strange, indeed, are the changes that a few hours can bring about in times of war.

But never before had Osmond or Harry enjoyed so hearty and happy a midnight supper. Trouville, too, confessed himself as happy as a king, and Wolf certainly was far happier than any king that ever was born.

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The information gained by Osmond's daring feat

was not lost upon General Lee. He knew now that Grant would soon cross the Rapidan, and that an attack might be expected almost any day or hour.

“When Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war.”

And in Grant and Lee certainly Greek met Greek. That week's awful fighting, after Meade—the Federal generalissimo's right-hand man—crossed the Rapidan is terrible even to contemplate.

Grant, you must bear in mind, dear reader, had so laid his plans that at least three great armies were to advance on Richmond almost at the same time.

Grant had sent off Sherman to confront and hold in check the Confederates in Georgia, while he himself took in hand the Virginian campaign against Lee. Meade's army was to cut Lee off from all supplies, General Sigel was sent down the historic Shenandoah Valley to break communications with Richmond from that direction, and to advance thence towards the long-wished-for Confederate capital, while Butler's army was to come up the James River from the south.

The forces thus arrayed against Lee would amount to 150,000 men all told. Surely terrible odds! It takes a hero, brave and true, to stand calmly up against an array like this. But Lee was that hero. He had drawn the sword, and, having drawn it, had thrown the scabbard far away.

The terrible slaughter that occurred in that wild

wilderness is a matter of history. How Grant and Meade thundered on, how Lee resisted, and in resisting rolled the forces of the enemy back, broken and discomfited, is a story too long to tell here. Suffice it to say that Grant's repulse on the second day cost him 15,000 men, and Lee probably but few less. Yet the latter wisely fell back two or three miles to Spottsylvania.

His short retreat was construed into a victory for the Federals, and telegraphed from the Wilderness as such, and far and near away in the North the waiting Federals went wild with joy. Hancock, who had smashed Longstreet at Gettysburg, tried to repeat his success on the 8th of May, but was hurled backwards in bleeding rout.

The fight raged on for days and days. On the 11th Grant had victory almost secured, but Lee, with Longstreet's gallant fellows, dashed up, and once again the balance was equal.

Further defeats of the Federals took place not long after this. General Sigel, whom Grant had sent to the Shenandoah Valley, was defeated by Breckinridge, and on the 3rd of June Grant himself was defeated at Cold Harbor. Ten days after this we find Grant trying to march upon Richmond from another quarter. He had well rested his troops in the Peninsula, then skilfully feigning another forward attack, drew them off, crossed the James River, joined Butler's forces, and marched upon Petersburg. Could

he but take this city he would sever the connection between the Southern capital and the sea.

But this town the Southerners meant to hold.

"It shall be defended," said the general in command, "on its outer walls, on its inner walls, at its corporation bounds, in every street, and around every temple of God and altar of man."

And Grant's designs, as far as Petersburg was concerned, were doomed to be frustrated, for the present at all events. He spent weeks in trying to undermine the works. When the mine at last exploded, there was a grand charge through the gap, and in this attempt Grant was once more foiled, and lost over 4000 men.

The Northerners now began to lose heart once more—Northern civilians, that is. But neither Grant nor his men did so. It is true that he was draining the best blood of the nation. But blood alone, he told his officers, would win in the end. Such a general as Lee was not to be conquered with rose-water.

One thing is certain, at this stage of the fearful conflict, if Grant had not quite succeeded in undermining Petersburg his repeated blows were undermining the army of his brave antagonist.

South from Petersburg runs what is called the Weldon Railway. Grant now attempted to capture and destroy this line. Lee's isolation would then be far more complete.

Terrible fighting took place for this railway, and

never had the Confederates behaved with such splendid valour before.

Alas! it was Colonel Osmond Lloyd's last battle.

It was on the last day of the fight for the line in which Grant was—in a series of glorious charges in which Osmond and Harry both took part—defeated, and forced to retreat along the line with a loss of a thousand killed and two thousand prisoners.

At the head of his brave regiment, and on horseback, Osmond was leading a charge, when suddenly a strange numbness seemed to seize him—no pain, however. Then some one, he thought, in whom he was very little interested, was falling. After this all was dark.

When Osmond recovered consciousness he was lying in his tent, and somebody sat by his side.

“Water, water,” he murmured, and a cooling drink was placed to his lips.

“It is you, dear Harry. How am I here?”

“You are wounded. You must be very quiet.”

“But just one question, Harry. Are we victorious?”

“Yes; victorious, dear cousin.”

“Is—is—Wolf safe?”

“All safe. Wolf is near you now.”

Hearing his name mentioned, Wolf got up and went to his master's side and fondly licked his cheek.

But for this noble dog, poor Osmond might have bled to death.

By his pitiful howlings he had attracted the surgeon of the regiment to the spot where Osmond fell, and a

tourniquet was immediately put upon his wounded arm.

The hand had, while our hero was still unconscious, been removed at the wrist, or rather a few inches above it.

“Good Wolf, brave old dog! I’m happy now. I feel—”

He did not conclude the sentence, but dropped off into a gentle and peaceful sleep.

Things were going hard, hard against the Confederates now. Even their friends in England shook their heads, and admitted that it was only a question of time.

Sherman, one of Grant’s greatest and cleverest generals, had captured Atlanta. That was the big event of September. Sheridan, also, a dashing young Irishman and another well-chosen general, had twice defeated the Confederate General Early. Grant had ordered Sheridan to devastate the Shenandoah Valley, and right well and terribly had he done so. After destroying Early’s army he spread his cavalry throughout the valley, and in order to make it no longer habitable for the Southern foe, the whole country from Blue Ridge to North Mountain was turned into a howling wilderness. Two thousand barns filled with wheat and hay and seventy mills filled with flour were burned, and four thousand head of stock driven before Sheridan’s army out of the once lovely vale.

So complete was the desolation that it was said that if a crow wanted to fly down the valley after Sheridan left it, he would have to take his own provisions with him.

But Early was reinforced, and returned intent on revenge towards the valley.

Sheridan was then absent from his army, which was posted at Cedar Creek, and this Early attacked. Sheridan returned in time, however, to save it, and turn what otherwise would have been a victory for the South into a rout—into, I might say, utter annihilation.

CHAPTER VII.

AT THE OLD PLANTATION ONCE AGAIN.

WE are back once more on the old plantation. The group around the fire and in the cosiest room in Brooklands one wild and stormy night towards the close of March, 1865, was as strange an one as could well be imagined.

Although war had raged around this plantation, and many others had been laid in ashes by the enemy, or by raiders—of whom there were many about—singularly enough, Brooklands had escaped.

But let us see whom all we have here to-night. It is not a very merry meeting, you must understand. The children, Harry's younger cousins, are romping

about, as children will, no matter what the grief or sorrow may be, but their elders are talking in voices that are subdued though not low. Yet at times words are lost, if not whole sentences, in the roar of the storm that goes howling around the old mansion, rattling the window-sashes — howling like hungry wolves in the wide chimney.

In a large easy rocking-chair at one side of the ingle is Mr. Bloodworth himself—nay, let me still call him Major Bloodworth, no one more deserves that military distinction. His wooden leg is stretched out in front of him. It forms a support for the cat's head as half-asleep she winks and blinks at the fire of logs that burns so cheerily on the low hearth. On a bearskin close to pussy sleeps honest Wolf. He seems more at home here than on the battlefield.

Sitting by his father's chair is Harry, his arm resting affectionately on his old dad's shoulder.

Two ladies are in the opposite ingle-nook, and both are dressed in deepest mourning, for one—Mrs. Bloodworth—has lost a son, as we know, and the other, poor Mrs. Brewer, has been deprived of a husband.

Yes, good old Captain Brewer sails the seas no longer. What he feared would occur took place more than a year ago. The *Mosquito* was sunk by a Federal shell some miles to the east of Charleston Sound. Only six of the crew were saved, for the vessel, which was heavily laden, went down in five minutes from the time the shell exploded.

Long before this, Mrs. Brewer and Lucy had accepted Harry's invitation, and gone to live at Brooklands.

Lucy and Katie are yonder now with the children, and more like sisters do they appear than simply friends; but Lucy is tall now, and the promise of beauty she gave when just entering on her teens has not been belied. She is seventeen now—sweet seventeen—and there is one in the group around the fire to-night whose gaze often turns in Lucy's direction, who thinks her more beautiful far than she was when a child romping with him on the decks of the old *Mosquito*.

This is Osmond, as you can easily guess. His left sleeve—at least the lower part of it—is empty and tucked up, but otherwise he looks as hale and handsome as ever.

At this moment, during a lull in the conversation, Osmond gazes thoughtfully into the fire. Is it an extra gleam from those blazing crackling logs that casts an additional glow over his face? No, reader; it is the memory of that letter which he wrote to Lucy in his prison tent while the shadow of death was darkening over him. The letter—ah! well does he remember it, and every event of that terrible night—had been an impulsive one, but then he believed it would be the last ever he should write to the girl. And in it he had told her how he loved her.

But now he is telling himself sadly—things are

altered. He has been back here at the old plantation for several months, but he has never dared nor cared to breathe a word of love to Lucy. Not that his feelings are altered. O, no, not in the very least! but how can he—a maimed and wounded old soldier with only one hand—talk of affection other than that of a brotherly sort to the young and beautiful girl, the most perfect and lovely in his eyes, of her kind? No, to do so would, he feels, be to insult her, and, strange to say, he has seemed rather to avoid Lucy than otherwise since his return, very much to the girl's wonderment and sorrow.

But return we to the group around the fire. There is only one other person here to whom I have not introduced the reader.

He is a tall and handsome man of probably seven-and-twenty, with a bright laughing face of his own, and as he takes the cigar from his lips, and looks across at Major Bloodworth, that face beams with intelligence.

"I must say, Uncle," says Cousin Tom, for it is he, "that you take a very reasonable view of the matter."

But stay, before we listen to the conversation, let us see how Tom came here, and why Harry himself is not still with General Lee, who is even now standing like a lion at bay and preparing to make a last and terrible stand for life and freedom.

And this takes us back many months to that fearful and bloody fight for the Weldon Railway.

When Osmond came to his senses in the hospital tent and found his Cousin Harry seated by the side of his rude couch, little did he know that he too was wounded. But so it was. Only a flesh wound, Harry had told the surgeon who bandaged up his chest that a bullet had torn open.

The surgeon shook his head.

"Flesh wounds," he said, "are dangerous at times; you had better take to bed."

But Harry had refused.

"No," he said, "I will take my turn in nursing Cousin Osmond till he is out of danger."

And so he had. But in a week's time he had a cot in the same tent as Osmond, for alarming symptoms had set in, and the surgeon positively compelled him to keep in bed.

Youth and a hardy constitution, however, soon pulled Harry well away from the precipice of danger, and by and by the two cousins were able to talk to each other about all their battles and adventures.

One day a skirmish took place between Lee's outposts and those of the foe. The latter were driven in, and a sharp fight ensued, which at the commencement of the war would have been called a battle. It resulted in victory for the Confederates, and they marched back singing, with many wounded and a few prisoners.

There was one officer among the latter, and he was immediately put upon parole.

General Lee himself saw him, and when the prisoner told him that he was a cousin of Colonel Lloyd, and had saved that officer from death when condemned to be shot, Lee hardly knew how to thank him.

When, therefore, this stalwart cousin marched into the hospital hut one day, and Osmond saw before him the very figure that had guided him safely through the woods from his prison tent to the darksome river, he could scarcely believe his eyes.

"I'm Tom, Cousin Tom," the tall officer said, as soon as he could find words.

"Oh," cried Osmond, "how can I ever thank you?"

The two shook hands.

"I hope," continued Osmond, "I may have a chance of doing the same for you, or even more, some day."

Tom laughed till the medicine bottles and glasses all jingled and rang.

"Do the same for me? I hope you'll never have the opportunity."

"But how on earth are you here, Tom?"

"Prisoner, that's all. Your 'Uncle Lee' is a splendid fellow, and has put me on parole. May I smoke?"

"Certainly, Tom."

Down Tom had sat between the two beds, and the conversation became general.

Just a month after this Osmond and Harry were invalided, and Tom, still on parole, was permitted to accompany them home to the old plantation.

Nobody ever knew the terrible risk that Tom had

run in saving his Cousin Osmond's life, nor does any one know even to this day how he managed it.

But to return to our group round the fire.

"Yes, Uncle," said Tom, "you take a reasonable and common-sense view of the matter."

The major smiled sadly.

"Our cause is lost," he said. "Lee may fight another battle or two, and then—

"I have only one regret," he added, "and that is, that the Feds did not whip us sooner. Your President Lincoln is a wise and a far-seeing man as well as a good man, but had he taken a more serious view of the matter at first, and called at the very commencement for his huge levies of three hundred and five hundred thousand men, what a lot of lives would have been spared, and how much fewer grief-stricken widows and orphans would there be now in our land! As for slavery, God—I can see now—has ordained that it shall cease in this land for evermore. I bow to His will. Our slaves are free, and yet—" here the major smiled—"you see, Tom, my boy, not one has left the old plantation!"

The conversation now took another turn.

"What do you think, Tom," said Osmond, "was the bravest deed of the war?"

Lucy and Katie had come to the fireside and sat down in the inner circle, beside great Wolf, to listen.

Tom looked thoughtfully into the fire for a time before he replied cautiously:

"Of course," he said, "you talk of individual acts of courage. "Well, leaving such men as your dear old Stonewall, and even Sherman and wild young Sheridan and our Meade, and several more, out of the question, I think the bravest deed was that done by young Cushing, or that by young Eric Dahlgren."

"I have my man ready," said Osmond, "when you are done. This letter from my dear friend Kenneth Reid speaks of him, but you must go on first, Cousin Tom."

"No, you, Os, you."

"No, but you," said Katie, touching big Tom's knee with her fan. "Begin with Eric Dahlgren, he is Lucy's hero!"

Osmond heaved a sigh, but nobody heard it.

"I'm not good at telling a story," said Tom, "but we were in the army of the Potomac when the affair occurred, and it wasn't very long after your General Lee, Cousin Osmond, so completely checked our career as we were dashing on to Richmond.

"Terrible stories of the bad treatment of our prisoners in Richmond had reached our ears, and though they angered all that believed in them, they completely fired the blood of young Eric. He was only twenty-one, and already a colonel in our service.

"'Hurrah, boys!' he said one evening to his mess-mates by the camp fire. 'Let us deliver those prisoners.'

"Nobody replied. The others thought young Eric had been drinking.

“‘Men,’ he said, ‘we’ve got to die but once. I propose we do a deed that will make those Southerners sit up, and rub their eyes, and stare. A deed of justice; yes, and a deed of revenge!’

“Stripped of all romance, Eric’s plan was to dash into Richmond, seize the warehouse where they said our poor fellows were kept in darkness and starvation, and slaughter afterwards as many of the Confederate Cabinet as the party could lay hands upon.

“Eric got plenty of volunteers, and on this daring expedition he actually started. When it is remembered that this brave young fellow was still suffering from wounds which caused him great pain I cannot help thinking that his was one of the bravest deeds of the war.”

“Did he succeed?” said Lucy.

“Alas! how could he? His corpse and those of his brave companions were shortly afterwards being kicked about by the rabble in the streets of Richmond!”

“Poor Eric!” sighed Katie. “But what about Cushing? I love sailors best.”

Katie blushed, and looked shyly up to see if anyone had noticed.

“Well,” said Tom, “I myself am half inclined to give the palm to the sailor.

“Away up the Roanoke River, then, last October, and not long before we reached here, Katie, there lay the Confederate ram *Albemarle*. She was a kind of twin sister or brother of your terrible *Merrimac* that

destroyed our *Cumberland* and *Congress* in Hampton Roads, and which you afterwards blew up to prevent her falling a prey to our Federal fingers. I can tell you, Harry, this awful ship of yours—the *Albemarle*—was a terror to our gun-boats and cruisers, and when young Willie Cushing one day coolly proposed to cut her out, or rather to blow her sky-high, daring though they knew him to be, his messmates only laughed at him. But a man can live a long time after being laughed at, and as the young fellow had already proved in many a daring fight—while bullets flew around him as thick as hail—that he bore a sort of charmed life, he soon got many to listen to his hazardous proposal.

“The whole of Cushing’s early life is a romance, but I’m not the man to paint it. Only, he was just twenty-two years of age when he started on this expedition, and a lieutenant in our navy.

“He got permission at last from his superior officers to try his hand upon the ram, and soon he had thirteen brave volunteers all eager and willing to do or die with him.”¹

“What was my hero like?” said Katie. “Have you seen him, Cousin Tom?”

“Yes, frequently. He was very tall—well, nearly my own height—but far better looking and not so burly, Katie, as I am. Willie Cushing was slim and

¹ By some accounts, volunteers were called for, and brave Cushing, out of all those willing to undertake the adventure, was chosen.—*Author.*

spare, with a face as brown as the back of my fiddle, and an eye like a hawk's.

“The little steam launch which Willie chose for his desperate adventure was as slim and shapely as Willie himself. Running out some distance from and over her bows was a light spar that could be easily raised or depressed by the hero himself. Attached to the end of it was a torpedo filled with 200 pounds of gunpowder, and this could be fired by a trigger and string that went aft to the stern-sheets, and were in command of Cushing himself.

“For days and nights before starting Willie and his bold crew manœuvred, no matter how bad the weather might be, in and out among the Northern fleet, and then, when he considered that the drill had made everything and everyone ship-shape, he prepared for his terrible adventure.

“On the 27th of October Willie Cushing shook hands with his messmates and started off in earnest.”

Cousin Tom's cigar had gone out, and before going further with his yarn he stooped to light it at a log.

All waited expectantly.

CHAPTER VIII.

LEE'S LAST STAND AT RICHMOND.

IT was going to be do or die," said Cousin Tom quietly. "But, Katie, I reckon you would hardly have thought Willie much of a hero as he stood up in the stern-sheets to raise his shabby cap to the officers who stood looking down at the slim figure with the well-worn coat buttoned up to his neck. No, he wasn't a great beauty just then.

"Many a heartfelt prayer went after him as the little launch faded from view in the shadow of the trees, and the gathering gloom of the night.

"But on went Willie, and never a word was spoken.

"Unseen they passed the pickets and even guard-boats below the town, and many another station.

"Here, Katie, is how my informant writes about Willie's rush up the river: 'At one station, to banish the chill air of this October night, a large pinewood-fire had been kindled, and so close were they that they could see the gleam of the men's rifles and even hear them laughing and singing, as they discussed their tankards of apple-jack. And the glare of that fire glimmered red and rippling across the water, while the background against which the men stood out was like some weird scene in a pantomime, a dark and tangled jungle, a mass of cloudy undergrowth, and

above were the solemn trees with ragged tufts of moss swayed to and fro in the wind.'

"And now Willie began to approach the wharf near to which lay the monster ram.

"In a low whisper he gave orders to ship the boom and torpedo.

"This was done calmly and quietly by his well-drilled and gallant crew, and the trigger-line placed close to Willie's hand.

All was ready, but now came danger, ay, and difficulty also, for lights were suddenly flashed from each bank across the water, revealing the daring cutter's advance, and at once the sailor hero was angrily challenged.

"Who goes there? Speak, or we fire!"

"'Yankees, you donkeys!' thundered Cushing in reply, laughing loudly and jeeringly.

"Then, indeed, all was confusion. The launch's sides were torn and split with the volley fired from the banks. The guard on the wharf rushed blindly forth in the dark. Bells and alarms clashed in every direction. Open were dashed the ports of the monster ram, and her big bow gun seemed to be fired at random. It did no harm, but good, for its flash revealed the overhang of the iron monster, and showed Willie where the torpedo should be placed.

"But the terrible difficulty lay in the fact that the vessel was surrounded with at least twenty feet of floating logs. Against this, at full speed, down came

the launch,—Willie, tiller in hand, in the stern, standing erect like the hero he was, the bullets whistling around him and even rending his clothes.

“It was a terrible moment. I daresay Will could never tell how he got over or past the logs. But he did. The torpedo was quickly depressed, and although at the same moment a cannon that smashed the launch all to smithereens was fired from the ram, it was the last shot the crew ever fired. For at the same time Will had pulled the trigger, and Plymouth itself shook with the roar of the explosion that followed.

“Only four escaped of Willie’s crew besides himself. But the ram was sunk! The deed was done!

“After swimming for hours, it seemed, Willie found himself among the reeds of a swamp, but so tired that he could not even crawl to the dry land. But next morning, as good luck would have it, he found a skiff belonging to the enemy, upon which he embarked, and escaped to a friendly shore.

“Surely no braver deed was ever done either in ancient or modern times!”

There was silence for a time after Tom had concluded, then Lucy looked smilingly up at Osmond.

“Yes, it is your turn, Colonel,” she said.

“Well,” he replied, “I have had a letter from Kenneth. He tells me that we may expect him out here any day, and he describes the last fight the *Alabama* ever had.

This was the historic battle of the renowned cruiser against the Yankee frigate *Kearsarge*, which protected her sides with chain cables and sank the *Alabama* in two hours.

“But my little story of heroism centres around the brave—truly brave—surgeon of the *Alabama*, Dr. L.—

“For this calm, courageous man went down with the ship rather than hazard the lives of the wounded men.

“‘The last boat,’ says Kenneth, ‘to leave the sinking ship’s side was laden and almost ‘lip’ with the water, and we shouted to L— ‘Come on, doctor. Come quick. Jump for your life. We’ll make room for you.’

“‘But gallant L— only shook his head. ‘There are more wounded still here’—I think he said—‘I must stay and do my duty.’

“And stay he did. We saw the ship heel over soon after, and clinging to the bulwarks, but calm and self-possessed, was the doctor. He lifted his hand as if bidding us good-bye, then—O, my dear old Osmond, that sight I’ll ne’er forget. And we all loved the quiet and gentle L— so much! He had endeared himself not only to Captain Semmes, but to every man and youngster in the crew. Is it any wonder then, that when we saw our brave ship take her last and fearful plunge with the doctor on her deck, that we lay on our oars gazing aghast and

dumb? Yes, in that boat, Os, there were big strong sailor men who clapped their hands to their faces and wept aloud.'"

Osmond quietly folded the letter and put it away.

Then during the silence that ensued, Cousin Tom stretched across and grasped Osmond by the hand.

"Your hero has it, cousin," he said. "Your hero has it!"

And all seemed to agree.

Long before this wild March night, events had happened, and were even then happening, that showed to every one that the end was not far distant.

Sherman had been doing big things. His great march through Georgia is one of the events of the century, and it would hardly be wrong to say he was the conquering hero.

Well, perhaps not always. The greatest and bravest generals that the world knows or has known have suffered defeat and discomfiture at times. But in making Sherman one of his chief generals, Grant, I think, proved that he was a far-seeing as well as a clever and brave commander.

After the battles of Averasboro' and Bentonville, at which bold Johnston may have been said to fire his last shot at Sherman, the latter entered Goldsboro' and established communications with Grant.

About a month before this the city of Charleston fell, and after it Wilmington capitulated.

And now we return to Lee.

There was life in the old dog. Nay, let me rather say in the lion. He was, indeed, the lion-hearted Lee. Yes, there was life in the lion, and on March 25th, only six days before the final convulsive struggle, the lion made an attempt to burst his bars and dash through the lines of gallant Grant.

That sortie from Richmond was a brilliant thing in its way, and right well Lee's poor ragged and hungry soldiers fought. They even captured a portion of the earthworks, and for a time spread panic and confusion throughout the monster camp. But such a sortie could have but one ending, and so the brave fellows were defeated and driven back pell-mell, and with sickening slaughter.

Just as we see a fire that we think has burned itself out suddenly leap into newness of life in another direction, in the same way did the Confederates spring to life again, and on the 30th of March repulse the daring young Irishman Sheridan.

After this dashing soldier had made "a final end" as he called it, of Early's army, he speedily destroyed the railway 'twixt Richmond and Lynchburg in the west.

Then northwards went he, hurried at once to assist Grant against Lee. He got to the east of Richmond, crossed the James River, and, wheeling round, formed into position on Grant's left.

Now Richmond, Petersburg, and Burkesville are the

corners of a triangle, its three sides being lines of railway, and to take Burkesville would be to completely isolate Petersburg and Richmond, because the line there formed a junction.

"This must be done," said Grant.

"Never while I can wave a sword," said Lee.

So the latter placed his army on the south-side line 'twixt Petersburg and Burkesville.

The Confederates were beautifully planted here with well-posted artillery and earthworks, a rivulet in front and woods behind.

Now listen to what occurred.

Sheridan's horse came wildly on, first west and then northwards, with the intention of turning Lee's right flank. He was well supported by Grant's left, but so hot and fearful was the Confederate fire that Grant's regiments were at first beaten and hurled back, all but demoralized.

Soon afterwards, however, the Federals once more pulled themselves together, and so fierce and furious waxed the fighting, that, under the leadership of the fiery Sheridan, not only were the ragged Confederates sent reeling back to their earthworks, but some of these were actually captured, and the defenders pitchforked out of them at the point of the bayonet.

Grant now placed Sheridan in command of the whole of his left wing, and next day this gallant hero commenced the battle of Five Forks, the last great stand of the Southerners under General Lee.

Pickett did all that mortal man could do to repel the terrible assault.

The thunder of his guns was said to be incessant and fearful, the rain of bullets as thick as hail. This last is, of course, only a figure of speech, but this final struggle was indeed an awful one. The ground was thickly strewn with the dying and the dead, riderless horses galloped wildly over the fields snuffing the air and screaming in dread. Cheer after cheer, yell after yell from the combatants rent the air, but nothing could withstand that charge, and, assailed both on front and rear, the Confederates fled at last, leaving guns, artillery, everything in the hands of their victorious foes.

The pursuit was kept up until darkness, more merciful than the exultant foe, descended and hid the poor Southerners from sight.

Grant attacked Petersburg that very night, and brilliantly carried line after line.

The place fell.

Then Lee fled west, and made one last and final effort to get clear, but all was in vain. So, about a week after this, the great general surrendered unconditionally to Grant, the conqueror.

SCENES IN RICHMOND.

It was Sunday (April 2nd, 1865) and the President of the Confederate States—President now no more

—was seated in church at Richmond, when slowly, shyly up the aisle, with hat in hand, came a messenger.

He handed Jefferson Davis a despatch, and this fallen monarch—if so I may dare to call him—knitted his brows as he read it, and, it is said, turned as pale as death.

With weak and staggering steps he left almost at once, and terror took possession of the hearts of the worshippers.

“*The city,*” ran the despatch, “*must be abandoned forthwith.*”

The panic that now ensued was terrible. The inhabitants of the capital had hitherto been buoyed up with false hopes. But now these were in a moment ruthlessly kicked from under them, and despair took their place.

An earthquake could not have caused greater terror. What could they do, whither could they fly, where hide themselves from the vengeful foes that soon must crowd their streets?

Towards night, terror and tumult were increased tenfold. A wild and disorderly mob took possession of the streets, a mob more remorseless and cruel than even the northern foe would have been.

Wine and spirits were seized and drank till men were changed into maddened murderers, howling fiends. Even when the rum and whisky were rolled out and emptied in the streets, like the beasts they

were they drank it from the gutter, and many drinking, died.

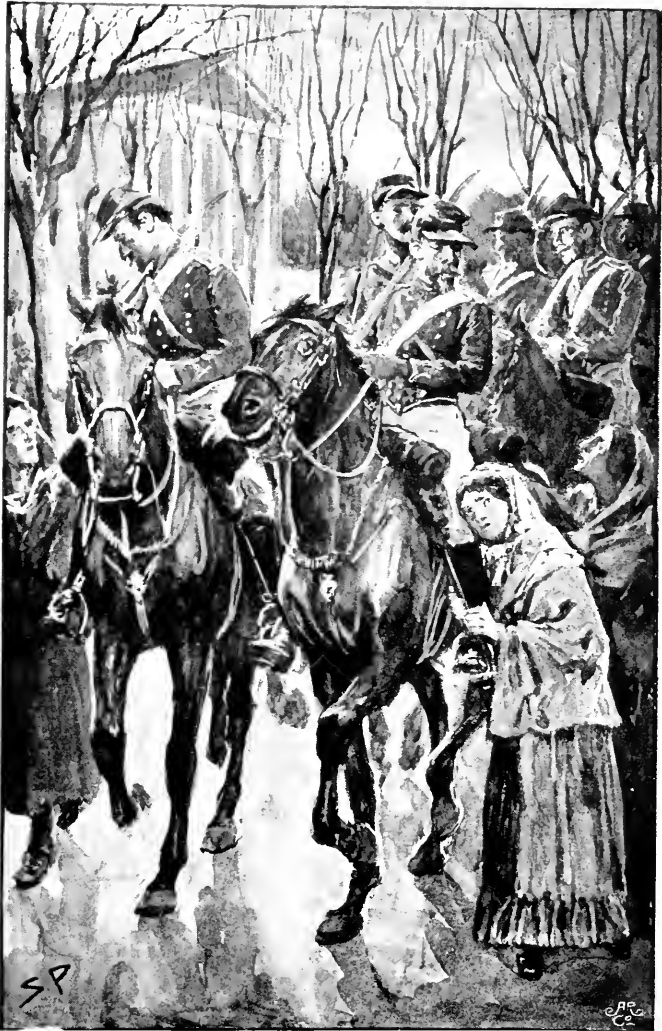
Windows and doors were smashed, robbery, violence, plunder went on in every street, in every direction, and now and then the shots fired and the knives flourished told that murder too was stalking abroad.

Meanwhile, the military commandant, in order that nothing should fall into the enemy's hands, foolishly set on fire the storehouses and blew up the ships on the river.

This was the commencement of a pandemonium which neither pen nor pencil can describe. For in an incredibly short time one-third of the whole city was in a blaze. Amidst the crackling of the flames on this awful night could be heard the drunken yells of the plundering mob, shrieks of women, and cries of scared and helpless children.

From afar General Weitzel, who held the Federal lines north of the James River, saw the glare of light in the sky, and even heard the roar of exploding shells and magazines. Too well he guessed what had happened, and at daybreak he rode in front of his forces to take possession of the doomed capital, from which long ere now both the President and Military Commandant Ewell had fled in disguise.

Onward the Federals went through the now deserted Southern lines. Only one sentry here still stuck to his post, because he had not been relieved. Weitzel made his way to the Capitol Square, and soon in the



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THE VICTORIOUS FEDERALS ARE WELCOMED BY THE
WOMEN OF RICHMOND.



morning breeze the Stars and Stripes were fluttering from the Capitol itself.

But what a scene was here in the square! The poor women and children huddled together in the centre, trying to screen themselves and their little ones from the scorching heat by means of the few chattels and household goods they had struggled hard to save. The sick, the aged, infants, and the dying all crowded together! It was a picture such as Dante himself could scarce have imagined.

To make matters worse, the criminals of the State Penitentiary had got loose, and ran amuck and wild. They even cut the hose of the engines, which some were trying to work that they might extinguish the raging flames.

As quietly and calmly as possible General Weitzel now set himself to fight the flames. The whole of Devon's division was marched into the city for this purpose. Everyone who could be pressed into the same service was sent to assist, and the now freed slaves gladly gave all the help they could.

This then, reader, is one more scene from the great Civil War. And it is the last.

It is due to the Federals to add that their presence in Capitol Square, when the cavalry first went rattling in there, instead of scaring the poor women, served to give them heart and joy.

In their delight they even crowded round the soldiers, kissing the very bridles and stirrup-leathers

and hugging the horses' legs, while the tears rolled down their cheeks.

In the midst of the great rejoicing caused by the capture of Richmond and the surrender of Lee, there fell an awful gloom on the Northern States, for PRESIDENT LINCOLN, the generous, kind, and true, was shot in the theatre at Washington, by the hands of the cowardly assassin, John Wilkes Booth.

CHAPTER IX.

FOR PLUNDER AND REVENGE.

NEWS often travels slowly in war times, and what with the destruction of railway lines and telegraph wires, when it does find its way to outlying districts it is often sadly garbled.

Although Major Bloodworth was in almost daily expectation of hearing of the fall of Richmond and the end of the great Civil War, day after day went by, and still the news came not. Yet now and then there were rumours that Grant had been beaten. But as this was deemed impossible, by not only Cousin Tom, but even by Harry and Osmond, no attention was paid to them.

Meanwhile, for a time at all events, life at the old plantation was as quietly happy as if such terrible scenes as those I have tried to portray had no existence in this world. Spring had come too, for it comes right early in Southern States, and indeed it was almost summer. The woods were musical with the song of birds; the trees were draped in leaves of softest green, through which the wind seemed to whisper, and sing, and sigh; the fields with their wild flowers were a sight to see, and the perfume of the wistaria that adorned the darkling pines was sweet as the scent of orange blossom. All over the porches and verandahs of Brooklands were clustering flowers, and in the gardens the beautiful kalmia was all in blossom.

Many a picnic did the cousins and Lucy now have by stream, by lake, and in the wild woods; and if at times sad thoughts of those that they should never see again in this world took possession of their minds it did but chasten and render holy their happiness, without stealing it quite away.

Old Uncle Neile and Mammy gave another entertainment, as the good old darkie grandly called it. The first portion of the treat took place one moonlight night in the forest. For the dogs treed the 'possum, and finally he was caught and killed. Another and another followed, and younger niggers than Uncle were sent off post-haste with them to old Mammy's cottage.

Uncle Neile was in fine form that night. He was bareheaded, having somehow lost his cap, and the

moonbeams glinted on his hair as if it had been a ball of snow.

"Ah!" he told Osmond, "der am nuffin on earth to beat de 'possum. 'Possum, pork, and pumpkin pie, and dere you is set up for life. Ha! ha! Yes," he continued, "de Lawd hisself sent de 'possum to make glad de heart ob de pore black man. An' de 'possum he am a curious critter too. No matter how of'en you kills him, he shuah to come again, all de same anoder time."

"What, the same 'possum?" said Osmond laughing.

"De same 'possum, foh true, jes de same ole 'possum, bress de Giver ob ebery good thing."

Well, in memory of old times Uncle Neile took down his fiddle, but he couldn't be prevailed upon to play anything but slow music.

"W'en I plays a jig, shuah enuff, sah," he said to Cousin Tom, "de tears come plenty quick, cause I thinks on dose dat we will neber, neber see again."

So that night, after songs were sung, Katie and Lucy and the children, two of which Mammy must take on her knee, sat round the fire, and Cousin Tom lit his pipe. Then they talked about old times. A kind of desultory conversation it was, but on the whole it was very enjoyable.

In the midst of it, however, Uncle Neile's door was suddenly thrown very widely open indeed, and in dashed a breathless and excited nigger.

Wolf sprang up with a "habbering" growl, and

would have dashed at the young man, had not Osmond seized him just in time.

Uncle Neile sprang to his feet.

“Young man,” he said, “I’s de master ob dis entertainment. We waits, sah, to hear de cause ob dis unsightly obtrusion.”

“Oh!” gasped the nigger, “I’s jes’ fit to drop, I’s gone dun fifteen mile. I’s ’scaped from de hands ob murderers. Gib me some ’fleshment. I’s ready to faint.”

“Young man,” said Uncle Neile, “dere is de ’mains ob de cold ’possum what Wolf can’t eat. You may hab dat soon’s you tell de story.”

The negro’s story was soon told. He had been making his way to the mansion-house to give an alarm when he saw lights in Uncle’s cottage, and rushed in there.

Concerning his escape from robbers and murderers there seemed to be little doubt. He had been tied to a tree, but had gnawed through his fastenings, while the raiders—for such they were—were making their evening meal. There were fifty of them at the very least, and from what the nigger was able to learn they were marching on to Brooklands to loot the place and lay it in ashes. As this was to be done as much for revenge as plunder, Osmond and Harry doubted not for a moment that the leaders were a portion of the gang with whom they had fought on the highway while conveying home their wounded father.

So Uncle Neile's party was very unceremoniously broken up indeed, and all haste was made back to the mansion. It was cheering, at all events, to know that they would not be taken unawares.

Long before this, in expectation of just such a raid as that by which they were now threatened, an earth-work with small corner forts was thrown up all round the mansion-house and gardens.

And now inside this the slaves—now free men, however—were hastily summoned and armed. Their wives and little ones were made as cosy as possible in the kitchens and outhouses.

Everything in three hours' time was made perfectly ready to give battle or to stand a siege.

It may be remarked here, that among the ladies there was no very intense excitement and terror, such as we should find under the same circumstances in countries not so accustomed to wars and rumours of wars. Yet from the description given of him by the young negro who brought the intelligence, Copperhead, the road-agent, who would lead this raid, was one of the most active and most dreaded in the country. He had come from the Wild West, and used to boast that he thought no more of taking life than cleaning his gun. As he had journeyed eastward raiding and robbing he had gathered around him a band of fully five hundred characters, as desperate as himself. These were distributed in gangs of fifty or a hundred here and there, throughout that portion of the state to which he was

paying attention, and they had their regular rendezvous or meeting-places, generally in the dark depths of some wooded defile, where, on the edible and potable portion of their plunder, they held high carnival.

But Copperhead had for some time attempted to legalize his dark doings, after a fashion, by hoisting the flag of the Northern States, the brave old Stars and Stripes. In a sense he was not unlike the famous Morgan, but then Morgan was a gentleman compared to Copperhead.

This chief was a villain, though it must be confessed that he was a handsome villain, and he seemed to know it, for he was dressed to kill, in more ways than one. He even assumed a certain gallantry of bearing towards the fair sex, but his cruelties both to women and children were well known, whatever he might pretend or assume.

It was late before everything was ready to give Copperhead and his band a warm reception, and yet no one seemed inclined to go to sleep.

John M'Donald — honest John, as neighbouring planters called him—lived in a house by himself on the borders of the wood. But to-night he was brought into the fort and placed in command of a detachment of the freed slaves.

All the rifles and revolvers that could be mustered did not exceed five-and-twenty of each. However, the other negroes were well-armed with pikes, and clubs, and bowie-knives.

That night wore slowly away, and the sun rose over the woods and hills, giving a sheen like silver to the broad bosom of the distant lake, and shimmering brightly on the river, whereon a reach or bend showed through the greenery of the fields at the bottom of the vale.

All night long darkie outposts had walked their rounds on the verge of the plantation, to make sure no spy was sent on in advance, and to give immediate alarm if Copperhead and his men appeared.

Major Bloodworth permitted his negroes to go about their usual avocations next day to prevent suspicion of his preparedness. But they were ready to assemble at the mansion immediately if summoned by whistle.

“Then came still evening on.”

The moon rose round and red just as the sun had gone down. By and by her radiance dimmed that of every star save one, and clad the sylvan scenery with a dreamy silvery haze that witched one's senses as one gazed over the landscape.

Osmond and Harry, with Cousin Tom and the young folks, lingered long in the verandah after dinner. There were the voices of the night-birds to be heard occasionally in forest and bush, and sweet they were. But sweeter far were the notes of Katie's guitar with the weird tremolo of Cousin Tom's violin.

Yet soon indeed was all this changed.

Lucy had just finished a song of the war, and all

were chatting pleasantly, when suddenly Wolf started from his place at Osmond's feet and rushed down the garden. He returned barking fiercely, as if to give an alarm, every hair on his back straight on end and his eyes gleaming like fire.

Almost immediately after, the two forest sentries rushed breathlessly in.

"Dey come, dey come!" cried one. "Copperhead he come hisself and de Stars and Stripes—"

The three cousins waited to hear no more, and shortly after every man was at his post and windows and doors securely shuttered and barricaded.

From loopholes in the wooden tower Harry could now see the enemy approaching. Yes, they carried the Stars and Stripes, a silken flag that fluttered out on the light breeze as they came marching on in something like military step.

And there was Copperhead's tall form, the broad hat, the broad belt, the handsome face, the "swagger gait".

He halted his men a little way off and loudly summoned the place to surrender.

He was none too polite either.

"It's all up, you rebel dogs," he cried, "and we've come for your things. You shall have your clothes if you're quiet and good, all else we confiscate in the name of the United States and the Stars and Stripes. Open gates and doors or we shall hop over the bank. Quick's the word; sharp's the action."

“Stand back!” shouted the stentorian voice of John M'Donald. “Draw off, you hulking scoundrel, or I'll drop you where you stand.”

The robber chief raised his arm.

Tick—tick—tick. It was the sharp sound of a tiny revolver, but two bullets rent honest John's jacket and grazed his skin, so well was it aimed.

John returned the fire quickly enough, and Copperhead threw up his arms and fell to the ground.

Dead? No, not even scratched. It was but a ruse to save his skin.

“Fire!” cried M'Donald.

Next moment a well-aimed volley tore through the ranks of the enemy who were now rushing to the earth-works, fully fifty strong.

That volley was well aimed, and thinned them a little. Yet they came on with shout and yell.

A rattling fire from revolvers now dropped the fellows right and left.

They began to waver.

But, sword in hand, Copperhead himself was now at their head. Though bullets rang and pinged around him, not one touched him. The robbers leap now upon the earthwork. Copperhead is the first. Next moment great Wolf has pinned him by the neck and hauled him inside. He for one is a prisoner.

But among a band of daring raiders like this, the loss of even the chief affects a fight but little.

All along the ramparts the battle now rages, fierce

and grim. The negroes, with honest John and Cousin Tom at their head, fight desperately, and Harry and one-handed Osmond plant a shot wherever they can do so with safety to their own men.

After a terrible struggle that litters the earthwork with dead and wounded, both black men and white, the raiders are beaten off.

Not routed, though!

They take shelter in every bush and begin a desultory fire upon the house windows, and at the loopholes of the bastions. This they seem soon to tire of, and it is speedily evident that they are making preparations for another charge! The firing now ceases for a time on both sides.

Among the little garrison no one doubts that the next charge must be a fearful one, and Major Bloodworth trembles as he thinks of the ladies and children waiting in fear and suspense for the result of this unequal contest.

A whole hour passed away! From the loopholes a portion of the band had been seen to draw off towards the forest, and some time afterwards they had returned with withered brushwood. It was evident now that their fiendish intention was to set fire to the buildings in the rear of the mansion, while the main attack would be made in front or on the flanks.

Another hour went by, and the pile of brushwood in the rear grew higher and higher. The attack could not be long delayed now. Copperhead himself, whom

brave Wolf had so cleverly captured, was securely roped and thrust unceremoniously into a cellar.

Osmond was returning from the rear of the mansion all alone, and was just under the gable balcony when he heard his name called. The moon shone very brightly, but this portion of the balcony was in shadow.

Yet well did Osmond know that voice. It was Lucy's.

And there she was herself. He could have touched her hand had she held it down.

Somehow the events of that evening long ago on board the *Mosquito*, when he and she played the balcony scene from *Romeo and Juliet*, came into his mind now. So vividly that he could not help—incongruous as the question was—saying:

“Lucy, why are you here? Is it to play Juliet to my Romeo again?”

“O, dear Osmond,” she half whispered, “I am so glad to see you. May I not come down and help to fight? I can fire a gun well; Father taught me, but I tremble with fear lest you should be killed.”

“No, no, no, dearest!”—the word came out in spite of him—“we are going to make a grand sortie from the rear, and we will carry everything before us. We shall return victorious.”

“Still, still, I tremble,” she said. “O, let me come down to fight by your side! Nay, but I must and shall come.”

“Lucy, I command you to retire inside.”

“One question, Osmond. I feel sure I shall never see you alive again. The question may seem a bold one, but I am not like English maidens. That letter you wrote from your prison cell; was—was there any truth in it?”

Osmond saw it all now. This innocent girl—but little else then, and a child even yet in years, though all so frank and winning—could love even a one-armed soldier like him! How blind he had been, and how cruel!

This was a balcony scene from real life, and needed not even the cunning and genius of Shakespeare to make it natural.

“Oh, Osmond,” she cried in alarm at last, “I can see more armed men coming up from the forest!”

Almost at the same moment a yell from the front told him that the raiders were once more advancing to the charge. So he waved his hand in fond adieu, disappeared, and was soon standing by, revolver in hand, ready to repel boarders.

Old Uncle Neile with a dozen trusty darkies had rushed out, with pikes in their hands, from a postern in the rear, and their unexpected charge prevented a fire from being lit that soon indeed would have laid the beautiful mansion-house of Brooklands in ashes. Alas! for poor Uncle Neile though! He was the first to fall, with a bullet through his chest.

And in front this fight on the earthworks was fiercer far than the last. For a time there were yells of triumph, screams of defiance, the rattle of revolvers,

the clash of swords, and every now and then a dull sickening thud and groan that told of death dealt at close quarters.

But now, behold, the blacks are in panic. Well and pluckily have they fought, but against such fearful odds how can they stand?

They are borne backwards towards the verandah. A charge is made by the raiders on the porch. This taken, the door would be beaten in and the house with all inside would then be at their mercy. But boldly stand our own white heroes there, and not one inch will they budge.

The raiders seem to have fallen short of ammunition, for they rush onwards with bowie-knives gleaming in the moonlight and stern determined faces.

Ring, ring, ring. It is the sound of a tiny revolver close by Osmond's ear, a little white hand and arm are uplifted close to his shoulder. It is his own little American lass Lucy, and two of the robbers fall beneath her fire.

The rest never advanced. Had they done so their success would have been certain. But just then a triumphant yell ascends into the air, for a band of new combatants are leaping over the earthworks.

The battle is soon over now, and all the raiders that have not fallen are seeking safety in flight. Then all is still for just a moment, except for the uneasy moaning of the wounded and faint cries for water.

For just one moment only though, and the next

Kenneth Reid, for he is the foremost of the rescuers, is shaking hands all round.

"I was hurrying to Brooklands," he said, "when I fell in with twenty Northerners going the same way, and, thank God, we've got here in time."

"North or South," said the Federal officer, advancing and lifting his hat. "It's all the same now. The last battle has been fought, Richmond has fallen, and the Union restored.

"But don't you remember me?" he continued, turning his face up to the moonlight that Harry and Osmond might see it.

"Why, I declare," cried Harry, holding out both hands, "it is Captain Spott!"

"Yes, sir, Captain Spott with two t's, all alive and lightsome."

Big John M'Donald and Cousin Tom were both slightly wounded, but they would hardly admit it. Lucy herself had received a flesh wound on the shoulder, and gloried in it.

And no less than ten poor niggers lay dead around the earthworks, and many more were wounded. They had died fighting "for dear massa, and de missies, and de ole plantation home".

Everything that could be thought of to ameliorate the sufferings of Uncle Neile was done. He was borne tenderly in and placed near the fire, and after a time he revived sufficiently to open his eyes and look around him.

“We am sated?” he asked, holding out his hand to Harry, who was kneeling by his side.

“All saved.”

“And de robbers gone?”

“All gone, dear Uncle.”

“Good-bye, good-bye, Mammy! Bress de Lord foh all His goodness; bress de Giver ob ebery good thing!”

He just wore away after this, with blessings on his lips. Seemed to sleep away, and there was hardly a dry eye in the room when he gave his last long-drawn sigh.

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The old plantation is as beautiful to-day as it was then, and just on the borders of the forest and near to a tall pine tree (whose dark nodding plumes are covered in early spring with the lavender blooms of the wandering wistaria) is a grave.

Against the tree is a cross bearing the simple inscription—

IN MEMORY OF

“UNCLE NEILE!”

1865.

CHAPTER X.

WHEN THE CRUEL WAR WAS OVER.

THE summer of 1865 was in its prime and glory when a British steamer left New York homeward bound for Liverpool.

There was a gayer crowd than usual on the good ship, for many a war-worn soldier was taking the voyage to Europe to seek for the health he had lost in the long and terrible struggle 'twixt North and South.

With few of these have we anything to do. But one group on the quarter-deck attracts our attention as the vessel passes Sandy Hook and the Atlantic opens dark and wide before her. It is not a very large one—only four ladies and three gentlemen—and we know them all well by this time. Here we have Mrs. Brewer, Lucy, Katie, and Mrs. Bloodworth.

The gentlemen are our heroes Osmond, Kenneth, and Harry. Ah! but there is one other gentleman that I think the reader will agree with me deserves at least to be mentioned. It is Wolf. He is walking up and down the deck, and is being admired by everybody, despite the fact that Katie has tied around his neck a ribbon of blue with stars on it. Katie says that, go where she will, never in life will she forget the bonnie blue flag under which her

brother fell. And Lucy is quite of the same way of thinking.

Kenneth Reid had brought Osmond news straight from Mirfields, where he had spent many days before coming out to the States. It was news of a very disheartening kind, although Kenn had broken it to him as gently as he could.

Still, more than once during this voyage homewards, when Kenn and he were alone with Harry in the cabin occupied by the three of them, Osmond would refer to it.

"Why," he said one evening, "I can hardly believe, Kenn, lad, that it is four long years since you and I crossed the ocean together. Ran away from home, in fact, to search for romance and adventure."

"Well," laughed Kenn, "haven't we had enough of both?"

"Almost too much," said Osmond, laughing in turn, as he held up the stump of his left arm.

"Oh, that little bit!" cried Harry. "Why, you left that with us in Ole Virginy for a keepsake."

"I wonder," continued Osmond, "what my mother will think of her one-armed boy?"

"She would have liked far better, I suppose, to see you all complete; but, never mind, lad, better want a hand than want a head."

"And you say, Kenn, that Mother and Eva are looking well in spite of our sad losses?"

"Beautiful both."

“And the old man, my dear father?”

“Well, he mopes a little sometimes, to be sure; but your big brother Dick is always with him, and cheers him up. Dick isn't going to let down his heart, I can assure you. Eva told me that there was much distress at first among the operatives who depended upon the great mill for their daily bread, and not a little discontent also; that, in fact, when mills stopped all over the valley owing to the war, the discontent amounted in some cases almost to riot. This annoyed Dick and his father too. But it did not prevent them from being as kind as kind could be to the poor fellows and their families.”

“Ah! Father himself is comparatively poor now.”

“Well, of course, Osmond, he cannot be so wealthy as before the glen became all silent. But dear Eva and her mother went to the village every day, and I know for certain that they never went to preach without doing a little practice as well, and many a hungry mouth their charity helped to fill, and many a tearful eye, I'm certain, did Eva dry with her helpful words and her beaming, hopeful face.”

“But Father will be broken-hearted, Kenn?”

“Yes, certainly your father takes on a bit. Only a day or two before I left I was admiring the beauty of your glen and the greenery of the grand old trees.

“‘Ah!’ he said, with a sigh, ‘they are far, far too green. I remember—and it is but a short time ago—when the trees were all a-blur with smoke, and the

hum of the mills was everywhere. Heigho! those days are gone!

“‘But they’ll come again, Mr. Lloyd,’ I said.

“‘Never!’ he answered sadly. ‘Never, in my time, dear boy.’”

“Poor Father! Poor Dick! Would that I could help them!”

“Come, come, Os, don’t you let down your heart. You don’t know what good fortune may be in store for you.

“Anyhow, Os,” he continued, “Lucy—”

“Hush, hush!” said Osmond, and so the conversation dropped.

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A mild-faced gentlemanly man boarded the steamer immediately on her arrival at Liverpool, and asked for Osmond Lloyd. Osmond was pointed out to him.

“I’m a solicitor,” he said, shaking hands with our hero.

Osmond grew deadly pale.

“Oh, sir!” he cried, “tell me at once, is my father dead?”

“Your father dead! Not that I know of, young friend,” replied Mr. Jones, smiling. “What put that in your head? I’ve good news for you, and I want you to come to my office—there is my card—as soon as you are clear of the Customs.”

“That will I, gladly, and I suppose I can bring my friends here with me.”

“Most certainly. One, I think, is concerned in what I shall have to read to you. Good morning!”

“Hurrah!” cried Kenneth as soon as he was gone. “I shouldn’t wonder if you and I had come into a small legacy. That is Captain Brewer’s solicitor.”

All three friends went to the solicitor’s office that very afternoon, and without much preliminary talking Mr. Jones proceeded to read to them Captain Brewer’s last will and testament.

A document of this kind has but little interest for the general reader. Indeed wills are excessively dry reading—unless one happens to expect something.

And Osmond and Kenneth too could not help wondering, as they walked along the street, what they could possibly have to do with this will of dear old Captain Brewer.

“I suppose,” said Os, “he has left you a gold watch for defending the old *Mosquito* so well, and me a gold ring because I found out about the mutiny.”

“Well, we’ll soon see,” replied Kenneth, “but I’m a bit more hopeful than you.”

The solicitor read the Captain’s will. After bequeathing a handsome annuity to Mrs. Brewer, his wife, and another to Lucy, to commence upon her wedding-day, to our heroes’ astonishment they found their names mentioned—Osmond’s first, for a legacy of £20,000, and Kenneth’s next for the sum of £9000!

The one looked at the other for a few moments,

with parted lips, but utterly speechless, till the grave-looking solicitor broke the spell by getting up and shaking hands with them.

I think Osmond and Kenneth hardly felt the pavement under their feet, as they walked back to their hotel that day.

They dined together—the whole four, which is counting Wolf, you know—that evening most sumptuously, just as young fellows would on so auspicious an occasion, and the solicitor was their guest.

“Now,” said Osmond to Kenneth and Harry, a short time before they retired, “I have a favour to ask you.”

“Out with it, lad,” said Harry.

“Heave round,” cried Kenneth.

“It is this: you must not breathe a word of all this—our good luck, I mean—to Father or to anybody till I give you leave.”

“Agreed,” said his friends, both in one voice.

.

They all travelled next day north to Yorkshire.

Dick and Eva were there at the station to meet and drive them through the glen to Mirfields. But I have no intention of describing either the meeting at the station, or that at the old mansion. Some portions of a story are best left out. But I must say that Osmond's father and mother were just about as happy that night as they had been for twenty long years.

And honest Wolf seemed thoroughly delighted to get

back to the old place, and knew and even kissed Eva's old tom-cat.

Next day, Eva told Osmond that the 10th of August—about two months thence—would be father's and mother's silver-wedding day.

“Will it indeed?” said Os.

He seemed to take wonderful interest in this fact, but Eva could not tell why.

A general tour through the Scottish Highlands was arranged for, a week after the arrival of the party.

Just the same travellers started on this beautiful journey as came across the Atlantic, but with two more in addition, namely Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd. Kenneth and Osmond took the whole management of the tour, and made it just as pleasant as pleasant could be for all hands.

Only Dick was left at home. Dick, you see, was in Osmond's secret.

Well, there was hardly a place worth seeing that the party did not visit, and really Mr. Lloyd was so pleased and delighted with everything that he quite forgot all his care, the silent valley of Mirfields, the hushed mills, the over-green trees and the clear streams, to which it was even said the fish had returned.

More than six weeks had passed away. And now the travellers were back once more in

“Edina, Scotia's darling seat!”

and preparing for home; everyone as brown as a

huckleberry, with the sun, and as hard as the Highland heather.

"We'll just be back in time, my dear," said Mrs. Lloyd, "for our silver-wedding.

They were sitting by the fire in their private apartments, as she spoke.

"How these twenty-five years have fled!" said Mr. Lloyd, laying a kindly hand in her lap. "But time hasn't altered our hearts, has it, love?"

Mrs. Lloyd did not reply.

She just clasped the hand she held a little more tightly, but the pressure spoke volumes.

As the party alighted once more on the platform of the station, and found two carriages ready to whirl them off up the glen to Mirfields, Mr. Lloyd thought he noticed an unusual bustle about.

Soon they were in the village.

There were flags at every window, and strips of them across the street.

Whatever could it mean?

Women and children, too, rushed out to cheer the carriages as they rattled past.

Then, near Mr. Lloyd's own old mill, the horses, at a hint from Osmond, were drawn up. Here a huge arch of evergreens spanned the road, and on it, written in roses red and white, were the words:

Welcome Home. Joy to your Silver-Wedding Day!

Mr. Lloyd could hardly speak for astonishment.

"Why," he cried at last, "look, wife, look, the old mill is going again! Look at the smoke! Listen to the rattle of the machinery! Why, wonders will never cease!"

Before he could say another word, a huge crowd of kindly-looking workmen surrounded the carriage, cheering and waving their caps.

Then out came the horses, and right up to the very verandah and porch of Mirfields the vehicles were drawn. Such a welcome home Mr. Lloyd had never known before!

But after they had got inside, the meaning of this change was explained, and he was now told of Osmond's legacy.

"Osmond, you young rascal!" said his father, grasping him lovingly by the hand, "and it is you who have done all this, and gladdened the heart of your old father. May God bless you, boy! May God bless you!"

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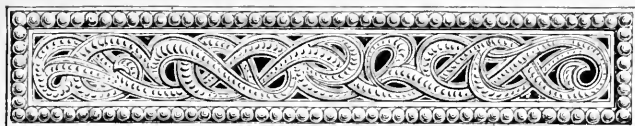
Osmond Lloyd never went to the wars again. Things took a prosperous turn in the Vale of Mirfield, and soon there were more mills going than that of the Lloyds. The woods were once again all a-blur with smoke, and once more the stream that meandered through the glen was far too dark for fishes. But it was just as Mr. Lloyd liked to see it. It meant business.

Well, nothing could ever make Kenneth other than he was, a sailor and a rover. In the course of a year

or two he had a ship of his own. Then he married Katie Bloodworth. The happy pair sailed to Madeira on their marriage tour, and with them went—can you guess?—Osmond and Lucy, for they were married on the very same day.

The ship was Kenneth's own, as I have said, and you will not be surprised to learn that there was one other passenger, who seemed just as happy as anyone else on board—and that was honest Wolf, the mastiff.

THE END.



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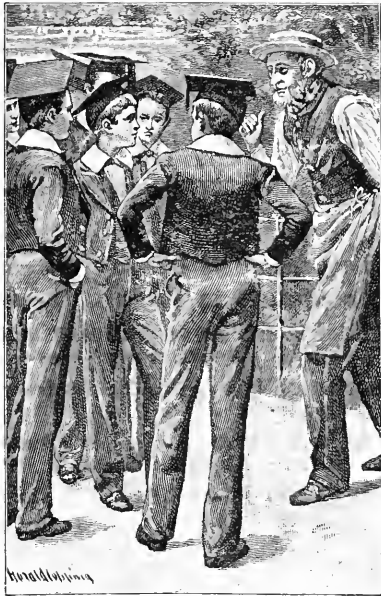
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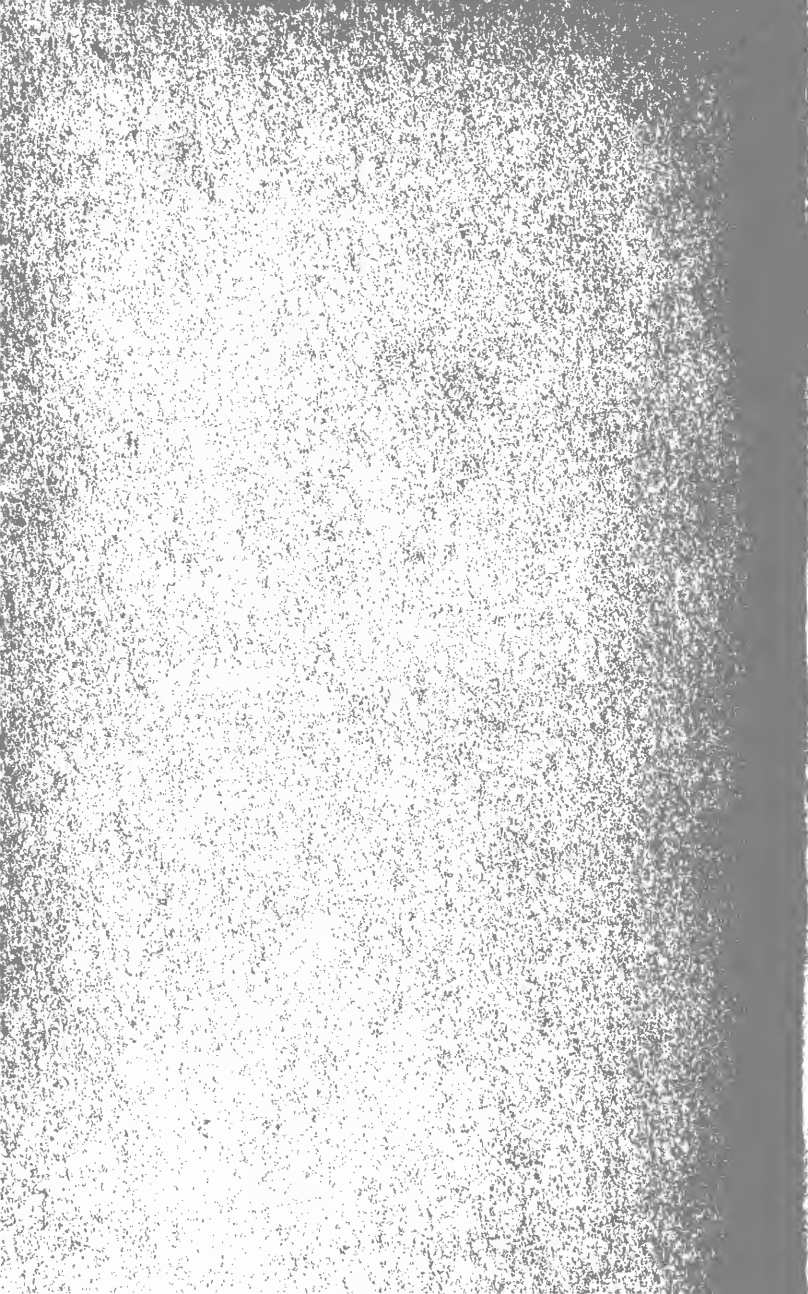
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