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ORIGINAL STORIES OF ADVENTURE in the WAR for the UNION.

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PRISON PEN; or, DEAD LINE AT ANDERSONVILLE.

BY MARLINE MANLY.

A Thrilling Story of Adventure Down in Dixie.



Chased through the swamp by the rebel guards of Andersonville.

PRISON PEN;

—OH—

DEAD LINE AT ANDERSONVILLE.

BY MARLINE MANLY.

CHAPTER I.

OFF FOR THE SEAT OF WAR.

"I have enlisted, mother!"

The little woman to whom these words were addressed turned white as with the pallor of death, and then rallying, caught the hands of her tall boy in her own, looking into his eyes with a hungry glance that spoke more than words ever could.

There were unshed tears in the widow's eyes, and the fact was plainly manifest that, although the words of Archie Gordon had not been entirely unexpected, they nevertheless gave her a terrible shock.

"Do not take it so hard, mother. The time has come when I can no longer hold out against the desire to serve my country. I am going, mother, and you must help me to keep up a stout heart."

"Father in Heaven, was it not enough that I should lose husband? Is it fair to rob me of my only boy, and take away from life all that it holds dear. Oh, it is cruel, cruel!"

"Mother, you forget that your love for our country is a power that rises superior to all else. God will watch over me. I firmly believe I shall come back to you again safe and sound when this war is over, and then you will feel proud of your soldier boy."

"As if I had not always been proud of you, my noble boy," murmured the little lady, with her arms now, clinging around his neck, "but my heart grows heavy with apprehension when I think of you in the heat of battle, with death hovering near in thousand shapes. Oh, may the good Father in Heaven save you for me! Was it not enough that they bereft me of my Edward, the dearest, kindest, noblest husband woman ever had, without robbing me of my boy, too?"

Archie comforted her, and presently the little mother proved herself possessed of Spartan blood and resolution.

"I must not let him see how terribly it will hurt to the death to have him go. Surely he has enough to suffer in this leaving all he loves for duty's sake. I will no longer be a burdence in his path. God bless him."

With this noble resolution in view, the little woman, already bereft of husband by the cruel hand of war, closed her bleeding heart and even smiled when Archie told her enthusiastically how the people had shaken hands with him when he enlisted and called him a chip of the old block; but, all, it was a pitiful smile that wrung the young fellow's heart.

He knew full well that a sad memory had arisen in her mind of the day when his father, the doctor, had come home to bid them all farewell.

He had raised a company and become enrolled in the army.

At that time it was a popular delusion that the war could only last three or four months at the most, and the parting was supposed to be for only a short time.

People believed the Northern troops would only have to make a march south, and that matters would soon be satisfactorily settled.

As! this delusion was soon destroyed.

There came stories of terrible battles, of thousands killed and wounded on both sides, and then many a Northern home was wrapped in mourning as the name of a beloved member was seen on the fatal death list.

In one of those early engagements he fell. When they read his name among the list of "Dead" it was as if a thunderbolt had fallen upon the little Ohio home. Oh, God! how many homes suffered that same dread shock during those four years of bloody war? Are there not thousands and thousands of fathers and mothers, sisters, wives and sweethearts, who look wistfully toward the distant Southland, and think of some Carolina and Virginia that had once the unmarked graves of those who have been very dear to their hearts?

It was a long time before Mrs. Gordon recovered from the shock, but Archie seemed to have, in a great measure, stepped into his father's place, and she soon learned to lean on him.

He was very like his father, and Archie was often heard to declare that if he could

only gain the universal respect that had always been granted his dearly beloved parent, he could wish no more.

The affectionate eyes of his mother had long since noticed his restlessness—how he eagerly read every item of news from the far off land of Dixie, and with what vigor he entered into all the enterprises connected with the soldier's relief movement.

Her jealous heart realized the inevitable result, but she put off the evil day in her mind until at last the shock came.

Archie had enlisted!

Several days passed along. The widow hastily got all things in readiness for his departure, and although that was to be fully two weeks from the time of his enlistment, the days seemed to fairly fly to her, as they will to the condemned criminal in his cell.

In the presence of Archie she now kept up a cheerful manner, which did much toward making the parting more bearable to him, though he saw through the action of the noble woman.

And although now her tears fell upon the socks she darned for him, as the terrible picture presented itself to her of the burial in trenches by moonlight, and among those mutilated forms so hastily put forever out of sight, she could see the noble form of her only boy.

Poor little mother! how she suffered in the solitude of her room.

Archie was young, with buoyant spirits, and eager to be a soldier—eager to inflict some loss upon those who had robbed him of a father.

True, he suffered, too, at the idea of parting from his dear little mother, but his pain was nothing compared with hers.

There was one in the little Ohio town who had never had loved since they were children together.

He wondered how Muriel Carter would take the news.

She was a loyal girl, foremost in all the sanitary fairs that were held, and was enthusiastic upon all matters pertaining to the war.

Though Muriel had never hinted to Archie that she thought it his duty to fill the place in the ranks made vacant by the death of her brother, she was well aware that the knowledge of her strong sympathy toward those who went to the front was much of an inducement for him to take the step that enrolled his name among the defenders of our country.

As a widow's only son, he was exempt from the draft, but, somehow, he felt as though it was half a disgrace to be at home when those who had been his schoolmates were in the war; and, at last, unable to stand longer, he had enlisted.

When he went to see Muriel that night he knew she had heard the news, because of her graveness when she looked at him; but during the whole evening not a word was said upon the subject.

Aie was taking his leave of her she looked straight into his eyes, while her own were partially dimmed with unshed tears, and said, bravely:

"You are going, Archie, my love. Oh, may God be with you, and bring you back again to me, and me. If you are wounded, send for me, and I will come to you, oh, so gladly. If you should never come back," choking under the feeling that threatened to impede her utterance, "I will never forget my soldier boy while I live, and trust in Heaven."

"You would not have me stay at home, Muriel?" he asked.

"No; for I think the time has come when every man is needed at the front. Before, the men were only, without the sons of widows and men over forty, but the war has now become so terrible that every one capable of bearing arms who loves his country, should be at the front to crush this Hydra. That is what we mean to do, to tear asunder our beloved Union. No, no; a thousand times, no. Much as I love you, Archie, I would rather know of you as being in the heat of battle with danger around you, than in safety at home. Would that were a man capable of bearing arms for my country. The time now is, when no impediment should be enough to keep back any loyal heart."

You will comfort my poor mother when I am gone, sweetheart?" he asked, tenderly.

"I love her dearly, Archie, and I will be a daughter to her in time of need. All that a loving child could do for her, that will I do."

He pressed her in his arms, and kissed her for those dear words.

She looked up at his many figure, and a great sigh forced itself from between her lips.

Brave, though she had proven herself to be, she knew full well what anguish would pierce her heart when she saw the one to whom her love had gone out, marching off from home in his suit of blue; going, it might be to die in the land of war.

The time flew by.

At last came the day when he was to leave them, never, perhaps, to return.

It was just such a day as had been the one who had already bidden Muriel good-by, of Captain Gordon and his company—the sky fair, the birds warbling, and all nature seemed glad; yet the widow's heart was heavy as lead, though she kept up to the end in a manner that was simply wonderful.

There were a score of men from the town in the company, the balance being from adjacent places, and every one within a radius of miles—saving a few whose sympathies were the other way assembled to wish farewell to our brave General.

How many Archie Gordon looked in his suit of blue.

He wore the stripes of a corporal on his sleeves, and a nobler boy never left home to battle for his country.

The fateful moment drew nearer.

He had already bidden Muriel good-by in the privacy of her home on the previous evening; for, although their engagement was generally known, still they had no desire to make a public spectacle of it.

And although her rivals, and the most persistent of these was one Clarence Henston, a lieutenant in the very company then about starting out.

Muriel had induced him to enlist, though it had been somewhat of a task, for he was but a new recruit to the ranks of the Union, his father being secretly a sympathizer with the South, though, in such a loyal community, he did not dare to voice his impressions much, for fear of the coat of tar and feathers that awaited him from his indignant neighbors; who, while believing every man entitled to his opinion upon such matters, had no desire to hear him bellow it forth on all occasions, and taunt them with every reproach of Northern arms.

Clarence Henston was something of a dandy in his day, and strutted about in his officer's dress as though the eyes of all were upon him, but Archie, beloved of all, was the center of attraction.

His wonderful figure, handsome face, noble head, so like his father's, curly, close cropped hair, and kind, flashing, yet magnetic eye, were enough to make up a remarkable young fellow whom any girl might well be proud to call a lover.

Muriel's eyes followed him as he went about among the townspeople shaking hands heartily with all, large and small.

Her heart was filled with pride to think that this noble young fellow was her own; that during the long weary march in the heat of battle, while in the midst of danger, on the scout through Southern swamps, lying in bivouac under the whispering pines; and, even when suffering the agonies of death, she had eyes to see that he was upon him—his mind would be filled with thoughts of her.

Oh, it were better to be the sweetheart of a soldier, in those days, than a queen.

The gay lieutenant bade her adieu; and yet so preoccupied was she in thoughts of Archie that she barely noticed his gallant speech of dying for her, if need be, and of hoping for reward if he lived to come home with honors, so that Clarence hardly knew whether to be offended or not as he walked away.

The shrill whistle of the locomotive was now heard—the decisive moment was at hand.

There were very heavy handshakings; and then the boys in blue began leaping on the cars that were to convey them to Cincinnati.

Archie pressed his mother to his heart, and heard her low "God bless you, my boy, I will pray for you."

Turning, he almost staggered toward Muriel.

At this decisive moment all feelings of bashfulness were gone.

He only knew that he was leaving her; that perhaps he would never see her again in life; and it was impossible to only press her hand.

He took her in his arms, reverently kissed her farewell, gave her one look into her tear-

bedewed eyes, and then, choking with emotion, tore himself away.

The gay lieutenant muttered an oath under his breath as he witnessed this sight, that verified his worst suspicions.

"He will never come home to claim her if I can prevent it, curse his handsome face," he muttered.

The cry of the people, the train moved off, the boys in blue waving their caps.

Faster it went—still faster, and then the rumbled died away. They had gone—alas—to what fate?

CHAPTER II.

ROUGH KENTUCKY IN '61.

Archie's father had been in the foremost battles for the Union; and, although those at home had been mourning him for some months when Archie made up his mind to go into the struggle, the war had not yet gone beyond its second year.

After being delayed in Cincinnati until they were sick with impatience, the company went into Kentucky, which was still debatable ground, the Confederates having apparently the firmer hold upon the country, as the Unionists were compelled to hide in the mountains like wolves.

Archie's father had been in the foremost battles for the Union; and, although those at home had been mourning him for some months when Archie made up his mind to go into the struggle, the war had not yet gone beyond its second year.

It seemed but just that the side by whom the war was precipitated should bear the brunt of the burden.

The North expended vast sums of money, and sacrificed thousands of her noblest sons to crush the rebellion; but the South suffered all its own men for one and to the other, her country was devastated, until hardly anything was left by which her indomitable armies might be fed; and it was only because of this that the Confederate generals finally surrendered—Lee to Grant, and Johnston to Sherman. Without money or credit, and a hostile army devastating their country, they were certainly driven to the wall.

Archie Gordon's experience among the guerrillas of Kentucky was brief, but exceedingly thrilling.

When the orders were finally received for the forward march, they crossed the Ohio into the States of Tennessee, and proceeded to a rendezvous, where the remainder of the regiment was met.

Then the march was taken up through the great hills to the Lexington pike.

In those days a more historic pike could not have been found than this self-same pike, for, leading from Covington direct to the heart of the Blue Grass region, where slavery was at its height, this self-same pike had been a highway for escaping slaves, and had witnessed many a terrible chase, in which the fierce hounds that had of late years been brought into service occupied no little prominence.

When Kirby Smith made his famous raid and threatened Cincinnati, Morgan did also, the citizens of the city were organized, and entrenchments thrown up beyond Covington on the Kentucky hills. Covering the Lexington pike was a rude fort, the remains of which are still to be seen.

That was a reign of terror that will never be forgotten by the good people of the Queen City, that sits like ancient Rome upon her seven hills.

It was expected that the rebel raiders would come along the Lexington pike; and, one morning, just at early dawn, the camp was aroused by the guns of the pickets, and awoke to the fact that the enemy were upon their seven hills.

There was a tremendous clatter of hoofs upon the hard pike, and a great cloud of dust arose.

All was intense excitement, for most of the men in the trenches were raw recruits—greenhorns who were exempt from the draft, or else had sent a substitute to the front, and yet who were ready to defend their homes.

When the truth broke upon them they felt such a rush that they arose loud enough to make the woods echo with the sound.

Instead of Kirby Smith and his grizzled men, there came in sight a large drove of mules, on the way to the Cincinnati market. It was not many miles away from the spot where this scene occurred that the regiment of which Archie Gordon was a member, on its way through Kentucky to join the Union army further south, came in contact with a force of guerrillas.

The orders given the colonel commanding

had been to inflict as much damage upon the rebel inhabitants of Kentucky as was possible, and gain as many recruits as he could.

Both of these injunctions he carried out to the best of his ability, and men were continually coming into camp from the mountain fastnesses, whether they had been chased by the relentless foe.

The Confederate force in Kentucky at this time did not amount to much; at least they were scattered so far over the State that they were not capable of organizing to meet any number of foes, yet they managed to keep the country in a state of terror, and might be said to virtually possess the majority of the commonwealth of Kentucky.

Being misinformed in regard to the strength of the Union troops, and believing there were only a few companies of them, not counting more than a couple of hundred men at the most, the guerrilla leaders of that section had gathered their forces for a little bit of strategy.

They thought it would be a brilliant bit of work to lie in ambush and gobble up the Federals as they rode along, entirely unconscious of the danger that lay before them.

For this purpose, some three hundred men were assembled under one leader, and it was determined to wait until the Union troops camped for the night, when an assault would be made that could not be otherwise than successful.

Secret was the main object, so that their intended victims might not take the alarm; and hence it was the Confederates, in their effort to keep their intentions unknown, for the best news should reach the ears of those who expected to surprise them, and he gets out from all information concerning their foes.

All this while Archie's colonel was well aware of their intentions, and when, in the afternoon, they drew near a little village upon one of the mountains, he sent one forward, with orders to lie on their arms all night.

This small force camped in the village. That it all meant, the men, of course, did not know, but their officers did, and had their men so arranged that, while seemingly off their guard, they were ready for immediate work.

It was a bright moonlight night. Archie had not been taken into the councils of his superior, being a non-commissioned officer, but he suspected the truth and felt sure that he was about to participate in the first engagement.

How he would bear himself he knew not, and yet, as a fight as would be likely to ensue would bear no comparison with a genuine battle, where the roar of cannon shook the earth and shells broke all around with terrible result.

Archie lay on the fair queen of night had reached her highest point, and was looking calmly down upon the still glowing campfires of the Union troops among the few houses which, with a tavern, constituted the village, there suddenly rang out several carbine shots.

Then the pickets dashed in. The enemy was upon them.

Sure enough, from the trees on either side there came swooping dark masses of men, and upon the night air there came the terrible rebel yell that was wont to strike terror to the heart of many a brave man. The Union boys were up and ready, but it was too late to be seen that many things were against them.

True, they had in part the protection of the few houses, but they were outnumbered two to one, the rebels knew every inch of the village, and, besides, were confident of victory.

The major in command knew full well the part he and his men were to take in the little game of diamond cut diamond, and he at once massed his men at a central point around their horses and the few stores.

But this place they could give the most effectual resistance to the foe, though the bushwhackers and guerrillas were coming with such desperate fury that nothing could have fully stopped them.

For recruits the men acted admirably, seeing that they knew nothing of the game their colonel was playing, and believed that they were to face the foe unaided.

They withheld their fire until the order came, and then poured a disastrous volley among their foes who returned a scattering, but bitter fire, as they continued their headlong rush.

Fierce by nature, and rendered more so by the wild life they had led for the past two

years, the mountaineers of Kentucky dashed forward.

The pale moon never looked down upon a more thrilling spectacle.

Where was the colonel and the balance of the regiment? Minutes were precious just then, and no matter how admirable his plans, a short delay might prove disastrous to their hopes.

Brave though that Union band was, they lacked the fierce energy which experience had imparted to their enemies, and their cause would have been well nigh hopeless had they been left to themselves.

But the colonel was ready.

From the coverts where he and the remainder of his men had been in hiding he had heard the opening of the affair, and when matters were at the critical juncture, from two sides the mounted Federals came galloping with never a cry, but rushing down upon the foe like a Nemesis.

The Confederates had been outwitted. They had hoped and expected to take their foes by surprise, but now the foe was on the other leg, and their astonishment almost paralyzed them for the time being.

Thus they lost valuable time in which it might have been possible for them to have made their escape, but now it was too late.

Completely hemmed in by the bluecoats, the Kentucky wildcats could only fight with a valor that, although hopeless, made every man of them a hero, and this they kept up to the end.

Many were killed, over a hundred taken prisoners, and some seventy escaped, though not without extreme difficulty.

They were pursued hither and thither by the mounted Federals like foxes.

It was a reign of terror to the rebel sympathizers of the neighborhood, and one they were not likely to soon forget.

Archie was one of the foremost in pursuing the fleeing rebels like foxes.

Some of them dodged in among the houses and a hasty search resulted in finding them secreted in haymows, barns, and even in the dwellings around. One old curmudgeon refused to help them, but now it was too late, declaring that no one was there, and even threatening to shoot the first man who attempted to enter.

He was speedily disarmed, however, and a search of the barn discovered three rebels hidden therein, one of whom was no other like the old man to proclaim him his son, which fact was quite sufficient to explain the man's fierceness.

I regret to say that in five minutes the barn was in a blaze, but Archie Gordon had nothing to do with the work, and felt indignant upon hearing of the ill treatment the old man had received, for he was only standing up for his rights.

This was Archie's first opportunity for smelling gunpowder, and he was rejoiced to see how well he stood the ordeal. A man within a foot of him had been killed by one of the bullets fired as the rebels dashed forward, and he had been at the scene of meeting the same fate himself—an ounce of lead tearing through the top of his cap and even cutting some of his hair away by its passage.

The prisoners were sent back to Cincinnati, and the force, on the following day, continued on to Lexington.

It was a beautiful country through which they passed—the garden spot of Kentucky, and Archie believed that he had seen picturesque in the world. Hills and valleys, broad grassy level lands, beautiful streams and well cultivated farms—they saw all these in one continuous panorama, and yet the continuous rain every now and then, the further south and nearer the scene of cruel war was ever before them.

During that march, the thoughts of our young soldier were almost wholly with those whom he had left behind him, and he was more determined than ever to win laurels and make his mother and Muriel proud of him.

Delusion of the speedy subjection of the rebels had long since been laid aside, a chimera, and the stern reality was now looked upon by every one that only by continued warfare could the South be brought to terms.

That disastrous and terrible battle of Bull Run had done more to awaken the North to a proper realization of the situation than all other things combined, and during the months that had gone by since then, the policy of the government had been radically changed.

It was no longer believed that the desired end could be accomplished by a few brilliant victories; but that in order to reduce

the South to submission, they must be taken by the throat and repeatedly shaken with bulldog pertinacity until but little life remained, for while they had one leg left to stand upon, the valiant descendants of Marion and Lee, of revolutionary fame, would fight.

"This being the case, it was now the policy of the North to keep the war confined to the South, so that it would gradually feel the iron hand of devastation—to gradually close in upon the struggling South, to raid through the enemy's country, severing their supply connections, and leaving a blackened trail behind, and in every way weakening the foe by reducing his supplies and comforts as well as meeting him in battle and decimating his numbers.

In the end this policy won, as it was bound to do.

The Federals were seldom lacking any of the necessities of life, and very often lived in luxury, while the men were frequently but illly fed and clothed; and these things tended to discourage them, though in the days of Washington, even worse privations at Valley Forge only served the Continental to renewed action.

Through Kentucky on horse-back to-day is a far different thing from the time when Archie Gordon saw it.

At that time a Union man would never have reached Lexington alive, or gone safely from there to Tennessee, had he been alone, for the mountains abounded with bushwhackers whose vindictive hatred for the Abolitionists was of a nature that had no scruples of conscience.

It was a time for paying off old scores, and no man's life was safe, until, eventually, the battle of Shiloh decided the matter, and Kentucky was handed over virtually to the possession of the Union soldiers.

This engagement was the only one of consequence that Archie took part in, until he joined General Grant's command, though several times they were called on to exterminate little bands of marauders on the way.

One bright afternoon they heard the sound of drums ahead, and presently rode into camp.

CHAPTER III.

THE IRONCLADS AT FORT HENRY.

At the time when Archie and those with whom he had made the march were in Kentucky in the late fall of '61 and early winter of '62 reached the headquarters of General Grant, preparations were in progress by the Federal troops, tending to the immediate reduction of Forts Henry and Donelson.

Mainly through solid and reliable hands erected these two forts, the first on the bank of the Tennessee River, and commanding the stream, and Donelson performing the same kind office for the picturesque Cumberland. They were connected by a dirt road, and was expected that in case of an assault upon either one, the defenders of the other would go to the rescue.

Grant was but a brigadier-general at that time, but was already watched by many as a rising light, for he had given evidence of bulldog courage and pertinacity, which, in some cases, is better than the brilliant mind, capable of planning and executing startling maneuvers, like that of Napoleon the Great. Grant took his stand at Fort Henry, and with some 15,000 men. He was also powerfully assisted by Commodore Foote, with his fleet of seven gunboats, four of which were ironclads.

When Archie Gordon and his comrades joined this army, it was not far from Fort Henry. Grant left Cairo with his army on steam barges, steamed up the Ohio to the mouth of the Tennessee River, and plunged at once into that stream.

Some ten or twelve miles below Fort Henry, he stopped his transports, while the commodore sent his gunboats ahead, shelling the woods, in order to discover any masked batteries, at the same time looking for a good place where the troops might be hidden.

Archie Gordon was on one of the gunboats, having been temporarily chosen to fill a position occupied by a cousin of his, who was taken severely ill. Thus, through mere chance, he was placed in a position where he saw the fighting that was destined to occur, and in which the land forces had little part.

About four miles below the fort the troops debarked, and for two days were busied with preparations.

On the second day after that which marked their arrival, Grant was ready for business.

General McClernand, with the main body of the army, was sent to move across the country, seize the road leading to Donelson, and then bear down upon the fort, but by an error in calculation the delay was so long in crossing the marshy, intervening stretch that the troops were cheated out of their expected and anticipated participation in the onslaught.

However, the battle was decided without their aid, though it would have brought matters to a focus sooner, no doubt.

General Smith, with his brigade, advanced along the west shore, while the gunboats slipped up the river to attack the fort from the river.

Archie was on the Cincinnati, which was the flagship, Foote being thereon in person. Together with the Essex, Carondelet and St. Louis, the Cincinnati steamed toward the fort, and the fun soon began, growing fast and furious with each passing minute.

The other three gunboats being without even the flimsy armor which protected the ironclads stayed out of gunshot, and the river-side sailing into the fort from the west, it was Archie's first real experience, and his blood leaped wildly with excitement as the great guns boomed, and the water flew high in air when the heavy shot from the fort fell in the neighborhood.

Slowly but surely the four ironclads drew nearer the fort.

They dared not send in a broadside, for fear of exposing their almost unprotected sides, so the fight was for the time wholly carried on by the double shot and shell brought to bear from their several bows.

There were heavy guns in Fort Henry, one having a caliber of sixty pounds and another of one hundred and twenty-eight, and when these were struck there was reason for consternation.

For an hour the terrible bombardment went on, the guns in the fort replying with vigor, though it was evident that the force was hardly sufficient to properly work them.

At about this time Archie chanced to be looking toward the Essex, when he heard an explosion differing from the firing of a cannon, and immediately the ironclad was enveloped in steam.

A twenty-four pound solid shot had torn through her oak planking and penetrated her starboard boiler, filling her with steam, killing both her pilots at their post and severely wounding Captain Porter and two score of his crew.

The Essex drifted out of the action, and those in the fort believed for the time that the victory was theirs, but the other ironclads kept steadily on until they were within some fifty yards of the fort where the rebels crouched behind their works and gaged in firing those of their guns that were yet serviceable.

The cannonade now became terrible, for the gunboats poured in a perfect hailstorm of shot.

Nor did the Confederates shrink. More than one solid ball struck the flagship at a point where it made a mark, and one man was killed, while many received wounds from the flying shot.

A dense smoke hung over river and fort, so that it was hard to tell what damage was done, but the Union generals could see the rebel flag still above the works, and as long as the smoke lasted they knew it was no time for slackening their fire.

There were now only four of the guns in the fort serviceable, the others having been disabled, and even the great twenty-four inch Columbiad had its vent closed, rendering it useless.

Meanwhile, the fire of the fleet grew fiercer as the vessel kept on nearing the fort. Human nature could stand no more.

Every minute those in the fort expected to starve to death by the land forces, against whom they could make no defense whatever; and, taken altogether, their case was perfectly hopeless.

The rebels must have known that Fort Henry was bound to fall, for General Tilgham in command had sent all of his men, saving one hundred whom he retained to work the guns, to Fort Donelson on the morning of this eventful day, under Colonel Heiman, and had McClernand been ordered to start a few hours earlier to occupy the dirt road, he must have inevitably captured them all.

When the firing was hottest on the part of the fleet, Archie became suddenly aware of the fact that there was now no answer from

the fort, and a minute later he saw the default rebel flag lowered from the proud position it had maintained during the whole of the conflict.

Fort Henry had fallen! Then cheers arose from those upon the fleet, and were taken up by the troops upon the shore, yet the land forces felt terribly aggrieved because they had been cheated by fate out of a share in the work.

However, it was pretty generally known among them that Donelson was to be their next objective work, and as this was a far superior fort to one that had just capitulated to Grant's forces, they felt confident of yet having a chance to try their mettle.

There were only some seventy rebels captured at Fort Henry with Tilgham, barring the killed, but a hospital ship also fell into Union hands with sixty invalid soldiers, arms, barracks, tents, etc., sufficient for the whole army of 15,000 men. The Union loss, beside those on the Essex, was one killed and nine wounded on the flagship.

CHAPTER IV.

FORT DONELSON.

No time was lost by Grant. Fort Henry had fallen; but it was a small matter compared with the strong redoubt upon the Cumberland.

There were some 15,000 Confederate troops at Fort Donelson, commanded in person by the gallant General Earl Warren, and under whom were the well known generals, Pillow and Buckner.

The defenses of Fort Donelson were of a most remarkable nature.

It occupied a level plateau, containing some eighty or ninety acres, which stands upon the steep bluff over one hundred feet in height.

There were a couple of water batteries at its base, mounting a dozen guns, some of very large caliber, protected by heavy earthenworks, and bearing up the river.

There were some eight heavy guns in the fort proper, but in addition there were the field batteries belonging to the army that garrisoned the redoubt.

Most of its defenders were, of course, native Tennesseans, but there were some regiments from Mississippi, Kentucky, Alabama, Virginia, Arkansas and Texas.

There were points inland from whence the fort or ninety acres, elevations several hundred feet in height, and the surrounding being heavily wooded, with deep, rocky ravines, afforded splendid opportunities for defensive warfare.

On the land side a stout abatis had been formed, which rendered assault at some points a thing entirely out of the question.

To many men an assault upon such a place would have seemed sheer madness, especially when defended by such an army as that of General Floyd—but Grant was the man for the hour.

It was now nearing the middle of February, 1862, and yet the Tennessee weather was delicious, seeming to these men of the cold North like October in their native states.

It was nature were being constantly augmented, and he had promise of many more regiments after he had once begun the siege of Fort Donelson; so, without delay, he set out over the dirt road spoken of before, and with only a few miles to go.

This was on the twelfth of February. His lines were gradually extended so as to invest the rebel stronghold by a line reaching almost from the river above to the river below, and by some estimated to have been over three miles in length.

This enviroing line was only a few hundred yards from the Confederate rifle pits and batteries which encircled Fort Donelson, at a distance of a mile or so from it.

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During the day, one of his men was shot through the body and killed, having incautiously exposed himself, while two more were wounded by the terrible bullets of the gray sharpshooters.

What damage they had inflicted in return of course, they could not positively say, but more than one Confederate had been made into a dead man.

On the evening of February 13, Commodore Foote arrived with his fleet consisting of four ironclads and two wooden gunboats and it was decided that on the following day they could attempt to silence the water batteries.

Preparations were made during the night and the following morning, and at about half-past two or a little later in the afternoon, he made the attack.

The ironclads advanced to within about four hundred yards of the water batteries, and poured in their shot, receiving the fire of the twelve heavy guns, and also many from Fort Donelson overhead.

For an hour this furious cannonade was maintained, and the commodore had almost accomplished the work assigned to him, as most of the gunners had deserted the water batteries, when a series of unfortunate accidents rendered the tide of the day completely. The St. Louis was now the flagship, and had done noble work thus far, but at this critical junction the wheel was shot away, while the tiller of its consort, the Erie, was wrecked, rendering both ironclads unmanageable, and causing them to drift out of the action.

The gunners of the water batteries, seeing the accident, returned to their posts, and proceeded to work in which they were seconded by at least twenty guns from the heights above, so Commodore Foote, realizing the foolhardiness of trying to annihilate the batteries in his crippled condition, gave up the contest, and steamed down the river.

This defeat of the Union gunboats served to elate the Confederates.

It was Floyd's intention to desert Donelson, as had been done with Fort Henry, seeing that capture was inevitable, for Grant's fleet being constantly augmented by the arrival of transports from the Ohio, having regiments on board.

After a council of war, it was decided to cut their way through the Union lines, and escape up the river to Nashville.

Pillow commanded on the rebel left, and Buckner in the center.

This was on the morning of the fifteenth. Pillow struck McClernand heavily, and the shock was severe, but the brave boys in blue stood firm, though outnumbered at this point.

The contest was fierce and bloody.

As if imbued with super-human energy, the great masses pressed forward, and piled battery and deadly muskets. Nothing could check them long, for they seemed utterly irresistible. Well might they be, for their case was desperate—let defeat come, and the end was sure—either death or a Yankee prison awaited them.

For two hours this fearful carnage went on, men fighting at times hand to hand, while the woods were sprinkled thickly with the dead.

McClernand was overmatched, and although contesting every step of ground, had to fall back and send for assistance.

At this time the way of escape was open to the rebels, and remained so for several hours, but the brave boys in blue had no advantage was taken of the opportunity until it was too late.

Archie's company was with McClernand, and in the thickest of the fight. Bravely they met the foe, but at the end of the contest, one-third of their number was missing, which was good evidence that they had not shirked their duty.

Under the trees, the blue and the gray fought a desperate hand-to-hand struggle, which showed the more pluck and endurance, though Pillow and his men, without a doubt, did prodigies of valor, and had the best of the contest.

During the heat of the battle, while the two lines were blazing away at each other, at only forty paces or so, Archie felt himself struck.

The wound was only a flesh one in the arm, but it reached and touched his clothes within an inch or two of his heart. What was singular and significant about it was the fact that although he was facing the foe at the time, at the end of his company, the bullets did not undoubtedly come from the rear. Either some one was shooting very reck-

lessly from the Union side, or else with a terrible purpose in view!

All through the dreadful action the young sergeant believed gallantly, and never so much as a sign of fear had come to his heart, but as the conviction entered his mind that he had a foe in the rear as bitter as those in front, he could not repress a momentary chill, though he did not fag in his duty to his men.

General Grant was all this time some miles away, on one of the gunboats, conferring with the commodore in regard to the part to be taken by the ironclads in the siege, when they should have repaired the damages inflicted upon them by the rebel guns.

He was astonished to receive McClernand's call for assistance, and realized the affair was something of more importance than a skirmish or mere bragadocio on the part of the Confederates.

Promptly dispatched assistance from General Lew Wallace, commanding the Union expedition in staying the rebel advance in the meantime.

It was three o'clock when Grant arrived upon the field, and then a general advance was ordered, before which the brave Confederates dashed, stubborn to the last, back into the trenches from which they had emerged.

General Smith, on the left, led the boys in blue over the rebel breastworks, and even held them against all opposition. The center was the bloody fight of Fort Donelson, and the night closing in, cold and gloomy, chilled the blood in the veins of those engaged.

The weather had changed, the wind blowing from the northwest, and the fog and slight snow had fallen, and the situation was terribly uncomfortable for both parties.

Most of the Union soldiers were lacking tents, and many of them had no fires, so they were obliged to couch all night in the cold, striving to keep warm, by huddling their overcoats about them, or stamping upon the ground, and flapping their arms.

The rebels, more poorly clothed and destitute of fires, must have fared even worse in the trenches, but they stood it bravely.

It is even said that many of the wounded on both sides, during that day's engagement, lay uncared for because of the fierceness of the battle, were frozen to death where they lay.

Archie Gordon was more fortunate than many of his fellow soldiers, for he had secured a portion of a fallen tree, and throwing in with half a dozen others had the pleasure of sitting beside a comfortable fire, and smoking a long-stem pipe.

The Confederates, during this night were in a very unenviable state of mind, particularly those in command.

Grant's army had been so constantly increased by the arrivals sent from Cincinnati, Cairo and other points along the Ohio that he now had a force of something like 35,000 men, and was believed by the Confederate chiefs to have half as many more.

They knew how utterly hopeless was their further effort to keep the fort, and as their attempt to cut a way out had failed, nothing seemed left but to surrender.

For over eight hours their men had endured the most trying of a watching and fighting, besides suffering keenly the while from the cold, and many of them were so utterly worn out as to fall asleep in line of battle, when actually under fire, which fact was noted for in history upon authentic grounds.

Then again, the fact that a portion of the Union army had gained a foothold in the intrenchments was a severe blow, for it would be a comparatively easy task for them to continue the good work thus begun until all the outer defenses of the fort were taken, and then the end would be near.

Bruce Buckner thought they might still fight their way through with a loss of three-fourths of their number, but this idea was abandoned.

It was decided therefore to surrender the post on the morrow.

So General Floyd had good reasons for not wishing to fall into the hands of the Union forces, and he determined to escape in the night.

So he handed the command of the fort over to a young fellow, in turn, intrusted it to Buckner, who was to be made the scapegoat of the occasion.

Two rebel steamboats having reached the fort during the night from the direction of Nashville, and in turn, intrusted it to his men as he could, especially his own brigade,

and steaming up the river they ingloriously left the rest to their fate.

What bitter feelings must have swelled the hearts of those who were thus deserted by their chiefs and left behind to enter Yankee prisons?

No really brave general could ever have deserted the men who had fought so gallantly for him through the day just passed, and the thousands left behind had no reason to love the memory of Generals Floyd and Pillow in the future.

Archie was in the dawn, expecting more hot work on this new-born day.

Early in the morning, Grant received a proposition from Buckner, asking for a committee to agree upon the terms of capitulation.

The reply of Grant was that of a soldier who knew his power, and would stand no beating about the bush. He had the rebels where he could crush them, and would not admit of shilly-shallying.

That terse reply has gone into history, and substantially reads:

"No terms, except unconditional and immediate surrender, can be accepted. I propose to move immediately upon your works." S. GRANT.

There was nothing left for Buckner but to accept the fiat, and thus about nine thousand Confederates were held prisoners of war, and both rebel strongholds had fallen before the prowess of General Grant.

CHAPTER V. CHICKAMAUGA.

After the surrender of Fort Donelson, Archie Gordon saw no more of active warfare until the middle of the following summer.

He then found himself under Rosecrans at Murfreesboro.

During this time he had been upon many raids through portions of Kentucky and Tennessee, and had been engaged in several severe skirmishes with the rebels. Along with others he had served his time in guarding the bridge along the single line of railroad over which the Union army received its supplies from Louisville, and while thus engaged had been in almost constant battle with the rebel forces, and sympathizers who would, had they been in the chance, have burned every depot, bridge and trestle, so as to cut the supply off from the army.

At length the Union army was put in motion, and the fact was apparent to one and all that it would not be long before they would see hot work.

Much skirmishing ensued, the rebels under Bragg retreating gradually.

In point of numbers the Federals could count upon their foe, but their position in a hostile country made things more even. Thus a hundred thousand men faced each other grimly, only waiting for the decisive time to come when the two great armies would seize each other by the throat.

All this time there was exciting side play.

Archie was with Granger when he pushed on to Shelbyville, defeating Wheeler, and taking the place by repeated brilliant dashes, thus capturing some five hundred prisoners. Wheeler, and the balance of his men escaped by swimming Duck River.

On August 21 Chattanooga was awakened by shells thrown across the river by some of Wheeler's division under Walker, so that the intention to strike that rebel stronghold yet.

For some days maneuvering was done such as crossing the river on pontoons, sending a portion of the army into the border land of Georgia to cut off Bragg's supplies and communications.

Crittenden's corp was to descend the narrow valley, climb Lookout Mountain by a path known as the Nickajack trace, and from that eminence have command of the streets of Chattanooga below, while Thomas and McCook were to push boldly forward across Mission Ridge into the valley which is traversed by the Chickamauga Creek, and proceed to the Tennessee, just above Chattanooga.

Bragg might have held the place, but he saw no good could come of it, and he wisely withdrew his army in time.

It was now strengthened from all quarters, Lee sending Longstreet's heavy corps of veterans from the Rapidan, Buckner coming from Knoxville, and even Johnson sending a strong division under Walker, so that the Confederate army now amounted to not far from a hundred thousand men, and was the strongest ever gathered west of the Alleghanies.

The Union force was some 55,000 men, and they, believing the rebels still in full retreat,

were rushing on like hounds pursuing a deer, while, truth to tell, Bragg was concentrating his immense force, and planning to capture the whole hostile army, which seemed bent on rushing down to ruin.

The trap was sprung too soon, and after feeling the tiger's claws sharply, the Union army realized that instead of a keen chase after a flying enemy, they were now threatened by a foe far their superior in point of numbers, and that they must now fight for their lives.

Then more maneuvering was required to concentrate the scattered forces before they could be cut off entirely, and gradually but surely the great rebel army advanced to cross the river.

The battle of Chickamauga was one of the most stubborn and bloody of the whole war, and themen who lived through it will never forget its horrors to their dying day.

It began in reality on September 19, and continued with hardly any intermission during the whole of that day and the twentieth, though the hottest work was undoubtedly done on that second day.

What need is there of a graphic description of the tumultuous and bloody in blue fought from behind breastworks improvised on the spur of the occasion, and although defeated and forced to retire to Chattanooga with a terrible loss of some 20,000 in killed, wounded and missing, had some satisfaction in knowing that they had inflicted an equal loss on the impetuous rebels.

Although Bragg's great army camped that second night as victors upon the bloody field of Chickamauga, where the creek ran red with blood, they did not follow up their success and attack Rosecrans in the movements at Chattanooga, for the latter stood ready to repeat the fearful lesson he had given Pritch and Van Dorn under similar circumstances at Corinth.

It was late in the afternoon.

The sun was below the western horizon and the sky shedding its vermilion hues upon the scene, but still the awful battle raged, the rebel hosts hurling themselves upon each other as if they had determined to rush and carry all before them.

There was not a man in the Union army but who saw hot work on that fatal day.

Archie Gordon was ever in the thickest of the fight, and yet he seemed to bear a charmed life.

He had received several wounds, but they were as nothing to him then.

At such times a man loses all individuality and becomes one of the many. So it was with Archie, his experience on that day was just what almost every man engaged experienced.

Shot and shell flew around him—men sank beside him, blood was everywhere, and a sulphurous smoke at times hung like a pall over the scene.

For the time being he was transformed into a man of iron—with close shut teeth and flashing eyes he nobly responded to the call of duty.

They were the rebel legions at this point, hurled back, and each time they came up fresh and eager to continue the warfare, strongly reinforced, while on every occasion the number of the boys in blue was cut down with no chance of reinforcements.

They tried to break through the lines. Even this was not permitted them, for as their old foes appeared again in front, stronger in number than before, a fresh regiment of Confederates showed up in their rear.

They were completely environed.

Death was all that remained now, but they had no fear, for they had been too close to the grisly monster all along to dread its coming now.

The scene that followed was appalling, as it was but one of the many that Chickamauga—well named River of Death—looked upon.

Hemmed in on all sides, the many, desperate boys in blue fought like so many tigers, but that their cause was hopeless was evidenced from the fact that they were outnumbered three to one.

Every man performed a prodigious amount of work, but none fell without inflicting a double or treble on the enemy.

Before extermination came, there was a hoarse series of hurrahs from the hill close by, and down came several regiments of Iowa men with a rush.

They struck before the rebels could form a new line, and the tide of battle was again changed, but in their retreat the rebels carried off many prisoners, and the Union troops dared not chase them far for fear of being themselves cut off from the main body by

some of Bragg's dashing and seemingly invulnerable legions.

Archie Gordon felt his heart sink when he found himself carried away as with the tide. In spite of the most strenuous efforts to free himself, he found it was impossible, for all around him were hundreds of the gray coats, and he was carried away with the vigorous retreat until the pursuit was checked by the recall of the Iowa regiments.

A few of his comrades had been equally unfortunate, and were now prisoners like himself, but the majority had managed to break away.

He was speedily conveyed to the rear of the rebel army, and his position was such that he could see General Bragg directing the operations of his march.

To young Gordon the famous Secesh leader was an object of great interest, and he almost forgot his own deplorable condition in watching the vigorous actions of the Confederate general-in-chief, as he sent aids this way and that directing an assault here and a diplomatic advance there, and all from his knowledge of the country surrounding Chattanooga.

When night finally closed in, the firing at length ceased, but it was as though the rebels were loath to give up the action even then.

By the time day came again the scene was changed. Chickamauga had been fought and won gloriously by the Confederates, but Rosecrans held the strategic point—Chattanooga—which had really been the main object of his campaign.

Night upon the battlefield!

The stars looked down upon the thousands of dead men with pity. Blue and gray lay promiscuously about, some still locked in the fierce grasp where a sudden death had found them; others lying prone upon their backs, while now and then could be found some who were with their hands clasped, as though he had tried to commend his soul to God before giving up the ghost.

Let us draw a veil upon the hideous spectacle.

At the night crept out those human fiends, the robbers of the dead, to pursue their nefarious trade, and when seen by those who were either the blue or gray, they met with scant mercy; and while the night after the battle wore on, Archie Gordon was a prisoner in the rebel camp.

CHAPTER VI.

STEALING A LOCOMOTIVE.

The young Yankee soldier knew from many things that were plainly shown that Bragg had gained the victory.

How else could it have turned out when the rebel general had been so heavily reinforced, and his army was at least half as many more men than Rosecrans possessed, and added to this was the fact that they were fighting upon ground well known to their leaders and thousands of the men themselves, besides being in a country that felt warmly toward them.

All honor to Rosecrans that he held them at bay so long, quietly retreating into his intrenchments at Chattanooga when the end was inevitable. All honor to his noble general for who was faithful to the honor of that bloody day's arduous duties faithfully; and, above all, honor to the brave boys in the ranks, who faced death as though they were going to a feast, and obeyed all orders without a murmur.

The thousands on both sides who lay there silent in death were mute witnesses of the terrible work done on that fatal twentieth of September, and there would be mourning in many a home, both North and South, while the dead were being read.

Archie slept that night, unmindful of the fact that he was a prisoner in the hands of the enemy. He was so weary he could have slept anywhere, and he had no remembrance of dreaming. Complete exhaustion produced by the day's work is the nearest possible semblance to death.

In the morning the prisoners were huddled together, and then, under guard, marched away.

They did not know what fate awaited them. The rebel prison had not gained an enviable reputation in those days, and there were many who had heard so much of the horrors to be experienced there that they would sooner have died than to be carried away to that terrible city of prison or any of the strongholds where it was customary to put Union soldiers.

Their journey was far from being a pleasant one, as it consisted of many miles march-

ing over rough country before they reached a point where the railroad could be made serviceable in order to be shipped to Richmond.

Archie had not given up all hope of ultimate escape. His was a spirit not easily crushed, and while he had life he had hope.

In the terrible time that lay before him it was this hope that kept him going through when thousands, who chanced to be more despondent, gave up and died.

At some town in Georgia they found the railroad intact, and then the work of loading the prisoners was begun.

Every species of woe was impressed into the service, and the captives were treated with about the same consideration as though they had been cattle—indeed, with hardly as good, for their lives were a burden to their captors, while fat calves would have received marked attention.

Here was where Archie thought he saw an opportunity to escape from his bondage.

They had arrived at the Georgia town late in the afternoon, and by the time a number of cars of all descriptions had been assigned to the cattle car, had been impressed into the service, it was growing dusk.

In the South, twilight is not what we understand it to be in the North, for darkness comes very soon after the setting of King Sol.

It was to be expected, therefore, that all haste would be made by the rebel soldiers who had charge of the many prisoners, so as to get them safely boxed up and on the way ere the hour grew late.

Owing to several reasons, the prisoners were not watched as closely as formerly.

In the first place, many of their captors were engaged in hunting and preparing cars for their occupancy. Again, both guards and prisoners were weary from the many miles' tramp that had been accomplished since morning. As a third reason, why the prisoners were left only partially unguarded, they had been warned that should any of them attempt to escape, they would be shot dead upon the spot.

This threat, coupled with the fact that they were weary almost to death, was enough to keep the Union men from attempting escape.

As they were in a hostile country, the very hotbed of Secession, and with Bragg's great army overrunning the land between themselves and the army of Rosecrans, there seemed little or no use of eluding their guards.

Besides, they were so weary that even the prospect of rebel pardon looming up before them did not just then have power to alarm them, and many actually enjoyed the prospect of taking a ride.

Archie was not one of these. He had no intention of trying to escape, in spite of all these drawbacks, and his eyes were constantly on the lookout for the expected and desired opportunity.

It came at last.

Chance had it that he was stationed close to the engine that had been brought out to convey the train of Yankee prisoners part of the way on the road to Richmond, and as a brilliant idea entered his brain, he watched the iron monster closely.

As the engine was a good head of steam on, and was fully determined that if given but half a chance, he would steal that locomotive or at least make a bold attempt, no matter what the consequences.

Somehow or other Archie gained the good will of the rebel soldiers acting as guards, who had come in contact with the detachment to which he belonged, and this might serve him well in case he was seen before well off, though he did not expect it would be so.

At last the chance he had waited for with so much patience came and he was ready to seize it.

The engineer had evidently seen some one among those just back of the locomotive who whom he desired to hold a conversation, perhaps relative to the trip he was just about to make, for after vainly endeavoring to catch his attention, he sprang from the cab and plunged in among the men.

Perhaps he thought his friend was in the cab, but in this he was mistaken, as that worthy was sipping some of the portions of the iron steed and standing upon the cow-catcher.

With a couple of leaps Archie Gordon had gained the side of the locomotive, and up to that time no one had paid any attention to his movements.

To spring into the cab was but the work of a few seconds.

Then his hand was upon the lever, and immediately he opened the throttle.

There was a movement of the great iron stool, which, however, was not noticed particularly, as it was taken for granted that the engineer, fireman, or some one in authority was doing the work.

As Archie opened the throttle still wider, the locomotive began to move rapidly, and it was at this moment the discovery was made that a man wearing the Union blue stood in the cab, and that it was the real engineer, who, dashing out of the crowd ran after the fleeing engine, now rapidly gaining headway—waving his arms frantically and yelling for it to stop.

The daring soldier realized what would come now, for although the locomotive was going too fast for any man to clamber upon it, there were rebel guards along the track. He crouched low.

It was well, for several guns sounded, and the bullets tore through the cab. Had he remained erect, he would undoubtedly have been pierced through and through by this rebel lead.

Other dangers were before him, even when he had gone beyond the possibility of being able to evade, already dashed out from among the houses.

He knew nothing whatever of the track before him, and although it was to be presumed that information had been sent along the road to regard the train, he had no train, so as to have the track clear still, at any moment, he might run off an open switch or turn into where the locomotive would be wrecked.

At these chances he took. If death was to come to him it would be nothing more than he had expected upon the bloody field of Chickamauga, and surely it was much more preferable to die instantly in the blaze of glory than to suffer in a rebel prison pen, eventually dying of disease, or being shot down like a dog.

All seemed fair before him, and his hopes arose, though they did not overwhelm him. It was simply his intention to run a few miles, then to stop, and then to leave the locomotive, though he believed it would be proper and just to reverse the lever as he sprung out of the cab, and send the engine back like a rocket whence it came, doing what damage he possibly could to the cause of the Confederacy.

This was a neat little plan in theory. That he failed to eventually carry it out was not the fault of the young soldier.

When five minutes had gone by since he leaped upon the engine, he believed he had gone far enough.

The locomotive was rocking from side to side with the swiftness of its flight, and he believed he must be fully ten miles from the spot where he had taken French leave of his captors.

He gradually slackened its pace, and was then able to see that on both sides of the track there were woods.

This was just as he would have wished had he been granted a request, for it was his intention to hide himself among the trees until the rebel soldiers had left the vicinity preyling upon neighboring houses for food, and then making his way back to the scene of the late battle, where he hoped to join the Union forces at Chattanooga.

When the locomotive came to a stop he stepped out, and he was relieved as if fully determining upon his plans before leaving the friendly cab.

Fatal inaction. Even as he stood, a voice, hoarse with much exertion, spoke in his ear.

"Reverse that lever, you runaway Yankee!"

Through one of the cab windows came the head and shoulders of a man; and, by the light of day, he saw that it was the steam-gauge, Archie saw a revolver brought on a line with his head.

It was the rebel fireman.

He had entirely forgotten his existence; and, as the fellow spoke, he saw that what was up, had hung to the fore-part of the locomotive for dear life until the frightful speed was abated in some degree, when he had managed to creep along the side, and thus made his appearance at the inopportune moment.

He rather enjoyed the situation as the grim smile upon his oily face declared, but you may be sure Archie Gordon did not.

Seeing there was no help for it, and that he must make a virtue of necessity, the young soldier laughed heartily at the manner in which he had been caught.

Though he would have given much to

have leaped over into the bushes that lined the track, he saw that the burly fireman was not the man to be trifled with, and that the only thing he could do would be to humor him.

At the least, he had had quite a little dash, and had enjoyed the exhilaration.

What the rebel guards would do about it, he could not, of course, say; but, as no damage had been done, and he was again a captive, they would not be apt to murder him.

The lever was reversed, and back toward the Georgia town they went.

Some fifteen minutes after the dash had been made, the rebel leaders, consulting in perplexity where they were to obtain another locomotive to take the train away, heard a rumble gradually approaching, followed by several long whistles; and, while they stood there almost unable to believe their eyes, the locomotive that had run away slowed up, until it stood in exactly its former place with the dashing Yankee soldier at the lever, and the fireman half through the cab window keeping his revolver on a line with Archie's head.

The safe return of the engine so pleased the rebels that they condoned Archie's offense, though he was distinctly warned that another such prank would surely cost him his life.

Although the engineer was wrathful, and would have been apt to have punished the man who had run off with his iron horse, one look at Archie's well knit figure caused him to think better of it, and he took it out in curses until ordered to his cab.

Rate is very uncertain, and thus it came to pass that, after all, Archie was one of those Yankee prisoners who started on that train for Richmond.

CHAPTER VII.

LIBBY PRISON.

Over the door of this historic old building in the Confederate capital might well have been inscribed those terrible words:

"Who enters here leaves hope behind!"

Many a poor fellow walked into Libby prison never to leave it until he was carried out to the dead wagon, that made its regular rounds in the city, to say nothing of the others whom fortune had frowned upon.

When Archie Gordon saw the inside of Libby for the first time it can readily be understood by those of the boys in blue who were there that he was most favorably impressed with his surroundings.

The air was nauseating to one who had been used to breathing the pure atmosphere of heaven, and misery surrounded him, such as he had never known before.

At this time the great rebel prisons were overcrowded with the prisoners captured in late victorious encounters. From the West came thousands of hapless boys in blue. Some time since the capture of his famous raid into Kentucky and captured large numbers of the Federal forces.

It was now late in the year '63, and there was soon to be afforded relief to the overcrowded prisons of Richmond and Salisbury.

There was building at Andersonville, Georgia, the famous prison pen, which has since become a synonym for all that is barbarous and cruel, and ere long the unfortunate captives, in compliance of provisions destined for their army, and hence in view of possible and probable emergencies it was determined upon building a pen at Andersonville which would hold ten or twenty thousand.

The greatest disadvantage, however, arising from the concentration of so many prisoners at the seat of the Confederate government, was the consumption of provisions destined for their army, and hence in view of possible and probable emergencies it was determined upon building a pen at Andersonville which would hold ten or twenty thousand.

As the prisoners of the Confederacy were accumulating fast, and were congregating at and near the center of their military operations at one extremity of the rebel country, exposed to recapture, and requiring the detail of a large force for their safe keeping, it was in truth a heavy burden upon the Confederate Government.

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*Old Libby is now in the possession of a fertilizing company, and the shafts that stood so long above the building is sold to victors at a dollar a slice.

scenes of cruelty whereby rash Federals lost their lives because of disobeying the injunctions put upon them, being shot by the tyrannical guards for some trifling misdemeanor.

Early one morning, just before dawn, they were aroused from slumber by a sudden shuffling of the rattles of manacles as they were discharged and the shouts of men.

At first they knew not what to make of it, but soon the news went round, coming from those who had been in the secret.

Three daring fellows had determined to risk all in an endeavor to escape.

They had made a saw out of an old case knife, and for weeks past had been engaged in sawing a hole through the heavy floor into the cellar beneath.

This had been done so cautiously, one stroke at a time, that even the Federal prisoners did not know of it though they were all around.

There were spies and Southern sympathizers among them, so that it would never do to trust a secret far.

When the square piece was eventually cut through one night, taking advantage of the darkness, two of the daring fellows went below, and before they had reached the hole with his blanket upon which he lay.

All the remainder of the night the two men below worked in the endeavor to tunnel out, coming up just before dawn. The block was cut through in the hole, but one of them managed to be lying at that point at all times during the day, taking turns at this job, so that there was no discovery made.

Night after night this work went on.

Finally, they knew that a few hours would finish it, and when the whole three of them went down below, a comrade volunteering to shield the hole with his blanket until dawn, to share with them a dozen messages from their friends.

It was not far from morning when the end came, and their tunnel was complete.

Then came the rush upon the guards without, and the plunge into the cold waters of the James River.

It was a long time afterward that their fate was known to those they left behind them.

They were chased like foxes far and near, hunted night and day, and finally one of their number was shot, but the other two eventually gained the Union lines, and if alive to-day will recall again the memory of that daring escape while reading these lines.

Archie was given no opportunity to escape.

Some of those who had been guards of the prisoners taken at Chickamauga were now on duty at the prison, and they, having formed a good estimate of the young soldier, had told the comrades of his daring escape with the locomotive at that Georgia town, so that to tell the truth he was a marked man.

Feeling confident that if any attempt at escape was made he would be in it, they watched him like a lynx, hoping in this way to get track of what was going on.

In this way, Archie, knowing he was a marked man, determined not to join any such league for escape, for fear lest he should betray his friends.

This isolation lasted while he was confined in Libby prison, which was for a period of two months.

Then he was transferred to Castle Thunder, as Libby was called, where he met new men, and at the same time several old comrades, whom he was pleased and, at the same time, sorry to see.

As his reputation had failed to come with him, Archie now enjoyed a feeling of liberty, and the fact that he was given no more notice than the other members of the prison was a source of much satisfaction to him.

Thus the winter of '63 and '64 was passed. When Archie was captured he had not been immediately searched, and he had taken advantage of this respite to hide all the ready money he possessed where it would not very likely be found.

The wisdom of this course was now seen, for there are times when he was able to provide himself with some of the necessities of life, though to the ragged, unkempt men who had been in these prisons ever since the battles of Bull Run and Manassas, they were luxuries that had long since been denied them.

These unfortunates were wild-looking characters, with gaunt forms, unkempt, wiry hair, dirt-begrimed faces and hollow eyes.

Their clothing was in shreds, their foot-

Twice within the first fifteen minutes had they been compelled to hastily crouch down among the bushes lining the road.

On the first occasion the veteran had caught a suspicious murmur of voices, and he saw his comrades down just in time to avoid being run into by several negroes, who might have unwittingly given the alarm, had they seen our fugitives, and they knew full well the chase would begin soon enough.

In the second place they had heard the heavy tramping of a body of fire-eaters, and were given ample time to get out of the way before the squad of mounted Confederates rode by.

Should work would have been made of them had they been discovered by these fire-eaters, and they pressed on, when the danger was passed, with renewed energy.

The road was a good one, though apparently well traveled by the army, as it led straight from the Confederate capital to the rebel army of Virginia.

Again and again were our friends compelled to hide, either because of approaching horsemen, or persons on foot—soldiers in gray, or to have been on some expedition, hunting recruits or deserters, or attending to the manifold duties which the exigency of the times was apt to render imperative.

Every three hours passed.

The three men walked steadily, and had placed quite a number of miles between themselves and Richmond in this space of time.

They knew full well, however, that when pursuit was made it would be a vigorous one, and that if their foes could but get upon their track they would chase them as the poor fox is run down in England.

At first they felt that no danger appeared, they would be compelled to leave the road and secrete themselves in some place for the day, trusting to good fortune to supply them with food so as to keep body and soul together.

As their escape from Castle Thunder had been at such a late hour, they knew it must be now close upon dawn, and were considering the expediency of leaving the road and dragging in the trees, when the sound of galloping horses once more reached their ears.

This time there was more reason for alarm. The sounds came from their rear, and although there might not be anything back of this, a cold chill struck the escapees, and the idea of war as the idea that their escape had already been discovered and pursuit made flashed into their minds.

As they hastily sought shelter among the trees, Archie thought he heard a rustling on the opposite side of the road, but paid little attention to the fact, believing that he might be mistaken, or else the noise was made by some bird.

No sooner had they secreted themselves a dozen yards from the road than they became aware of the fact that from the opposite direction there also came the sound of horses' hoofs beating upon the hard road.

At first they fancied this must be an echo, but the longer they listened the more assured they became that it was really so. The veteran had with his comrades removed somewhat further from the road than had heretofore been done, simply because the veil of night was beginning to weave the way to the gray of early dawn. This fact had suddenly come home to him at the time of hearing the racket in their rear, and turning to his comrades he was somewhat anxious to get out plainly and aimed so that at a distance of two yards he could distinguish them apart.

Nearer came the sounds.

At length they suddenly ceased, words were uttered faintly as a hail, and both bodies of horsemen had come to a halt directly in front of where our friends were lying in concealment.

They exchanged salutations, by which it was made plain that the respective leaders were a major and a captain, the former having charge of a squad that had recently left the rebel capital.

"Any news at headquarters?" asked the major, evidently a freen with the army upon the field and was now on his way to Richmond on diplomatic business.

"Nothing of much moment. By the way, have you seen any stragglers upon the road within the last twenty hours? Several of them have escaped to-night from Castle Thunder, and the whole country this way, is being scoured for them. That is my present errand."

The three fugitives in the bushes caught

their breath—the crisis had come sooner than they had expected—the hunt was already in progress.

"Indeed!" ejaculated the cavalry officer on his way to the capital, "how did they make their escape?"

"The affair had not been investigated when I left, and the only fact known was that seven of the cursed Yanks had tunneled out and were gone. The sentry, in walking his beat chance to go a little outside of his usual route, fell into the hole they had made while tapping their infernal tunnel. Of course the alarm was at once given and detachments sent out to hunt them down. It would do my heart good to see them shot dead, and I have the right to say that I do not disturb the rest of a Virginian officer and gentleman."

More words were exchanged, and then it seemed that the detachments were about to separate, each going its way, when from out of the bushes on the other side of the road from that where our friends lay concealed there sprang a man.

"Hold!" cried this individual, "I think I can give you some information regarding these Yanks, gentlemen."

"And who in the field's name are you, my fine fellow?" asked the major, his hand resting on his sword as he bent low in the saddle, and endeavored to scrutinize the fellow's face in the dim light, an uncertain and equally unsatisfactory task at best.

"I recognize your voice as that of Major Thurber of the Maryland regiment, Don't you remember Silas Keene, major?"

The major uttered an oath.

"Pardon my language, my good man, but under the circumstances how was I to know but what it was one of those self-same Yanks playing some shrewd trick upon us. I am sure Captain Wharton here will be thankful for any information you may see fit to give him with respect to those whom he hunts. Am I not right, captain?"

"Assuredly, since I recognize the name of this man as belonging to one of the most noted of Confederate scouts. What news, friend?"

"You mention seven men, but I saw only three. That they were Yanks I knew full well from their dress and words which they let fall, besides, two of them were tattered and torn like men who had seen long imprisonment, and the other was a long-legged fellow which looked to me in the morning light as gray."

"None other than old Corney himself," declared the captain, eagerly; "where did you see them?"

"Right on this spot, hardly five minutes ago, and if I mistake not, they are at this very moment crouching among the trees yonder on the other side of the road."

CHAPTER X.

OLD CORNEY'S STRATAGEM.

"Come, it is time we were getting out of this."

Old Corney, the veteran hoarsely whispered these words in the ears of his comrades when the startling declaration of the rebel scout reached them.

Indeed, it was time they were leaving the grounds which they then occupied, and not a second must be lost, for only the time required for the troopers to throw themselves from their horses, and to be among the trees must have elapsed before all would be hopeless.

Rising from their crouching position the three unarmed fugitives moved away from the trees, and then, rather than run, they, for should they be heard by their new foe, the latter would have a clew that could not be otherwise than valuable to them and disastrous to the Federals.

The captain gave a hasty order, and the dozen men throwing themselves to the ground, drew their sabers and plunged in among the trees, led by the rebel scout who pointed out the precise spot where he had seen the three fugitives vanish while hidden among the bushes, where he had himself taken refuge upon hearing their approach, being suspicious by nature, and on an errand that would not admit of running any risk.

The major himself became enthused with the idea that a man-hunt might prove diverting, and not being in any particular hurry to enter Richmond at such an early hour, he gave an order to the four men who were with him.

Dismounting, they all plunged into the woods after the others, the horses being left in charge of one dragon who sat with one knee

thrown over his saddle, listening eagerly for any sounds that would indicate the game was stirred up and occasionally grumbling at the fate that debarred him from taking part in such an exciting hunt where the quarry was human.

The troopers searched well, and their bright sabers were plunged into every dark clump of bushes that defied other investigation.

Scattered as the rebels were, it would have gone hard with the three fugitives had they remained anywhere near by for they must have inevitably been captured.

Old Corney, however, had led them deep into the wood, keeping beyond the line of trooper search.

Which way he was going he knew not, for the trees were too dense overhead to take his bearings by the stars. He only knew that the sounds of the hunt had gradually died away, and when in the course of time they once more struck a road, as it led north, they determined to follow it some distance until away from this dangerous vicinity.

Several times, as they advanced, they fancied they looked across the fanfare, but the truth did not break in upon them until in turning a bend they saw in the dim morning light a body of almost a score of war-horses, with one man sitting in the saddle which he was driving.

Then, like a flash, the truth came home. He pressed forward through the forest, they had unconsciously kept edging to the left, as a man will always do when traveling blindly, and the guards against this forging ahead of his stronger side, and in the end had almost completed a circle, striking the wood at a point about half a mile below where they had left it before, so that they had been going over the old ground again.

There was something of the dress of old Corney, and he was well seconded by his two younger comrades.

The sight of those horses gave him an idea.

True, it was a hair-brained thought, and one which a discreet man would have never entertained; but the veteran believed that dash often accomplished more than strategy, and he was ready for anything.

Had they been wise, they might have plunged into the brush on the other side of the wood, and then have been able to proceed without much danger of molestation, the search being wholly conducted upon that side where they had formerly been.

But Corney had allowed this brilliant idea to flash into his brain, and he could think of nothing else.

He no sooner mentioned it to his comrades than they at once seized upon the plan.

Nothing remained then but to carry it into execution, and the sooner they set to work the better it would be for their chances of success.

Taking the side of the road on which the rebel scout had been secreted when he watched them, they crept cautiously along through the bushes, until a point had been reached directly beside the horses.

The rebel trooper still sat with his face toward the other side of the road. His horses had been fastened to a rope which he held in his hand. There was a purpose in this, for otherwise he could not have held the whole of them.

As his back was toward them, and he seemed to be in no suspicious of danger, the chances were in favor of their scheme working well.

The veteran, during his passage through the wood, had made his comrades follow his example in arming themselves with stout bludgeons.

That which he carried was a veritable war-club, and one blow from it would settle a giant's hash.

With a low word to his companions, the tattered old soldier crept out of his place of concealment, and approached the rebel trooper.

If he made any sound it aroused no suspicion in the mind of the man left to guard the horses, for the animal were naturally stamping, as the mosquitoes or flies annoyed them.

The two in the bushes held their breath. Discovery might come in more than one way.

The fellow might turn just at this critical time and give the alarm, or one of the rebels might step into the road, returning from the wood, and thus see the men they sought, for it was not far from broad daylight now.

When old Corney got within striking dis-

tance, he lost no time in useless preparation.

An Irishman by birth, he had wielded many a shillalah at Donnybrook Fair, and knew well how to handle the native weapon of the land of his fathers.

There was a sudden loud crack, like the thump one would give a tree-stump, and over went that rebel trooper, falling like a ninepin struck by the ball. Dead, or not, it was all one to Corney, for he knew little mercy would be shown him by the man's comrades anyway, and he did not believe in tempering his blow so that he might not risk the fellow's life, thereby running a chance of losing the game.

It seemed as though the gray trooper had hardly vanished on one side of the horse before the ragged Federal, dropping his "bit of a stick," had leaped into the saddle from the other side.

No sooner did they see their comrade in the place so lately occupied by the confederate, than Archie and his comrade, realizing that the game was working well, leaped out of the bushes, and each, selecting a horse near that upon which Corney had mounted, sprang into the saddle.

The veteran had caught up the rope which his predecessor had dropped when he was made the recipient of that terrible blow, for another brilliant idea had flashed into his active mind, and this was to carry every horse away with them, thus preventing the pursuit on the part of the outwitted troopers.

A word and a kick in the ribs served to start the leading horse, and away they started down the road.

As they had gone thirty yards several shouts sounded behind them, some of the troopers, probably the major and his men, having returned, but too late.

They sent a volley of bullets after the flying Yankees, but these missiles did no harm.

Our friends now hastened to arm themselves, from the holsters of the various saddles securing a couple of large revolvers apiece, while there were two more upon each side of the saddle.

Holding one of these latter ready for use, they urged the horses on.

It was a wild sight to see them dashing madly down the road, looking keenly ahead, as though they had expected opposition.

In truth they were not far wrong. Some of the troopers being near the road, a mile or so further on, had heard the shots and heavy tramping, and taking in the situation at a glance, as the rebels advanced, ran in, formed a line across the route, and with miscellaneous drawn weapons waited to check the mad dash of the three escaped prisoners from grim old Castle Thunder.

CHAPTER XI.

A MAN HUNT.

Those Confederate troopers who stood so gallantly in the road could not but have felt shaky as they saw the troop of horse dashing down upon them.

They had more than one danger to contend against; for, while they ran the risk of being run down by the charging animals, there was also a peril in the revolvers which they could see in the hands of the Yankees, and when the collision came, death was sure to follow.

Brave men as they were, the Confederates could not be blamed for looking over their shoulders to that which was of retreat was open in case the plunging horses pressed them too closely.

A few more leaps, and they were upon them.

Like the sharp crack of firearms rang out, mingled with loud cries, and the troopers sprung back in time to avoid being crushed by the horses.

Two of them delayed too long, and went down under the feet of the madly plunging steed.

Like a tornado, the little cavalcade swept on, the three men bending low in the saddle to avoid the rush of bullets which they felt sure must follow.

They were right, for several warnings sounded; but, owing to their precaution no damage was done by this last discharge.

They had not come out unscathed, however, for old Corney had a slight wound on the side of his head, where a rebel bullet had grazed his skull, while Trauter, the third soldier, had a bullet wound in the fleshy part of the arm.

This was rudely bound up when they were

at some little distance from the spot where the troopers were, and the journey continued.

Their situation had become both better and worse, if such an anomaly can exist.

The fact that they were now well armed was something that must cheer them considerably.

At the worst, they could make a desperate fight for liberty, and this was a desideratum not to be despised.

On the other hand, it was now known just where they were, what their number was, and what the point they were aiming for, so that the rebels could concentrate their forces and hunt them savagely.

Taking it as a whole, however, they believed it better to have been considerably bettered by the brilliant idea that had flashed into the mind of the old veteran.

They were now beyond their enemies—that is those who were in immediate pursuit of them—and they could not expect to keep the horses any length of time; for, at any moment, they might dash around a bend in the road only to find themselves in the midst of a cavalry company, such as was the case on this line between Richmond and the front at almost any hour of the day.

It was the veteran who suggested that the time had come for them to desert the horses and take to the forest again.

As he had no opposition, so, dismounting, they gave the steeds a start, and set them on along the road at a wild gallop.

Care was taken when entering among the trees not to be conspicuous which would show this fact to a keen-sighted foe.

The day-god came up and illumined the face of nature with his genial rays, but they were most unwelcome to the three men who were yet almost in the shadow of the grim pine-trees which they had so recently escaped, and to whom darkness was the best friend they knew.

Had they not been sure of a hot chase, and known that before the day was over, those woods must be overrun by rebel soldiers hunting for them, their best policy would have been to have lain low, and by keeping quiet pass the day sleeping and recruiting their powers for the coming night, when the best work could be accomplished.

But they were compelled to risk all, and push forward in the day time, trusting to chance to keep them from danger, or rather to the power of the Almighty, who had thus far shielded them.

Up moon their progress was good, but they had headed in a line due northwest, hoping in this way to avoid the greater part of their foes who would be going straight north.

A short time after the sun had passed the meridian they heard the barking of dogs in their rear, followed by the hoarse shouts of men, which grew in violence until the whole forest seemed to echo with the discordant noise.

The chase had now begun in earnest. Realizing the desperate nature of their position, the three Federals set their teeth, and quickened their pace until they had assumed a run; still their pursuers seemed to gain.

They were white in the face, but full of grit, and pushed on, determined to make at least a gallant fight before giving in.

There was no mystery regarding the finding of their trail—the bark of the dogs told that the men were close at hand, but that the discomfited troopers were in the van of their pursuers, though it was evident that they must have been heavily reinforced.

Louder grew the signs of pursuit, and more desperate their chase, but that the dogs were not bloodhounds, and they had no reason to fear them, but the men were fully as ferocious as hounds could be, and when they came up with the fugitives there would be particular Cain to pay.

At this moment the three Yankees suddenly found themselves upon the bank of a stream, which, though not wide, was evidently deep.

To go either up or down was beyond all question impossible, for they could hear the hoarse shouts of those who chased them in either direction.

The only thing left them was to swim across.

There came a volley at this moment, as some of their eager pursuers burst into view and a cry broke from poor Trauter as he reeled back, clutched at the empty air and fell upon the green grass that bordered the river.

Both the others saw that the shot had

pierced the poor fellow's heart, and that he was already dead. Had he been only wounded, they would have stood at bay over him, and have met death rather than desert him.

Now there was no need of any such sacrifice for him beyond all earthly hope.

Life is precious to every man, when he can with honor save it, and as their only hope lay in crossing the river, old Corney and Archie Gordon lost no more time, but sprang into the water.

They found the current strong, but made little attempt to stem it, preferring rather to use their whole power in endeavoring to reach the opposite shore.

When they were two-thirds of the way across, the Confederates began to appear in large numbers on the other shore, and then the firing began.

The bullets zipped about their ears in a manner decidedly unpleasant, and splashed in the water, some of them rising again to fall further one with a sullen chug, like a frog leaping off a log into the river.

All at once, old Corney uttered a cry, threw up his arms, and vanished from sight under the cold waters of the river, and Archie Gordon, who fancied he did, which amounted to the same thing—a tinge of red over the spot where his faithful old comrade had gone down.

Horried at the brave fellow's fate, he could only keep on, though he now seemed to lose all thought of his own, and would become of him. With his two comrades killed, his own fate seemed immaterial.

He did not notice that the firing had now ceased entirely, for he had gained the shore. Looking back, he saw half a dozen men in gray stooping over the bank.

"Surrender, Yank!" said one, aiming a carbine.

A second caught him by the nape of the neck, and in this way he was drawn out of the water.

Poor Archie! He was again in the hands of the Philistines, and destined for a rebel prison, but he could only think himself favored by Providence, when he remembered the terrible fate of the two poor fellows who had so lately been full of life and hope, and now lay, one stiff and stark on the bank yonder, the other, at the bottom of the river without doubt.

CHAPTER XII.

THE DEAD LINE AT ANDERSONVILLE.

ANDERSONVILLE!

What tragic memories cluster around that name!

How many men, living to-day, can look back to the time when they formed one of the many thousands that were huddled together within the log walls of this most infamous prison pen!

Andersonville!

The name stands to-day, one of the few blots upon the Confederate escutcheon, and the blackest and foulest of them all.

There are few among those who fought under Beauregard, Bragg, or Johnston, Bragg, or any noted general of the South, who does not have a very unpleasant feeling whenever Andersonville is mentioned in their presence.

They utterly and wholly repudiate the horror of that death-pen, and cast the blame upon those who should properly bear it—John H. Winder, a brigadier-general in the Confederate service, who had long made the prisons of Richmond a terror, and Henry Wirz the jailer.

That these men were appointed to such a position, and never removed until after the war, was evidence that their diabolical actions were sanctioned by some one high in authority. But even if this were not so, it could not be conclusively proven who should have shared the blame.

Andersonville prison flourished only a few months longer than a year, when it was closed by Lee and Johnson's surrender; but during that time over a rebel and thousand Union soldiers were murdered within that stockade, many of them shot down in wanton cruelty, simply because they trespassed upon forbidden ground, and crossed the awful death-line!

They died by hundreds in the poor apology of a hospital, reduced to skin and bones. If a man was wounded ever so little, his death warrant was generally sealed, for in that slimy gangrene would set in, and even the wound was at times to be swathed in bandages already reeking with poison, having done duty on more than one occasion.

It was the avowed policy of the provost-general and Captain Wirz, his jailer, to decrease the number of prisoners under their

charge by any manner of means, and they gloated over the rapidly growing dimensions of the graveyard.

It was the only way of relieving them of their hated charges, and no means were left untried in order to carry out this awful design.

The officer in command was often heard to boast that he himself, with only a scanty appropriation from his government, had been able to kill off more Yankees during a year, by starving and murdering them, than the combined Confederates in the field had been able to do in fair combat, where they lost an equal number of brave men; and when that frightful death-roll is consulted, it will be seen that he was not much off from the way in his tolerance.

The prison proper was fifteen hundred and forty feet long, by seven hundred and fifty feet, after the addition had been made to the original structure.

The pickets were composed of solid trees, twenty-four feet in height, planted close together in a trench five feet deep, with the earth thrown around the base, and the tops roughly pointed with the ax.

In the absence of anything like a hundred feet was another similar stockade twelve feet high, to serve as a protection for the inner one.

Within these limits no shelter of any kind was allowed; the canopy of the sky was the only covering for the thousands of wretched men. No a shelter or sleep but a hole left for shelter, and the burning beams of the blazing sun fell full upon the red soil of the bare hill or incline upon which a portion of the stockade rested.

The guard line at Andersonville was the invention of the cruel monster Wirz.

Before his coming the prisoners had been allowed full sway within the stockade, and could converse with those visitors whom order forbade to enter. It was now, however, to prevent this, Wirz had poles planted some ten feet apart and thirty feet from the stockade, and upon these was fastened a railing.

Notice was then given that any one transgressing upon this ground would be instantly shot; and the guards being well instructed seemed to take a fiendish delight in carrying out their orders.

If a man put his hand over that line of death and dip his foot in the water, the stream that ran through the stockade—the reaching under to reach a worthless rag which the breeze had blown from its proprietor, the partially exposed body of a prisoner, who a struggle with his mates had forced beyond the terrible dead line—all these were enough to secure the shot of a sentry and the death of the unfortunate.

With a malignity never excelled in the tortures of the Inquisition, Wirz had had "so placed the railing that a portion crossed or intruded upon the little stream, which entered from one side and furnished water for the prisoners. And this point was the only water to be had, and pure as it was at any other part of its course, and necessarily more inviting to the thirsty palates hankering after it. To reach this water the *dead line* must be obtunded upon. To do this was death!"

Such cruelty was seldom known, and certainly never denounced by a civilized nation.

"At this fated spot the ghosts of many poor fellows were seen shrieking their death agony over those filthy waters, as their emaciated forms sought in vain for temporary refreshment nearer to their source."

In August, 1864, there were held within the confines of this great pen, *thirty-three thousand* Union soldiers. So crowded was the place that it was almost impossible for them to lie down to sleep, even upon the bare ground.

Some dug caves to shelter their miserable bodies from the torrid sun and the fever-breathing rains of that country; others made a nest of a pile of blankets, but the majority were entirely without covering day and night, summer and winter, and almost without clothes; for they had been robbed of every thing worth having by the rebel guards, who secured their booty by taking shoes from one man, a hat from another, an overcoat in the chilly season from a third, and money and valuables from all.

Men who went into the prison pen at Andersonville had about an even chance for life and death.

Those who came out alive were fortunate; but it would be hard to find a man of those heroes who did not contract disease of some kind while there, which would mark him for life.

It must needs be a constitution of iron that could resist climate, exposure, starvation and the cruelties of Wirz combined.

The stockade was crowded when our young hero, Archie Gordon, reached it, and the process of murder in its various forms in full sway.

As was put through the mill as the others had been before him, but as the guards were now well supplied with clothing they did not rob him of his garments. He lost what money he had, but this would have done him no good such as had been the case at Richmond.

Then he became one of the vast jostling crowd of surging and suffering humanity, running the same terrible risks and joining in with their poor sports, guffing up to pass the dreary hours away and forget for the time being how close they were to death.

Archie had not been in the prison ten minutes before he witnessed a tragedy such as made his very blood run cold, and yet which had grown so common an occurrence that it was almost wholly unnoticed by the general mass of prisoners.

One poor wretch, driven almost insane by the heat, his parched tongue protruding, and his eyes red as coals, had stood glaring at the cool water beyond the line until unable to stand the torture longer he dashed out, and throwing himself down beside the pool, drank long and eagerly.

As he arose to rise, a gun sounded, and with a shriek the poor fellow dropped lifeless back to the earth. He had given his life for a drink of water.

Archie's blood ran cold, and he turned his eyes upon the man who had shot the prisoner. The guard was laughing as he reloaded his gun.

Heaven help you if you ever fall into my hands," said Archie to himself, and the man's face was photographed forever on his mind.

In time he grew accustomed to these scenes of horror, but he never forgot that first murder and the marked guard.

CHAPTER XIII.

TERRIBLE PEN-PICTURES.

Among the many thousand prisoners congregated at Andersonville, it was of course reasonable to suppose that Archie would know quite a number. He recognized several who had been comrades in the assault upon the Tennessee forts, and though sorry to see them in such a plight, it was pleasant to meet old friends.

There was a constant humming noise as the prisoners talked and sang, trying to keep their spirits up.

Some of the men were ready to give up, but the majority showed themselves possessed of grit beyond the usual run. To give in to despondency in that hole was the same as inviting death, for the grim destroyer who was there like an eagle, and seize upon the unfortunate.

Archie, naturally gifted with abundant spirits found a good use for the overflow here, and many a poor wretch had reason to feel glad that he was there. A congenial company can often do more than medicine, and the most fatal symptom among the prisoners was disease of the mind.

Surrounded as they were by an unhealthy atmosphere and together with the dirt which like a tremendous herd of cattle, and compelled to drink foul water, which in its pure state contained the germs of disease, coming as it did from a swamp, where it oozed through the mud, and the vegetable matter—it was no wonder that death stalked in their midst, and as a mind brooding over trouble weakens the system, so those who were the most moody were the first to be carried off to the rough hospital and eventually to the field of horrors, the grave-yard.

This latter place will ever be remembered as a disgrace to the South.

Every day the dead cart made its trips, and the bodies which were piled upon it to be carried away.

The bodies were placed in a long, shallow trench, some quicklime thrown upon them, and about two or three feet of soil cast over them.

Heads and limbs protruded here and there, and the atmosphere was simply terrible. Flocks of carrion birds hovered above this field of death, awaiting their feast.

Scattered upon thousands of brave men lay in that place, while their dear ones far away among the hills or on the beautiful prairies of the North were praying for their safety.

These were days when no rations were served at all—days when the wretched pris-

oners believed that this was the intention of the fiendish Wirz to starve them all in a body, and thus exterminate an army at one blow.

It has since been proven that sufficient food was sent to have provided all with the required sustenance, but owing to the reality of those who had charge of it at the prison, much of it was sold and the money pocketed.

Every day, one or more men fell beneath the bullets of the guards.

Wirz murdered more than one man in the presence of his comrades, for some petty cause, such as making a firm, but perfectly respectful answer, when accused of attempting to escape.

"The grew to fear this man as though he were the Evil One himself.

More than one man in that list would have sacrificed his own life, if by so doing he could have put this fiend in human shape out of the way, but no opportunity was given those who would thus have made martyrs of themselves for the good of their fellows.

Orders had been issued that if a dozen of the prisoners made a dash for liberty, the cannon near by were to be fired indiscriminately into the prison pen, mowing down hundreds of the defenseless wretches.

The same order was to be carried out if Sherman's army came within some many miles of the place.

Never have the horrors of that place been fully described, and mine shall not be the pen to attempt the task.

To those of my readers who were there, what need is there of such a picture, when, by shutting the eyes of the imagination, which will make a cold shudder sweep over their frames, while with those who were not there in that year of terror, it were far better that the worst remained un told.

The sight, and the sound—the dreadful sounds that greeted the ear, and the misery entailed by acute suffering—these will never leave the mind while life remains.

Among the thousands in that great pen, there were many whom Archie probably never saw during the whole of his confinement there.

Every day he looked upon new faces, and not unfrequently came across friends, some of them long forgotten, because of the haggard faces and tattered garments.

The rebels were continually on the lookout for tunnels, as this seemed the only way the prisoners could escape directly from the pen itself, and if any were being dug, the greatest possible care had to be used to prevent their detection.

Escapes were made, of course.

Few were there, however, who got away. Some were shot, some were mangled by the fierce bloodhounds kept by Wirz for the purpose of hunting men; others were never heard of again, and their bones now bleach in some Southern swamp or wood. They either fell to the fugitives' arms, or were shot down by the fiendish captain and his minions, or else the teeth of the bloodhounds had torn their throats so that life slipped out, and there was no use carrying their back.

This Wirz is the blackest character the history of the four years' war can produce, and his name deserves to be handed down to posterity as that of an inhuman monster, too vile to live.

That he met that he met his just fate at the hands of the government whose loyal soldiers he had slain without compunction.

Twenty thousand victims had been sent to that "undiscovered country," from whose bourne no traveler returns; there to be mute witnesses against the monster tyrant. Many times that number lived to curse his name, and bare their heads with grim satisfaction when the news came of his ignominious death.

He took a keen enjoyment in this chase for escaped prisoners, and often delayed the pursuit in order to give the poor fugitive a better start, knowing how poor his chance of escape, and striving to prolong the agony.

Then the hora belli was sounded, and with canteen well filled, haversack stuffed with edibles, tobacco pouch dangling from a button, and revolver ready, would mount his pony and hurry away.

The eggs strike the scent and away they go on the track of the poor devil.

Perhaps after a long day's exciting chase the wretched fugitive would be brought back, mangled by the hounds, despondent over his failure, and sometimes to work in the chain gang for his temerity in endeavoring to escape from such a fate.

Sometimes he would be left where he had fallen, with only the leaves for a shroud. Seldom, indeed, that the fugitive got away;

and even if in this were the case, he had a hostile country between himself and those who would befriended him.

Archie's mind was bent upon escape.

During the weeks he spent at Andersonville, there were none of the terrible sights that he had not look upon. Each day's horrors only made him more determined to leave this place behind him.

The sooner the better, for in time even his body must become weakened by the privations he endured, and because of the ex-

He was singularly fortunate, however, and by a shrewd trick, managed to receive a supply of food when the others had none.

This was the game he played. For several months he hoarded it until one day when a dear friend seemed dying for want of food, when with this he bribed one of the guards to procure him a quantity of victuals, which saved Ward Edwards' life. After that there was nothing Edwards would not have done for him.

That very night, he saw the guard slip the coin into a small hole near his station, which was evidently his bank. Archie managed to draw the identical piece out with a piece of stick, the end of which he had placed a lump of gum from a wild cherry tree.

The following day that silver piece again did duty, and on the same night Archie once more drew it out of the new bank of the guard, who was about to come to his coil.

Day after day this bit of silver did its duty, Archie and his friends enjoying the proceeds of his cunning, and the guard fancying all the while he was laying up the nucleus of a small fortune.

If he discovered how he had been hoodwinked, Archie's life would not be worth a penny, for no inquiries would be instituted if a guard shot a prisoner in the midst of his friends.

And so was Archie convinced that he should have gotten as a matter of course, and his conscience never troubled him because of the deception.

More than one poor wretch had his life saved during those days of starvation by the generosity of the young soldier.

As has been said before, Archie was continually on the alert for a chance to escape.

Twice he had come within an ace of being shot, because of trespassing upon the dead line.

On the second occasion, he had boldly stepped upon the forbidden ground, and filled his cup at the clear portion of the stream. It was for a comrade who was dying, and had not even been taken through the mockery of being carried to the prison hospital.

As he turned to retrace his steps, a rifle cracked, and the bullet whistled by, within a few inches of his head, but he rejoined his comrade, perhaps the only man who so boldly crossed the dead line and lived.

There was only one way to account for this—the guard who had fired was the man with whom Archie had dealings in the provision line, and he did not care to kill the goose that laid the golden eggs.

There would come a time, perhaps, when he would banker after that young man's blood more fiercely than any man in the whole Confederate army—that would come when he learned the truth and how he had been deceived.

Archie did not care to repeat the attempt, for another guard might be on the spot, or else this same fellow believe that it would be bad policy to make two misses, and send his man to the gallows.

The man who drank that cup of water, if he has lived to this day, has never swallowed liquid more bravely earned, and he must remember Archie Gordon with a deep affection.

Archie soon learned how dangerous it was to attempt to tunnel out, and finally resolved to look around, and see if it were not easier to effect escape in some other way.

Being always obliging, and much more sure than any of the prisoners, he was generally selected as one of the party sent out after firewood, and to do various other tasks which would lighten the labor of those who were there for that purpose.

Some of the best of medicine and surgery, taught him by his father, who had been at one time a doctor, and when this was found out, he was taken to the hospital.

For who ever went there came back; it was but a halting place between the prison pen and the terrible cemetery; however, Archie was not carried there to be treated, but went to lend his assistance.

Here fresh scenes of horror awaited him.

Those in charge had grown accustomed to the dreadful sights, and though some might have desired to alleviate the sufferings of the wretched beings, they were restrained by the strictness put upon them by those in authority.

If Archie had never been confident of the eventual overthrow of the Confederacy before, these sights must have fully convinced him, for he knew that Heaven would never sustain a cause that was backed by such inhumanity.

With every breath he drew he mentally cursed the government that treated its prisoners ten times worse than dogs, allowing them to die off by thousands, to waste away to mere living skeletons, so that the bones almost burst from the tightly-drawn skin.

He set to work with a will, but most of the poor fellows were beyond all mortal aid, and besides, the supply of medicines was shamefully stinted.

One day he went over one poor fellow, who, wasted to skin and bone, was passing away, he found him holding a tress of golden hair and a picture in his hand—the picture of a sweet woman.

"Your wife—God bless her!" he whispered hoarsely, as Archie sustained him, "tell her I died for my country, and that my last thought was of her, but spare her the horrors of this scene. Her address is on the picture. Have the rest buried with me. Oh, God, it is over!"

Febly he raised the golden lock of hair, pressed it to his lips, where it lay, as a shudder passed through his frame, and then all was still. The little woman with the golden hair was the widow of the Republic.

"Poor fellow, he is dead!" said a voice on the other side of the late sufferer—a voice that sent an electric thrill through Archie's frame.

He looked up and saw one of the Union prisoners before him, who was evidently a doctor in the hospital—a man with a long, iron-gray beard, and thin, though well knit frame.

"One look he gave, then a wild cry broke from his lips."

"Father! Alive! Oh, God, I thank Thee!"

It was indeed the dead alive.

CHAPTER XV.

BROKEN FETTERS.

Strange anomaly.

The dead had come to life in the midst of the dying. One woman had just lost a husband, and to another a dearly beloved was restored as it were.

Archie's arms were around his father's neck, and the latter pressed him to his heart. Never again had they expected to meet thus, and though they spoke not, their hearts were full almost to bursting.

Loath to part, the doctor told all his adventures.

He had been left for dead at a time when the Union troops were in retreat, and was doubtless so regarded by his comrades, but the bullet had only stunned him, and he came to consciousness to find himself a prisoner.

All this while he had been employed in the hospitals at Richmond, but had lately been transferred to Andersonville, where his soul was made sick with the miseries he was daily brought in contact with.

Several times he had sent messages to his wife through men about to be exchanged, but through some reason not one of these ever reached her, as he now learned to his surprise.

Since coming to Andersonville the doctor had been allowed his liberty, for it was believed that as he feared well, he would never think of attempting escape and thus incurring deadly dangers.

Archie might not but for meeting Archie, and this intelligence that his dear wife had so long believed him dead excited him so much that he felt he must go crazy if he did not attempt to reach her.

After that they were almost continually together, and thus were enabled to discuss plans for escape.

Captain Gordon had been enabled to possess himself of a revolver and ammunition, which he hid away for the desperate venture, believing that the reason those who had heretofore escaped had failed to get off was the fact they were totally unarmed, and hence unable to beat off the savage hounds that ran them down.

He had a plan to go as far as he pleased. It was his intention to give this to Archie in the proper time. Meanwhile he must make himself so friendly to the sentries that they would not require him to show the paper.

The pass mentioned no name, but spoke of the bearer in connection with the hospital.

Every time he went out, ostensibly to search for some weed that grew near by, in order to make a poultice for a sick rebel guard, who needed special attention, the doctor carried with him a small supply of food such as would keep without spoiling, and this was placed in a package wrapped in heavy cloth, which in its turn was secreted in a hollow stump against the time when their desperate venture would ripen.

Archie made himself very necessary at the hospital, and was looked upon with favor, for as has been said before, he had a winning way about him.

One day he left up his trick with the guard, and the solitary silver piece procured many a good meal for the half-starved prisoners with whom he had become particularly acquainted.

The meeting with his father, whom they had mourned as dead these two years, had made him especially light-hearted.

Perhaps he too was reported dead in the North, and the little mother was bowing her head with grief at the additional burden thrown upon her.

If they both escaped alive, what a glorious coming home it would be.

He thrilled at the very thought of it, and prayed that Heaven might see fit to return them to the dear little woman away off in the Ohio home, who was grieving for her dead.

Day after day the weapons of the guards sounded, and some poor wretch fell beyond the dead line, a victim to the cruelty of the fiends in charge.

Day after day the great, high-bodied dead wagon, drawn by four mules, lumbered along, picking up those who awaited its coming, and creaking under its load of wretched morality, made its regular trips to and from the awful cemetery which was encroaching upon the precincts of the living.

In August over two thousand had died and been half buried. What a fearful outlook for those that remained, crowded in the pen to the number of over thirty thousand.

The time was now at hand for their departure.

They were risking more than most of the prisoners would have done in attempting the same thing, for they were in what might be termed comfortable circumstances when their situation was compared with that of the half starved, illy treated prisoners in the pen.

True, they endured privations, and both of them were gaunt enough to what they had formerly been, but their strength remained, and they had a way to live. Besides, he showed how every atom of it would be needed ere they could cross the many miles of hostile country that lay between themselves and the land of freedom.

In leaving this comparative comfort, which might have been their right alone, and plunging into the deepest danger, they were, therefore, risking more than would have been the case with the poor men who, confronted by death in the most terrible shape, escaped from the pen, and ran, and groined, and lost their lives in the Georgia wilds, with the savage hounds, and even more inhuman men chasing them than if they had remained in their loathsome quarters.

Their preparations, beyond the collection of food as spoken of before, were few indeed.

The doctor secreted some medicines which he knew would be of value to them should one fall sick by the way side. Besides, he had secured a little compass which would probably be of much value to them in steering their course properly.

Archie had already made one escape, and knew what a hot chase would follow. He believed that he had the more reason, because he and his father had made themselves very useful to Wirz and his men, and, therefore, more regard would be given to their flitting than if they were a couple of the poor inmates of the pen.

They had many a time seen the jailer start off on his man hunt, and knew just what maneuvers he would go through with.

This gave them something of an advantage over most of those who escaped from Andersonville.

Besides this knowledge, they could back it up by defending themselves against the hounds used on the occasion, and if it were possible to exterminate the whole pack, ere Wirz could ride back, and secure

another, they could probably make good their escape.

The fact that they had these two revolvers was a potent one and gave them much hope.

They dared not communicate their intentions, and to a very few among the prisoners, for fear of betrayal, for in such a great mass of men was only to be expected that there were spies, and those of the Judas' type.

Those whom they did trust with the secret wished them godspeed, and the longing look in their eyes told better than words could have done how fondly they wished it was the favor of Providence that they should be members of the fortunate little party.

Glady would they have assumed any risk in order that the chance might be given them of once more breathing unpolluted air, as being again in the presence of those they loved.

The day drew to a close.

As Archie and his father had set the time for their venture at sundown, it was now the critical hour.

The doctor was first.

He had his medicine box in his hand; and, as he came to the guard, he stopped to inquire as to how some ailment of the Confederates, whom he was treating, was progressing.

Then with a little light badinage he passed on, as the guard supposed, to visit some rebel soldier.

As he went, though apparently busy, was keenly watching from a window of the hospital; and, when he saw his father pass the guard, he knew that thus far the scheme had proven successful.

At this time the prisoners, his possession, and would experience no difficulty in using it, as he had frequently done this before.

There was no time to be lost, however.

At dark he was supposed to be among the rest of the prisoners in the pen, and he must not be in the hospital building when the guard came to escort to their miserable quarters those of the prisoners who had been detailed to perform the work in the hospital.

If he was absent, it was not probable that any notice would be taken of it, for he had prepared for this very thing by going into the pen before the guard arrived on several previous nights.

He waited some ten minutes.

They were the longest minutes he ever passed in all his life, and seemed like as many hours.

He was compelled to possess his soul in patience, and try to think of other things.

Home came up before his eyes, as it had on battlefield and in bivouac, and he found himself thinking of the dear little mother who would be bowed down with grief when she heard of his death, or capture which almost meant the same thing.

Another face came before his mental vision.

How would Muriel take the news?

His heart beat quick and with almost suffocating force, when he realized that it was now about to take the chance, not only to save his own life for the dear ones at home, but to take with him the father and husband, who had been mourned as dead these two years and more.

Oh, how proud and happy he would be to see the little mother once again, clasped in the arms that were all the world to her.

Then he thought of the trial, with emotion as he thought of it, and for the time being, he almost forgot where he was.

Then he suddenly became conscious that the sun had reached the prescribed limit, and that the ten minutes he had marked out for his delay, had slipped by.

Summoning all his self control by remembering that everything rested with him, he left his position, and walked leisurely toward the guard.

His pass insured his going on, and as there was nothing in the looks of the young man that betokened in any way his intentions, the man on duty merely glanced at the paper, and allowed him exit.

Had it been necessary, the two men would have forged a pass, such was their determination not to let aught stand in the way of their undertaking, but thanks to good fortune, they had not been compelled to resort to this exigency.

So long as he was in sight of those who were around the prison and hospital, Archie walked about very leisurely, and finally entered, but when he knew he would have no occupants at that hour, he waited for darkness.

The suspense was not of long duration.

Twilight is brief in the extreme South,

and soon after the king of day had vanished from view in the west, darkness crept over the land.

When assured that it was gloomy enough for his purpose, Archie left the hut, and made direct toward the base of the little hill to the point where he had agreed to meet his father.

When he had sooner given the signal after reaching the proper place, but the doctor arose just in front of him, and the two clasped hands over the success that had already attended their effort at escape.

It was now dark, yet the good judgment, yet they seemed singularly fortunate for the doctor announced that he had found the tree they looked for.

As he put his hands into the cavity, he uttered a low cry of surprise and vexation, for it was empty.

CHAPTER XV.

YANKES AT BAY.

At first, a feeling of keen disappointment was what came upon the two men when the discovery was made that the hollow tree did not contain the package of food they had so zealously collected, and hidden away in this emergency.

They had relied so much upon it, that it was now apt to prove a very serious loss to them.

All at once, however, the doctor made the startling discovery that it was all a mistake—he had gone to the wrong tree.

He realized this from the fact that the hole in this one was on the eastern side while that in which the food was secreted, was on the western.

This cheered them wonderfully, and the next thing in order was to again get their bearings, which was soon done, and in five minutes the precious package was in their possession.

So far, good.

The stars were shining brightly by this time, and as long as this was the case, they know there would be little or no difficulty in getting their bearings whenever it became necessary.

How often had their eyes been turned longingly upon that bright north star, while their minds were busy with the thoughts of those whose homes lay under it, as it seemed to them to be a way Southern prison. That star proved a beacon to many a weary Union soldier, escaped from rebel prisons, for well they knew that if they headed toward it, they must at last come to the land beyond their war, where loving arms were awaiting them.

The two men had already mapped out their intended course as far as was practicable.

They headed due north, walked a mile or so in the shelter of the trees, crossed a plantation, where the lights in the negro shanties were the only signs of life, and then struck a dirt road which seemed to run in the direction they required.

All this had taken quite a time, though they were still within hearing distance of the prison pen, and the murmur that always marks the presence of a vast multitude was borne in on the balmy breeze of that September night.

They suddenly became conscious while standing thus upon the dirt road and listening, that an unusual uproar had sounded.

Had the prisoners, driven to frenzy, attacked the guards in the endeavor to force their way out.

Knowing what the orders of the monster, Wirz, were in such an emergency, the two men shuddered as they continued to listen, expecting to hear the roar of the cannon placed near by which would sound the death knell of thousands.

No such sound came.

They knew, therefore, as the clamor gradually died away, that some other cause must have been at the foot of it, and that perhaps most of the racket had been made by the guards.

Was their escape?

This alone could not be the cause, for as a general thing they were very quiet about such matters, and Wirz seldom started in pursuit before morning.

From far away the baying of hounds came to their ears, but they could not but start to think that the work had already begun.

What caused such haste?

Perhaps other prisoners had also escaped.

Archie remembered that a tunnel had long been in progress within the stockade, and it might be that some of the men had succeeded in getting out.

The number, they numbered, the better chance for some to get away, providing they scattered.

Many men would have been glad to have known that the dogs were on another trail than their own; but these two were brave, unselfish heroes, who would have assumed additional risk in order to help any of the poor boys in the prison pen.

Therefore, when the fact became manifest that the hounds had struck their trail, the doctor shut his teeth hard, and drew his revolver.

"They are after us, my boy; but, thank God, we are prepared! Better us than after any poor souls who may have escaped to-night. If my hand has not forgotten its cunning, that infamous Wirz will have less bounds to hunt men down when we are done with them. Come, Archie, we are too close to the prison. We must make a dash through the wood yonder and then pick out a place to waylay the brutes."

They lost no more time.

The hounds were pressing swiftly on, and gaining a mile every passing minute.

The moon, but a battered hulk of a once proud queen, now arose in the east, and her light, though none of the best, proved very grateful to our friends in their passage through the woods.

At length, tired of this rapid flight, and believing that the hounds must now be close upon them, the two men determined to make a stand.

The moonlight sifted through the leaves, but dimly illuminated the spot, yet it was amply sufficient for their purpose.

They held their weapons in readiness, and crouched close together behind a fallen log.

Keenly they watched the space in front for the rush of the hounds, and they had not long to wait before a huge, lanky brute leaped into view.

He crouched at sight of them, probably for a death-spring; but the doctor was too quick for the brute, and, just as others of his ilk sprang into view, the leader fell over with a leaden pellet in his brain.

Then the fun began, and raged fast and furious for a short space of time.

Archie was no interior shot, with the revolver, and at a time like this, when there was so much at stake he was very apt to do remarkable execution, in spite of the drawbacks attending them.

If they cried "havoc" when they let loose those dogs of war, then the dogs got the worst of it.

Only one of the brutes eluded the fire of our friends; and, as he put his paws upon it and glared into the faces of the two men like a demon, his brains were scattered by a shot from the doctor who pushed his weapon close up to the dog's eye, as he pulled the trigger.

Victory!

The two men could not but feel elated when they realized that the hounds had succumbed to their prowess; but all was not yet over.

From among the trees there suddenly leaped out two men in gray.

They were guards from Andersonville.

So sudden was the attack, coming from a quarter where they had not suspected any danger, that the two men were somewhat taken somewhat at a disadvantage, and when the guards hurled themselves upon them, it seemed as though all was lost.

After that first sinking sensation, their courage did not fail, and they remained what was at stake, and became nerved with almost superhuman power.

The man with whom Archie fought was a perfect devil, and he swore frightfully as he found himself balked in the endeavor to clasp the ex-prisoner's throat in his horny hand.

They whirled to and fro like giant oaks in the embrace of a tornado, bending and writhing; yet the rebel could not accomplish his desire.

He finally found himself thrown half a dozen feet away with terrible force.

Believing him out of the way, Archie turned to the other, who uttered a revolver-crack, and the bullet struck his neck.

Whirling around, he saw his late antagonist on his knees, and in the act of taking a second aim.

He saw more.

The moonlight fell full upon the face of the rebel marksman, as he knelt there, and revealed the repulsive features of the very

guard who had shot the poor wretch over the dead line on the first day of Archie's incarceration at Andersonville.

Heaven had given him the chance to keep his vow.

As the rebel guard fired, Archie dropped. Then raising his own revolver, he sent the last bullet it contained into the brain of the murderous guard in gray, and with his death shriek, the boys in Andersonville were relieved of one of the most brutal foes against whom they had to contend.

He would watch the dead line no more for victims.

CHAPTER XVII.

THROUGH THE SWAMP.

Believed of his own enemy, Archie now turned with no little anxiety to see how his father was progressing, but there was no reason for any fear in that direction.

The doctor had always been a man of uncommon caliber, both as regarded mental and bodily strength; and though being incarcerated two and a half years in rebel prisons, was, as a general rule, rather deficient in strength, he had, owing to circumstances, been able to retain a fair share of his energies, having been in the main employed in the hospitals connected with the Prisons.

It had been nipped and tucked between himself and the guard for a minute or so.

To all appearances, it would seem as though they were well matched, and a looker-on must have possessed cunning eyes indeed, to be able to declare which of the two was the most likely to win in the end.

When, however, the report of the other guard's revolver rang out, a thrill passed through the frame of the Union soldier.

From his position he could not see the other, and hence, knew not but that his darling boy had been laid low by this cruel shot.

Uttering a low cry of fury, he hurried himself on his antagonist with additional vigor, and the affair was speedily decided.

That it was the two shots rang out.

As to the result of these, there could be little doubt, for the wild cry of the stricken guard told that he would hunt escaped prisoners no more.

The other fellow, realizing that he was now alone in the fight, and that further resistance would only be followed by the loss of his life, surrendered at this juncture unconditionally.

Archie, relieved of his foe, sprang toward the spot where he knew he should find the others, he was astonished and none the less pleased to discover his father covering the second rebel with his revolver, the fellow crouching at his feet.

Victory was theirs, but they had no time to lose.

At any moment they might be surprised by others of the Confederates, and all chances of escape taken away from them.

The reluctant captives, against whom men had gained for them a chance to continue their flight, which must not be thrown away, but there was one duty which must be performed ere they could continue their onward progress.

The remaining guard was quickly but firmly secured to a tree, where his comrades would find him eventually, when attracted by his shouts they were drawn to the spot.

Then, what weapons the two men had carried were secured, for the desperate Federals knew full well what dangers lay before them, and also, how those dangers would lose half their terror when they were well armed to cope with them.

Thus arranging their matters, they left the scene of their late struggle, and strode onward.

No one could know better than they what terrible dangers they were incurring by this bold adventure, for after slaying the guard and setting dogs of the rebel doctor, nothing could be expected but death in case of recapture. Wirz might overlook the death of the man, but he would never forgive the slaying of his dogs.

Still, animated by the thought of the far-away Northern home, the magnet that raised the drooping spirits of many a man during such times as these, our two heroes were ready to do and dare all things, with the belief that God would carry them through in safety, and that in the end it would be all right.

The moon rising at such an opportune moment had been of much value to them, and was likely to prove even more so in their further advance, for the route was entirely

unknown, and they were in continual danger of falling into holes.

One thing they noticed, and this was the fact, that as they advanced, the ground was gradually assuming the nature of a swamp. The trees grew more densely and were festooned with trailing creepers and hanging moss.

Underfoot the walking had become more difficult, and the treacherous nature of the ground, and more than once had they been compelled to retrace their steps in order to find firm footing again.

Once or twice they heard splashing noises from the moment their hands sought their weapons, but upon second thought the latter were not drawn.

The swamp was alive with animated nature, and this splashing sound was undoubtedly caused by the sluggish reptiles there were plenty to be found in any Southern swamp.

Still the sounds were not pleasant to hear, though far preferable to the baying of hounds, which their ears were stretched to catch.

Though already weary, they could not think of resting while so near the terrible prison pen, but must continue the toilsome march until dawn, when they would find some place of shelter, where they could sleep the greater part of the day.

Unconsciously their minds went back to the prison from which they had so lately escaped, and their hearts were full of sympathy for those who were within those rough walls, yet there were probably many there who would rather remain to suffer the tortures of outrageous fortune than by a bold venture start upon the dangerous road to freedom.

The time passed slowly on.

Our friends made good progress, but much time was unavoidably lost because of the swamp.

In order to follow the vagaries of the path upon which they chanced to alight they were obliged to go in a direction very almost opposite to that in which they desired to make their way.

More than this, they frequently missed this peculiar ridge of higher ground, and most valuable time was wasted in seeking for it, which would have been avoided could they have met a friendly ducky who would have served as their guide.

About an hour before dawn they heard loud voices to the right, and believing they were near the prison, they advanced, as it did not come they advanced cautiously.

It was then discovered that the voices proceeded from a party of three hunters, encamped on what would appear to be an island in the morass.

Their dwelling, being over some trivial matter, and appeared to be young Georgia planters, though why they were not in the Confederate army at this time was a fact which the two Federals could not make out at that time, but presently, instead of dropping, they learned that they were home on a furlough.

As it would never do to be discovered by these three hot-bloods, Archie and his father crept slowly and cautiously past the island, keeping upon its border and still following the ridge.

Eventually, they left it behind them, and were once more started on their journey, the excited voices of the hunters gradually dying away.

The swamp was apparently of no mean dimensions, for when daylight peeped upon them they were still within its confines, and apparently as far from being free from its tortuous windings as ever.

Their next thought was for the day.

Rest they must have at all hazards, and both of them were hungry as so many bears.

Since nightfall they had passed through much that was calculated to try their stomachs, and these their appetites which must now be satisfied.

Half a mile further on the swamp appeared to be broken, for islands like that upon which the three hunters had been encamped became more frequent.

Upon one of these they determined to spend the day, and were soon busily engaged in breaking their fast. When appetites had been satiated they sheltered themselves in the dense bushes and slept, totally unconscious of the fearful danger that was swooping down upon them, and threatening them with a terrible death.

Archie opened his eyes.

It was still daylight, and yet he seemed to comprehend the fact beyond all others that the day was far spent, and that the sun was

two-thirds of his journey down the western sky.

Though this came to him as a matter of course, he could not at first determine where he was, nor what had been the cause of his sudden awaking.

He had been dreaming of home—and was once more a boy among his associates at school; and so vivid had been the dream, that, upon awaking, he was naturally confused.

Above him were the cypress trees of the south, with their trailing streamers of vines and moss, and between their branches he caught a glimpse of the intensely blue sky beyond.

CHAPTER XVII.

HUNTED LIKE BEASTS.

Then it all came back to him. He comprehended that they had slept almost the whole day, and yet what was it that had aroused him from such a sound sleep?

Even as he lay there with his brows knit as though puzzling over the matter, there came through the cross swamp the sharp, clear notes of a horn.

Archie shuddered.

He had heard that horn before, when Wirz, the savage jailer, was ready to start out upon his morning rounds, and such was the deflection with which he regarded the man and all that pertained to him, that a blast from that trumpet would almost have been sufficient to have aroused him from the dead.

This, then, was what had awakened him from his sound sleep.

But for the foolishness of the man who blew the trumpet, evidently to bring his comrades together, they might have come upon the two escaped prisoners still sleeping, and have surrounded them while they remained unconscious of their deadly peril.

Not a second was to be lost.

The pursuers were close at hand, and it would not be surprising if they reached the little island before these when they sought refuge there, and were acquainted with the topography of the swamp.

From the fact that the bugle notes had come from the direction where they had been when making their way toward the island, it was not surprising that they were advanced along the same path, and if this were indeed so, then all hope of escape in that direction was out off.

This thing flashed into his mind as he sprang hastily to his feet.

The doctor lay not five yards away, sleeping heavily. Evidently he had not heard the terrible sound which had so startled the younger man; yet, no sooner did Archie lay his hand upon him, than the doctor opened his eyes with that quiet self-possessed look that was characteristic of yore, and seemed to ask what it meant.

A few words put him in possession of the facts bearing on the case, and then he was on his feet ready for the fight.

Archie had not heard the voices of their pursuers among the trees, and at one point could even see them walking in single file along the ridge with a mulatto in the lead, evidently a guide.

Their number astonished and disconcerted Archie, but he had confidently hoped and believed that if the worst came they might make a stand and give their foes battle, but these men would outnumber them six to one at least.

File seemed to be their only hope, and there was not much that was encouraging in that.

What if they should be compelled to plunge through the swamp without regard for path, what would be their fate?

Perhaps only the one path led to the island.

If so, then their case was indeed desperate.

They now saw escape before them in not seeking a new path, and they could not sleep, and yet they could hardly be blamed for such an error, seeing that they were so weary and wretched at that time.

The worst had now come, and it was an open question as to whether the Confederates would gobble them up, or be given the slip. They hastily made their way to the other side of the island, and then took a look over the scene.

It was far from inviting.

The swamp stretched out before them with its trees and hummocks at their bases, but there was no sign of a ridge.

There was some reason for hope, because of the fact that islands had now appeared in the swamp, and both of them believed they were now near the terminus of the place. If

this were so then perhaps the muck would not be so deep as it had heretofore been.

There was no choice left them. Already the shouts of their enemies announced that they had reached the firm land, and were scattering over it in the hunt for those whom they had every reason to suppose were there.

Archie took the lead. He was the younger of the two, and besides it was his noble nature that prompted him to assume the greater risk.

He relied much upon his keen eyes to tell him in what direction to go, but keener than they had been deceived by the treacherous aspect of a swamp, and he might be going to his death.

He soon sunk almost to his knees, and it was difficult work to proceed with any haste, but when men are in such a desperate pickle they can accomplish wonders.

The doctor followed behind, closely at first, but gradually losing ground unknown to Archie, who, young and vigorous, pushed ahead with the determination to do or die written upon every line of his brave bronzed face.

In his hand he grasped one of the large revolvers that had been secured from the dead guard, and with the proper person this could be made almost as deadly as a repeating-

Some distance had been gone over when a series of wild shouts rang out in their rear.

They were discovered. The rebels rushed to the edge of the swamp landing, and then came a rattling discharge of guns and puffs of smoke.

All that was in favor of the escaping fugitives was the fact that a peculiar dusky light deceived the eyes of the marksmen, and they shot wild.

As teeth tightly clinched, Archie strode onward, steadily increasing the distance between himself and the men upon the island, but still they continued the wild fusillade, which thus far had proven perfectly harmless, as it was no easy task taking aim at objects under the branches and interlocked vines where the shadows danced at hide and seek, and continued gloom seemed to hang perpetually, though the rebels themselves, standing on the swamp land were thrown out in bold relief.

All at once Archie failed to hear the steady thump, thump behind him, which proclaimed the fact that his father was following.

As he turned, a wild wild foreboding of misfortune, it flashed into his mind that his father had been exposed to the fire of the enemy more than himself, being in the rear—a fact that had not struck him before.

That was the doctor had taken refuge behind the elevated bank lately followed, striding as he was wounded Archie knew at a glance.

Without a second's hesitation the brave young fellow turned and plunged back over the bank he had so lately followed, striding as it were into the very jaws of death for the sake of one who was all the world to him—his father.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A CLOSE SHAVE.

It was a daring act to thus turn and face those who were now launching their deadly bullets at him, and not only turn but advance toward them—out Archie thought nothing of this.

With him it was but the workings of nature.

His father was in danger—he whom he loved better than any one on earth, saving the dear little mortal left behind, and all thoughts of personal safety and natural discretion, such as might possibly have intruded themselves had it been only a casual comrade who had been with him, flew to the winds when he realized that the doctor had been wounded.

The noble father had made no sign, had uttered no word for help.

He knew Archie's nature too well to believe he would not come back to him if he called, and for that very reason he held his peace.

Better that one escape from the death that hovered over them than that both go down.

It chanced, however, that Archie had himself discovered the fact that his father no longer pursued the same course at his heels, and while the doctor stood behind the interlocked roots of a cypress tree, screened from the bullets of those upon the little swamp island, Archie was rushing back as fast as he could to join him.

As he had been so lately followed the rebels had almost wholly lost sight of him in the

gloomy depths of the swamp, but when the doctor was hidden from their view by the cypress hummock, they turned their attention to the other fugitive, firing almost at random in the direction he had gone.

On the other hand, Archie had a fine view of the Confederates as they stood outlined upon the firm land.

Seized with a sudden idea he raised his revolver and sent shot after shot among his foes.

All things were in his favor.

All the long revolver was almost equal to a musket for its carrying capacities; the rebels were grouped together and presented a fair target in the light, and besides, Archie was a good marksman.

It was little wonder, therefore, that he did good execution among the graycoats with the bullets he rained in among them.

They were seized with consternation.

What did this mean? Three of their number down, writhing upon the earth, and either dying or else severely wounded, and when they had doomed the game fully in their own hands.

Captain Wirz was the first man to recover his wits and realize the danger that hovered over them all.

He ordered a hasty retreat to the shelter of a clump of bushes just back of their present exposed position, and the rebels stood not upon the order of their going but leaped wildly away, followed by several shots from Archie's second revolver which he held outstretched, determined to give the guards and men hunters all they desired.

Thus he was enabled to reach the side of his father unmolested.

When the rebels had gained their shelter and glanced out from behind trees and bushes to discover the means who had put them to flight in order that they might vent summary vengeance upon him, the young soldier had vanished.

They knew full well that the same cypress hummock that sheltered the doctor now performed a like service for the other.

There were ways in which they might have circumvented the two escaped prisoners by making a detour through the swamp and coming upon them in the rear, when, caught between two fires, they must inevitably go down.

Two things opposed this plan.

In the first place night was fast closing in and it would be a waste of time to have them try to make the circuit, laborious as it must prove, wading through the muck of the swamp.

Then again they had a healthy respect for the nature of his wound, and the doctor showed himself such a masterhand with the revolver.

On the whole, although it was possible that some of the Confederates might be daring enough to attempt such an undertaking, the odds would go about it with exceeding caution.

When Archie reached his father's side he made immediate and eager inquiries as to the nature of his wound.

He was greatly cheered to find that it was far from being a serious one.

The bullet had given the doctor quite a shock however, from which he was then slowly recovering, and it was this which had made his white hair, his wound was greater than it really proved.

They fortunately had made all provision for such an emergency, and without loss of time Archie proceeded to dress the wound. It was then an almost instant operation, and he declared himself like a new man, and both ready and anxious to continue the fight through Dixie toward the Union lines.

It was deemed wise by Archie, however, to change in their present place of shelter for half an hour longer, when darkness would have settled upon the swamp, and they would run no gantlet of the enemy's fire as must inevitably be the case if they exposed themselves while in daylight, lest, for that the rebels were still hidden behind the trees and bushes they had good evidence.

All that was needed to prove this latter fact was for Archie to thrust out his cap on the end of a stick, and immediately a rifle sounded, the bullet splashing into the water beyond.

The time passed slowly but at last it was quite dark enough for their purpose. Archie strove over the Southern swamp, only broken now and then by the discordant cry of some night bird or the splash of a moving alligator, of which they had seen more than one during the progress of their march through the swamp.

Archie once more took the lead, but this

time he was careful to make sure that his father was close behind him.

Leaving the cypress hummock they again turned their faces in the direction they had been going when brought to a halt, and slowly pursued their difficult course through the swamp, making as little noise as possible.

They were not yet free from danger.

So long as they were in a hostile country, just so long would they be in hourly peril, and just so long must their nerves be continually brought up, expecting constant surprises.

Through the swamp they went.

Enemies were behind them they knew full well, but whether their retreat had been cut off, or whether the guards had passed them, they were, of course, wholly ignorant.

The doctor's wound troubled him so little as to be almost beneath notice.

Archie was a trifle anxious in regard to it, knowing how in such a country very often a scratch may eventually be the death of a man, but he did not worry.

Heaven had been very kind to them so far, and, perhaps, all would yet be well.

Darker grew the swamp as they advanced, and it soon became evident that the end was not yet, though they really believed it could not last much longer.

It was at this juncture that Archie came to a sudden pause, and in this direction he listened intently for a few seconds; and then, catching his father by the arm, drew him back in the shelter of a tree.

A splashing sound now reached the ears of the doctor; and, a minute later, he saw a moving figure in the distance.

This was followed by a second and a third, until five had come into view. Half bending, they plodded on through the swamp in single file.

They were heading for the swamp island, as if to come upon the rear of the two hundred Federals.

CHAPTER XIX.

BLACK FRIENDS.

It did not need any magician to tell the two fugitives who these five men were.

The very fact of their heading in the direction of the hummock, behind which the two men had been hiding, was enough to proclaim the fact that they were a portion of the gang Captain Wirz had at his heels when he pursued those who had escaped from Andersonville.

As a usual thing, he did not take more than a couple of men with him besides the dogs; but, on this occasion, he knew what abode many men he had to contend with.

Besides, he had lately risen from a sick bed and was unusually ferocious.

The general outcry which had followed the escape of Archie and his father had created quite a stir, and the whole neighborhood was being searched, so that when a trail was finally struck they docketed after the dogs, thus making more than a dozen who were on hand at the time when Archie scattered them so effectually with his revolver.

These five men had been ordered by Wirz to make the circuit and come up in the rear of the Federals who crouched behind the hummock, keeping a sharp lookout as they passed through the swamp, lest those whom they sought should pass them by in the darkness.

As the reader has seen, this was just what they had already done.

Our friends were very careful not to make them know of their mistake, for although it would, perhaps, have been an easy matter to have utterly demoralized the graycoat guards by a few quick shots from their revolvers, there was really no telling what might happen, and, besides, they were averse to shedding human blood when it could just as well be avoided.

No sooner had the Confederate quintet of guards passed out of sight and hearing, however, than the hunted Unionists were on the move.

The sooner they left the hated jailer and his cruel minions in the rear, the better it would be for their health and comfort.

They knew not whether they would be chased back to the swamp by these dogs, but the chances were inclined to be that way.

Their first duty was to reach dry land.

After plodding on for some ten minutes after the sound of the guards had passed by, Archie made a very pleasant discovery.

"What is it?" asked the doctor, who had detected the low exclamation he gave vent to.

"I think we have struck a piece of luck.

If I am not mistaken, there is an old corduroy road here which will take us out of the swamp."

Investigation proved the truth of Archie's remarks, for there was an old corduroy road running across one end of the swamp, and it was this they had now come upon.

That a roller it was to stand upon the firm logs, after having been so long in the muck of the swamp.

They seemed to feel invigorated by the change, and ready to push on.

One great danger was Captain them.

It was so supposed that a Wirz knew of the corduroy road through the end of the swamp, or, if not, the mulatto guide who had brought himself and men along the little ridge, would undoubtedly meet a way out of the swamp.

What then if its terminal points at solid ground were placed under surveillance, so that death could be meted out to the bold fugitives as they attempted to pass by?

Under the circumstances, caution was quite as necessary as it had ever been before, and yet they meant to lose no time.

With revolvers drawn and ready, they moved on, and finally the swamp was left behind.

The camies had as yet appeared, and they breathed easier when once more in the forest they could turn their faces toward the north, and press forward, knowing that although freedom was far distant, every step took them closer to it.

The night was dark, like the preceding one, and the moon would not rise until late.

They only halted a little while to clear off the swamp mire that had clung tenaciously to their garments, and then once more proceeded on their way.

Eventually a fine road through the pine forest debouched upon what appeared to be a very good pike, and as its general direction was in their favor they stuck to it.

The danger was greater so far as discommodities in the way of the trees, but the traveling was much easier, and, besides, they were in no danger of losing themselves, as the stars could always be seen.

They were careful, however, about pushing recklessly on, knowing what might await them.

When they finally came to a house lying to the left of the pike, it was decided that they must have a drink of water, come what might of the venture.

There were a few negro huts back of the main building, and toward these they made their way.

Upon one of them Archie rapped.

There was no answer, and he rapped again.

"Who dar?"

The voice was close to the door, and beyond doubt belonged to a darkey of the male sex.

Archie put his mouth near the rickety door, and said, in a low but perfectly audible voice:

"The door's open the door, we are two Union soldiers escaped from prison."

Magio words!

When did they ever fail to work upon the heart of a black man in time of sore distress?

Few there are—day or night, when hunted and harassed, bleeding, sore, hungry, and almost dead, ever applied to a negro in the South without being aided more or less, perhaps at the risk of life.

Perhaps there are a few isolated cases where the white is treacherous, but these men were outcasts from the slave ranks, men in the confidence of their masters, and whose backs had never felt the lash, though through information imparted by them their fellows had often suffered the torture.

A black face looked out from the opened door, and the fugitives were drawn within. When the little window had been duly screened, a light was struck, and then they saw their black friend.

Archie went to a field hand, used to picking cotton, black as the ace of spades, yet with a broad grin on his face, and a happy light in his eye at the prospect of being able to do something for the soldiers of that great man Linkum, who had proclaimed that they should be free men, that the lash should be applied to their backs no more, and that they should, in the place of being mere chattel property, be known as men and citizens of the Great Republic.

The white was called down quietly, so as not to arouse the pickaninnies, as Black Pete explained; and then, from the material at hand, the good negro concocted a meal which, to the fugitives, seemed the best they had ever eaten, although at another time they took back to that supper, and smile at its simplicity.

Wonderfully refreshed by this hot meal, they kindly refused the offer of the negro to remain in his hut until the next day.

Andersoville was still too near at hand to loiter, and the greater the distance they placed between the hated prison and their own persons the better.

When the darkey learned that they could not stay, he offered to pilot them on their way, and take them to such a point that without much difficulty they could reach the cabin of a friend of his before morning, to whom they were to apply for lodging.

This offer they gladly accepted, and were soon on their way again.

Clouds had rolled up meanwhile, and there was every evidence of a dreary rain.

Nothing could deter such brave hearts, though, and strengthened by the cheer that had so lately been before them, they truged along the dusty pike in company with their black guide.

CHAPTER XX.

CUDJO.

It was early dawn when the two fugitives reached the cabin of Cudjo, to whom they had been referred for assistance on their way by Black Ben.

When they had gone some several miles, and before leaving them had explained the remainder of the journey to the friendly cabin beyond that it really seemed as though no one could mistake the way.

It was, however, to the intense darkness, and the chilly, uncomfortable drizzle, that had settled down more in the shape of a heavy fog than aught else, they managed to lose their course several times, and then only with the greatest difficulty regained the path.

When finally they sighted the cabin that had been so minutely described to them, in the early dawn of another day, they were glad, indeed, for, wet and weary, they now had a chance of gaining shelter and receiving comfort.

Cudjo was a free negro—that is, a former lenient master had allowed him to purchase his freedom years before, having worked in a mill extra hours to produce the money with which he finally bought himself.

He lived alone upon a little patch of ground, and made money in various ways—with his garden, selling vegetables, and through other channels.

It was news that he had a wife who was the slave of a neighboring planter, and people understood that for a long time back Cudjo had been saving up, hoping to buy her.

The proclamation of President Lincoln had reached the cunning darkey, and he was holding the two thousand dollars back, with which he had expected to purchase Liza, his wife; for, if in a short time the war must end, and she be free, then they would have no use for this sum to go North and start well in life.

They rapped on the door again and again, but there was no answer.

Cudjo was absent.

Our forlorn fugitives felt their hearts sink as this fact became apparent, for they had heard so much of his stanch loyalty to the Union, that they had hoped to be cheered with at least a good meal and shelter for the coming day.

Not being deterred, they tried the door and found it open to their touch.

Once inside, the fact was apparent that the black master was away.

Men in their circumstances could not stand idleness, and they were ravenous with hunger, and throbbed through by the drizzly rain and sleepy enough to drop down anywhere.

A fire was speedily kindled, and while Archie busied himself making some bean coffee, the doctor cut some slices from a piece of bacon and fried them in a pan, together with some potatoes. There was some cold pone in the cupboard, and taken with the other articles they made out a fine meal.

To men who had been in rebel prisons any length of time, all little fastidious notions in regard to meals and victuals were unknown, and they were ready to eat and enjoy almost anything.

When the meal was ended, they restored their minds as nearly as possible to the condition they had been in before, though the doctor cast a rueful glance at the hole they had made in the side of bacon, hanging from the rafter, and which, of course, could not be replaced.

That was the last thing on the programme was to get some rest.

It was really dangerous to remain in the cabin of the free negro, for he was known to be a rebel, and leaning toward the Union; though Cudjo had been running enough to hide, in a great measure, his rabid love for the boys in blue; but when they surveyed the miserable aspect outside, they had not the heart to leave their shelter.

In ten minutes both were asleep upon the floor of the cabin.

At first they had intended that one of them should remain up to keep watch, but this had been finally abandoned, and they hardly knew when they laid down, so quickly did sleep overpower them.

How long they slept they knew not.

They were awakened by heavy footfalls, and opening their eyes, they saw standing over them a large negro, black as their former friend.

Upon his face was the most curious combination of astonishment, pleasure and fear, if such a thing were possible.

Evidently he knew who they were, and although pleased at their coming to him for help, and surprised to see them stretched out upon his floor, he was not without a certain fear which was so plainly written upon his face.

"Hi, yi; what dis mean, white folks?"

Realizing who this must be who had broken through the chamber, the two fugitives arose to their feet.

Cudjo was a negro of giant frame, capable of demoralizing most men in a hand to hand combat, and should an ugly fit come upon him, he might prove himself a demon before they could escape matters.

Archie laid his hand fall upon the butt of one of his revolvers.

"Are you Cudjo?" he asked, looking into the eyes of the negro with his peculiar smile.

The darkey was won at once.

"Dat am me, young massa; an' I dunno but youse must be den Linkum boys what hab 'scaped from de prison pen. De whole country an' aroused. I clear ter goodness youse hab killed de cat an' best dogs, an' put his guard down by more'n one man. I lub you foah dat, young massa. Cudjo hate de dogs an' de men, an' when you kill dem in de swamp ebery nigger dat hear de news, he kick his heels together an' sing in his pocket so dat de white wouldn't hear. But how youse find Cudjo's hole?"

They thereupon explained matters.

Cudjo's eyes glistened when he heard the stirring recommendation that his black friend had given him, and bringing one clinched fist down into the other open palm he said, earnestly:

"Dat am true, ebery word of it, massa. Cudjo am all Union, flesh, blood, and bones; but wat am de use of shouting it out an' getting a bullet in de brain. I hate de men white say we are animals, without souls. I hate de land dat hab echoed to de lash an' de cries of de oppressed people, ebere since dis republic has been born. I hate de institution dat far a man away from de wife of his bosom, an' sells 'em away inter Egypt. De good Lord am put a curse on dis country because of dat, an' de day will soon come when de heel of de Norf will be pressed on de proud Souf, and den de Lord will say, 'let my people go.'

The negro spoke as if inspired, and there was an eloquence rude but powerful in his rendering of these words that impressed those who heard him.

It was plain to be seen that he was no ordinary black man. The same struggling spirit that had caused him to labor for his own freedom, and then to work to buy his wife, would ever bring him to the front among his race.

"Dis am no place foah youse, my massas, foah dey suspect Cudjo already ob aidin' more'n one poor wretch dat 'scape from Andersoville. You must come wid me at once an' I'll lead you to de place whar dey won't find youse in a hurry."

Removing all traces of their presence in the cabin, he told them to follow him; and they went out into the heavy day.

The man was still hanging heavy over the earth, so that it was almost as safe for them to be abroad as at night, especially when under the guidance of one who could avoid dangerous points.

It took them an hour Cudjo brought up at quite a large barn; the house of the plantation being only dimly visible through the fog.

Here he called upon a friend of the same color as himself, the man who had charge of the plantation, the fugitives were admitted to the barn.

CHAPTER XXI.

UNDER THE HAY.

Hardly had the two dripping fugitives been drawn into the barn than a clatter of hoofs was heard.

There could be no mistaking the imminent rebel cavalry.

Both the darkeys understood it, and after hasty consultation in low tones, their new-friend, who had been introduced to them by the euphonious name of Bijah, came up to the Federals.

"I s'pect dat am Massa Coulton back agin. He am a Confederate kurnel ob hoss. Den agin it may be some ob dem dat am 'n'k'lin' de house. Ob de whole we think we had better hide widout delay. Cudjo am gwine afore dey set eyes on him. He come agin to-night an' start you on de right road Norf."

Cudjo was indeed going.

They pressed his honest hand at parting, not knowing whether they would ever see him again, and then followed Bijah up into the loft.

Although the rebel colonel had hardly a horse left him for home use, the few negroes on the estate had harvested a hay crop, about the only thing that could be garnered without much labor, and the loft was well filled.

Under this hay it was expected that the fugitives were to hide.

Archie tunneled in first, and his father followed.

When they had entirely vanished from sight, Bijah pulled the hay about so as to effect a screen, the opening they had made, and then went below.

His last surmise was correct, for those who had arrived at the Georgia mansion were men who had been scouring the country all day for the fugitives, and were in no pleasant mood of mind.

They were cavalrymen who had no connection with the command of the owner of the estate, and they were there for business. In fact, they had been informed by a poor wretch that he had seen the two fugitives in company with a negro, heading in the direction of the place, and as there was no other residence for miles around, it was quite evident to them that there was a good chance of the negro always being found in hiding about the premises.

They knew full well that the wife of the rebel colonel was a bitter Secesh, and would not think of harboring any one who would prove an enemy; but in those days of darkness in the South it was well known where the sympathy of every slave lay, and they regarded suspiciously at times when there seemed to be a chance for them to secretly strike a blow at the Confederacy.

The colon understood that the fugitives could not have hidden themselves in the house by any manner of means, and their attention was now cast upon the stable.

A rush was made for the barn.

Through a knothole in the boards Archie saw them coming. He had continued to burrow under the hay until he was finally brought to a halt by reaching the side of the barn and here they would doubtless be safe from the keen search that must inevitably follow.

At sight of the Confederates rushing toward the place, he could not help shuddering; they presented such a wild appearance; and he actually recognized, as a portion of that fearless and reckless command known as the Alabama Wildcats.

They were representative Alabamians, tall and angular, men who feared neither man nor wild animal, and who were in the number in battle; and as he had met, these fellows before he did not relish falling into their hands.

Since time had elapsed without their finding its passage, it had been past the middle of the afternoon when they left the house of Cudjo, bound for this place.

Because of the heavy fog and general gloom, night might be expected to close in upon them sooner than it did. In any way, things now looked it could not come any too soon.

When the Alabama fire-eaters reached the barn they put the darkey through a systematic course of questioning, and yet they were not at all satisfied with the answers he gave.

Of course he pretended to be totally ignorant in regard to that of which they inquired; but some of the Confederates professed to see the lie in his face.

A search was immediately begun, and of a necessity this brought them to the great loft of hay.

They might have shifted it, but the task

was more than any of them cared to shoulder, and consequently other means must be tried in order to ascertain whether the Yankees were secreted under its weight.

The leader of the cavalrymen, a heavy set sergeant, took up his stand in front of the haynow, and in gruff tones demanded:

"Now, you tell me what you got in de tanks. We know what you are and I reckon you'll save yer hides a singin' by surrenderin'! Come out!"

No answer.

The sergeant uttered a string of oaths and then tried another tack.

"Boys, get yer guns ready. Ef the Yanks don't make a stir by the time I count ten, let drive. We'll see how long they can stand de lead!"

Thereupon there was a great clinking of gun locks, every one of the five troopers who had ascended to the loft with the sergeant feeling it incumbent upon himself to pull back the hammer of his piece at least three times, the effect of course being to impress any one who overheard the work with the idea that there was quite a host present.

And methodically the sergeant counted half a score, but when he had finished not a sound broke the silence save the stamping of a horse in a stall below or the laugh of one of the men outside.

The sergeant and sergeant now uttered another oath. He had half believed himself that the fugitives were under the hay, but now his ideas had changed considerably, for it would be impossible that they could be within hearing and refuse to discover themselves at this stern command.

"Fire!"

With the order the guns were discharged with a deafening crash, but there was not the slightest commotion in the hay.

A commotion was caused in that heap could have done our friends no harm, for the closely packed hay was almost as effectual a barrier to the passage of lead as sandbags might be.

The horse broke loose and dashed wildly through the stable, scattering the rebels who had remained below.

They, believing something terrible must have happened, ran outside, while the sergeant and his men came tumbling down, believing on their part that an attack of some kind must have been made on those below at the time of their firing.

It seemed evident to all parties by this time that the Yankees were not there, and so they once more turned toward the house, probably for refreshment, after holding a short confab as to what should be their future movements.

Half of the distance had been gone over, when, in the midst of a heated discussion, a sharp cry suddenly rang out.

Thinking of the Yankees who had effected such a daring escape, and of Andersonville, the troopers grasped their carbines nervously and looked toward that spot from whence the cry seemed to come.

It was the colonel's wife, and she stood upon the veranda of the mansion pointing either at or over them, while she uttered some bitter denunciation of which they could only understand the fact that she would see to it that they were given their deserts by the colonel when he returned.

"What you say, madam, have we done wrong? We believed the Yankees to be in the barn," said the rebel sergeant with either real or mock humility.

"Rascal, look behind and see your work!" cried the colonel.

The troopers turned.

"My stars!" yelled the sergeant, "the barn's all ablaze."

And the two Yankees lay under the burning hay!

CHAPTER XXII.

SORELY PRESSED.

The words of the rebel sergeant were indeed true.

How the fire originated was not a very difficult problem to solve to those of the men who had been up in the loft with the new-fangled officer.

After they had discharged their weapons into the hay, they had only time to notice that there was no succeeding commotion, such as would be the natural consequence had the fire been beneath the hay, and been struck by their balls, when the commotion below drew them thither.

Such was their haste, half believing there must be a surprise from some of the escaped Yankees, of whom they entertained a secret

fear since the killing of the bloodhounds in the swamp, and the discomfiture of the prisoner guard under Captain Wirtz, that they took no notice of the fact that a wad from one of their guns was smouldering in the hay.

They had hardly left the barn before this had sprung into a flame, and catching with wonderful quickness upon the surrounding hay in a very short time the loft was a mass of fire.

Archie's father noticed it first, for Archie himself had just been pressed against the boards as he peered through the knot hole after the rebels.

"What is this smoke, Archie?"

"Turning at the words, the young fellow also caught a whiff of the sharp smoke which was already permeating every portion of the loft, having found its outlet as yet, though the roof was on fire inside.

At the same time there came to their ears a crackling noise, which could have but one explanation—the hay was on fire!

This was a startling fact.

Under the hay, as they were, there was no chance of escape, and death stared them in the face.

It was an awful feeling that came upon them, and yet it seemed useless to make any attempt at escape from their fate.

The strange crackling noise grew louder, and they knew that the fire was gaining ground.

Were they doomed to be burned alive like rats in a trap after having done so nobly in eluding their pursuers thus far?

The doctor groaned at the idea.

He had at one taken it for granted that nothing could save them from the threatening doom, and his mind had immediately gone back to his Ohio home, and the dear little woman who had mourned for him so long.

But now that all, if it would have been just as well, perhaps, had he fallen in the battle, where his name had been chronicled among the dead.

As for Archie, he was of a more hopeful, energetic nature.

His mind was not yet ready to give up.

He thought of escape, and how it could be accomplished.

Better to face the dozen troopers in a pitched battle than to submit to the embraces of the fiery monster.

Was it not possible to push a board off?

The barn was old, and he had noticed before this, when he had no thought of making use of the fact, that some of the boards were loose in the middle, only held above and below.

Perchance, if the two of them exerted their united strength, aided by the unnatural power the separate possessor, they were in would give them, they might manage to push one of these boards off, and escape outside through the aperture thus made, though to be sure, they would be compelled to face the troopers immediately.

Archie had almost decided on this plan, when an inspiration came to him; he could call it by no other name.

The openings to the stalls were generally on the other side of the loft, but one at least lay on the side where they crouched under the hay, for he had put his foot down into it, and but for his agility in recovering himself, might have gone through just before the troopers entered the barn.

Why not make use of this hole now?

Brilliant thought.

It would take them below in safety, and at the same time might give them a chance to escape without being seen by the troopers.

Just as he hit upon this idea, looking out through the knothole, he saw the troopers brought to a halt by the colonel's wife and their attention drawn to the barn. This told him that the fire had broken through the roof.

A few words to his father, and the doctor grasped the idea, which gave him much relief.

Archie lost not a second, but reaching the spot, he pressed his weight upon the hay, and went through into the stall below, in which act his father followed him.

Their time was exceedingly limited.

They felt the troopers had remained transfixed for a dozen seconds after realizing that the barn had been fired through their means, for though dare devils one and all, they knew the officer to whom this place belonged.

Thus it was something like consternation seized upon them, and they wasted the seconds that were so precious to the fugitives.

As Archie's father landed beside him on the lower floor of the barn, a wild shout

ringing out from the direction of the house announced the fact that the sergeant and his followers had recovered their wits, and were dashing toward the barn, as if any effort of theirs could stay the mighty power that had been brought into life by a spark.

"What was to be done?"

The barn doors were all shut and could be barred from the inside if necessary, so that before the running rebels could reach them they could easily transform the place into a fort which could not be taken while they remained well armed, and on the alert.

Of what use would this be however while the fortress was burning over their heads?

This would not be good policy.

Again Archie had equalled to his occasion. His eyes fell upon a small opening in the rear of the barn, and toward this he sprang followed by his father.

The rebels were advancing from the other direction, and if by good luck their attention would be fully taken up with the fire then our friends would have a good chance to escape.

Once through the opening the danger grew nearer.

Each of them had a revolver ready, and if discovery came, they intended making use of the weapons. Should they gain a good start, however, they might trust to their legs for escape, as the night would soon close in.

A way they dashed, side by side, desperate yet determined men, who were ready to do and dare, when there was held before them a hope of ultimate escape and freedom from the power of the Confederacy.

Archie had as yet not failed to the fact that they were discovered, and there was no telling but what they might even gain the shelter of the trees without being seen.

This would have been too good luck.

When two-thirds of the way across the open a sharp report rang out in the rear, and Archie felt—yes, actually felt the bullet sting past his head, tipping his left ear in its passage.

Then came hoarse shouts entirely different from the shrill cries that had announced the surprise of the rebels on discovering the fugitives.

Telling his father to go on, leaping in a zigzag manner in order to avoid the bullets that must come, the brave soldier in blue went on his tracks.

There was a rapid interchange of shots, and while Archie was uninjured he must himself have done considerable damage among his foes, for there was wild commotion among them, and they made haste to retreat behind the bushes.

To be out of the unerring marksman's range.

Taking advantage of this temporary respite, Archie ran on and gained the shade of the trees.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ALONG THE RAILROAD.

Once beside his father, Archie breathed more easily, for that danger had been safely passed.

When he vanished from view, the troopers again made their appearance as though it were their intention to immediately pursue the fugitives.

The sergeant was greatly incensed to think that after all, the Yankees they had been hunting so assiduously must have been secreted under their feet after all.

They were remaining, however, that the fugitives differed from those wretches who had so often been hunted through this country, and also that discretion is often the better part of valor, by the sharp crack of two revolvers, and hastily they sought their shelter again.

All that was left to the fugitives now was immediate flight, and as they turned to dash away there arose in front of them a human figure.

Archie instantly covered the man with his weapon, but seeing the black face, he lowered the weapon, fearing no treachery there.

"It's me, massa—Bijah."

It was indeed Bijah, who had escaped from the soldiers, and was hiding in the bushes. He had heard the firing in the barn, and believing the Yankees had been shot, had lain low for fear of the fury of the troopers who must now know that he was complicated in the matter.

Even when the flames burst from the roof of the barn, he could only sit there and shiver, for he now realized that he had as much to fear from the anger of his master when he returned as from the soldiers themselves.

When he saw the two Yankees safe and sound beside him, his joy knew no bounds.

"I 'se gwine wid youse, massa. Dis ain't no safe place foah Bijah arter dat. Dey'd 'flay him, an' de foah 'elpin' you'se. Don't say nothin' till we gets outen dis neighborhood, an' den I lem' you'se decide de matter wid me, but I knows it am suah deff foah me heah."

They had no hesitation to trusting to his guidance, raising full well that, having been known in the neighborhood, every rod of ground must be familiar to him.

As they hurried along, Archie was thinking it over, and he saw that they could not trust him to their safety.

He had imperiled his life by hiding them, so that it would be no longer safe for him to remain behind.

Besides, would he not be useful to them in dealing with the colored people.

It was well therefore, that Bijah was to become one of their number.

He led them in an intricate manner, and it was evident to both men that without dogs the rebels could not make any headway toward the place.

Had they so desired, Bijah would have taken them to a secret glen where they could have hidden with security as long as they desired, but this was not the policy they were just then following.

Darkness was becoming so hot that their chief desire was to leave it as quickly as possible.

If they could by some means get ahead of all who were pursuing them, their journey would be a much easier one, that it was feared he had when the whole country was being hourly scoured by footmen and horses, and the bay of the fierce bloodhound was liable to be heard at any minute, following on their trail.

There was such a short time to elapse before the night fell that it would not have paid them to have stopped to rest.

Again, with Bijah to guide them through the country with which he was so familiar, it was certainly plausible to believe that he would take the most uncut paths during the remainder of daylight so as to prevent the possibility of their meeting any one.

Darkness fell—and then the black guide came to a halt to settle his own case before going any further.

There was a moment of suspense to the poor fellow.

Was he to accompany them to the land of freedom of which he had dreamed so long, or would they decide against him, in which case he had laid the most terrible fate to look in the face?

His gratitude knew no bounds when he heard their decision; and, falling on his knees, he actually cried as he kissed their hands.

Solemnly he promised to be bound by all they wished him to do, to be eternally vigilant and keep on the alert for their welfare.

Then the journey was resumed.

As the route was open, among the trees, but the air was damp and chilly, and they would have suffered keenly if it had not been for their constant and energetic movements in walking.

As the route was rough, every muscle of the bodies seemed brought into play with each passing minute.

The weary march was kept up; but, as the hour grew later, and the chance of meeting any one less, Archie told the black guide to take them to some public highway where they could make better progress than by stumbling along through the dark woods.

While they were on the way to the road they came upon an open plain, and Bijah explained that it was the railroad.

This was a new thought.

Why not take advantage of it, and make their way north along the rails?

True, there was danger of being seen; but, as the route was so open, and the rails were not watched and guarded by soldiers as was the case near the scene of battle, and their uniforms had received such bad usage that in the night it must be their difference from the other distinguish their difference from the soldiers of the Confederates.

On the whole it was a good thought, and off they started.

The night wore on.

It was weary work, but they were dogged in their determination.

Once Bijah brought them to a halt, and declared it was a good opportunity to secure a mess of provisions for future use.

They were near a farmyard, and he was well acquainted with the place.

Indeed, from his actions, Archie had a strong suspicion that he had been there before on a similar errand, but he kept all these ideas to himself.

They were in the enemy's country—and all's fair in war.

That enemy had dragged them thither, had starved and maltreated them in every conceivable manner, and now anything that fell in their hands must be confiscated. They were regularly enlisted soldiers of the government in a rebel country, and all that could be taken was properly their own.

Hence they had no qualms of conscience in purloining the property of the Confederates, and their first object was that the owner of this place was as rank a rebel as ever drew breath.

Acting under the darky's orders, the doctor secured a dozen or more splendid ears of green corn from a field near by, and waited at the rendezvous by the railroad, while his companions proceeded to accomplish their share of the labor.

Archie managed to secure a ham from the smoke house, while the negro made his appearance, carrying a fat chicken by the neck in each hand.

No one but a member of the colored race could ever have caught those two fowls from the roost without making a tremendous clatter.

Thus laden, the trio once more resumed their journey up the track, resolved to walk until near morning.

Bijah promised to show them an old deserted cabin, in an almost impenetrable brake, which at times and once or twice lived, and near which he and others of the slaves of the colonel had worked one summer, chopping trees for some purpose, and where they could pass the day in security and comfort.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE MEN WHO MARCHED THROUGH GEORGIA.

Bijah had not made a rash promise when he declared that he would lead them to a place where pursuit would never find them, and where they could spend the coming day in peace.

Just before dawn, they reached the tangled undergrowth, and following the darky closely, commenced the task of piercing it. Archie believed the secret to be dense thickets, lay the little rude cabin that had once been the home of a runaway slave, and where he had lived for some years, defying capture from all persons.

They were compelled to get on their knees at times, and once had to lie flat upon their breasts and wriggle along like so many serpents.

How Bijah could remember this route so well, unless he had had an object in making it familiar, it is hard to say.

Archie believed that Bijah had intended running away at some time in the past, and had kept this secret quiet for reasons which were very manifest.

Be that as it might, it was lucky for them that he knew the place.

They passed the most pleasant day of all their pilgrimage there.

The hut was so wonderfully concealed, that, without a knowledge of the labyrinthine route through which Bijah had taken them, and which had been formed by the runaway slave by long labor, it was utterly impossible to get anywhere near the hut, hence they were quite free of apprehensions lest the smoke of their fire should be discovered.

What a great feast they had upon the spoils of their recent foray.

The green corn roasted was delicious, and Bijah extemporized matters so that both the ham and the chickens were more than passable.

They knew that this day would be to them like a green oasis in a desert, and hence they made the most of it, hoping to recruit strength for future need.

They were not their enemy's but for an hour they discussed their journey, Archie making a rude map of their designs, and learning all he could from Bijah in regard to the topography of the country, for the black had traveled considerably with his master, though he possessed no retentive mind.

When evening drew near, they made another hearty meal, and after that, there was nothing left to carry with them.

The night was clear overhead, but very dark, which suited them exactly.

On they marched, the whole livelong night, keeping to their old friend, the railroad, and by the time morning came it was calculated they had gone something like twenty-five miles.

Once they had been compelled to get out of the way of a passing train, going north, which they watched wistfully, as its lights vanished in the distance.

The next day they spent in a loft of an old shanty used for a stable, and, when night came, pursued their journey without having had a mouthful of food for twenty-four hours.

On this night they came very near being captured, walking almost directly into a regiment of Georgians marching down the railroad to take the cars at the station.

Only the presence of mind of Bijah saved them, and, crouching in the bushes, they waited till the gray soldiers had passed at the closest distance of their escape, and promising themselves to be more careful in the future.

In the early dawn they reached some negro shanties on the outskirts of a plantation, where Bijah soon made friends.

They were sequestered in a cabin, and after a while a negro came to them with a basket of provisions, which had been contributed by the black cook at the house.

Here they found warm friends. They were visited then during the day to shake them by the hand and wish them goodspeed. They were for the Union, one and all, and hoped Massa Linkum's boys would soon win in the great fight.

That night the fugitives once more started away along the railroad; but they had been warned by the negroes that it would be dangerous keeping to it much longer. So, at midnight, having struck a road, and knowing it must be a safe one, they were advised by their dusky friends, which they had been advised to take, they left the rails and took the pike.

They were now getting in the vicinity of Atlanta, and from what information they could pick up, it was believed Sherman's army were there.

If they could but join them, all would be well.

They must aim therefore for Atlanta, and keep their eyes open for foes, with which the country abounded.

They had suffered much, and their fitful slumbers were haunted with the terrors of Andersonville, back to which they would assuredly be taken if recaptured.

That night there was a heavy shower, but they had preserved their health in a way that was almost miraculous, and which spoke well for the doctor's drugs.

A few more nights of toiling—filled with narrow escapes, suffering, hunger and privation, and with scarcely any sleep, such was the extreme danger with which they were surrounded.

How would it all end? They did not feel able to stand much more of this business, and yet the same old spirit of pluck and determination was strong within them.

God alone knew what they suffered, but the weary of the dear Ohio came was like a loudstone, drawing them ever onward, bridging despair, and cheering their most gloomy hours.

They had lost all reckoning now, but believed they must be in the vicinity of Atlanta, for the country was fairly overrun with small detachments of rebels, who had evidently been chased out of the city when Sherman and his gallant army occupied it.

They would not want of sleep the fugitives were staggering along one night about nine o'clock, never once suspecting danger, as their course lay through the woods, and they knew of no force before them, when suddenly there rang out the hoarse challenge:

"Halt! Who goes there?" This was followed by the sharp, significant click of a gun-hammer, as it was drawn back.

The fugitives seemed frozen with horror. To be caught, after all they had endured, to be taken to the death, especially as they had now almost gained the Federal Army.

They shut their teeth hard, and grimly resolved that sooner than submit they would brave any force of rebels, risk any danger.

The things flashed through their minds like wildfire, and yet the sentry who had demanded of them the countersign was growing impatient.

Delay in matters like this was enough to excite a suspicion, especially at such a time, when the soldiers of both armies were so close.

"Friends or foes?" came the gruff demand, and they knew that a musket was aiming in the direction of them.

It was a fearful moment of suspense.

Archie was about to fall to the ground and

pull his father after him, when they suddenly flashed into being a bright light.

It was as if some one had cast upon a smoldering fire an armful of dead leaves, which had burst into a flame.

By the aid of this light they saw human figures, a dozen or so, some reclining, others standing, but all, oh, blessed sight, wearing the beloved blue of Union troops.

They could not be praised, they had struck a portion of Sherman's army in the environs of Atlanta.

Safe at last!

They could only answer the sentry's demand, and were soon in the midst of sympathetic friends.

CHAPTER XXV.

CONCLUSION.

The fugitives from Andersonville had come upon a portion of Kpatrick's command, and they received royal welcome from those heroes who followed the dashing cavalry leader.

For a few days they were well fed and given good opportunity for sleep, which recuperated them immensely, and then were furloughed.

Bijah at once entered the service of an officer as his servant, though he confessed he would like to remain with Archie.

The two men took advantage of an engine leaving for Chattanooga to bring down one of the last trains of supplies that Sherman expected to receive before cutting his communication, and starting on his march to the sea.

Thus they found themselves once more in Chattanooga, where frowning Lookout Mountain looks down upon the Chickamauga battlefield, and the historic Tennessee River winds about like a water serpent.

At that day the famous Cincinnati Southern railroad was only a dream, so that our friends were compelled to take a roundabout way in order to reach Cincinnati, going to Nashville and then Louisville, where they embarked on a steamer that eventually landed them on the public water front of the Queen City of the West.

They had been unable to telegraph, as the few available wires were used for public service, and they knew full well that the letters written in Chattanooga would not reach home until long after they did, but they halted not in Cincinnati only to secure breakfast, but they boarded a north-bound train, and were soon flying over the fields and along the base of hills, bound for home.

They were terribly excited. They stroggled with fear. How would they find the home from which they had been gone so long?

Reaching the little town snugly encoosed among the Ohio hills, they stopped the first citizen whom they met and made inquiries.

"Where is my father, and where are his boys?" The little mother was alive and well, though she was bowed down with mourning for her lost ones.

Nearer the cottage they drew.

The door stood open, the afternoon sun fell upon the carpet, just as Archie remembered so well.

As he stepped into the doorway the little lady looked up. White grew her face. She forgot to breathe, holding to the table with one trembling hand.

"Mother, it is your boy, alive and well." Archie rushed forward and caught her in his strong arms as he spoke. Then she hung upon his neck and wept for joy, while her lips uttered short but fervent prayers of thanksgiving.

Outside a tall man leaned against the wall of the house, while his frame shook with intense emotion. Oh! the seconds were hours fraught with agony to him—the agony of suspense, for he was dying to clasp in his arms that dearly beloved form.

"Mother," said Archie, when the little woman had become in a measure calm, the man stepped forward, and, having embraced himself, and as he spoke he drew back his head so that he could look her in the eyes, "are you able to hear news—grand, glorious news?"

She looked at him in wonder—then, as if a glimmer of the truth flashed into her mind, a frightened expression came upon her countenance.

"Heaven has given you strength to bear so much, but you need to stand great joy. Oh, God has been good to us, little mother!"

Then he strode to the door, suspecting that the doctor, who had suffered much more from the privations of their escape from the prison than himself, would be rendered weak by the excitement and went out to him.

When he appeared again, supporting with his strong arm another, the little lady gave one glance into that white face, pinched by hunger, but still the same to her as of yore, and then flew to him.

"My Edward, alive! Oh God, I thank Thee!"

That was all she said; but she fainted in his embrace, and they could scarcely unlock her arms from around his neck, so tightly were they clasped.

Oh! it was a happy family that gathered around that supper table. The neighbors heard of the news, and came flocking in to shake by the hand their brave fellows.

One came not to shake hands, but full of joy, put on his cap when the meal was ended.

"I am going to Muriel, mother," he said, simply.

Heaven bless her, she has been like a daughter to me. You will find her changed, for she has mourned you as dead, but she has been true as steel," said his mother, a proud light in her eyes, as she surveyed the manly young fellow before her.

Archie looked Muriel awaiting him, a glow in her pale cheeks which they had not known for many a day, and between them was the happy peace that comes of true love as well as of true friendship.

Clarence Henston fell at Chattanooga some time after the battle of Chickamauga Creek. Archie never mentioned his suspicions to any one, but he was firm in the belief that Clarence had tried to murder him on the battlefield, for at the time that shot had come from the rear, and so nearly ended his young life, his rival, the lieutenant was behind him.

Archie only spent a few weeks at home, and then rejoined the army.

The doctor had received a shock to his system from his long imprisonment and the hardships he had been exposed to during his escape, so he remained at home.

One of the very first men Archie met on his entering camp was the fellow he had been exposed to during his escape, so he remained at home.

The man had played a shrewd game on the Confederates, making believe he was shot, and swimming under water to the shore, where he hid his head among the reeds that lined the bank.

Archie and he saw much of each other during the closing months of the war, participating in the campaign against Lee, which ended with his surrender after a gallant resistance at Appomattox.

Bijah went North with Captain Archie, and to this day is the most faithful benchmark mortal man ever had.

All of our friends are still living, and in good health. Archie is one of the leading lights of the Ohio bar, and his boys bid fair to be perfect facsimiles of their father. There is a young girl who looks much like the Muriel of former years, but her mother has called her Adele.

Archie did not forget Cudjo, who had done so much for them during that time of distress, and at present he is one of the best known and wealthiest colored Baptist ministers in Cincinnati. They never forgot his eloquent discourse in the Southern cabin.

[THE END.]

CRIMSON BARS;

—OR—

A SOLDIER FOR LOVE.

BY MON MYRTLE.

CHAPTER I.

THE WAR SON OF THE SUNNY SOUTH.

One pleasant summer morning, in the year 1862, two men, mounted upon hand-somes, and dressed in the veranda of a charming villa, situated near Corinth, Mississippi.

The younger, a dashing and chivalrous specimen of manhood, was attired in a gray frock-coat and broad-brimmed, felt hat covered his head.

This was Ned Morton, and no other than your humble servant.

My companion was dressed in the usual garb of a citizen; he was my uncle, William Morton, an elderly and influential man, much respected—and he deserved it.

He was the owner of the mansion from which we had just taken our departure.

We were at present on our way to Confederates headquarters, and my object being to introduce me to an officer of his acquaint-

ance, General Van Dorn, in order, if possible, to secure for me a position on his staff.

This, however, was not altogether in accordance with my wishes; for, although I wore the gray, I had no desire to cast my lot with the soldiers of the South; on the contrary, my convictions led me in the opposite direction, and I was steadfast on that point; I had worn the gray suit, which was my dress at West Point, having already spent two years at that institution, from which I had been ordered home by my parents, who were residents of Nashville, Tennessee, as soon as the war commenced. I had, however, declined to go until two weeks previous to the opening of our story, when a ruse, in the shape of a telegram, which stated that my mother was dying, had the desired effect, and induced me to leave the academy, and hasten home.

Having spent two years in the North, and viewed the war from a Federal standpoint, it is not strange that I believed the South to be in the wrong; and that my sympathies, which were at first with the Union; were shortly enlisted in behalf of the Union; and, in fact, I was only waiting at West Point to be ordered on active service.

As I grew up at home with my parents and sisters, two in number, my two elder brothers being in Lee's army, I left Nashville, and proceeded to Corinth, for the purpose of visiting my uncle at his villa in its vicinity.

To proceed with my story; When we arrived at Corinth, we found Price's army were quartered nearly five miles from there, awaiting orders to move upon the village, which was then in possession of the Union troops under General Rosecrans.

Corinth is a strong position, and a most desirable strategic point, being situated in a range of the Appalachian Mountains, and upon the banks of the Mississippi. Here, when the rebels occupied the place, he had constructed earthworks and fortifications, in order to enable him to maintain his stand against the Federal forces under Halleck; but Halleck, in turn, on his occupancy of the place, after having driven Beauregard from the position, strengthened it materially.

General Rosecrans had also added to the strength of the fortifications, and now occupied it, waiting until the rebels, having concentrated troops enough for the purpose, should attempt to dislodge him.

We passed within sight of the flag, which waved gracefully over the works, and caught just a glimpse of a bluecoated sentinel as he passed up and down on a parapet commanding an extended view of the position.

We saw a few Confederate soldiers in a glade further on, but avoided them, much to my relief, and shortly reached a suburban villa.

Here we halted and dismounted, my uncle remarking that we would make a call on a friend of his—Mr. Brontou Eiden,

We found him at home, and he received us very cordially.

After we had exchanged greetings to our satisfaction, Mr. Eiden bade my uncle and myself follow; and, entering a pleasant garden which was attached to the premises, we were shown among the choice collection of plants and shrubbery with which it was ornamented, and Mr. Eiden and my uncle seemed engrossed in their conversation. I wandered on alone, smoking a cigar. I was delighted with the place; and, as I proceeded, could not help admiring the surroundings of this prettily situated villa. We were shortly overtaken by my uncle and Mr. Eiden, and we strolled among the bright array of flowers and choice exotics until we came in sight of a rustic trellis, at the further end of which was an arbor, from whence proceeded the sweet, melodious voice of a warbling: "Maryland my Maryland," and anon singing snatches of "Dixie" the war song of the Sunny South.

As we drew near, she broke into a fresh peal of melody, interspersing her variety of patriotic songs with a verse in the following style:

"In sunny climes of Southland
Where o'er hill and glade and grass-land,
The flowers of the South,
Yest' in glory of drooping cypress,
Crimson-roses, rare and peerless,
And white anemones,
Gathered from some woodland lakelet."

Her voice was rich and impressive, and I was both thrilled and charmed with the music.

It was deemed to me that I had never heard anything half so inspiring.

As I entered the arbor, the most beautiful girl I had ever seen arose and, at first, appeared a little startled, for she had evidently not anticipated our unceremonious entrance.

She was a fair young girl, with a face so mild and sweet that any person of ordinary susceptibility could not conceal his admiration.

Here was, indeed, a countenance of remarkable beauty, and one which combined all the essentials of culture and refinement.

Her dark, brown eyes sparkled with merriment, and she was mischievous enough to seem delighted at my apparent embarrassment.

"Elsie," observed my uncle, smiling, "I have brought your cousin; you know I promised to do so sometime since; but here he is at last, what do you think of him?"

The girl crimsoned, and confusedly replied, girl-like:

"Mr. Morton, how can you say that?"

"Mr. Edward Morton—Miss Elsie Vernon; Miss Vernon—Mr. Morton," said Eiden, introducing us.

We both nodded, instinctively; and, following my uncle, he withdrew, leaving us to our own reflections.

Elsie and myself, however, soon became acquainted. The situation was to me—a bashful young man—rather awkward at first, but observing that she managed to maintain an admirable degree of composure, my confidence soon returned, and we shortly began to chat pleasantly.

She informed me that she was the daughter of Eiden's wife's sister, and her parents had been married for a number of years resided with the Eldens.

Her former home had been at New Orleans; and after I had conversed with her for a short time, I had a great desire to visit her in Crescent City, which she described so charmingly.

We then talked about the garden, until, happening to glance toward a chair opposite where we were sitting, I perceived a copy of the *Corinth Courier*.

"Ah! Mr. Vernon, I see you are interested in the war, are you not?"

"Oh, yes, I like to read of the gallant achievements of our brave boys of the Sunny South."

"Then you are a—"

"I was about to remark that she was a rebel, but thought better of it, and added, instead:

"A true woman!"

"You must not begin our acquaintance by flattery," she replied, demurely.

"Not for the world."

"Yes," she sighed, "I like to read the papers at all times, and especially this morning, for there is an account of the battle of Manassas, in which Arthur's regiment took part, and of an absolute victory, it was at least an advantage for our cause."

"I am glad to hear it," I replied—"I fear I told a fib—" but who is Arthur?" I ventured to ask, vague fears of a rival for the affections of that charming creature, with whom I was already enthralled, arising before my mind.

She either anticipated my query, or my eagerness betrayed my emotion, but she gave me an evasive answer.

"A gentleman friend," was all she said.

Was he a lover, betrothed, an acquaintance, relative, or what? were the questions which I tried to solve in my inmost mind, and which quite baffled me.

Elsie changed the subject.

CHAPTER II.

THE BATTLE OF CORINTH.

My pleasant associations with this peerless Southern beauty were destined, however, to be of short duration.

We enjoyed a few pleasant walks about the vicinity of the place during the two days that my uncle and myself remained at Mr. Eiden's as his guests; and it is needless to say that Elsie and myself became very much attached.

At length, on the morning of the third day, at the breakfast table, my uncle announced that he had secured for me a Lieutenant's commission in the Confederate service, and that I was to be attached to General Price's staff.

He also observed that the orders were for me to proceed at once to headquarters and report myself ready for duty. My uncle and myself remained silent, like one in a stupor, so crushing was this appalling declaration to me.

Recovering my self-possession, however, I exclaimed:

"You have made a mistake, sir. I am a Union man. Do I not wear the uniform of the Federal military academy?"

"The Union man!" sneered my uncle; "a nephew of mine turns his back upon his own people! and at that in the hour of dire necessity! Oh! how contemptuous—traitor! traitor!"

"No, sir, not a traitor, if you please. I am standing up for the whole, undivided Union—North, South, East and West; while you believe only in the South," I replied, with energy.

As I spoke, I produced from my pocket a small silk American flag, and waved it over the rebel's indignity.

Elsie instantly snatched it from my grasp, and thrust it into her pocket, at the same time observing:

"Stand up like a man, Ned, and fight for the people who love you!"

"If I am to fight for you, I replied, keenly scrutinizing her fair face, "I would consider it."

"You would?" laughed my uncle. "That's right, Elsie, my dear; you will make a Confederate of me, in spite of his adverse inclinations."

"Well, yes, I admit I have surrendered to her when no three men would have broken my determination," I observed, in a moment of weakness, a proceeding which I afterward upon mature reflection, had ample cause to regret.

Elsie clasped her hands in girlish glee, plucked a fragrant moss-rose from her hair, and fastened it in the lapel of my coat; after which she turned her eyes on the epaulettes of a lieutenant, and finished by fastening a dainty pink ribbon, with her monogram tastefully embroidered thereon in gold thread upon my left breast with a gold pin, remarking that it was an amulet that she hoped would insure my safety.

She then bade me adieu, as my uncle was at the door awaiting my coming.

As we mounted our horses, Elsie stood in the doorway, surrounded by a profusion of sweet home-scented flowers, which she fastened on my left handkerchief.

In my inmost heart I wished I had never seen her, for she alone was the cause of my becoming a traitor to my country.

But, *was I a traitor?*

We all see.

In due time we reached General Van Dorn's headquarters; my uncle introduced me, and Van Dorn called one of his aides and ordered him to conduct me to General Price's quarters at the other end of the line—the extreme right.

This was readily accomplished and I was soon duly installed.

We spent at least two weeks resting on our arms before a forward movement was ordered. I earnestly hoped that we would have a hotly contested battle, and made up my mind if it were possible to do so, to fall in with and join the Union army.

This was my determination.

Elsie would not know but what I was captured and confined a prisoner of war, while I would be engaged in fighting the battles of my country in the army of my choice.

While in camp, I made the acquaintance of General Rogers, commander of the Texan brigade, who afterward proved one of the bravest of our soldiers.

General Rosecrans, in command of the Federals, must have been advised in some manner of our contemplated attack, for he began erecting an additional line of earthworks in and about the camp.

On the morning of September 50, 1862 we broke camp and pushed forward, shortly encountering the command of Ogley, thrown forward as skirmishers by Rosecrans, in order to draw us under the heavy fire of the batteries.

Ogley gave us a pretty hard resistance, and when at length he was obliged to fall back, stoutly disputing every inch of the ground, Generals McArthur and Davis were ordered to his support.

The results were a heavy skirmishing on both sides for a couple of days, both parties being well covered by the woods and thus sheltered from the withering fire prevailing.

On October 3, these skirmishes culminated in Van Dorn, backed by half our force falling heavily upon the Union commands, and pushing them back.

In this spirited fray which was really the beginning of the battle, the "enemy" lost General Haxelman killed, and Ogley severely wounded.

Price, Van Dorn and Lovell now concentrated their forces for the attack.

forward with the intention of cutting off Rosecrans' communications, and annihilating his small force ere re-enforcements could arrive.

Our men army numbered fully forty thousand men; and well armed and equipped, we formed a formidable force with which to grapple. I was detached from Price's staff, and sent to the front to take charge of one of the guns of a battery whose commander had fallen in the skirmish of the previous day. I thus had a good view of the Union works ere they were obscured by the clouds of sulphurous smoke which were so soon to engulf them.

As the rebels covered the approaches to Corinth, while several heavy batteries were placed in position, in such a manner as to sweep the entire space in front of their lines.

We advanced up the Chewalla road, and encountered three regiments of infantry who had been sent out to meet us.

The fight commenced at about half-past seven in the morning, and lasted until nearly two o'clock in the afternoon. The shells from the earthworks, and also roundshot crashed through our ranks, spreading death and desolation in their wake.

The fire of the infantry was terrific on both sides.

Towards the afternoon, skirmishing and more or less fighting prevailed, the Federals falling back to take position behind their earthworks.

During the ensuing night I assisted, reluctantly, in placing a rebel battery in front of the Union redoubts at a short distance from Fort Robinett—their center.

The battle was resumed shortly after three o'clock in the morning by this battery, but we did not reply from the Union troops until daybreak.

Then, such a perfect tornado of shells did they pour in upon us, a most terrific bombardment, which it seemed as though might annihilate us, were it not for our bayonets.

We fired a few rounds, lost five gunners and had one gun dismounted and wrecked; a fort on a commanding height which I afterward learned was Fort Williams, was almost completely ruined.

These were trained upon our battery which was soon silenced, abandoned, and subsequently captured.

The fire of the batteries on both sides was most terrific. There was a fall of burning shells, rattling, whistling, and whistling bullets. I went back and reported to Price.

I found his command forming behind the shelter of the woods for a bayonet charge. It was a stirring sight, their grim, firm ranks announced by gleaming bayonets.

I saluted the general and awaited his orders.

"Mount," said he, "and lead the Second Texas regiment in the charge; they are well commanded."

I took my place and made up my mind that I would leave my bones to bleach on that field.

A charge seemed madness. Nothing could possibly live in the face of those batteries. To be killed in the rebel service was not just to my liking.

I would much prefer to be a "live coward than a dead hero;" but, there was no help for it, I was there and I must make the best of it.

Steadily and with invincible courage our serried columns emerged from the woods, crossed the railroad and moved up the Holloway toward the Federal batteries in column of divisions—Van Dorn holding the right and Price the left. Our brigade on the left swung out, and the one on the right was slowly obscured by the smoke.

Bullets were raining in close proximity to our heads, and shells were scattering their deadly contents in our very faces, but still we pressed on, undaunted.

A terrific avalanche of shot out and tore our ranks, ploughing great lanes through them, and with our bayonets the gaps were filled up and still on—on! stumbling over mangled corpses and slipping in gore as we stalked along to what seemed certain destruction.

With desperate determination the Confederates forced their way up to within an incredibly short distance of the Union guns; coped with Davies division, poured in a terrific volley of musketry and forced them to retreat and abandon their guns.

Our dead and dying were falling about us thick and fast; men were stepped on or leaped over as they fell upon the grass with gory wounds.

At this time, Price's division had grappled with the enemy unaided by that of Van

Dorn, he having been unable to advance, owing to difficulties encountered in the way.

With a hoarse shout our host rushed upon the batteries. There were flashes which rent the smoke clouds, we were enveloped in a sheet of flame from the batteries, and our columns almost annihilated.

The attack had been intended to be simultaneous with that of Van Dorn, but did not succeed in time, and Price pushed on alone and bravely breasted the full fury of the batteries.

We formed a second time and threw ourselves upon the guns in the very madness of despair, but were hurled back, crushed, but not defeated. A third time we rushed up to certain destruction.

We gained the top of the redoubt, poured in a volley upon the enemy, killing General Richardson, and struggling over the guns.

The guns were discharged upon each wailing masses of men, who were pressing up close to their muzzles.

Muskets were clubbed, bayonets and sabers clashed; still we desperately cut our way through, and were soon leaping over the ramparts.

At this critical juncture, however, an Illinois regiment sprang from a ravine close by, delivered a close volley and charged us impetuously, putting us to rout and recovering the lost ground.

The rest of the terrible battle was to me a blank.

As the Illinois regiment delivered its fire, I happened to be in a conspicuous place, received a bullet through my body, and fell unconscious.

I learned, however, when apprised in the hands of the Union men, that the rest of the battle was terrible, even more so than the first portion. Van Dorn and Price had jointly attacked the largest of the forts and been repulsed with dreadful slaughter.

General Rogers was killed while planting the rebel colors on the crest of Fort Williams at the close of the Fourth Mississippi and Second Texas regiments. Over six thousand Confederates had fallen, and about two thousand Federals, on this frightful field of slaughter.

The Union troops claimed to have captured two thousand two hundred and forty-eight prisoners.

The rebels were completely repulsed, and Tennessee was now fully in the hands of the Federal Government. The prisoners were shipped north to Johnson's Island opposite Sandusky, Ohio, and I found myself with the wounded Union soldiers at Cairo, Ill., where we were shipped as soon as practicable.

I was not dangerously wounded, though it was fully six or eight weeks before I was able to be about.

I was then sent to Johnson's Island, and remained a prisoner of war one month ere I was exchanged.

I should, before submitting to imprisonment, have signified my wish to join the Federal army, and thus have escaped it, and at the same time have fulfilled my earnest desire; but, I got the idea that it would be better for me to suffer awhile longer, and be sure of Elsie, than at once make the change I heartily wished to effect.

CHAPTER III.

SEEKING DEATH.

I wrote Miss Elden that I had been wounded, but was not now entirely recovered, and although I had been a prisoner of war, hoped to get back to her some time. I still wore her ribbon badge, and it was spotted with blood from the field of Corinth—my own blood, shed in a cause against which in principle I was opposed.

She replied to my letter promptly, so at least the date thereon attested, though it passed through so many official hands, and was perused by so many prying, curious eyes, that I had delayed a week in transmission, and bore the marks of not over scrupulously clean fingers.

I answered her welcome epistle, but heard no more from her, and supposed my note unobserved.

On the day of my exchange, I asked permission of the colonel of the Second Tennessee regiment to which I was immediately assigned, to pay a short visit to the Eldens, as well as a brief tour of duty in the order that I might have a chance to recruit my energies; feeling somewhat unwell from the effect of my wound and confinement. But I was deprived the privilege. The colonel, who was a very rigid disciplinarian, stating there was no time for fooling, as we

had to march at once for Murfreesboro to repel Rosecrans' advance on that city.

I wrote her that I was back in the ranks and in good spirits, but unable to go and see her. Alas, however, the postal facilities were so uncertain that she never received it; or, at least she afterward told me so, and I had no reason to doubt her word.

About this time a previous suitor of hers—Arthur Vanclève—returned from the army of Virginia on a furlough.

She told him plainly of my engagement, and the subject was dropped and not resumed for several days, when one morning Arthur handed her a copy of the *Corinth Courier* in which was published a full account of a skirmish in front of Shelbyville, Kentucky, with my name in the death list.

She nearly swooned at first, and then gave way to a copious flood of tears, moaning and almost becoming hysterical.

In those days, deaths were too sudden and common to cause more than an ordinary amount of grief, and in a short time Edward Morton passed from her mind, and as Vanclève was a son of very wealthy parents and could exalt her from her humble position, Elsie began to encourage his advances, and in about six weeks after my supposed death they were married.

It was now Vanclève's intention to procure a release from the army, and remove with his charming wife to California, or some such agreeable climate, away from the hideousness of grim visaged war.

Meanwhile, I with my regiment participated in the defense of Murfreesboro, Tennessee.

Although in the thickest of that fight—and it was a pretty rugged one, I had the good fortune to escape capture or injury.

This incident occurred on the 31st, 1862, and June 3, 1863, I was sent out with a company of my regiment, of which I had been commissioned captain, to assist General Cheatham's army in its struggle with Rosecrans, who was concentrated at Bessemer upon Murfreesboro, determined to crush the Confederates out of existence.

Five thousand men were detached from Price's army, as a reserve, and among these was my company, every one of them brave men, and veterans of many a desperate battle.

Previous to this, however, I had been allowed a short furlough, and had hastened to Corinth.

Judge of my dismay, however, on learning that Elsie had married Vanclève, and had gone with him nobody knew whither—or if they did know—were not inclined to impart any information.

Heretic was glad to see me, but never had the slightest idea that I was interested so much in his niece.

He told me of the wedding, and said he supposed she would shortly return.

In despair, mortified, and in jocular rage I returned to the ranks, and when ordered to Murfreesboro, proceeded there with alacrity, and actually hoped to get killed in the battle.

When the struggle commenced, I plunged into the thick of the fight, and later, when our color-sergeant fell, pierced by a dozen bullets, I seized the flag myself, and bore it aloft in one hand and my sword in the other.

Thus in the terrible battle of Stone River, regardless of my life, and reckless to a fault, I carried the "crimson bars" through its baptism of fire, amid the avalanche of shells and bullets, miraculously escaping the hundreds which were doubtlessly directed at me.

Finally, I rushed headlong into the Union ranks, as they were driving our men before their furious advance, and was immediately disarmed and made a prisoner.

CHAPTER IV.

UNDER THE OLD FLAG.

The thought that I had lost her, whom I had entered the Confederate ranks to please, was maddening and humiliating in the extreme.

How I wished that I could have ended my life in its dishonor there, where I stood.

But my captors were not inclined to put me to death, and thus release me from my misery.

Oh, no, they wanted me to spend a while in a prison, and then count "6000" in exchange for one of their noble boys.

While I was oblivious of what was passing on about me, so deep and gloomy was my reverie, I was suddenly aroused by hearing my name called in a cheerful tone of mingled surprise and pleasure.

"Ned Morton, by all that's wonderful!" cried a handsome, dashing young officer, attired in a blue uniform, and with a lieutenant's bars upon his shoulder-straps.

I looked upon and beheld my old chum of the many days at West Point, Elmer Fenworth, "Elmer!" I exclaimed, rising from my recumbent position, and shaking hands with him, "you here?"

"Yes! I have joined our gallant boys in blue," was his reply.

"Oh, and I!" I murmured sadly, "have joined our gallant boys in gray, less fortunate but equally brave."

He looked at me reproachfully.

"Oh, Ned," he exclaimed, feelingly, "to think that you and I, who were always like brothers together at West Point, should have been striving to kill one another in this terrible fight," and he folded me in his arms fondly.

"Such," I replied, "is of too common occurrence in this fratricidal war—brother against brother, son against father."

"I then explained to him how I had happened to cast my lot with the South, and concluded there and then to join the Union forces."

"I explained that I had two brothers in Lee's army of Northern Virginia, and preferred not to go where I would be likely to encounter them, for fear that I might have the misfortune of killing them."

"I explained, however, as he introduced me to the officer who was to muster me in, that I wanted to go where the fighting was heavy, in order to make amends for my past conduct."

"You had better remain with us, then," observed the officer, "for, if I mistake not, we are going to have fighting enough before we are through in this part of the country."

I was accordingly made corporal of the Eleventh Indiana Light Battery, which was subsequently detached from the Army of Tennessee and ordered to join Grant in his expedition against Vicksburg.

Elmer was at the same time commissioned major of the regiment, being transferred from General Rosecrans' staff for the purpose, and the former, Major E. W. Raymond, promoted to colonel, while Baxter Belding, a young merchant of Indianapolis, was made lieutenant-colonel.

He and Raymond had been officers in the battery since the first battle of Bull Run, and it was not until that they should hold exalted rank.

Its organizer, Colonel Robert Gilmore, had fallen at Ball's Bluff, and his successor, Colonel Graham, at Antietam.

I was proud to be appointed to a battery with an officer of record, and determined that my efforts for the "stars and stripes" would be much more vigorous if possible than they had been for the "crimson bars."

I had nothing in particular to do at present, Elmer invited me to accompany him to his home at Detroit, and having kindly secured a six weeks' furlough for me as well as one of the same length for himself, I could not refuse him.

I told him, however, that I felt somewhat diffident about appearing among the people of the North whom I had been until recently fighting against.

"Don't give yourself any uneasiness on that score," he replied. "Who will know it?"

"That is not the question; it is the inward consciousness of acting what I am not, that troubles me."

"But you are going to make it all right. We in the North, you will yet be an honored Federal officer."

"I hope so."

We reached Detroit four days later. Elmer's family was in comfortable circumstances, and I resided on one of the grand avenues of the city in a spacious house.

I desired to stop at the Brunswick, but he would not hear of it, so together we proceeded to his father's residence.

Such a greeting as my friend received! He had not been here for over a year, and his family was delighted.

Elmer took me in, introduced me as one of his best friends, and I was soon entirely at ease.

A handsome young lady shortly entered the room and ran up to Elmer to welcome him, embracing him warmly. He introduced her to me as his sister Alice.

She was tall, fair and shapely, with deep blue eyes, and dark brown hair; cheeks like peach blossom, small mouth with coral lips, which, when parted in a smile, would give a sweetness to her expression, displayed a set of small teeth, white as pearls. In short,

she was a brunette, sparkling and vivacious, and her beauty was enhanced by a becoming dress of fleecy white muslin, adorned with cherry colored ribbons.

She could not have been over nineteen, and certainly did not look even that age.

I immediately felt deeply impressed with her attractive face and winsome manners. Alice and I were soon the greatest of friends; not that I could forget Elsie so soon, but as she had married, I had no further claim on her, and was more and more drawn toward Alice every day.

I escorted her to the parties, societies, opera's, etc., and the time passed very pleasantly. How rapidly the six weeks seemed to pass!

Elmer announced one morning that we would have to return the first of the week to the front. I, however, made the best of my time with Alice, and determined not to lose her as I had Elsie, first so confided in her all my past history, and left it optional with her to accept or reject me.

She felt for me tenderly, and I went back to the army a happy man, leaving her a brilliant diamond ring as a pledge of our betrothal.

CHAPTER V.

HOT WORK.

I felt now as though I should like to live; yet, I did not shrink from following the fortunes of the Union.

We reached camp on the tenth of April. We found that our battery had already joined Graut, who, in conjunction with Sherman, had been operating against Vicksburg since the January of the year.

Accordingly, we proceeded to Cairo, and took transport for the scene of hostilities, reaching the army about April 20, and at once rejoining our battery.

We missed most of the perils and hardships of the campaign, but were in time to participate in the spirited engagement at Port Gibson, Mississippi, which resulted in a Union victory, occurring on May 1, 1863.

At two o'clock on that morning, while we were marching through a wild, tropical country, overgrown with luxuriant foliage and flowers, from which a rare fragrance emanated—having on the afternoon of the thirtieth of April, under McClernand, landed at Bruinsburg—we encountered a rebel battery, and were brought to a abrupt halt. We found that the battery was strongly posted on the brink of a commanding eminence before us.

We afterward learned that the rebel General Bower had sallied forth from his intrenchments at Hattiesburg, and had planted his batteries on these heights.

Our battery was ordered to the left, which was commanded by General Osterhaus, and as soon as morning broke, we opened a brisk fire upon the enemy.

The battle was hotly contested one, and lasted most of the day.

We lost over eight hundred men, killed, wounded and missing, among whom were eighteen from our battery, including Lieutenant Colonel Belding, who was killed by a shell.

During the night, the rebels retreated, leaving the two roads to Port Gibson open, and flying across the Big Black River, abandoning a gun, Gulf, their depot for our battery's ammunition, which fell into our hands, and afterwards became a very important base for General Grant's supplies. They destroyed their ammunition and spiked their guns, however, before leaving.

On the thirteenth of May, when Logan, we encountered rebels near the town of Raymond, strongly posted in the woods, and drove them with difficulty to the shelter of their rifle pits.

After a hard but impetuous struggle we drove them again, and hurled them back routed.

Raymond then fell into our hands. During the afternoon of the fourteenth we were with General Crocker, and participated in an artillery duel with the enemy quite near Jackson, the state capital.

As before, the rebel batteries frowned from the top of a hill, and we were obliged to send the infantry forward to storm them, which, under Crocker's personal supervision they accomplished, with the loss of one life, though with dreadful slaughter, and capturing Jackson.

On the sixteenth, we met General Pemberton, who had pushed out from Vicksburg with the intention of attacking Grant in the rear at the Longstacks, near Champion Hills, which was the most decisive of Grant's battles, and in his advance on Vicksburg, and

really decided the campaign, as it effectually squelched all hope of Johnston effecting a junction with Pemberton.

At Big Black River, the following day, while with McClernand in pursuit of the retreating rebels, we came upon them suddenly, and as the ground was favorable they made a stand, determined to dispute our passage.

They posted eighteen guns on the brink of an eminence opposite a bayou twenty feet wide and three or four feet deep, over which we would be obliged to pass in attacking them.

Then in addition, on a bluff which fringed the other side, just beyond the first battery, we perceived an array of guns and unburned Confederates, nicely encoined.

To storm their position it would be necessary to debouch out upon an open plain and cross both the bayou and the river in the face of the rebel batteries.

General McClernand viewed the position, and immediately ordered an artillery attack upon the enemy's works.

We took a fair position, unlimbered our guns, and were soon hurling shell and canister among the rebels.

The rebel works were vigor, wounding and disabling General Osterhaus in the opening of the fusillade.

While we kept up a rattling fire in the center, thus commanding the attention of the rebel works, General Lawler, contrived to approach the rebel works on the right, quite unobserved.

Reaching a favorable position his troops divested themselves of their knapsacks and blankets, fixed bayonets, and emerging from their concealment traversed the open field and plunged into the stagnant water of the bayou.

A terrific fire of shot and shell was instantaneously turned upon them, reddening the brackish water with their blood.

The rebel ranks were completely the assault, however, being so sudden and unlooked for by the rebels, their fire was not delivered with as effective an aim as usual.

Accordingly, the bayou was successfully crossed, and the works taken at the point of the bayonet without much further resistance.

CHAPTER VI.

CAPTURE OF VICKSBURG.

As the rebels were now driven from the Big Black River, General McClernand bridged the stream and our victorious forces pushed forward toward Vicksburg, swinging around to the south as we approached that city.

On the tenth of July the city was completely besieged, our lines extending from the Yazoo above to Warrenton on the Mississippi below Vicksburg.

The rebel army was then hemmed in on all sides without the possibility of escape. We were not aware, however, of the memorable events of the siege which lasted two months, until, finally, on July 4, General Pemberton surrendered to Grant.

The campaign had lasted nearly six months and cost the Federals fully nine thousand men; and no wonder it was a great relief to us when, on that memorable and ever glorious fourth of July, the rebels capitulated.

While these last events were transpiring, the theater of war had been transferred by Lee to Longstacks, to Pontchartraine, and we were just receiving news of the great battle of Gettysburg.

After the capture of Vicksburg we were sent to join General Thomas, and with him participated in the battle of Chickamauga, on the nineteenth of September, 1864. The day we spent with Sherman and Hooker, and took part in the battles of Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge, Tennessee.

At Christmas Elmer and I secured brief furloughs, and returned to Detroit. While there Alice and I were the principals in a pleasant bridal party.

In March, 1864, our time of enlistment having expired, we spent nearly a month in Detroit again, and finally, being offered positions in Elmer as colonel, and I as major of the Michigan regiment—we accepted, and went into Virginia, just in time to take part in the closing scenes of the war.

There, on the fifth and seventh of May, we were first engaged in the battles of the Wilderness, and Spotsylvania, and, on the fifteenth, in the battle of New Market, where we were repulsed.

After the victory in April, 1865, at Big Five Forks, we joined in the assault on Petersburg.

On this series of battles I will dwell briefly, as some of my best friends fell during that

carnival of death, and Elmer lost an arm.

On the second of April our regiment was among them in the brigade ordered to the assault upon the rebel rifle pits.

As the bugle sounded the charge, Elmer and I having dismounted, placed ourselves in position and pushed forward on foot. How they did plant the shot and shell, grape and canister into our redoubtable phalanx! Our explosions were actually deafening, and it seemed as if at each successive discharge we could feel the flame from the guns scorching our faces.

While we pushed on, I suddenly felt myself whirled around and thrown violently upon the ground, and as I looked behind me, saw a great gap plowed through the ranks, and caught the flash of the exploding shell, through the cloud of smoke.

Those near me were not injured, nor was I myself, though the force of concussion, as the shell passed in such close proximity, had prostrated us.

We paused, fired, fixed bayonets, and charged the outer line of rebel rifle pits, firing the enemy before we to seek shelter in their intrenchments, and stumbling over mangled forms as we pushed forward.

At this juncture, our regiment was ordered to hold the captured pits, and we immediately jumped into them and proceeded to do so.

When the rebels perceived our intention, they advanced a light battery, determined to dislodge us; unlimbering their guns and opening fire.

What a din the shrieking and exploding shell, and whizzing shot made over our heads, as ever and anon they scattered the earth into our faces or struck down some of our men.

With hoarse cheers, however, we defied them, and keeping possession of the excavations, were soon engaged in coolly picking off those of the rebels within range of our deadly rifles.

The enemy possessing heavy siege guns, which were in a fixed position in front of the city, began throwing fuse shells among us, and we found the pits soon too hot to hold us, as we were threatened with complete annihilation.

While we were subjected to this tremendous fire, however, a battery had been ordered to our support, and it wheeled into position as quickly as possible, delivering its fire over our heads.

Elmer raised his sword, and spoke encouragingly to our men, when, suddenly, with a shriek, a heavy shell bounded directly into the pit between us.

As it howled over the earthworks it struck me, taking his head directly off, and, exploding, blew Elmer's right arm off just at the elbow, and killed a private named Johnson. As we could not have Elmer's wound attended to, then, I bound my handkerchief tightly around the mangled stump to stop the flow of blood.

Rounds, bullets and shell, still continued to plow through our position, and a fragment of the latter knocked my cap off while I was attending to Elmer's wounds. I made him lie down in the trench upon my coat and his own, and, seizing a musket, commenced to bang away in my shirt sleeves at the enemy.

An hour passed—an hour of dire destruction of human life and limb.

I turned to assist a wounded comrade, when I received a mine-ball in the right breast, which traversed my body, penetrated my lungs, missed my heart by a couple of inches, and came out through my left arm, fracturing the bone, but, fortunately, not shattering it.

I jumped, and knew no more until the engagement was over.

CHAPTER VII.

CONCLUSION.

Petersburg was taken, Richmond fell; Lee surrendered at Appomattox, and the rebellion collapsed.

Still I lay in the hospital, at Portsmouth, Va., alongside my brother-in-law, Colonel Elmer Fenworth; and my wife and her mother, who had come down from Detroit, paid every attention to us.

Fenworth's arm had been amputated near the shoulder, but he was rapidly convalescing. I was, however, burning up with fever, and my life despaired of.

Alice always endeavored to appear cheerful when in my presence, but I overheard her saying to her mother, in accents of distress:

"Only to think, mother, that he should die, now that the war is over, after going through so much," and her eyes filled with tears.

"Don't weep, Alice dear, I think he will recover; I really feel a presentiment that he will," answered Mrs. Fenworth, reassuringly.

But the doctors gave not a ray of hope. How horrible was existence in that hospital, where poor, mangled and diseased forms were huddled together in a putrid atmosphere.

Quite a number were released from their sufferings by death every day, and some poor fellows, that were instinctively aware that they could not recover, awaited death with stolid indifference.

Before fever bereft me of my senses, and previous to the two weeks that all was a blank to me and I raved continually, I noticed one poor boy, who knew his time had come, endeavoring to persuade a comrade who sat by his bedside fanning him, to assist him to walk to the dead house as he was pretty near gone, and did not wish to trouble anybody to remove his corpse after life was extinct. He was a true hero.

Well, to make a long story short, I reached the Vicksburg, which would decide my fate, that is, whether I would recover or not; passed it safely, and began to convalesce very rapidly once the fever left me.

To the great joy of my wife and friends, I was able in about six weeks to travel slowly toward Detroit.

When Elmer and I had both fully recovered we formed a copartnership and went into business as lumber merchants at Grand Rapids.

During the fall of the year 1867 my wife's health began to fail, and physicians ordered her to travel South, and there remain for her health.

I accompanied her and we made my father's mansion our home, where we were warmly welcomed. My sisters had married, and lived in the city of Nashville, and one of my brothers was in business with my father—the other brother, William, fell at Gettysburg. I made it my business to go down to Corinth for the purpose of seeing Elsie, now Mrs. Vinsclevé.

Disappointment, however, again awaited me.

Mr. Elden was dead, and nobody knew where his niece and her husband were located.

Nashville did not seem to afford Alice any beneficial result, and accordingly we went to Millville, Florida. Here for a time she appeared quite well, but in the summer of 1869 she began to fail rapidly and died.

Elmer, and his wife and mother, came down to the funeral, and we buried her beneath a spreading orange tree in the cemetery at St. Augustine.

After the funeral, I decided to remain where I was, as I had become quite attached to Florida, and my two children accompan-

ied Elmer North, where they were sent to school.

I engaged extensively in orange culture, and soon, that is, in a very few years, found myself a moderately rich man. I gave my whole attention to my business and as a result grew more and more wealthy.

In the Centennial year, I had the distinguished honor to be considered one of the wealthiest men in Florida.

In 1878 I had occasion to go to Memphis on business.

One day, while there, I strolled out in the neighborhood of Elmwood Cemetery, and entered.

As I sauntered among the graves, my attention was suddenly attracted by a young woman in mourning, who was bending over a grave, and engaged in tenderly embellishing it with flowers.

There was something in the sweet, pale, girlish face, which seemed intuitively to draw me towards it as it glowed with tender devotion, while the lady was thus engaged.

I approached, and, unseen by her, fixed my eyes upon the inscription on the monument.

Judge of my utter consternation when the following met my gaze:

"Capt. Arthur Vinsclevé, C. S. A., killed at Chattanooga, May 9, 1864. Aged, 28."

I looked at the lady; scanned every lineament of her features attentively, and although time had wrought some changes, felt convinced that it was really my Elsie that stood before me; and she appeared more lovely than ever. I approached, looked into her face and smiled pleasantly, while I extended my hand. She looked up, gave a little shriek, and almost fainted. She thought she beheld an apparition of Ned Morton; and in that ghostly place it was no wonder she thought me a supernatural being.

"Why—no; can it be possible that you are Ned Morton? Ned fell at Shelbyville, did he not?"

"No; that is, I rather guess not. I am Ned Morton!"

And, to further convince her, I produced the pink ribbon badge with her own name worked thereon, which, with her dainty fingers she had fastened to my coat on that memorable summer day in 1862.

I had carried it about me in an inside pocket ever since, carefully wrapped in oil silk, as a memento, and, although with sadly faded, she instantly recognized it.

She grasped my hands, and shook them delightedly, trembling with excitement and pleasure.

I allowed her to continue her exclamations and demonstrations of surprise and joy for a few minutes, then asked an explanation of her presence.

She then informed me that since Arthur's death she had resided with his mother in Memphis, not having married again—preferring to remain a charming young widow.

I made it a point to remain at Memphis somewhat longer than my original business in that city demanded, and it is needless to observe that Elsie soon set aside her notion of remaining a widow, and accepted my proposal of marriage.

I narrated to her all my experience, and she seemed much interested; listening very attentively, while tears over and anon filled her eyes, as I recounted the many scenes of peril. She said she was glad that after all I had subsequently fought on the side to which my convictions naturally led me, and remarked that I was "a traitor to my true side"—but a quiet and soldier of both.

After our quiet wedding, Elsie accompanied me to the beautiful orange groves near St. Augustine, where peace, tranquility and bliss have since prevailed.

[THE END.]

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