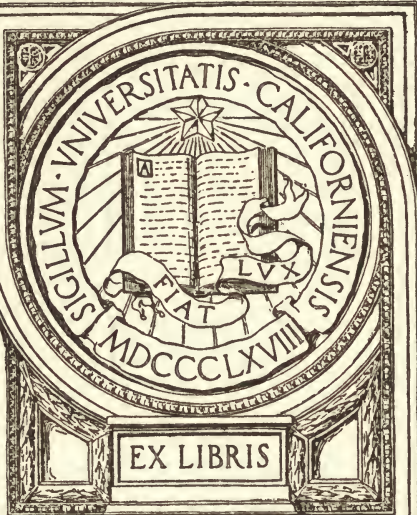




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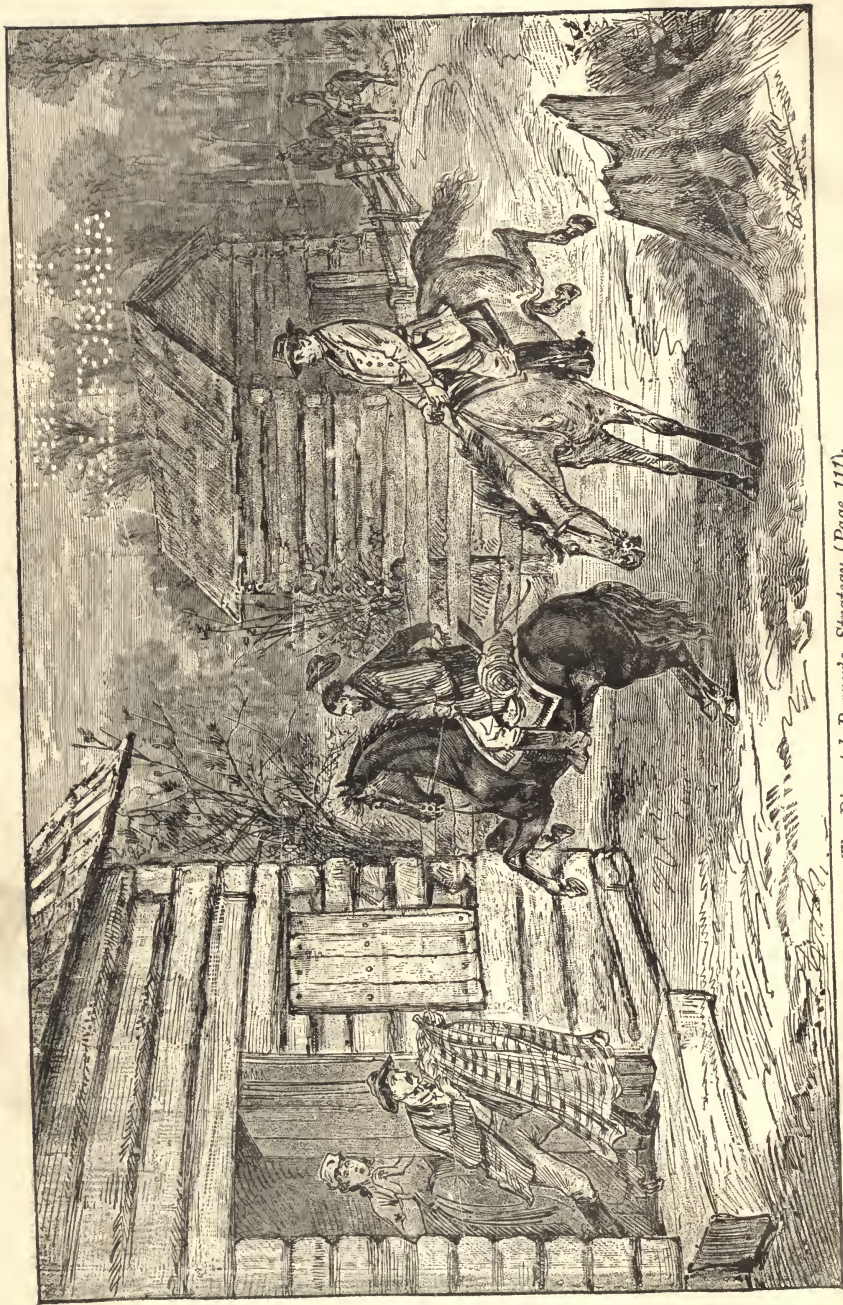














# DEEDS OF DARING

BY

# THE AMERICAN SOLDIER

## NORTH AND SOUTH

THRILLING NARRATIVES OF

PERSONAL ADVENTURE, EXPLOITS OF SCOUTS AND SPIES, FORLORN HOPES, HEROIC BRAVERY, PATIENT ENDURANCE, IMPRISONMENTS AND HAIR BREADTH ESCAPES, ROMANTIC INCIDENTS, HAND TO HAND STRUGGLES, HUMOROUS AND TRAGIC EVENTS, PERILOUS JOURNEYS, BOLD DASHES, BRILLIANT SUCCESSES, MAGNANIMOUS ACTIONS, ETC., ON EACH SIDE THE LINE

## DURING THE CIVIL WAR

BY D. M. KELSEY,

*Author of "Pioneer Heroes and Daring Deeds."*

REVISED EDITION.

THE SAALFIELD PUBLISHING CO.  
NEW YORK      AKRON, OHIO      CHICAGO  
1903

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# DEEDS OF DARING

BY

# THE AMERICAN SOLDIER

## CHAPTER I.

### A PERSEVERING MESSENGER.

The Dispatch Bearers—Danger of the Mission—An Unlucky Meeting—The Messenger Gets Left—Sent Back—Another Start—A More Unlucky Meeting—Court-martialed by Guerillas—A Friend in Need—Sent Back Again—Irrepressible—A Rendezvous in the Woods—Important Information—Why He Went Back—Gives It Up.

IT was the night of the 21st of April, 1861, when four men took their seats on the train from the National Capital to Annapolis. They held no communication with each other, and any ordinary observer would have supposed them entire strangers; but this was only an assumed manner, in order to increase the chances of doing the work assigned to them. They were Col. Lander, Maj. Welsh, Mr. Van Valkenburg and Commissary Patton of the New York Seventh Regiment, and were charged with dispatches of importance from Gen. Scott, then in command of the United States Army, to Gen. Butler. The mission was fraught with peculiar danger and difficulty, as so many of the Marylanders were ardent Secessionists; and the Union men could not, at that early stage of the war, tell readily what chance-met friend would turn out a foe. But the four with whom we have to deal thought they were to be favored by fortune in this respect, as they reached the Junction without any one of them having been recognized.

Such good fortune was not to last forever, though; for, as the train drew up at the platform, and Mr. Patton, with the

other passengers, stepped off the car, his hand was warmly grasped by an old acquaintance.

"Why, how are you, Patton? I thought you were a National Guard—what are you doing here?"

"Oh, nothing in particular. You oughtn't to think so much."

"Oughtn't to think so much? What do you mean?"

Mr. Patton quietly explained as much of the real state of affairs as was necessary and not imprudent; but the mischief was already done. In those days there were men always ready to play the spy over another's actions, to gain in an underhand and surreptitious manner knowledge having a market price; and although few officers were willing to hold any converse with such men, there were some who held that *all* things were fair in war. One of these informers had happened to overhear the bluff greeting, and lost no time in conveying the fact that a member of the National Guard was in town.

Mr. Patton strolled toward the Annapolis train with his friend, little suspecting that any note had been taken of that friend's words. But the suspicion had spread rapidly, and when he went to the hotel, to find when the train would start, he was put off by evasive answers to that simple question; they had no time table up to date—thought it would go in fifteen minutes—and the speaker appealed to a bystander. Mr. Patton was about to remonstrate somewhat angrily, when he saw the train, some forty or fifty yards from him, move off. At the same time he was approached by a resident of the town, whom he afterwards found to be a prominent lawyer there.

"What is your business in town, sir?" this individual asked.

"It is not with you, sir," replied Mr. Patton, as politely as the meaning of his words would permit.

"But mine is with you; you are suspected of being a spy."

"I am no spy, but a messenger from the War Department at Washington to the commandant at Annapolis."

The stranger bowed and withdrew; but only a few feet; from the new position he signaled to the captain of a militia company that was drilling a short distance away. The drill was interrupted, and the entire force marched towards them. The captain stepped up to Mr. Patton and demanded his business.

"I am a messenger from the Secretary of War to the Commandant at Annapolis. I do not understand why you question me; are you an officer of the United States?"

"I am in command of the militia volunteering for home protection. We are not United States soldiers."

"I was not aware that this state had seceded. In any event, I demand that you treat me as a prisoner of war, for I am an officer of the United States Government."

A little cowed by the prisoner's resolute tone, the officer withdrew to hold a council of war with two or three of his subordinates. The conference was a short one; all had heard everything that had been said, and had been affected in the same way. After a moment the captain turned again to Mr. Patton:

"Well," he said, "you can't go on, anyhow; you've got to go back to Washington. We'll send you back in a wagon."

"Very well," replied Mr. Patton; "I suppose your wagon is not ready yet? I'll walk along the road until it overtakes me."

This was assented to; but if he had any hopes of escaping from them in that way, and continuing his journey, they were doomed to disappointment, for the wagon overtook him in a very short time, and he was driven to the outposts of Washington. But, although he had not objected to their arrangements when he was in the hands of the militia, he had no notion of carrying out their plans any farther than necessity compelled. So that the wagon was hardly out of sight when he turned to retrace his steps, hoping to reach Annapolis by a road which did not lead through the Junction. Being very tired, he felt that he would be unable to proceed much farther, when he was overtaken by a farmer driving home. The offer of a dollar for a "lift," was gladly accepted, and Mr. Patton slept in the bottom of the wagon until the countryman arrived at his destination.

Once more on foot, he must find a guide, that the journey might be accomplished as speedily as possible; and was fortunate enough to overtake a boy who agreed, "for a consideration," to act in that capacity. Everything appeared to go well upon this second start, and he began to hope that his progress would not again be interrupted. But as they turned into the main road, they were met by a half-drunken fellow armed to the teeth, who ordered them to "hold on, there."

"Who are you?" he demanded.

"My name is Moore," replied Patton, anxious that his real name and errand should not be known to the guerillas, of whom this fellow was evidently one.

"Where (hic) you going to?"

"I'm going to Annapolis, to collect some money due me there."

The questioner eyed him critically for a moment, and Patton thought that suspicion would fail to get into that befuddled brain, when the guerilla broke out with:

"Say, I don't (hic) b'lieve a d—d word o' that. You're a Yankee spy; tha's wha' y'are."

"I have told you my name and business," said Mr. Patton firmly; "now let me pass."

"Won't let any d—d Yankee spy pass. You've got to (hic) come with me to tavern. Come 'long, now."

If the messenger had spoken firmly, his waylayer showed signs of stubbornness such as is only to be seen in a man something more than half-seas-over; and knowing that a shot, or any other alarm,



"You're a Yankee Spy."

would speedily call a larger force to the ground, Mr. Patton decided to go to the tavern, hoping to escape on the way, or to find that his captor had no reinforcements there except liquor. But, unfortunately, his calculations were based on false grounds; and he found several other guerillas there, all fully armed, and all as drunk as his captor. The latter announced that he had taken a prisoner, and the whole company was speedily resolved into a court martial.

"Gen'lm'n, 'fore we proceed ter c'nsideration (hic) this case, le's have 'nother drink all round."

"I move to 'mend—two drinks."

The drinks were accordingly ordered and discussed. The captor was called as witness.

"Court martial's always held in writing—too much trouble in this case for such a fellow's that. Where'd you ketch him?"

"Down 't the fork; he's a spy."

"Then he ought to be shot," decided the first, who acted as chief of the judges, and appeared to have some kind of authority over the others.

"'Taint so," growled a third; "hang him, if he's a spy."

"Don' know," remarked a fourth, who appeared to be less drunk than the others; "better lock him up."

Number five had been nodding over his empty glass; but now awakened with a start, and sagely remarked that they had better take another drink on it. The wisdom of this decision was so apparent that there was no argument following it, and the liquor was unanimously called for. But if before they had had any idea of prudence, or of obedience to the laws of war, it was washed completely away as the fiery stuff was gulped down; and in a moment more they were all resolved to hang the spy. A rope was procured, and the prisoner, who saw no possibility of escape, was marched out into the yard. The rope was adjusted over the limb of a tree with as much skill as if the members of the court martial had occasionally assisted Judge Lynch, and the preparations were complete.

"Hallo! What are you doing there?" asked a horseman, who had ridden up while they were making their few rude arrangements.

"Going to hang a d—d Yankee spy," was the answer, in a tone in which obstinacy and deference were curiously mingled.

"Fall back!" was the authoritative command; and the horseman, as soon as his order was obeyed, approached Mr. Patton, and said:

"I know you; you are a member of the National Guard; I drank with you in Baltimore. Where were you going when they captured you?"

"To Annapolis."

"On your own business, or that of the United States Government?"

"That of the Government."

"Well, I can't allow you to go on; that would be inconsistent with my duty as commander of this district; but if you will give me your word of honor that you will go straight back to Washington, I will release you."

Patton, glad to be released on any conditions from the drunken set who had held him prisoner, readily consented to do this, and was soon retracing his steps a second time. He arrived at

Washington without further adventure, and reported the failure of his efforts to Gen. Scott. In the capital he learned that three colleagues with whom he had set out, had been no more successful than himself, having been arrested and sent back before they reached Annapolis.

But he was not thus to be baffled; he had made two efforts and failed; and with faith in the magic of the mystic number, he determined to try the third time. His parole, of course, did not bind him to any course of action, except the direct return to Washington; he had re-entered the capital in accordance with his promise, and had reported to the general in command of the forces there; he was then free to enter upon any other work, and he chose to make the attempt once more.

He next disguised himself completely, and in company with a friend who owned a very fast team, drove out of the capital in a buggy. The object of the trip was to search for a stolen horse; and every one whom they met was questioned as to whether he had seen the animal in question. Strangely enough, no one had seen any traces of such a stray horse as the two described, and they drove onward. Their ruse forbade their traveling by night; so, as darkness came on, they stopped at a tavern for supper, lodging and breakfast. Having duly refreshed the inner man, the two retired to the room assigned them. But Patton, in order to gain time, decided to push through on foot.

It was important, however, that this movement should not be known to the people in the house until the next morning; so he departed by stealth, when they supposed he had gone to bed; his companion remaining to take the buggy and horses back to Washington. He made his way to the woods, fearing that on the road he might be stopped; and journeyed to a considerable distance without meeting with any adventure. But now the sound of horses' feet were heard and the voices of men. He hastily concealed himself; and all his haste was needed; he had scarcely a moment to spare before they were within a few feet of his hiding-place. There, much to his dismay, they halted, and were soon joined by two or three other parties that came from different quarters. It was evidently a rendezvous, but whether of guerillas or regularly enlisted Confederates, he could not tell.

"Where's the Seventh, now?" asked one who appeared to have the authority of a commanding officer.

"Embarked on the Washington train this evening," said one.



“Is that bridge all right?”

“Yes, sir,” replied another; the nuts are all off the bolts; the train is bound to go down.”

This was evidently the chief thing to be reported, and in a little time the whole body moved off. Creeping from his hiding-place as soon as they were far enough away to render it safe, Patton hastened back to the hotel and aroused his companion. Together they started towards the bridge which had been so tampered with, intending to prevent the passage of the train. His effort in this case was successful, for the train was not quite due when they arrived at the end of the bridge, and many lives were saved by the timely warning.

The third effort to get to Annapolis was now foiled; for, even if his identity and business were not known at the hotel, he had at least aroused suspicion by leaving with his friend in the middle of the night. Then, too, he was utterly worn out by the three attempts, having driven eighty miles and walked thirty in the thirty hours. So after three distinct efforts to perform the task assigned him, he was finally obliged to turn it over to others, with only the consolation of a duty bravely attempted, though baffled by circumstances.

## CHAPTER II.

### PAST THE BLOCKADERS.

Precautions Before Leaving England—An Uninviting Vessel and Unwilling Captain—Chased—Into the Jaws of Death—And Out Again—Followed—A Persistent Enemy—But Bad Marksmanship—No Shots in Reply—Nothing to Shoot—The Blockaders Get Tired—And the Rebs Get a Rest.

A CERTAIN wealthy South Carolinian, accompanied by his wife, went abroad in the year 1860. After several months spent pleasantly in Europe, they proceeded to Egypt. Here they lingered over the ancient ruins until suddenly called again to the living active world. A special courier had been sent up the Nile with some intelligence of merely personal interest; he brought with him some papers of later date than the tourists had yet seen; and in these was contained the startling information that the first gun had been fired at Sumter upon the National Flag.

“We must go home at once,” said the traveler to his wife; “for every man will be needed in the Southern army before the struggle is ended.”

Hastily, then, they prepared to depart. A Vigilance Committee of the North had been established in London, as they learned on reaching the English metropolis; the United States Minister, Mr. Adams, is said to have repudiated indignantly all knowledge of the proceedings of this institution; but however this might be, our tourists' friends informed them that the names of Southern men who left England for the West Indies were invariably gazetted in the New York papers. To avoid this, our traveler, whose name was one well-known in the annals of his native State, was advised to adopt another, which would not be so readily recognized. It was as Mr. and Mrs. Crosby, then, that they

sailed from Southampton, and by that name we will call them throughout this story.

We need not follow them in their voyage to Havana, where they arrived just three days after Messrs. Mason and Slidell had resumed their interrupted journey to England. Safe under the protection of the British flag of the vessel in which they had crossed the ocean, they had no difficulty whatever in getting into port; getting out was a different matter, when they were at last re-embarked in a Confederate vessel.

In the first place, they had to wait several days for the arrival of such a craft. Finally, one arrived—a swift, strong steamer, drawing but little water, and, consequently, most admirably adapted to the work in which she was engaged. She had served as a tug-boat on the Lower Mississippi before the war—and a boat less fitted for the reception of passengers could not easily have been found. Nor did she, to the amateur eye, appear seaworthy. Besides all these disadvantages, the crew were as reckless looking a set of dare-devils as could be picked up in New Orleans for a service so full of perils. Altogether, the idea of a voyage in such a vessel was so uninviting that one gentleman, who, with his wife, had expected to accompany Mr. and Mrs. Crosby, flatly refused to ship in the *Victoria*.

During the stay of this vessel in Havana, she passed into the hands of English owners, who determined to run her back at all hazards. She had brought over a cargo of cotton and sugar, on which, in anticipation of future scarcity of these articles, an unusually handsome profit had been made. The proceeds were invested in forty thousand pounds of gunpowder, a commodity sorely needed in the Confederacy. A number of rifles and other munitions of war were placed in her hold, the mass of the cargo being just under the cabin. As a protection from chance sparks, a layer of bags of coffee was placed over the gunpowder; but the carelessness of all the smokers on board made it wonderful that no stray cigar stump fell into this somewhat inflammable shield.

“I don’t know exactly what the chances are of our being captured by the Yankees,” remarked Mr. Crosby to a fellow-passenger, “but it looks as if we were quite as likely to be blown up by our own men.”

The listener, a Louisianian named Beaujeu, only shrugged his shoulders and smiled in reply.

"Well, whatever happens," put in another of the party, a Mississippian, named Cooper, "we can't accuse the captain of persuading us to ship with him. He has done all in his power to frighten us off, and has ended by insisting that the owners shall charge us an exorbitant fare in gold."

"Certainly, my dear fellow, if a stray spark penetrates to the powder, we'll not blame the captain or anybody else," rejoined Crosby.

"Nobody'll ever know who was to blame," continued Beaujeu, with mock pathos.

But in spite of the captain's objections to passengers, there were several of them on board the *Victoria* when about six o'clock on the evening of February 7th, 1861, she steamed out of the harbor of Havana. There was no danger of meeting with the enemy less than three miles from shore, for that distance from the territory of a neutral power they were bound by the law of nations to respect.

In those early days of the war, the Federal authorities had not yet learned the importance of guarding the Pennsylvania coal mines. Anthracite coal was still exported, and thus the Confederate steamers were enabled to obtain, from so-called neutrals, a supply of the fuel so necessary to their safety. There was no smoke from the smoke-stacks of the *Victoria* as she stood out from Havana, and but for information which the United States Consul at that port had managed to convey to the captain of a man-of-war just without the charmed boundary between neutral waters and the high seas, the *Victoria* would probably have passed unobserved.

"Ten thousand stars were in the sky,  
Ten thousand in the sea,"

as the Federal hailed the long, low craft which glided like a shadow over the water. No answer was given to the summons, and the boom of a gun was heard. But the shot fell short, for the cunning captain of the *Victoria* had discovered the Federal in time to get his vessel out of range. "A stern chase is a long chase," when the speed of the pursuer is well matched with that of the pursued; but if the latter chances to be the swifter, the former must soon give up the effort. So it was in this case: the *Victoria* easily distanced the man-of-war, and was safe for the present.

They had to battle with the next enemy that beset them, however; for the "gigantic storm-wind" is a foe that no ship can

evade. But we are concerned only with their adventures in connection with the blockading fleet, and need not follow the staunch little vessel, or the passengers through the qualms of sea-sickness, and amid the storm; for, although her machinery suffered severely from the strain which it underwent in battling against the gale, she was yet able to proceed on her way at a sufficiently rapid rate to escape pursuit. The build of the Confederate enabled her officers to desery Federal cruisers before she herself was perceived, and she gave to such a wide berth. The principle adopted on such occasions was: "Where you see a flag or a ship, avoid it," and, in carrying out such a policy, long detours are unavoidable.

About mid-day of the third day from Havana, the officer upon duty suddenly espied, upon his right, the smoke of several steamers, their masts rising clear against the blue wintry sky. They had unconsciously sailed almost into the jaws of the blockading squadron, riding before the passes at the mouth of the Mississippi. Instantly the alarm was given; the head of the little steamer was turned, and as much steam crowded on as the weakened machinery would bear. The engine throbbed like the heart of some immense animal, fearful of an enemy yet more powerful.

The officers and men were on the alert; the passengers equally so. The gentlemen offered their services, if assistance should be required; the ladies clung together and looked on in terror.

"Thanks for the offer," replied the captain; but we hope to show them a clean pair of heels. Do not be alarmed, ladies; we shall escape without danger. 'He who fights and runs away,' you know, 'may live to fight another day;' and we mean to increase our chances by running away before we fight."

Faster and faster sped the *Victoria*, and after her in hot pursuit two Federal men-of-war. For a long time the result was doubtful; then, to the anxious eyes on board the little vessel it seemed that the outlines of masts were a trifle dimmer; gradually they faded, until not a speck blurred the outline between sea and sky.

Great was the jubilation among the passengers as the man on the lookout announced that the enemy was no longer visible. Had they not escaped a dozen other Federal war ships in precisely the same way? But these had been closer than any, and therefore the triumph was the greater.

“Not so fast,” said the captain, shaking his head dubiously; “to use a landsman’s phrase, ‘Never halloo you’re safe until you’re out of the woods.’ They’ve not given up the chase so easily, and, besides, there’s another misfortune that has befallen us.

His tone was very grave, his look anxious.

“What is it?” they cried in chorus.

“I have been consulting with the pilot, comparing notes as to our deviations from our course. These have put us far out of our reckoning, and neither of us knows anything about this part of the coast.”

The passengers looked at each other in dismay.

“What’s the matter?” asked Beaujeu, whose attention had been momentarily diverted.

The situation was duly explained to him. He laughed good-humoredly.

“Why, you needn’t mind a little thing like that, Captain —; I’ve hunted and fished around this coast ever since I was half as big as a mosquito, and I know just where we are. Where’s your chart, Captain?”

The chart was submitted to the volunteer pilot, who, true to his promise, pointed out various landmarks which had been familiar since his childhood, but which were unknown to the seamen. Thus set right, they directed their course to Barrataria Bay, which they entered after a few hours’ sail. Thus they were nearly at their destination—Fort Livingston—which guarded the entrance to the passes leading into the Mississippi River. The Federal cruisers seldom approached this stronghold, which was only about two days’ journey from New Orleans, then in the hands of the Confederates; and our blockade runners began to congratulate themselves on having been successful. And when, that very evening, they succeeded in establishing communication with the Fort, they felt themselves indeed secure.

The commander of Fort Livingston despatched a pilot to assist the officers of the *Victoria* to run her in under the guns of the Fort; but, after repeated trials, lasting almost until day-break, it was found that the water was too shoal to admit of their approaching nearer than three miles from the Fort, whose guns were not of sufficient range to cover them at that distance. Under advice of the pilot, they therefore anchored at the nearest possible point to await the rise of the tide, which, he assured

them, would easily carry them in if they would but wait till ten o'clock, A. M.

Comforted by this assurance, and confident of safety, the wearied crew and officers were permitted to turn in, the three passengers—Messrs. Crosby, Beaujeu and Cooper—volunteering to keep watch, along with the few whom naval discipline required to be on deck. All was tranquil for the remainder of the night, and the morning dawned with a glory such as is seldom seen at that season of the year.

Eight o'clock came, and all were once more stirring. From the cook's domain came the scent of fragrant coffee, and the appetizing sizzle of fresh fish, fried as only one of the old-fashioned colored cooks can fry them. Crosby stood idly drumming with one hand, the other grasping a spy-glass.

"I reckon I'll go below," he said; "but now for one last look, to make sure."

He raised his glass as he spoke, and, as if in bravado, swept around the horizon. He started back in astonishment, then again raised his glass to his eye.

"What's the matter, Mr. Crosby?" asked Beaujeu, observing his actions.

"Look at that dark line yonder; what do you think it is?"

The officer on duty came up at that moment, and the three looked in the direction indicated.

"It certainly is a column of smoke," said Crosby.

"And it is moving this way," said Beaujeu.

"Very rapidly," added the Lieutenant; "I will wake the captain."

A council of war was called at once, to which the three civilians were admitted, by right of services willingly rendered in the past, and likely to be required in the future.

"To be captured at the very last moment, after all our escapes, is unbearable!" exclaimed one.

"It would be," rejoined another; "but we are not captured yet."

"No, and we will not be," replied the captain, emphatically; "sooner than have that powder fall into the enemy's hands I'll set a match to it myself."

"Can't we get under the guns of the Fort before high tide?" asked one.

"The shore pilot says not; we'll have to run her as far in as

she'll go, and then beach her if necessary. The guns of the Fort can't help her much, for the pilot tells me there's really a powder famine there. Their supplies have been delayed or captured on the way, and they have not ammunition enough for a dozen rounds from the guns."

"Then we must save the powder," put in Beaujeu, energetically.

"How?" demanded an officer, curtly; and the young man suddenly lost enthusiasm.

In accordance with the decision of the captain, the vessel was put in motion. The incoming tide made it possible for them to get within two miles of the Fort; but there she stuck fast. Rapidly the column of black smoke that had at first alarmed them, developed into the full outlines of a man-of-war, the United States steamer *DeVoto*. This vessel was a trim-looking craft that carried several rifled cannon and other guns, but as she drew much more water than the *Victoria*, she was obliged to lie to at a distance of three quarters of a mile. Her movements, as may well be believed, were anxiously watched from the deck of the Confederate.

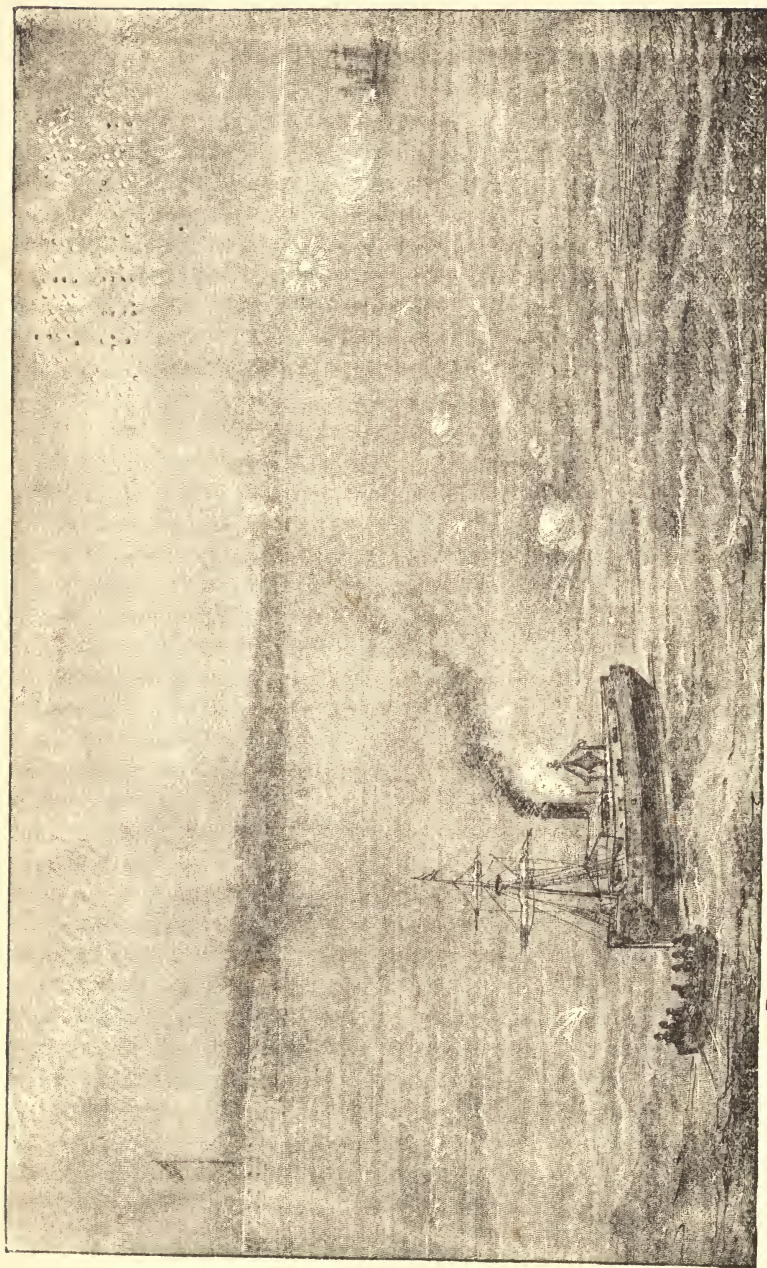
As the Federal was seen to stop, unable to approach them any nearer, the Union Jack was run up to the mast-head of the *Victoria*; but the ruse was too transparent to deceive the blue-coated officers, and the attempt to fool them was answered by a shotted gun.

Their own powers of defense were but small, and nothing was to be expected from the Fort, as its guns could not command their position. As the shot dashed up the water around them, they hastily launched the boats, hoping to secure the safety of the ladies on board, and (what was of far more importance in a military point of view) deliver certain dispatches and other important papers into the hands of the commander of the fort. The officers of the *DeVoto* had in some way learned this part of the *Victoria's* errand; and not knowing that there were women on board, the Federal guns were directed upon the boats. Fortunately, the marksmen of the *DeVoto* were not experts, and the boats and their occupants were unharmed.

In response to the request of Capt. B—— of the *Victoria*, Col. S——, in command of the Louisiana Volunteer Regiment that manned the fort, sent a detachment of one hundred men with two cannon down to the landing place; for had the vessel been left







*Pursued and Pursuer Fast Aground. An Anxious Day in Blockade-Running.*

undefended, the greater part of the crew being engaged in the boats, there would have been imminent danger from the launches of the Federal steamer. As it was, these guns formed a sufficient protection, being provided with a considerable proportion of the ammunition of the Fort.

The men of the party, officers, crew and passengers, returned immediately to the beach after having paid their respects to Col. S—— and left the ladies in safety. The guns on shore were not enough to have done the DeVoto any serious harm, especially as she kept very carefully out of range of the fourteen left at the Fort; but hour after hour the group on the beach marked first the flash, then the report and curling smoke, followed by the dash of the water as the ball struck, then ricocheted over their heads, so close that they dodged in spite of themselves. The Confederates wasted little or no powder in the effort to answer these compliments, having none of that valuable commodity to spare.

All day long this one-sided warfare was kept up, until the Federal had fired no less than two hundred and eighty-three times at the vessel and the troops near her. Of this multitude of shots, but three struck; two of these were solid shot which inflicted some slight injury upon the rigging; the third was a shell, which was afterward found in a bag of coffee, the fuse extinguished. Had that shell exploded as it was expected to do, the Victoria would have gone up like a rocket, and come down as splinters.

Slowly the day passed, a day of great anxiety to all who were interested in the fate of the Victoria and her cargo; for the latter was worth more than money to the Confederates at that period; and while the force here did not dare to make any effort to land the powder until the DeVoto should disappear, there was no saying when a shell might prove the instrument of destruction. At last, as the twilight of the short winter day began to deepen into night the DeVoto ceased firing and steamed sullenly away in the direction of the blockading fleet.

Now was the opportunity of Capt. B——, and his assistants, officers, men and passengers, with such help as might volunteer from the Fort; for they readily divined the Federal's purpose of bringing other vessels of lighter draught to capture that which she had been unable to approach. There was a number of small luggers plying in the bay and through the bayous, and these were immediately put into active operation to lighten the powder ship. So well did they perform their task that by about

two hours before daylight, the ship was lightened sufficiently to be gotten in safety under the guns of the Fort.

When the gray light of morning first made distant objects visible, the sentry on the Fort proclaimed a sail in sight. It was the DeVoto, accompanied by two others, in one of which the Southerners recognized a vessel of their own, captured by the Northern navy only a few weeks before. Drawing even less water than the *Victoria*, escape from these, had she been in the same exposed situation as on the previous day, would have been impossible; and the Confederates enjoyed immensely the disappointment of their baffled enemies at this escape of their prey.

During the day the number of the blockaders was increased to five. They hovered round like hawks above a dove-cote, anxious to injure, but fearing to attack, lest they themselves be driven off—just out of range of the guns of the Fort; and for two days they continued to do this, leading the Southerners to suppose they meditated an attack. Had they been aware of the actual condition of affairs, they could not only have cut out the *Victoria*, but captured Fort Livingston as well; for valor is nothing under such circumstances without shot and shell.

Happily that danger passed away. No treachery revealed to the bluecoats the lack of ammunition—the stronghold of the gray-jackets; and the DeVoto and her companions at last withdrew, determined that no other vessel should elude their watch, and slip through their fingers as the saucy little *Victoria* had done.

## CHAPTER III.

### ZOUAVES ON A SCOUT.

Ready to Move—Spoiling for a Fight—Reconnoitering—Returning—Three to One—  
“We'll Back You”—A Surprise—A Skedaddle—A Brisk Engagement—A Rapid  
Retreat—The Spoils of the Battle—Caring for the Wounded—Another Surprise  
—A Strong Position—A Desperate Defense—A Hand-to-Hand Encounter—  
Terrible Odds—Every Man for Himself—Help Comes Too Late—Marks of the  
Fight.

COLONEL WALLACE, in command of the Zouaves at Cumberland, in 1861, was accustomed to post his mounted scouts at different points along the approaches to that place; but, having failed, on the 27th of that month, to obtain some very necessary information of the enemy's movements, he determined to employ these men in a body as a reconnoitering party. There were but thirteen of the men, but they were the pick of nine different companies, and constant practice for a number of months had made them valuable and efficient in their peculiar line of duty. Accordingly he sent for one of them, D. B. Hay by name.

“Corporal Hay, do you know where Frankfort is?”

“Yes, sir; it's on the pike between here and Romney.”

“Very well; you will take the twelve other scouts as your command, and go to Frankfort and find out if there are any rebels there. Start immediately.”

Hay saluted and turned away to collect his men. The latter part of the order was not difficult to obey, for the scouts, accustomed as they were to be suddenly called on for active service on such expeditions as this, were soon ready. Canteens and haversacks were hastily filled, and strapping their rifles to their backs, the twelve men mounted their horses, much the worse for

hard service, but the only animals that were available, while their officer bestrode the only steed worthy of his master, that belonged to the command—a trophy of a skirmish a few days before. Notwithstanding the broken-down condition of their mount, however, there were no laggards in the little party that rode out of Cumberland that June morning; nor did the general opinion of their comrades, that Hay was spoiling for a fight and wouldn't come back until he had had one, deter them. To men of their bold and dashing courage such a prediction was not a check, but a spur.

Onward they rode, until, as they drew rein on a small eminence, the little village of Frankfort lay in full view. Along the one crooked street, the mere widening of the road that led to and from the town, were scattered the houses of various grades, from the substantial brick mansion of the merchant or lawyer or doctor down to the rough and fragile frame cottage of the laborer. Along the street, too, standing talking in groups, walking slowly along, or lounging before the stores, were many Confederate infantrymen; while the number of horses picketed near the town showed that there must be a considerable force of cavalry there. Not for an instant did the men who, from the grove-crowned summit of the hill, looked upon the scene, think of the danger to themselves; that was always the last consideration. There was merely a sigh of regret that, independently of the enemy's numbers, they must ride away without attacking; for they must return, with the information they had obtained, to Col. Wallace. As soon, then, as they had each made a careful estimate of the enemy's numbers, and, comparing them, found them to agree with each other, they turned their horses and rode leisurely back to Cumberland.

For some reason they chose to return by a different road than that by which they had reached Frankfort; nor does this choice admit of any reasonable explanation; it was by no means the "shortest way home," but, on the contrary, rather the "longest way round;" there was no real necessity for them to explore it, as they would probably never be sent that way again; and there was no ground for believing it safest. Far from it. They had reached a point between three and four miles distant from Frankfort, and were descending a steep mountain side, when a sharp turn of the road suddenly showed a considerable body of Confederate cavalymen not far from them. Instantly all

drew rein, as if they were but puppets worked by the same piece of mechanism; and though there had been no word of command uttered, each proceeded, as the little party halted, to count the men before them.

"How many do you make of them, Hollenback?" asked Hay.

"Forty-one," answered the man, whom he had addressed. Hay looked around the group questioningly, and each man nodded as the leader's eye met his; each had reached the same result.

"Well?" he asked, briefly.

"Go in, Dave; we'll back you," was the reponse of one, echoed in the same silent way, and emphasized by a grim smile on each bronzed face.

"Are you ready, now?" he asked.

"Yes, ready for anything; go on, and we'll follow," was the reply, as they unslung their rifles.

"Come on, then, and the devil take the hindmost!" cried Hay, as, setting spurs to his horse, he dashed down the decline.

On rode the Zouaves after their leader, at a speed as nearly headlong as the character and condition of their horses would permit. Though so far outnumbered, the Federals were not without advantages which somewhat counterbalanced the superior force of the enemy. The road was but narrow, and, as we have said, on sloping ground, the Federals being somewhat above the Confederates; an abrupt declivity on their left and a nearly precipitous wall ascending on their right would prevent the formation of a line of battle by the Southerners, who would not have room even to wheel their horses and charge up hill at the handful of men who proposed to attack them. The situation of the Zouaves was one in which the renowned Davy Crockett would have gloried, for to "go ahead," was the one course possible. Even if they halted, danger more than ordinary awaited them, for the impetus acquired in their rapid descent would carry the Federals into the very midst of the enemy.

As Hay came thundering down the hill, shouting to his men, the Confederates, until then in blissful ignorance of an enemy's presence, halted, surprised, to look back. The assailants were not more than seventy or eighty yards away, and were rapidly approaching. Never once supposing anything but that there was a large force about to attack them, and recognizing the difficulties of their position, the Rebs put spurs to their horses and galloped hastily onward in no very good order. The Zou-

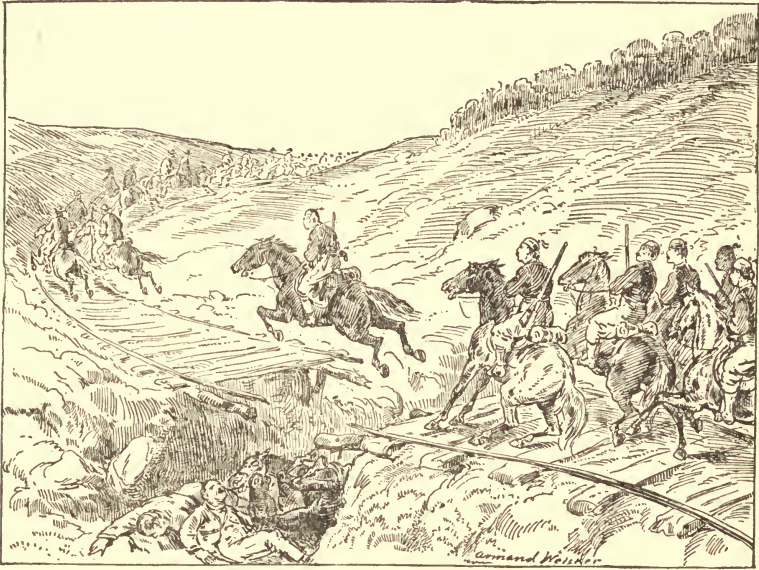
aves, who had hitherto, save for the brief answers given their leader, preserved a grim silence, now vied with each other in the wild yells which they uttered. Onward, onward, they rode, these grim huntsmen of human game, and their cries, echoed and re-echoed by the hillsides, grew more and more unearthly.

Owing solely to the superiority of his mount—for they every one rode recklessly—Hay was far in advance of his men. The Confederates had not quite reached the foot of the hill when he overtook them, firing his rifle when almost in their midst. As one of the Confederates reeled in the saddle, he hurled the now useless weapon (for he had, of course, no time to reload) at a second; the Reb, stunned by the force of the blow, fell; but Hay, without waiting to see the result, drew his revolver and plunged into their midst. For a minute or two the bullets flew hither and thither; as a gray-jacket was pierced by one from Hay's pistol, another struck the Federal; maddened by the thought that the wound might be fatal, he fired again with the same deadly aim as before; then another, and another, before a second struck him. Two more shots and his revolver was exhausted. Drawing his sabre-bayonet, he prepared to use that, when, with a flash in the sunlight and a whirr of swift motion, a sabre, in the hands of a Confederate behind him, descended upon his own head. Still, weakened as he was and half-blinded by the blood which soon began to flow over his face from this cut, he thrust right and left most manfully.

It was the commanding officer of the Confederates who had dealt the sabre cut. Hauling back for a fresh blow, he at the very instant that his hand began to descend, received a wound in the arm that paralyzed its power. The ball came from the rifle of a Zouave, Lewis Farley, who had just reached the scene of battle in time to see his officer's danger. Still advancing with unchecked speed, he was unhorsed by the encounter; but the accident did not render him useless. Grappling with the enemy who had been similarly served by his onset, there was for a moment a desperate struggle; at last the Federal was thrown. By this time the whole of Hay's little force had come up, and before the Confederate could make use of his advantage over Farley, another Zouave, Hollowell, had knocked him down. Springing to his feet, Farley vaulted into the saddle of a horse that Hay's revolver had made riderless, and that far surpassed the one from which he had been thrown.



So sudden had been the onset, so sharp had been the conflict, that the Confederates were still uncertain as to the number attacking them; while the irregular but headlong advance of the Zouaves made it appear as if they had dropped from the clouds. How long it might rain fighting devils clad in big breeches and small caps, they could not tell; and thinking discretion the better part of valor, they put spurs to their horses and continued the flight which Hay's solitary onset had arrested. Madly down the hill they rushed, until the track of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad was reached; then along the road-bed, with something like the speed a horseman might use if chased by a locomotive in a tunnel, they dashed away.



*A Headlong Pursuit.*

But even at that early day in the history of the war, the importance of this line of railroad was fully appreciated, and there had been an effort made to stop travel on it. A culvert had been burned by some marauding party, whether Northern or Southern is uncertain and unimportant; certainly the fact that it had been so destroyed was not known to either of the two parties whose fortunes we are now following. The Confederates, indeed, did not discover the gap in the road until it was too late to check their horses; they must take the leap. Spurring their

animals to yet greater speed, that the added impetus might increase their chances of safety, they plunged on. Many reached the farther side in safety, but eight, wounded, or less excellently mounted than their comrades, failed to gain the roadway again; and falling heavily into the rugged chasm, were either crushed under their horses or killed by the force of the fall.

Hay, wounded as he was, was the foremost in the pursuit, and to him, as to the Confederates, the dangerous leap was unavoidable. His spirited horse, however, carried him safely over; but the noble animal had received in his body more than one bullet meant for his master, and weakened by loss of blood and by the severe exertion to which he had been subjected, had borne his rider but a short distance from the culvert when a deadly tremor passed through every limb, and he fell dead upon the earth. Hay had barely time to extricate himself from his stirrups before the horse fell. Thus deprived of his only means for pursuing the fugitives, and unable, by reason of his wounds, to drag himself onward, he sat down upon the ground beside the dead horse, and cried like a child over its loss.

The scouts, seeing the dangers of the leap across the burnt culvert in time to check their horses, turned aside from the road a little and by a slight detour were enabled to reach their wounded comrade without incurring the risk. Of course pursuit was now useless; so they devoted themselves to taking care of the spoils. Seventeen good horses, in fair condition, with all their equipments, had been the reward they had earned by their brave attack; while eleven of the Confederates lay dead upon the ground. Congratulating themselves upon the brilliant victory which they had achieved, they set their leader upon one of the captured horses, each man selected one in place of his own broken-down steed, and they continued their journey to the town of Cumberland.

"Boys," faltered their officer, in a weak voice, when they were but a few miles from the scene of conflict; "Boys, I'm getting so weak I don't believe I can go any farther."

"Can't you hold out to Cumberland? 'Tisn't much farther."

"It's a long way off for me, for I can hardly manage to sit my horse—"

The words had been spoken firmly, though the voice was low and weak; but the resolution at last gave way before the deathly faintness that came over him, and only the quick, strong arm

of one of his men saved him from falling from the saddle. This was unmistakable evidence that they must stop. Dismounting, they laid the wounded man upon the grass, where the thick foliage kept the sun's rays from proving annoying; two went to find a wagon at some neighboring farm house, another went to the river for water, while the others busied themselves in binding up his wounds as well as possible with the rude bandages they could prepare, and in otherwise attending to his comfort. But even while they were engaged in this humane task, a brisk fire was opened upon them from the hill to their left. Fortunately, Hay had recovered his senses under the liberal application of the cold water, and was somewhat strengthened by a draught from his canteen.

"Put me on a horse, boys, and leave me to take care of myself."

His desire was complied with, and clinging painfully to the saddle, lying down upon the neck of his horse—for he was still too weak to sit upright—he forded the Potomac in safety. The first thought of the Zouaves, after securing the escape of their wounded leader, was for the horses that they had captured in such an unequal fight; and the delay occasioned in getting all of them together proved dangerous to the soldiers.

"Let the horses alone, and give the Rebels h—l!" thundered Farley, as he saw the uselessness of the attempt, and the design of the enemy. Evidently, the Confederates, having a much superior force, were trying to surround the Federals. The latter now numbered but ten, for Baker and Dunlap, who had been sent for the wagon, had not yet returned. Of them we shall hear later.

"Tain't any use, boys," said Farley, at last, "we can't stay here, or they'll get us sure."

The crack of his rifle followed this observation.

"What are we to do?" asked another, as he rammed the ball home.

"It's a pretty slim chance, but if we could get to the big rocks yonder, the river 'd be between us and them."

"How are we to get there?"

"Make a rush for the island."

They were on the point of land projecting between the Potomac on the one side and Patterson's Creek on the other. The bowlders were not on high ground, but would answer admirably

for breastworks. The stones, washed naked by the stream, almost wholly covered the surface of Kelley's Island. At a given signal, then, they made a break for the stream, and amid a shower of bullets from the enemy, who saw the wisdom of the attempt, they gained the coveted position.

"All right, boys? Anybody hurt?"

"All as sound as new fifty-cent pieces."

"Not whipped yet, not by a long shot."

"Be careful of the cartridges; they'll soon be getting mighty scarce."

Crouching behind the rocks, they waited; each man with eager, gleaming eyes and set teeth, his finger ready to dispatch the messenger of death as soon as there was a certainty that it would reach an enemy. It surely could not be difficult for their force to dislodge such a handful of men, thought the Confederates; and, rushing down from the hill like an avalanche, they swept across the little plain, and the foremost man was in the stream.

"Whew, boys! more than seventy; let them have it now."

Almost with one report, the rifles were discharged; the man in the stream threw his arms above his head and fell backwards as his feet lost their hold on the bed of the creek; the water grew dark around him as he went down; here and there, in the mass of men upon the land who were about to follow him into the water, one would fall; another would stagger a moment as if bending beneath a heavy load; and then would turn and retreat toward the shelter of the grove as rapidly as the nature of his wound would permit. Hardly a bullet of the ten failed to take effect; and surprised by the excellent marksmanship of the men they were about to attack, the Confederates halted irresolutely a moment, then turned and fled to the nearest shelter. When each was protected by the trunk of a tree, by a bush, the side of a ravine, or some such natural object, as the Federals were by the rocks, there began that most exciting kind of combat known to the soldier—sharpshooting. As one man exposed himself in order to take aim at an enemy, half a dozen pairs of eager eyes would mark him, and before his own ball was sped, five or six others would come whistling past his ears.

So the fight went on for more than an hour, and at last the river was again reddened; but not with blood this time; it was but the reflection of the clouds about the setting sun. As the

sky faded, the Confederates received a reinforcement of a small party of horsemen. The shower of shots from the island soon warned the new-comers that, raised so far above the level of the ground, they were in the greatest danger, and they speedily dismounted. One of them, who appeared to be an officer of considerable rank, and who afterward proved to be a brother of the famous Col. Turner Ashby, took command; and seemingly insensible to all danger, walked coolly from point to point arranging an attack that should be more successful than the first that had been made on the island.

"Hold your fire, men, until we see what they are going to do," commanded Farley, intently watching the movements of the enemy.

But they were not left in doubt many minutes. As it seemed to them, looking through the gathering darkness from behind the rocks, the Confederates sprang from their coverts at a given signal and made a rush for the stream. Onward they came.

"Now let them have it," cried Farley.

And at the word there were ten flashes of fire from behind the rocks; only one or two reports, for the discharge was almost instantaneous; men in the river groaned and sank; men about to plunge into the water sprang back and fell, each "with his face to the sky and his feet to the foe;" men behind them looked around more than doubtfully. Only the leader seemed resolute; but, as is often the case, one man's courage was sufficient to reanimate many. The Federals, in the confusion, could not distinguish what he said; probably his own men could not; but the former felt that they now had a foeman worthy of their steel, and the latter followed him, pressing close in his footsteps, right up to where the rocky shores of the island rose from the water's edge.

The fight was now hand to hand. Despite their losses, the Confederates were still strong—at least six or seven to one. Against such terrible odds at such close quarters, it was madness to fight; yet the Zouaves fought on with the strength and courage born of despair. The night darkened over the conflict, and in place of the white smoke that had wreathed the muzzles of rifles and revolvers, there were flashes of fire; that was all the change that the darkness brought. The noise of the shots, the shouts and curses of the combatants, made night hideous. Still the Zouaves fought on, feeling that the one thing left to

them was to sell their lives as dearly as possible; fought instinctively, as the leopard struggles to free himself from the deadly coil of the anaconda.

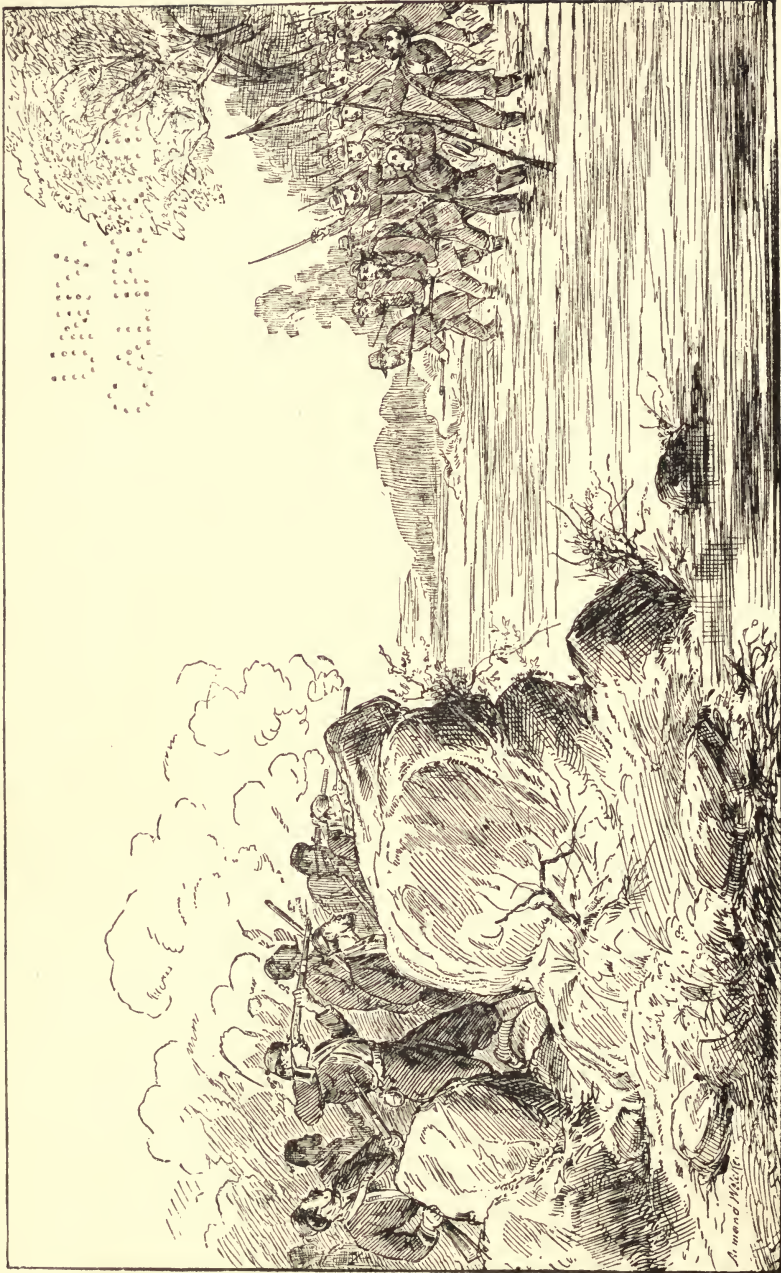
Had the light of day shone upon them it would have seen strange pictures; pictures terrible to look upon, so full of animal ferocity they were. There is something grand in the thought of thousands of men laying aside their daily work, going to fight, perhaps to die, for the right; but follow those men to the battle-field, and the moral heroism has vanished; the sacrifice has been made, and is over; they are mere bull-dogs, game-cocks, urged on to each other's destruction by the command of another animal, called an officer. O, it is a horrible thing to see men fighting as these fought there, in the darkness, upon the rocky island, with the river flowing so peacefully around them!

Before long, Farley found himself in direct combat with the Confederate officer; the duel had lasted some minutes, now one, now the other, gaining a slight advantage, but it seemed about to result in the defeat of the Federal, when another of the Zouaves, Hollowell, perceiving his leader's danger, hastily swung his rifle at the Rebel's head. The blow was a heavy one, and the Confederate, without a groan, fell dead at the feet of his late antagonist.

"D—n it," was Hollowell's brief comment, "it's ruined my rifle," and stooping down an instant, he possessed himself of the dead man's revolvers.

A third Zouave, Thomas, had fired twice with deadly aim, and was just in the act of reloading when a pistol ball grazed his head, knocking him senseless. As he fell to the earth, the Confederate who had fired the shot, fearing it might be ineffectual, had drawn his saber, and was about to finish the work so well begun, when a comrade of the wounded man fired upon him. The blade gleamed in his hand a moment, then fell to the ground as his grasp relaxed, and in an instant more his dead body lay across the unconscious form of Thomas. Such were some of the scenes that might have been seen, could the sun have suddenly lighted up the darkness. Knowing that Hollenback had fallen, and supposing that Thomas had been killed, the Zouaves began each to think of saving himself, if it were possible. One after the other, under cover of the darkness, the eight survivors plunged into the stream and swam away from the scene of carnage. The enemy, finding what they were endeavoring to do,





*A. Mend. 1846.*



gave chase; but before long decided that the fugitives were too much scattered for them to pursue with advantage.

They accordingly returned to Kelley's Island, in order to bury their dead and care for their wounded. Thomas, whose senses had now returned, crawled into a little thicket of bushes and vines as he realized the state of affairs. Thence he could see the dead bodies carried away, thence he could hear their every word.

"Hallo! here's a Yank!"

"Alive or dead?"

"Alive; come get out o' this."

"I can't; I'm wounded," murmured Hollenback, faintly.

"Get out 'o this, I say; can't you understand English?"

The command was uttered so threateningly, and accompanied by such a show of force, that the wounded Zouave dragged himself slowly and painfully to his feet, and, still at the point of the bayonet, waded the narrow stream. Thomas lay in the bushes unseen, unsuspected, until the last Confederate had disappeared; then he crept out, and, by wading and swimming, succeeded in reaching the opposite bank of the Potomac.

The two men who had been sent for the wagon had heard the earliest shots of the second fight, and knowing that since there were so many fired, there must be a considerable force opposed to their comrades, galloped off to the camp for reinforcements. Fifty men were immediately detailed to go to the rescue; but such was the enthusiasm excited by the report of the two messengers, that the force was swelled to four times that number before it had left the town. Fast as they could go, the progress of the fight had been so rapid that, when they arrived at the field of battle, there was no one there. Stains of blood upon the smooth white rocks, guns lying where they had fallen from the dying hands, broken pistols that had been thrown angrily away—these were the traces that remained of the desperate fight. Returning to camp, they told the story of what they had seen. It was then late at night; early the next day, a larger force, consisting of two companies, were sent to search for the living and to bury the dead. But this detachment met with but little more success than the former. The body of Hollenback, which the Confederates had left behind them in their flight, and eight of the horses the party had captured, were all that they brought back to camp with them. But perhaps the best part of their

success was the information they obtained that the Confederates had carried off twenty-three bodies of their comrades, besides those who were shot while in the water, and drowned.

One after another, all through the afternoon of the 28th, the scouts came into camp, heartily welcomed by citizens and soldiers, until all had reported. Singularly enough, only Hay and Thomas were wounded; the latter very slightly. Of the others, one had had his cap shot from his head, and had replaced it by the broad-brimmed soft felt of an enemy; another had three bullet-holes through his shirt; Farleys' sabre had been shivered to the hilt, and that and the scabbard were all that remained; Hollowell held on to his broken rifle, while he proudly delivered the captured pistols to Col. Wallace.

"Keep them for your own use, Hollowell," said the officer; "you have won them nobly, defending your comrade in his danger. I know that you will use them well in the defense of our country."

But the enthusiasm of soldiers and townspeople gave way to sorrow when the body of the one man killed was brought back to town; with measured, solemn step, and muffled roll of drums, they bore his body to the town cemetery;

"Slowly and sadly they laid him down,  
From the field of his fame, fresh and gory!  
They carved not a line, they raised not a stone,  
But they left him alone in his glory."

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE ENEMY'S SECRETS.

Lieut. Pelouze and His Friend—Interview with the President—On to Richmond—In the Confederate War Department—The Token—A Vengeful Woman—Trapped—The Spy's Escape—Leave of Absence—Ribbons and Photographs—“We Did It!”—Green Fields and Pastures New—A Friendly Enemy—Gen. Grant's Opinion—A Scouting Adventure.

“**L**IEUTENANT Pelouze? Yes, sir, I think he's here now.”

The speaker disappeared in one of the offices of the War Department. The tall, spare-built young man, to whom he had spoken, looked curiously about him, as if in the habit of making minute mental notes of any place in which he might chance to be. His survey was soon completed, for his glance was rapid and comprehensive, as befits one who must be observant; and he was thoroughly familiar with the apartment by the time that young officer (in later times holding the rank of general) answered the summons of his friend.

The customary greetings had been exchanged, and the stranger dived at once into the business which had brought him to Washington.

“I came to see, Pelouze, if you could introduce me to the Secretary?”

“Why, he left for his home in Harrisburg yesterday, and expects to be gone a week, at least,” was the reply.

The stranger looked chagrined.

“But I can, perhaps, obtain an interview with the President,” continued Pelouze.

The stranger's face grew brighter, and he answered heartily:

"That is what I would like best of all things. When can it be accomplished?"

"At once, I think; for your services are such as to command attention just now. 'Every dog has his day,' you know, and it is so with men. This is yours."

Toward the White House, then, they bent their steps, and true to Pelouze's prophecy, were admitted, almost immediately, to the presence of the Chief Magistrate.



*The Spy's Interview with Uncle Abe.*

"I have heard of you, Mr. Lee," said the President," though I have never before had the pleasure of meeting you; and the reports have all been good ones. Now, as my time is limited, let me hear briefly what you have to say."

The young man bowed, his face flushing with pleasure at the praise; for even in the Spring of 1861 men were beginning to learn the value of Abraham Lincoln's good opinion.

"I have just arrived from Richmond, sir, with information which I hope may be of use. The force of the Rebels is as well known to me

as to any other subordinate in their War Department."

"How many men have they?"

"Twenty thousand, all fit for service, fully armed and equipped. Troops are being concentrated as rapidly as possible near Culpeper Court House.

Much more was said, of the same general tenor; and the employe of the Confederate War Department concluded by offering his future services to the United States Government as scout or spy; for the present information had been the results of a labor of love.

"Go back to Richmond then, Mr. Lee," said the President; "and if we want you we will let you know."

The two young men retired, and took their way to an apartment where they could talk the matter over with the desired privacy. Many were the plans which each proposed for sending information back and forth through the lines, but the other instantly pointed out a fatal defect in each. Pelouze threw himself back in his chair.

"I am sure I have racked my brains well, but not another plan can I imagine."

"Nor can I," returned Lee; "the trouble is, that we cannot foretell the circumstances under which we may have to get our information through, so we will just have to depend upon the inspiration of the moment. Of course, it will be comparatively easy for you to communicate with me."

"Yes, but there must be some token or password, by which you will be sure you are not being led into a trap."

The officer reflected a moment; then, drawing a sheet of paper toward him and tearing off a narrow strip, he filled the pen with which he had been idly playing, and wrote his name—Louis H. Pelouze—on the slip. Folding it lengthwise, he tore it in two and handed the lower half to Lee.

"There," he said, "if a man comes to you in any garb whatever, if he can produce this upper half of my signature, you will know that I regard him as trustworthy."

There was nothing more to be said or done, and the volunteer spy returned to Richmond, and worked sedately enough at his desk. His trip to Washington, it need hardly be said, had been made under cover of a visit elsewhere, and so well did he guard his secret that he was no more suspected than his great namesake himself.

Six months passed, and Lee had not yet been provided with a trustworthy bearer for his secret dispatches. Still he bided his time patiently, knowing that he had not been forgotten.

One evening, about the middle of November, he was chatting with a number of others in a cigar store which was a favorite lounging place for employes of the War Department. A stranger entered, whom we may as well introduce at once as Timothy Webster. The newcomer was drawn into the conversation, apparently by chance; and as frequently happens in such cases, interlocutors in the dialogue were often changed. It was not long, then, before Webster and Lee were talking to each other on the current topics of the day.

"Have you any acquaintances in Washington, Mr. Lee?" asked Webster, when the subject had gradually changed to the National Capital.

"Very few indeed," replied Lee, carelessly, but with a quick glance at the questioner; "I was never there but once, and formed no new acquaintances."

"The population is constantly changing, of course, and is recruited from all parts of the country," returned Webster, lighting a fresh cigar; then, after a few whiffs, he asked, as if the name had just happened to occur to him: "did you ever know a man named Pelouze? He is there now."

"Pelouze? Yes, I knew him, but only slightly."

The group of loungers had broken up into smaller knots, and Webster was therefore unobserved by the others as he took from his pocket-book a slip of paper, and handed it to Lee. It was the upper half of Pelouze's signature. As soon as they could do so without attracting attention, Lee and his messenger left the store, and, in the course of a stroll about the city, laid their plans.

The spy felt much elated at the prospect before him. He was now a clerk in the office of Gen. John. H. Winder, the Provost Marshal of Richmond. It was a part of his business to know the number and destination of all the troops in the Confederate Army; not a recruit was enlisted, but that the information had to come to this office. Easy enough it was, then, to get the information, and here was the long-wished-for, trustworthy messenger to carry it to the Federal headquarters. Even when Webster was laid up with the rheumatism the case was not so bad. Lee felt that he had not been forgotten, that his perilous position in the enemy's very capital was to be the means of helping his country at last; that the value of his services was recognized by those to whom they were rendered. Nor did he deceive himself. His information was really invaluable, and Webster's involuntary defection was immediately remedied by the appointment of two detectives, Messrs. Lewis and Scully, to this honorably dangerous post.

We must now go back a little in the history of these two men.

While in Washington, a portion of their duty had consisted in searching the dwellings and baggage of those persons who were suspected of disloyalty. "Drest in a little brief authority," they had not always been considerate of the proprieties and courtesies of life; perhaps there was small room for them in such cases.

Mrs. ——— had been ordered South, being well known for her political preference for that portion of the country, and as usual in such circumstances, Lewis and Scully were sent to search her baggage and escort her out of the District of Columbia. Perhaps, in her hot secessionism, she had provoked them beyond endurance; such cases were not unusual; perhaps they were, as frequently happened, possessed of an undue sense of their own importance. At any rate, they treated her more roughly than she deemed the necessities of the case required. This behavior she of course resented.

“I'll not forget you!” she cried, angrily.

Then the two detectives had both smiled in the peculiarly exasperating fashion of entire indifference. It mattered not to them, they retorted, in manner if not in words, whether she remembered them or not; and the knowledge that they felt so, and had reason on their side, only galled her the more.

Mrs. ——— reached the Confederate capital in safety; and amid friends in political sentiment, remembered the two insolent detectives only as unpleasant creatures with whom she had come in contact at the period of her semi-martyrdom. She took rooms at the Spottswood Hotel. Sitting at her window there one day, what was her surprise to see Lewis and Scully walking along one of the most prominent streets of Richmond. The whirligig of Time had in truth brought her an unexpected opportunity for revenge. She at once gave information to the military authorities that two Yankee spies were in the city. The detectives were tracked, discovered, arrested and brought to trial, after the summary fashion of soldiers who deal with spies. Mrs. ——— swore positively to their employment by the United States government; they were unable to prove that they had any legitimate business in Richmond, and were accordingly found guilty and sentenced to death.

Webster had fallen under suspicion, as being closely affiliated with the condemned men, and Lee was under a similar cloud. Both were accordingly arrested immediately after Lewis and Scully had been taken into custody and before their trial. There was, of course, no such positive evidence against them as there was in the other case, but the Government determined to find out the truth regarding them.

Scully was a communicant of the Roman Catholic Church, and requested that the last rites of religion might be administer-

ed to him. The request was so far granted, he was told, as to allow him the privilege of confession. It is well known that any revelation made in the confessional is considered by all authorities sacred; a violation of such confidence means the total excommunication of the offending priest; and the Confederate War Department either could not or would not bribe one of these servants of the Church to betray his trust. A bogus priest, however, would not be bound by any such vow as held those



*The Bogus Priest.*

sworn to the altar. A detective was accordingly dressed in suitable apparel, duly instructed in the forms to be observed, and sent to the cell of the doomed man.

Scully, assured that his fate was sealed, and believing that his confidence was worthily placed, made a full confession, implicating Timothy Webster and William S. Lee, as well as Lewis and himself. The pseudo-priest was jubilant as he left the prison. Four spies were not often discovered at once; and he had sufficient evidence, as military tribunals go, to insure a quadruple hanging. Lee and Webster were immediately brought to trial; the latter

was convicted and sentenced; but, luckily for our hero, Scully had blundered in regard to his middle initial, which was not S. but J. This rendered it impossible to fix the offense upon him, as there were several other subordinates named Lee in the War Department. Thus he escaped by the skin of his teeth.

Lewis and Scully were equally fortunate, although in a different way. They were both of English birth, and had entered a



claim to the protection of the English Government. Even in their own minds the success of this application was extremely problematical, as "British bluster" was notoriously a supporter of "Rebel brag." In their doubts, however, they were mistaken; the English representative informed President Davis that the Confederate Government would be held responsible for the lives of two British subjects if the sentence against Lewis and Scully were carried out. England, though professedly a neutral, was too powerful a friend to lose, and the two detectives were released, and escorted, as Mrs. — had been, beyond the lines.

Webster alone found no help in the interference or ignorance of others, and he alone suffered the fate which, by the rules of war, all had equally deserved. Lee was released and restored to his desk in Gen. Winder's office, but suspicion was by no means quieted, and he was subjected to such a close surveillance that he found it impossible to send any information to the Federal authorities. There was no difficulty whatever in ascertaining all about the strength, condition and movements of the whole Confederate army, or any part of it, but how to make use of this knowledge was a problem which appeared well nigh insoluble.

Turning this question over in his mind, he bethought himself of two men whom he had known for some time, and who were loyal at the outbreak of the war. But how could he assure them of his own devotion without too great a risk? It was not only his own life that was at stake—it was the life of a man situated so that he could render peculiarly good service to his country. He had obtained the confidence of many Confederates; his arrest had not materially changed their opinion of him, since the charge had not been fixed; that was the era of suspicion, and no man was above it. Although he had been closely watched for a while, vigilance was already relaxing, since there was nothing observed in his conduct but a most exemplary devotion to duty.

He could not go directly to these acquaintances, for they might fail to recognize him, and this in some way lead to his betrayal. The return of confidence made it possible for him to obtain a short leave of absence, "for a visit to Orange County." The destination thus announced was so far within the Confederate lines that no objection could be raised to his going. But,

once on the way northward, he did not stop at Orange County. Making his way through the lines, he went to Philadelphia and had a dozen photographs taken. Thence he went to Washington, and after many strolls among millinery establishments and dry-goods houses, succeeded in finding what he wanted—a piece of ribbon of an unusual color! Nor are we recounting trivialities when we chronicle these proceedings so minutely.

It was not safe in those days to trust much to the safety of the mails. Letters were liable to be lost or destroyed; and to guard against this danger, our spy wrote a dozen letters, inclosing in each one a *carte de visite* and a piece of the ribbon. Six of these were addressed to Samuel Ruth, six to an old man, named Silva, who lived just outside of the Confederate lines. These were the two men whom he believed loyal, to whom he must trust so much.

The letters were mailed at different times, so as to insure the receipt of at least one of the half dozen. Having attended to this business, Lee, whose leave of absence had nearly expired, returned to Richmond and the Confederate War Department.

The next thing to be done was to find these men. Ruth, as he readily ascertained, was employed by the Confederate Government to transport pontoons from a point back of Richmond to Winchester, whence they could readily be removed to Harper's Ferry, when Jackson's men, having reached that place, would require them. It was not long after Lee's return that he met Ruth face to face on the street.

"Good evening," said the contractor, lifting his hat with one hand, while the other, with one dexterous gesture, showed an end of the odd-colored ribbon protruding from his button-hole.

Lee returned the salutation, and in turn displayed his ribbon. Ruth extended his hand.

"I hardly knew you at first, it's been so long since I saw you, and pictures are not always reliable."

"But now?" queried Lee.

"Oh, that's all right," returned Ruth, nodding, and looking at the bit of ribbon; "and mighty glad I am that you provided so well for all emergencies."

"Are you ready?" asked Lee, glancing cautiously about him, to see that no one was near who would be likely to carry the tale.

A hulking negro lounged against the wall near by, and a trim

housemaid of his own color had paused a moment to coquet with him. An occasional pedestrian hurried by, but that was all—just enough to remove all semblance of privacy from their talk.

“From this moment forward,” replied Ruth, fervently.

“And Silva?”

“True as steel. But we must have some more private place than this, in which to talk these things over, must we not.”

A rendezvous was accordingly appointed, and the work began.

The business upon which Ruth was engaged afforded him peculiar facilities for anything of this kind, as it was necessary for him to go back and forth between Richmond and Winchester very often, and a little extension of the northward journey was never noticed. Lee's duty was to obtain the information and write it out in the cypher agreed upon; Ruth carried these dispatches across the lines to Silva's house, where some reliable messenger was in waiting to take them on to the Federal headquarters.

Ruth's duties in transporting the pontoons were soon at an end, and probably in recognition of his distinguished services in this connection, he was made general superintendent of the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad. He immediately appointed Lee his assistant, and they were thus enabled to transmit intelligence more rapidly and surely than ever.

At first sight, it would seem that this was a mistaken move on Ruth's part, as depriving them of all the accurate information which Lee had hitherto been able to obtain by virtue of his position in the War Department. But the superintendent of this railway had to keep a correct account of all the troops carried to and from Richmond. “We did it, too,” observed Mr. Lee, naively but emphatically, in his own history of this part of his life, published more than twenty years later.

The work was not enough for two willing pairs of hands, however, and when Lee had an opportunity of securing a different position, he resigned from the railway office.

He had made application for the post of sutler at Gen. Lee's headquarters. He was successful, and the new position gave him great advantages. The officers paid many visits to his tent, and paid well for what they consumed in the way of brandy and tobacco. True, many of them merely bade him “charge it,” and never allowed him to see the color of their money; others, more honestly inclined, paid for what they got; but the payment was of course in Confederate money, which was even then of but

small worth. The true value of their patronage was the information which they gave him regarding the movements and disposition of various bodies of men. From them he learned better than any mere subordinate in the War Department could, the plans of the commander-in-chief and his lieutenants, so far as these intentions were known to the regimental officers.

But Lee was not allowed to remain long in this position. For some reason, which, however, was not due to any suspicion of his singleness of heart, he was transferred from Gen. Lee's headquarters to the Forty-fourth Georgia. Of course, a sutler must buy stores, and supplies of whisky and cheese could only be obtained at railway stations, such as Orange Court House. When, therefore, the sutler of the Forty-fourth Georgia went to such places, no one thought anything of it, for no one knew of the communications which he passed through the hands of "old man Silva" to the Federal headquarters. And when he was so circumstanced that he could not go in person, a trusty negro carried a note to the same reliable friend, requesting him to order certain goods, and making apparently simple statements that covered deepest meaning.

But "the mills of the gods grind slowly," yet they grind exceeding small. For more than two years he had been weaving a net about himself, in which he hoped to ensnare his country's foes. Strange it would have been if, at some time, his foot had not caught in some one of the many meshes, and caused a fatal fall. Suspicion had pointed to him when Webster met his fate, but the impossibility of fixing the accusation, and his own exemplary conduct, had effectually averted the consequences, until, in the hurry of events, some new excitement filled the minds of men, some new individual was pointed at by the finger of distrust. It was hinted to some government detective that the sutler of the Forty-fourth Georgia made too many trips after supplies, and often extended his journey beyond the lines. The clue was followed up, and Lee was closely watched. So skillfully was it done that he, to whom acuteness was as a second nature, and whose very life was staked upon his wariness, did not know that it was so. The first intimation of it came upon him like a thunderbolt.

"Lee," said a detective to him one day, "you have always been a good friend of mine, and I like you too well to see you come to harm. Take the advice of a friend. then, and get away."

"What in the devil do you mean?" demanded Lee, apparently very much surprised.

"Oh, come, that won't go down with me," returned the detective, "though you are a good actor. Never saw it better done in my life, but it don't work all the same. The order for your arrest—you know the accusation—is in my pocket now, but I'll give you a chance for your life, just "for auld acquaintance sake."

"Do you think I'm going to be scared off by any such stuff?" demanded the spy, with an indignant snort; let me tell you, sir, that if this is one of your jokes that you are trying to play off on me, it is a very poor one."

He turned away in high dudgeon; the detective looked after him and sighed; he would have given the spy one chance, but here was the offer thrown in his teeth; he must do his duty as an officer of the Confederate Government. Still he hesitated; he would, at any rate, wait until the next morning.

But Lee's apparent indignation had been only assumed to cover his dismay. He had not expected so speedy a termination of his career in the Confederacy, for the two years' service now seemed short enough. That very night he paid a visit to his friend Ruth.

"Why, Lee," asked that gentleman, much surprised at his unexpected appearance, "what brings you here?"

"I have come to say good-bye," mournfully replied Lee; "you will not see me again."

"Have you been imprudent in any way?" asked Ruth, anxiously.

"No; I don't know how it got out, unless some Rebel spy saw me within our lines—but I've no time to talk; I must be out of their reach by daylight."

"Are you well mounted?"

"Excellently; and I have considerable money—all my profits; so I retreat honorably."

And away through the darkness he rode, unquestioned and unchallenged by friend or foe; reaching the Federal lines, in safety, and reporting in due form at the headquarters of Gen. Sharp.

"Through the assistance of Samuel Ruth and William J. Lee," said Gen. Grant, "the Rebellion was overthrown a year sooner than it would have been."

Immediately upon reporting to the Federal general above-

named, Mr. Lee was assigned to scouting duty. One of his adventures is worthy of record, though not strictly a part of the story of his work as a spy for the Union. His companion or partner was Judson Knight; each knew the other well; and each would have trusted the other with his life, his fortunes and his sacred honor.

It was the 20th of November, 1863, and the Federal force, under the command of Gen. Meade, was encamped at Mine Run. How large a body of the enemy was near them, and in what direction it was to be feared, were questions yet to be determined. In obedience to the higher authorities, a number of scouts were sent out, in small squads and in pairs. Among the latter, who were of course expected to penetrate deeper into the unknown than the larger parties, were Lee and his friend Knight. In order to accomplish their purpose the better, they had donned Confederate uniforms. This, of course, would materially increase their danger in case of capture.

It was late in the afternoon when they rode away from camp, and for several miles no adventure befel them. They had decided to make Orange Court House their goal, as the Confederate outposts were believed to be just beyond that point. By skillful management, aided by their gray uniforms, they hoped to get in the town such points as would enable them to judge of the enemy's force and exact location. But when they were three miles away, or some half-dozen miles from their starting-point, Knight turned to Lee:

"What is that on that hill yonder?"

"I've just been looking at it," returned the other; "and it looks to me mightily like a battery."

"There's more than a battery there," said Knight, shaking his head doubtfully; "it looks more like a brigade."

"I don't believe there's a brigade of Rebs within ten miles," answered Lee, testily, "but let's ride nearer."

Acting on this suggestion, they approached the point where the doubtful body of men was located. They were challenged by a picket. Lee recognized the voice as belonging to an old Richmond acquaintance.

"Why, Burton, don't you know me?" he asked, with great heartiness of manner.

Burton looked hard at him through the gathering dusk of the November afternoon.

"D—d if I do, unless its Lee," replied the picket; who, it is hardly necessary to say, was not aware of the Fourth Georgia's loss of a sutler.

"Lee it is," returned the scout; "this is my friend, Mr. Knight, Mr. Burton, one of the honorable class of high privates."

"Same as myself," answered Burton, with a short laugh; "happy to meet you, Mr. Knight."

The Federal muttered something which might have meant an acknowledgment of the introduction, and accepted the Confederate's proffered hand.

"Many of the boys about here, Burton?" inquired Lee, in an off-hand manner.

"Well, the regular picket guard; the relief will be here in a few minutes. Hi, Jim! did you know Lee was here?"

Thus summoned, the comrades of Burton gathered about the two Federals.

"Fourth Georgia, I s'pose, Mr. Knight?" asked Burton, by way of doing the polite; "didn't know you were in the neighborhood."

"Yes, we've been here—that is, hanging around Meade—for some little time; we've heard of your being here, and Lee insisted on riding over to see some of his old friends."

"Did, eh? Well, I'm mighty glad to hear he remembered us so kindly. Sort o' makes a man feel good, these wartimes. Say, Lee, if you're so anxious to renew old acquaintances, there's plenty more on the road."

"Are there?" asked Lee, with genial interest; "and where may they be now?"

"Well, I reckon they're pretty near all of them at Orange Court House by this time. Just about, I should say, for there comes the relief."

"But not all of my acquaintances, I suppose?" asked Lee; "another regiment?"

While Burton and Knight had been talking, he had ascertained that this was the outpost of a regiment of artillery, and supposed that some infantry was coming to support it in case of an attack.

"Another regiment! h—! It's old Pap Longstreet's whole corps."

"You are joking."

"No, I'm not; it's so—ain't it, Brown?" turning to a com-

rade; "they've been getting in all the afternoon, and they're just about settling themselves to salt mule and chicory now. Have a chew?"

A glance of quick intelligence passed between the two scouts, then, with the rapidity of thought, each had sprung upon the back of the horse nearest to him, and spurred away. The as-



*"Spies! Spies! Yankee Spies!"*

tonished Rebs grasped the situation in a moment.

"Spies! spies! Yankee spies!" they yelled, and fired hastily after the fast flying figures. "And then and there was hurrying to and fro," as the alarm was given and the chase began.

The fugitives bent their heads down to their horses' necks, and gave the fleet animals the rein. The bullets whistled about their ears, but still they rode on unharmed; the leaden messengers of death tore up the earth under their horses' very feet; but fainter and fainter grew the yells behind them. Onward, still onward; and now they are out of range; now they approach the Federal lines, and at last are safe within them, astonishing Gen. Meade with the news of so large a force scarcely nine miles away.



## CHAPTER V.

### CAUGHT A TARTAR.

A Reconnoissance—A Hard Road to Travel—Surprised—Surrender of Arms—His Captors Get His Ammunition, and He Gets His Liberty.

ONE day, early in September, 1861, Capt. W. E. Strong, of the Second Wisconsin Volunteers, was ordered to proceed to the woods near Camp Advance, at which the Second was then stationed, to see if the outer line of pickets ought to be extended. Proceeding along this line until the last post was reached, he found that he was some four hundred yards from the river. To the right, between the pickets and the stream, was a dense thicket of pine undergrowth. In Capt. Strong's judgment, this portion of the ground should be occupied, as the thick brush offered such facilities for the advance of small parties of the enemy upon the outer post. He accordingly so reported to the superior officer who ordered him to make the inspection; and was directed to make a minute examination of the grounds, reporting again at 3 P. M.

A short time after noon, then, he departed upon this second errand, and "thereby hangs a tale." Passing the outpost, he pushed on through the thicket, and found that distance had indeed lent enchantment to the view. He had thought that the brush would shelter the enemy in any flank movement that might be attempted; but he found that the ground was so rough and the woods so dense that no force could penetrate it. Having made his way to the river, the officer concluded that his work had been thoroughly done, and that he might return by some pleasanter road than that by which he had advanced. He accordingly turned back on a line about one hundred rods in ad-

vance of the outer line of pickets, intending to turn towards camp as soon as he got fairly into the open country.

All along this route there was underbrush of greater or less density, but none so difficult to penetrate as that thicket through which he had just made his way. Thinking nothing of any danger, he pursued the path calmly but rapidly, in order to get back to camp and report at the time designated. He was hastening along when he came to a somewhat denser thicket than any which he had yet passed since leaving the river. Suspecting nothing of danger within such a short distance of the Federal lines, he plunged into the shady recesses. Suddenly, from behind every bush there appeared to spring a man; and in an instant there were six Confederates surrounding him and demanding his surrender.

"Gentlemen, you have me," replied the Federal, somewhat ruefully, as he saw that there was no possibility of escape.

"Who are you?" asked one of them, whom the others, later on, addressed as "Sergeant," and who appeared to be in command of the squad.

"Your prisoner," he answered, evasively; at which there was a general laugh at the "cute Yankee."

"Where were you going?"

"Back to camp."

"Where had you been?"

"Gentlemen, I must decline to answer any such questions," he answered.

This produced considerable dissatisfaction among his captors, and they began to discuss, in no very pleasant mood, how they should dispose of him.

"Oh, let's hang the d——d Yankee scoundrel," suggested one, pointing to a limb overhead, such as Judge Lynch has often wished for.

"Let's take him to camp and hang him there," proposed another.

"Well take him to camp," decided the sergeant, without intimating what was to follow when once they had arrived there.

The procession was, to the prisoner, an imposing one. He himself was the central figure. Two of the Confederates were cavalrymen, and these rode, one on each side of him. Before him were two infantrymen, while the remaining two brought up the rear. There seemed absolutely no possibility of escape

by any way that could be thought of, and Strong felt hopeless.

Whether they did not wish to linger so long almost in the very face of the Federal pickets, or whether, in that early stage of the War, the capture of an enemy was so novel an experience that they did not "know the ropes," we cannot undertake to say; but certainly the little column had marched some twenty rods before it occurred to the sergeant that a point of some importance had been neglected.

"See here, stranger," he said, turning to the prisoner, "I reckon I'll trouble you for your sword and pistols."

"Certainly, sir," replied the captive, stopping short in the road to get the weapons, in order to give them up.

The sergeant had omitted to order a halt, and as a natural consequence, his men marched on. As Capt. Strong brought his pistol pouches around to the front of his body, and his hands touched the stocks, the idea suggested itself that here was a chance to escape. The soldiers had passed on and were about fifty feet away; they were in a comparatively open portion of the woods, but about sixty yards to the rear was a small thicket; the prisoner was fleet of foot, and a good shot. All these points were thought of as he changed the position of the pouches; he touched the stocks; he drew out the pistols at full cock, and aiming, first at the sergeant, then at the two infantrymen who were nearest to him, fired. Hardly had the bullets sped from the barrels when he was off to cover, like a deer before the hounds.

He had moved so readily to give up his weapons that the Confederates had not the slightest idea of his intention, when the shots rang out, both at once, upon the still air. For a moment they were paralyzed by surprise; then, as they realized the situation, gave chase. But that moment's inaction had enabled the fleet-footed Federal to get a good start. He had nearly reached cover before a shot was fired. But the bullets, when they did come, were not ill-aimed. One passed through his cheek, coming out at his mouth; a second perforated his canteen; and the others whistled unpleasantly close to his ears.

In the meantime the Confederates had hastily arranged a plan of pursuit. The sergeant was not hit, but two of their number had fallen by the fire of the prisoner; there were then two horsemen and two unmounted men remaining. The latter gave direct chase, trusting that their own speed would prove greater than

that of the Federal; the troopers made a circuit, one to each side, so as to head him off and drive him back upon the two infantrymen.

As Capt. Strong, glancing back over his shoulder, saw the arrangements that were being made for the pursuit, he fired three or four shots at the pursuing infantrymen; but he dared not pause to take careful aim, and the shots had no effect. He ran on, still at the top of his speed, until a small knoll was passed, and he was thus shut off from the pursuers; he was almost within



*Catching a Tartar.*

hailing distance of one of the Federal pickets. But, even as he felt that in a few minutes more he would be safe, he was suddenly confronted by the two troopers.

“Halt! Surrender!” called the sergeant.

For answer, Capt. Strong turned and ran in the other direction; the sergeant spurred his horse onward, and was, in a moment's time, nearly up with the fugitive. The Federal turned, took deliberate aim, and pulled the trigger. The cap snapped. The trooper had his carbine unslung by this time, and was holding it with both hands on the left side of his horse, the barrel pointed to the Federal's breast, and without bringing the weapon to his shoulder, the Confederate fired. It was a good shot, when

the aim is considered ; though it failed of its object ; the ball passed through coat and shirt, grazing the skin on the left side between the fifth and sixth ribs. An inch to the right, and it would have been fatal.

By this time the fugitive was ready with another shot, and this time his revolver did not fail him. When the smoke cleared away, he saw a horse, empty-saddled, galloping off towards the Confederate camp, the rider dragged along the ground by the foot, which still stuck in the stirrup, as the Trojan prince was dragged at the chariot wheels of Achilles. Other Confederates there were none visible ; warned by the fate of half their number, they had hastily beaten a retreat. Capt. Strong ran on until the pickets were reached, when he thought he might take it a little more leisurely ; being much exhausted by the exertion and the loss of blood from the wound in his face.

Whether he reached camp in time to report punctually at the hour set, does not appear ; but as the official written report from which the outlines of this story are drawn, was dated the day after the adventure, we conclude that the surgeon interfered to prevent over-exertion in the way of talking. He was uninjured, save for the shot in his cheek. He never heard again of his captors who so narrowly escaped with their lives. They evidently carried off the bodies of the two infantrymen, as these were killed very near the Confederate lines ; and the dead trooper was, as we have seen, dragged back to camp by the frightened horse.

## CHAPTER VI.

### A SCOUT TO BALTIMORE.

Necessity for Information—Obliging Videttes—A Successful Ruse—An Unexpected Guest, Who Finds Himself in a Hornet's Nest, But Doesn't Get Stung—A Cordial Reception—Attentions from the Officer of the Day—Danger Ahead—Getting the Countersign—A Drunken Officer, Who Speedily Sobers Off—A Changed Home—Trustworthy (?) Messengers—A Deserved Fate—A Friendly Chat, That Ends Unpleasantly—Crossing the River—The Enemy Alarmed—Pursuit—Vexation of the Pursuers—The Pursued Triumphant.

THE War between the States afforded peculiar facilities for obtaining information, on either side, by means of scouts or spies ; for in every state that lay along the dividing line there were men who held with the North, and others who held with the South. Such men, of course, from their peculiarly intimate knowledge of the surrounding country and its inhabitants, were invaluable to the commanders to whom they attached themselves. Such a man was Elijah White, a wealthy planter of Maryland, who, like many others, incensed that that state remained in the Union, volunteered to serve in the Confederate army operating in the sister state, Virginia.

In October, 1861, Gen. Evans, of the Confederate army, whose forces were then at Leesburg, was much annoyed by the knowledge which the Federals frequently showed of his plans. Suspicion immediately fell upon the townspeople, but could not be confirmed with regard to any particular persons. Not only was this the case, but the enemy indulged in many maneuvers which, in his entire ignorance of their movements and intentions, often discomfited his forces. Accordingly, several Marylanders in the Confederate service volunteered to cross the Potomac and, penetrating as far as Baltimore, sixty miles away, bring back the news.

Four men made up the party, one of them being Mr. White. Riding to that point selected for fording the river, they found that the stream was closely watched on the other side. Stratagem, of course, must be employed, and some accommodating videttes were pressed into service.

"Just you fuss about and attract as much attention as you can, will you?" was the proposition; "and then maybe we can get across."

Doubtless the Federal pickets wondered what was the matter with the videttes across the river; certainly, they paid their undivided attention to those gentlemen, and did not see the four men in blue uniforms who swam their horses to the Maryland side. These, of course, were White and his party; and once more on dry land, they changed their blue uniforms for citizens' clothes, and rode away. But by the time that they were ready to do so, the Federals had discovered that the "fussing about" on the part of the videttes had been merely a ruse to draw their attention from something else, and blue-clad cavalrymen were now galloping hither and thither in search of the daring enemy. But the Marylanders had no mind to be found; each felt that "his foot was on his native heath," and if no clan surrounded him, each was a host in himself. To them, a road was a superfluity, and, striking into the thick timber, they rode for thirty miles without other guide than their knowledge of the country and

"The cool, green mosses,  
To the northward of the trees."

Of course, for them to enter Baltimore in a party would probably excite suspicion, as that city was then in the hands of the Federals, who knew not whom, among its inhabitants, to trust; so, a short time before reaching the suburbs, they separated, having first assigned one of the principal hotels as a rendezvous. True, the city being an important point and more than suspected of having Southern proclivities, was closely guarded; but the four Confederates succeeded in evading any troublesome inquiries. The very fact that they had so many acquaintances in the city was in itself a danger, but they were so skillful and fortunate as to avoid meeting with any who might betray them. But as the adventures of three of the party were of no particular interest, and might be told in a few words, let us follow the chief of the expedition, then, as he made his way about the city.

Stabling his horse in an out-of-the-way place, he carefully removed all traces of his ride from his person, and bent his steps toward the residence of a friend in whom he knew he could trust, a Mr. W——. But what was his surprise to find his friend's parlors filled with a considerable party, twelve of whom were Federal officers. W——, however, was well used to dissembling in the presence of such as his present guests, and exclaimed, as he shook the new comer heartily by the hand:

“Why, I had no idea we should have the pleasure of seeing you to-night—thought you couldn't tear yourself away from the metropolis.”

“O, I left New York last night,” explained White, readily taking the cue. “Thought I'd come around; though I didn't know there was any party on hand.”

“O, not a party; just a few friends from the garrison and about town, that, like yourself, happened to drop in. Let me introduce you.”

The new comer was as heartily received by the guests as by the host, and though the inquiries as to the news from the metropolis were somewhat difficult to answer, the suspicions of the party were not aroused. Tell it not in Gath, but the truth gathered from many sources by the present historian, seems to be that the good liquor dispensed so liberally by W—— affected them with such a desire to love all mankind as is quite unusual and improper for soldiers in time of war. Certain it is that the strange New Yorker, who spoke so patriotically about the “Union, one and indissoluble, now and forever,” was taken to their hearts as “a regular brick;” they seeming to be especially fond of that variety of building material that night, since each went home with one in his hat.

But before they dispersed, or even before they became “o'er all the ills of life victorious,” White, by means of skillful and seemingly innocent questioning, succeeded in obtaining considerable information regarding the number and disposition of troops upon the upper and lower Potomac. So completely were they blinded by his acting and their own intoxication that one of them insisted upon escorting him, the next day, over the fortifications. This Federal was, on that particular occasion, officer of the day, but his duties were not so onerous as to interfere with hospitality, and everything was fully explained to the stranger. It may well be believed that the Confederate kept his eyes and ears



open, and while asking as few questions as possible, in order not to excite the suspicions of his now sober companion, he managed, by careful comparison of statements, to get a pretty accurate idea of facts and figures.

But, of course, all of his time could not be spent in this profitable manner. Provided by Mr. W—— with the sign and counter-sign, by which he could gain the confidence of the Southern sympathizers, he spent several days very pleasantly; keeping a sharp lookout, meanwhile, for further information. At last, judging that they had learned all that was necessary or possible for them to find out, the four Confederates met, under cover of night, at a friend's house, to arrange matters for their departure. Their discussion was suddenly interrupted by their host, who ushered in another friend, who had recently arrived in the city. The new comer was greeted as cordially as in time of peace, and the important subject in hand dropped for personal inquiries.

"Sorry not to have seen you before," he replied to their greeting; "but maybe it's just as well for you I wasn't in the city. I tell you, gentlemen, you'll have to be right careful if you want to get through all safe."

"O, we're always careful—never got caught yet."

"From what I've heard of your adventures, its more by good luck than good management; for some of your expeditions have been right risky. But you'll need extra care now. There's something going on along the upper Potomac; I couldn't find out particulars without having too many questions asked of me, and maybe being obliged to make a trip to Fort McHenry; so I thought I'd warn you and give you all the information I could safely obtain."

"The fords are guarded, I suppose?"

"Double forces at every one. Baker—he's old Abe's right-hand man, you know—brags that he isn't going into winter quarters until he can do it at Rebel expense."

"Does he prefer Libby or Andersonville?" asked an irrepressible wag.

"There's no time for joking, said White; Baker's acting in conjunction with Stone, at Poolesville; and we'll have to get back as soon as we can."

Setting out with as little delay as possible, they made their way to the river; but the nearer they approached it, the more dangerous they found their course. There were so many Fed-

erals along the principal roads that they had to keep, most of the time, in the timber; and this could hardly be called a wise plan, since it would be liable to excite the suspicions of any stray scouting parties with which they might chance to meet. But their fears proved groundless, and they safely reached the woods near Poolesville. From this point, however, as they were well aware, it was unsafe to proceed towards the town, which lay directly in their course; yet it seemed equally unsafe to turn aside.

"I tell you, boys," suggested White, "let's get the countersign and go into Poolesville."

"Easily enough said," returned one; "but how is it to be accomplished?"

"I'll go and get it."

But there was a chorus of protestations against White's proposition, and it was only with difficulty that he could silence their objections to his daring project. At last, however, he persuaded them to go to the house of a friend living in the neighborhood, and remain there for a given time, or until he should return with the countersign. Resuming his Federal uniform as soon as this plan was agreed on, he proceeded cautiously along the road until the light of a picket fire warned him that advance in that direction was no longer safe. Hitching his horse in the woods, therefore, he crept silently through the brush until he was within earshot of the nearest guard. More than an hour he lay there in the darkness made yet more dense by the deep shadows of the wood; hardly daring to breathe deeply lest he should alarm the guard; to hear the countersign he had crept to within as short a distance as the nature of the ground allowed. His blood was chilled by the long inaction, for the air was keen that October night; and his limbs were almost benumbed by lying so long in one position. At length, however, his patience was rewarded. Footsteps were heard approaching.

"Who comes there?" challenged the guard.

"A friend with the countersign."

"Advance, friend, and give the countersign."

With beating heart, the man hidden in the bushes strained his ears to hear the reply, which sounded but faintly:

"Bunker Hill."

He felt like flying back to his horse, but must, of course, return as slowly and cautiously as he had advanced. At last, how-

ever, he was once more mounted, and dashed along the road at full gallop, roaring out as he went, something like this:

“Oh, the Star-Span-(hic)gled Banner, oh, long (hic) may it wave,  
O'er the (hic) land of the frhee (hic) and the home of the brah-(hic)ve.”

This beautiful rendering of the patriotic song was rudely interrupted by the picket's—

“Halt! Who comes there?”

“Friend 'ith count'sign,” answered the new comer, with tipsy gravity, as he vainly tried to keep himself from reeling in the saddle.

“Advance, friend, and give the countersign,” was the reply, in the stereotyped form; while the picket smiled contemptuously at the drunken officer who answered:

“Bunker Hill,” as he passed on.

The sights which now met his eyes were such as, unexpected, might have sobered him had he been as drunk as he pretended to be; for he was now at once upon his own plantation, and in the Federal camp. His home was converted into a guard-house, whence issued unearthly cries, in mingled accents of brogue and German-English, from the drunken soldiers confined there. The fences had long since fed the flames of camp-fires; the barns had shared the same fate. The groves were unsightly clusters of maimed trees, separated by strips of land where the fresh stumps showed what had been. But it was no time to think of the past, or the present as compared with it; he must think only of the present and the near future. Passing easily from place to place by means of the countersign, he fell in with a party of officers who seemed bent on a glorious spree.

“Keep it up till the 'wee sma' hours', boys,” cried one.

“You bet your bottom dollar on that,” answered another.

“I was to get back to Little Mac, with these dispatches, before sunrise,” said a third, refilling his glass and leisurely sipping the contents.

“Thirty miles!” exclaimed a fourth; “think you'll make it?”

The speaker's laugh was echoed by the whole party, for the messenger's attitude and manner were anything but indicative of the energy that would be required for the ride.

“D—d if I intend to try it. Old Stone needn't to think it. Guess my horse is lame. I hope he is.”

“What'll you do? Somebody 'll blow on you, maybe.”

“O, I'll fix that. I won't stay in town. Guess I'll go just the

other side and put up at P——'s for the night. Your dispatches are for Banks, ain't they, Schmidt?"

Schmidt, another aid present, answered that they were.

"Guess they're good enough to keep over night, ain't they? I don't believe they're important. Let's make a night of it, anyhow, and lay the blame on the d—d good-for-nothing horses, that are so easily lamed."

"Dat soods me, Gabdain"—answered Schmidt, with a strong German accent. "I don't know any ting w'at I likes better."

The "wee, sma' hours" came all too soon for the majority of the party; but at the smallest, they judged it safest to break up the bout. The two aids rode on to the plantation at which they were to spend the night; the remainder, with one exception, staggered home to their quarters; that one man mounted his noble gray horse and rode hastily to the farm-house where there were three others awaiting him.

"Did you get the countersign?" was the first eager question of all.

"Got it without any trouble; had some first-rate liquor, and have lots of fun in prospect for us."

"What is it?"

"A couple of McClellan's aids are going to spend the night at P——'s; one has dispatches from Stone, the other to Banks. Let's capture them."

With exclamations of joy, only stifled that no enemy might overhear them, they mounted and were soon on their way to the indicated house. Their plan was arranged as they rode on; having ascertained in what room the two aids were to sleep, they would manage, by stratagem, to separate them, and thus beat them in detail. Accordingly, having lain in wait some time, White rode up to the house, and rousing a servant, asked, in disguised voice:

"Is Captain Schmidt here? I have been told that he was, and have been sent by Gen. Stone to call him immediately."

"Yessah; I'll tell him, sah."

Capt. Schmidt soon made his appearance, hurling oaths that from their deep guttural sounds seemed doubly profane.

"Tamn ter teufel w'at watched me and told old Stone. W'at's de matter you? O, I peg bardon—"

"I am very sorry indeed, Captain Schmidt, for the duty which has been imposed upon me. The general sent for me as soon as

he learned of my arrival in camp. It seems he had already heard of our frolic; and had ordered word of my arrival to be brought to him—”

How long White might have gone on in these condolences is uncertain, for as he got to this point his three men had arranged matters so that the trusty messenger was completely in their power, and a moment more sufficed to secure him in such a way that resistance was useless, had he not been too much astonished to think of making any. He was left in charge of two of the men at some distance from the house where he had expected to spend the night, while White and the third of his little force went again to the residence.

The knock at the door was answered this time by P— in person, very much out of humor at having his household so frequently aroused at such unusual hours; for it was now verging on three o'clock in the morning. Determined to see the intruder, he suddenly shoved the candlestick so close to White's face that the flame singed his hair; and, seeing his old neighbor before him, started back in utter surprise. With a warning glance, White placed his finger on his lips and pointed his revolver. P—, having recovered his self-control, nodded, and quietly submitted to be guarded by White's companion. Meantime the Confederate leader had mounted the stairs to the room lately occupied by Cpts. Schmidt and —, but in which only the latter was to be found.

“Why, Captain White,” exclaimed the Federal, as he opened the door, “come in, sir. Glad to see you.”

“I heard you say at the tavern that you were going to stay all night here, and I thought I'd follow suit, and join my regiment in the morning.”

“O, it isn't worth while to be so particular; take my word for it, it doesn't pay. Have a seat. You smoke, of course; won't you try one of these cigars?”

“Thank you; but smoking of itself is dry work; I've a pocket pistol here, of excellent brandy; sample it.”

“Is that the kind of arms you carry? I'm afraid they wouldn't be of much use if you were called on to defend yourself.”

“O, it's all right, I reckon; it don't pretend to be effective against any foes but thirst and fatigue. By the way, how about the new carbines they talk of introducing? Have you heard anything of them?”

"No, nothing but some camp talk. This is first class brandy—best I've tasted for a long time. I guess they'll poke along about the carbines a year or two, and then the war will be over and forgotten. For my part, I'd rather trust to these than to any carbine ever made."

"Colt's, are they? It's a magnificent pair, certainly."

"Yes, Colt's navies; I carry them always; keep 'em loaded, and never let them go out of my possession."

"Now, I prefer this kind—it's Adams,' self-cocker; have you ever seen them?"

"Don't believe I have," replied Capt.—, pushing his own revolvers across the table that stood by the bedside, and reaching for the more novel weapon of his companion. Meanwhile White carelessly picked up the pair thus tendered to him, and examined them thoroughly, as any soldier might examine a handsome article of the kind. Cocking them as if unconsciously, he seemed lost in admiration of the elegant workmanship.

"Loaded, you say?" he asked, in a careless tone.

"Always," was the answer.

"Mine isn't," was White's rejoinder, as he pointed the weapon in his right hand at his companion's head, "I am a soldier in the Confederate army, and I want you to dress and come along with me immediately."

The Federal, taken completely by surprise, stared a moment at the Confederate; then started up as if about to grapple with his opponent.

"It's of no use to resist," White assured him, "for the house is surrounded by my men. Be quick."

The prisoner dressed as quickly as possible, and in company with the two Confederates, was soon on horseback. Not much time was required to reach the remainder of the party, the reunion affording much surprise to the two prisoners, each of whom



*"Mine isn't."*

was ignorant of the other's capture; and an equal amount of quiet, grim amusement to the four Rebs. With their prisoners in the centre, they trotted briskly along in the bright moonlight until the gleam of the picket-fires across the Potomac was visible. It was now necessary to hold a council of war; and withdrawing into the shadows of the woods, they consulted upon the course to be pursued. At last it was suggested that two should advance boldly towards the pickets with the countersign, and state that they had volunteered to cross the river on a reconnoissance.

"That will get two of us across," answered one; "but how about the rest?"

"Why the news will spread, and they will want to talk it over with each other; so they won't attend much to their posts for a while; and the two left behind with the prisoners can surely find an opportunity of slipping past at some place."

The plan was accordingly put into operation, and succeeded admirably. When the two who went first were safely across the river, and the others were watching their opportunity, White turned to his prisoners and said:

"Gentlemen, as you are perhaps aware, the least sound may betray us; and the slightest attempt on your part to escape would excite the suspicions of your friends. Now I don't like to threaten, but for us to be taken would involve us in considerable danger; so please understand that the slightest effort to attract attention will be certain death. If we are taken, we will sell our lives dearly and yours will be only a portion of the price."

The two prisoners, who had previously been gagged to prevent their talking, as they seemed determined to do, bowed their heads in assent to this demand, and gave no trouble in the passage of the river. The Confederates watched their chance narrowly, and when, as they had expected would be the case, they saw one particular spot deserted, they issued from the woods and swam their horses across the stream. But scarcely had they crossed when, in the distance, they saw two squadrons of the enemy dashing along the bank. Some of the negroes about P——'s plantation must have made their way directly into camp and given information of all that had taken place. Their words, full of anger and chagrin, soon became plainly audible to the Confederates, who, secure in the vicinity of their own picket lines, gave vent to a hearty burst of laughter.

“That’s him!” cried one of the pursuing party; “I know his voice, Major.”

“Is that you, White?”

“Yes, that’s me, Major; how are you, sir? Fine night, isn’t it? I’ll give you another call soon. Good-night.”

In an instant a shower of shot was falling around him, but fortunately did no damage. In his little force, he had himself assumed the position of rearguard, and had lingered farther behind his party than was necessary; accordingly, putting spurs to his good gray, he cantered merrily on, and had soon come up with the main body. But they were now approaching Leesburg a little too closely for the liking of the Federals, who accordingly wheeled as soon as they saw that they were not to bag their game, and returned to the Maryland side of the Potomac.

Meanwhile, White and his men had reached Leesburg, delivered their prisoners into the proper hands, and as soon as they should have snatched a few hours’ sleep, were ready for any other expedition which promised as much as this, in the way of adventure.



## CHAPTER VII.

### ZAGONYI'S FAMOUS CHARGE.

Fremont—Zagonyi—Fremont's Body-Guard—A Kid-Gloved Brigade—The Prairie Scouts—Valuable Information—Strength and Disposition of the Confederates—"Fremont and the Union"—The Valley of Death—Matheny's Attack—Retreat of the Enemy—A Determined Foe—His Fate—The Fight Ended—Not a Kid-Gloved Brigade.

GEN. FREMONT had been extremely popular ever since his explorations of the Far West had made known to the people the true greatness of the country beyond the Mississippi; and when, in the early days of the war, he was assigned to the command of the Federal forces in Missouri, enthusiasm knew no bounds. He was welcomed as a deliverer by those who desired to keep the State in the Union, and bitterly execrated by those of opposite sentiments.

Among those whom his personal powers of fascination and romantic life had attracted to his side, was a Hungarian refugee who had long been a resident of this country. A soldier in boyhood, when his native land made her desperate but unsuccessful effort to free herself, he made himself notorious for his headlong courage. But he was not permitted to serve until the end of the war. There was a desperate cavalry charge upon an Austrian battery; more than half of the horsemen were slain; their leader was wounded and captured; and for two years, Zagonyi was a prisoner. Then, imperial clemency released him, but exiled him forever. He came to this country, and having for so many years enjoyed the blessings of a republican form of government, considered himself as much bound to fight for the preservation of the Union as any "to the manor born."

Zagonyi offered his services to Gen. Fremont, and was most

cordially received. Whether at his own suggestion, or that of his commander, does not appear; but he was authorized to raise a company of horse, to be known as "Fremont's Body-Guard." Such was the personal popularity of the Pathfinder, that young men flocked to the standard thus raised, in numbers more than sufficient to fill the company. Notwithstanding the severe tests to which they were subjected, in the effort to organize a body of Bayards, knights fearless and blameless, within five days a number sufficient to form two full companies had been enrolled. In addition to these, a third company, composed of the flower of the Kentucky youth, tendered its services and asked to be included in the guard. Subsequently a fourth company was added to these three. Handsomely uniformed, well-armed, mounted upon picked horses, and peculiarly entitled to be called by the commander's name, the corps soon awoke the jealousy of the other parts of the army. "Fancy soldiers," the "kid-gloved brigade,"

*Major Zagonyi.*

and similar epithets were muttered or spoken aloud as they rode through the camp. Fired, as they were, with an enthusiasm for a soldier's life, these were the bitterest taunts that could be flung at them; and many were the secret vows made by those chivalrous hearts, that their comrades' words should be disproved.

Late in October, 1861, Major Zagonyi received orders to proceed with one hundred and sixty of his men to reconnoiter the country through which the main body was about to advance; leaving the remainder of his men in camp, under command of a non-commissioned officer. It was eight o'clock, on the evening of the 24th, when they set out toward Springfield, Mo. Gen. Sigel had already sent out a squadron of cavalry for a similar purpose, one hundred and thirty strong—the Prairie Scouts, well-known in the War history of Missouri; these were but a few hours in advance of Zagonyi's troops, and a rapid march soon enabled

the latter to overtake them, thus combining the two forces.

Major Zagonyi took command—the officer of the Prairie Scouts, Major White, being very ill—and pressed rapidly onward. His men were almost worn out by the strain on their powers. The Scouts, organized at Georgetown, had marched to Lexington, sixty-five miles, and retaken the boats which Price had captured from Mulligan, when the latter capitulated in September. Proceeding by way of Warrensburg to Warsaw, Major White had reported to Gen. Sigel for duty, and had been sent to Springfield. During the whole of this time they had been without tents, and had been obliged to provide themselves with food from the surrounding country. Although the Body-Guard could not show such a length of arduous service as their comrades, they were equally weary, having been on the march for seventeen hours.

Such was the condition of the men when, as they came within two miles of Springfield, they were met by a farmer who said he had important information to give. Obedient to the summons of their leader, the officers clustered around him, and listened attentively to this “friend in need.” A number of men on their way to join Price, he said, had but recently arrived at Springfield, and this reinforcement had increased the force of the enemy to two thousand. Later investigations have revealed that this estimate fell short of the real strength of the enemy by two hundred—in itself not much less than the entire force at Zagonyi's disposal.

The Confederates were encamped upon a hill about half a mile west of the town; to their left was a broad and well traveled road; to their right, a narrow lane. Their rear was protected by a dense growth of trees, which crowned the summit of the hill, and at the foot of the hill there was a small brook. Between their encampment and the grove mentioned, were situated the county fair grounds. The latter afforded protection for their train, being surrounded by a high board fence; while the edge of the timber formed an advantageous post for their infantry and cavalry.

Major White had been left behind the main column, with a small escort, to proceed as slowly as his weakened condition might require; and had been captured by a Confederate scouting party. This confirmed earlier reports of the presence of Federal troops in the near vicinity, and their officers lost no time in

preparing to resist the expected attack. Their position was practically unassailable, except by way of the narrow lane already mentioned; infantry and cavalry were posted so as best to command this avenue of attack, and sharpshooters stationed among the scattered trees, to pick off the advancing assailants. The lane had no outlet, leading only to ploughed fields and timber, impassable for cavalry; if, then, the infantry stood firm, nothing could prevent the enemy's being cut to pieces.

Such was the situation as the farmer explained it to Major Zagonyi. A hurried council of war was held; would it be well to advance? There were many reasons for a negative answer; there was but one for any other.

"We have been called 'kid-gloved boys', and 'fancy soldiers for the pavements of St. Louis'; shall we show that we are soldiers fit for the battle-field, and know how to handle our enemies without gloves?"

Such was the question which the leader addressed to his men; there was not one dissentient voice in the answer; he bade any who were sick, or tired with the seventeen hours' ride, go back, while there was yet time; but not a man stirred.

"Follow me, then," he cried; "And let our watchword be, 'Fremont and the Union!'"

In order to reach the lane along which they were to ride against the enemy, it was necessary to make a detour of twelve miles; under the guidance of the farmer, this was speedily accomplished, and they came in sight of the battle-ground. At first, not an enemy is to be seen; the column of horsemen, whose sabres and spurs clank as they ride, in a sort of rough martial music, seemed strangely out of place in the still brightness of the October afternoon. Suddenly, from the woods, that glow with all the beauty of an American autumn, ring out four short shrill reports, and four Guards reel in their saddles; their eyes glaze; they fall to the ground. The leaves overhead still dance in the breezes, though from the same bough others have fluttered, brown and dead, to the ground; the column rides onward as if none of those composing it were left behind. There is no time to halt now, for just over that spur of the hill they see the gleam of rifles.

They ride on, and as they pass the corner of the wood,  
"Battle's magnificently stern array"  
breaks upon their sight. The road slopes rapidly downward;



Zagonyi's Famous Charge.



Charge of Fremont's Border Guard

they must reach the valley as soon as possible, and charge up the hill. Urging their horses to a gallop, at the word of command, they follow their leader.

"Into the jaws of death,  
Into the mouth of hell."

Volley after volley pours into their ranks, but at last they have gained the brook which separates the two slopes, and they dash wildly up the hill. There is a momentary hesitation; they can not tell why their comrades, the Scouts, should have deserted them in this hour of need; they do not know that the commander of the smaller body has judged a flank attack advisable, and has deployed his men for that purpose; but it can be only a momentary halt, for it is as certain death for them to pause here as it is for them to dash onward.

But the wood was so dense as to be impenetrable; and the Scouts, who had suffered from a galling fire while making the endeavor, were forced to desist. As they rode forward to reinforce the Guard, they met an officer of that body riding back towards them; and gave the order:

"The enemy are retreating; take your men down that lane and cut them off."

The point indicated was the line of connection with the main road. The order was of course obeyed, though the information proved to be false. This movement left the whole brunt of the battle to be borne by the Guard. This body was reforming at the foot of the hill; being, in this position, somewhat sheltered from the enemy's guns. As yet, they have not struck a blow, although suffering so severely; but the time has come for action. Lieutenant Mathenyi receives orders to attack the enemy's cavalry with a force of thirty men; and the little body proceeds at once to execute the order. The Confederate horsemen, four hundred strong, are posted at the edge of the wood; it seems folly to attack them with this handful of men, but the odds are no greater than in other parts of the field.

The graycoats wait to see the meaning of such a movement—a small force detached from the main one. Mathenyi's corps has thundered up the hill halfway to the summit before they realize what this desperate foe intends to do. Grasping their revolvers they pour their fire into the advancing horsemen; but it does not cause a delay. Right at the center of the body Mathenyi hurls his men, their sabres gleaming and flashing in the sun-

shine. Dismayed by the unexpected attack, the Rebels give way an instant; they cannot close up again, for the Yankees are among them, cutting them down like grass. Thrown into such fatal disorder, they can only seek each man for himself, for safety. They turn and fly, pursued in hot haste into the corn-fields where they would have taken refuge;

“And down in the corn, where the poppies grew  
Were redder stains than the poppies knew.”

Mathenyi has disappeared among the enemy's cavalry; there is neither time nor opportunity to ascertain whether the attack has been successful or whether the handful of men has been cut to pieces; the main body has reformed, and Zagonyi gives the command:

“In open order—charge!”

The column spreads out like a fan, and rushes madly up the slope. A murderous fire pours down the hill; but the leaden hail seems unheeded, save where, here and there, the Guardsmen drop from their saddles. Here rushes a riderless horse, mad with excitement into which his rider has guided him; but suddenly he feels another hand on the rein, another weight upon his back; and is again with his companions; leaving behind on the grassy slope, steeds and riders, “in one red burial blent.”

Had the Confederate infantry stood their ground, nothing could have saved the attacking force. Outnumbered, fourteen to one, they had no means of retreat, nor did they desire any. But the Southerners did not wait for the attack; seized with a deadly panic, they turned and fled into the woods, the Guards spurred their horses amid the fugitives, cutting them down mercilessly. There was, after the first rout, an effort made to rally the men, but it proved ineffectual; all that remained of the force was a number, who, more determined than the rest, sheltered themselves behind trees, and fired at the horsemen who advanced. But even these are soon put to flight by the determination of the boys in blue. Scattering from the point where they had been stationed, some of the infantry endeavored to reach the ploughed fields near by, whither the sabred cavalry cannot follow; but many take shelter in the fair-grounds, and thence escape to the town. They are pursued hotly, and the conflict now rages in the streets. Women and children hasten away from the dreadful scene of carnage; and yet, impelled by a terrible fascination, turn back to look upon it.



In every battle there must be, on both sides, numberless instances of courage; or there would be no battle, but a slaughter. It is sometimes difficult, through a medium that shows only one side of the question, to discern this fact; and in the recognition of it consists the impartiality of a War history. While the Confederates were, in general, ignominiously routed by a handful of men, there were many of them who did not deserve censure; and among these was a young officer who, on that one day, vindicated the claim of one man to a place among the chivalry of the South. Superbly mounted, he dashed alone against a squad of Federals; he breaks through their line; one of them goes down before him; wheeling, he charges again upon the same body; another feels the weight of his blade, and he escapes in safety.



*Attack on Zagonyi.*

But this was not all. Feeling that much of the credit for the desperate valor of the troops must be due to their leader, he sought out Zagonyi, in the thick of the fight. Charging a third time on the enemy, he leveled his pistol at the leader, and pulled the trigger when the muzzle almost touched his side. Swaying to the right as he felt the pressure of the revolver over his heart, Zagonyi escaped

the wound, and the bullet passed through his clothing. As the weapon was discharged, the Federal raised his sabre, already discolored, and cleft his opponent's skull; at the same instant those who surrounded him, believing their leader wounded, pressed around the Confederate with their flashing blades, and before he had fallen from the saddle, his body was covered with blood from half-a-dozen wounds.

Up and down, through the streets of the little city, rode the soldiers, seeking the scattered enemy; most of the Confederate horsemen, and many of the infantry, had made their way to a place of safety; but those that remained were the bravest,

the most desperate, who fought like the Guards themselves. At last night descended, and the fight was at an end.

The assembly was sounded, and the troops gathered in the public square of the town—how changed from the gallant array that at noon had approached Springfield. Then, every man had been mounted on a magnificent, dark bay horse, chosen with care from the well-stocked stables of the government; but only thirty of these animals bore their riders out of the fight; the rest of the soldiers were mounted on horses caught on the field, their Confederate riders having been killed, or were on foot. Nor was this the worst. Seventeen of their number had fallen on the field; two could not live through the night; twenty-eight others were more slightly wounded; and of those who here assembled, and peered into the powder-stained, smoke-begrimed visages around them, there was not one who did not wonder to see so many there. So desperate had been their charge that it seemed a miracle that any escaped.

Expecting that the fugitives would soon reach the main body of the enemy, and that he would be attacked by a force which he could not resist, Major Zagonyi determined not to attempt to hold the town, but to retreat to a distance of about twenty-five miles. This was successfully accomplished, and at last the weary and half-starved soldiers had an opportunity to rest and refresh themselves.

Thus ended a charge often called in the annals of the period, "Zagonyi's Ride to Death." As brilliant an exploit as has ever been recorded, it resembles in more points than one, the course of a rocket through the darkness of a July night. A sudden flash, and it bursts upon our astonished gaze, a miracle of radiance; but in a moment it has faded as completely as a dream—"left not a wrack behind." The attack upon a force so far superior in point of numbers attracted much attention even at that time, when wonders were every-day affairs; but it had no effect upon the progress of the war in that part of country; its only result may be summed up in the words of one of the men there wounded, who groaned out to a friend:

"I guess they won't call us 'kid-gloved soldiers' any more."

## CHAPTER VIII.

### A VENTURESOME VENTURE.

Too Venturesome for a Leader—A Good Chance—In Ambush—A Disappointed Party—A Slim Chance—A Woman in the Case—A Desperate State of Affairs—A Golden Opportunity—That Proves to be Less Golden—A Division is Brought Out—Capture of the Scouts—Exchange.

**I**N the old days "before the War," so lovingly looked back to by many a one who now finds himself growing old, it was no difficult matter in the South to arrange a hunt. As soon as

"A southerly wind and a cloudy sky  
Proclaimed it a hunting morning,"

some enthusiast would mount and ride to the next neighbor's with an informal invitation to the sport. So the party would grow, as they went on, just as a snow ball increases. When the War broke out, the same spirit still survived, but could only vent itself in expeditions of daring and adventure.

It was so that the scouting party grew, whose adventures we are about to relate. Captain Darrell, the leader, was a young South Carolinian, nominally attached to Gen. Bonham's staff, but who, finding the life of a partisan more agreeable, was relieved of the duties of an aid-de-camp, and allowed to plan and execute his own movements as if he regularly belonged to that branch of the service. A native of the same state as the Revolutionary Swamp Fox, his was a desperate, reckless courage which would have done credit to one of Marion's men. He claimed to be extremely cautious; but this does not appear to have been well founded, for many of his old friends in the South Carolina regiments predicted many times that he would certainly be captured, and refused to accompany him on any more scouting expeditions.

Such was the man who, one day in November, 1861, learned of an opportunity of harrassing the enemy. The Federal forces were at Langley, their pickets being somewhat in advance; while the Confederates had a picket post at Dranesville, a town made memorable in the following month by the artillery duel which was the first success of the Northern Army of the Potomac. Capt. Darrell received, from private sources, information that a Federal force was to proceed towards Dranesville, probably on a reconnoissance; and, without an effort to ascertain the strength of the party, determined, with a few men, to attack it from the woods through which the road passed, and escape pursuit in the confusion which would ensue.

Following the old plan for raising a hunting party, he soon had, despite his reputation for recklessness, as many men as he desired. They were three in number; Lieut. Decaradeux, and two privates, Carper and Coleman. They set out in the afternoon, and stationed themselves in a position most excellently adapted for an ambush. Above the road rose, on either side, a high bank, entirely inaccessible to horses, and nearly or quite so to the most expert climber. These elevations were crowned with a dense growth of lofty pines. A better covert could not be imagined.

Here they waited, but the enemy did not come. Night drew on, and resolving to give up the idea until the next day, they left their post and went some distance down the road to the house of an acquaintance. Here they passed the night, leaving just after daybreak. The house stood some little distance from the main road, being separated from it by a field of considerable extent. They were in the midst of this field when they descried, far down on the road from Dranesville, the head of a column of Federal cavalry. There was no time to be lost; and a hurried consultation was held.

"They must have passed us during the night!"

"Let's get to the big pines where we were yesterday as soon as we can."

"We can't do it in safety; the trees are half a mile off, and the Feds would see us and fire on us sure."

"What are we to do, then?"

"There's some second growth just under the hill, across the road; we might take shelter there."

They had by this time reached the edge of the road; and the

last suggestion seeming the most feasible plan, they quickly acted upon it. The road was crossed, and passing a small house that stood by it, they gained the shelter of the young pines, which were some six or seven feet in height.

"What are we to do here, Captain?"

"We must annoy them as much as we can; they've been up to some deviltry at Dranesville, and they'll think it's got abroad and we're a large force sent to ambush them."

"Mighty slim chance," muttered one of the men.

"O, I don't know about that; I shall fire into them as they pass; and though I am ready to die, if necessary, I think we'll all get off safely enough. They'll be considerably confused by the attack, and while they are getting ready to repulse the strong party, we can get away to the big pines below, where they never can catch us."

"Well, I'll stand by you, Captain," answered Decaradeux, firmly and without a moment's hesitation.

There was a slight pause, and then, with white faces but flashing eyes, the others added, in one voice:

"So will I."

"Look to your arms, then, and see that they are in perfect order."

All this time the body of cavalry had been steadily approaching. At the head of the column rode Gen. Bayard, then ranking as colonel, the officer in command. In the rear were the Confederate pickets and about a dozen citizens of Dranesville that they had captured and were taking back to Langley. They were not more than twenty yards away, when Darrell gave the final order to his men to look to the condition of their arms; and as they rode on, he sprang to his feet with the words:

"Now, boys, let them have it."

As the shot poured into their ranks, the men looked around in terror, imagining that the whole Rebel army was hidden in the pines. Many of them had wheeled and were about to beat an ignominious retreat, regardless of everything but personal safety, when the voice of their leader inspired them with more courage.

"Steady, boys, steady; close up the ranks there; no running away!"

As he spoke, he spurred his own horse onward, closely followed by his staff officers; he advanced to a distance of five

yards from the bushes, when the fire of the Confederates again blazed forth, and his horse fell, carrying him also to the ground. At the same moment, two other officers fell, one killed, the other mortally wounded. Col. Bayard speedily regained his feet, and mounting the horse of one of these fallen men, endeavored to restore order among his men.

But it seemed as if they were hopelessly demoralized by the fatal effects of the two volleys, and they had well-nigh become uncontrollable when a woman, running out of the little house which the scouts had passed, cried :

“There’s only four of them! There’s only four men in the bushes.”

Her tone was imploring, for she was a Southern woman, a friend of the four men there concealed, and she meant rather to plead for them than to encourage their enemies; but, half-frenzied by the thought of such a small party being attacked by so large a force, she did not consider that she was really betraying her friends. Her words, of course, were far from having the effect which she intended. The Federals needed no encouragement from their officers when once assured that the attacking force did not consist of the whole Confederate army; they rallied, and while some were dismounted that the bushes might be the more thoroughly searched, others were so disposed as to prevent the escape of the enemy by flight.

Matters had taken a desperate turn for the scouts; Decaradeux had been wounded in the right hand, Coleman had a bullet in his side; the only hope of safety lay in their being able to reach the big pines where they had, the evening before, waited for this very body of troops. But this movement on their part was anticipated by the enemy, for Bayard had completely surrounded the clump of bushes, and had, besides, filled it with his dismounted men. It was, then, in the midst of a circle of foes that was rapidly closing around him, that Darrell stopped under a sapling to reload his revolver. He heard their yells and howls around him, as the traveler over the Siberian wastes hears the voice of the wolves pursuing him; as the stag hears the yelping and baying of the hounds. His hand, however, was as steady as ever in the safe solitude of his tent; not an unnecessary grain of powder was poured from the flask, and as he rammed the balls home and rose from the earth, his face, save from the blazing eyes, was as calm as if he were beside a camp fire.

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66. The Knight's...  
Armand Welcker



The little group had scattered when the cavalymen had first entered the bushes, and Darrell was now quite alone. As he rose to his feet, he became a target for several of the enemy, and the balls whistled thick around his ears. The distance was so short that nothing could save him but continual motion from place to place. Darting from tree to tree, he at last stood in an open space near the road, and looking toward it saw that a gap in the fence was guarded by a single cavalryman. It seemed a golden opportunity. He had answered with his revolver a few of the many shots that had been fired at him, and now had but a single load remaining; to fire on this man and hit him, might mean escape; to fire and miss him meant certain death.

This flashed through his brain instantaneously. Quick as thought he rushed at the horseman, raising his revolver as he advanced; the Federal raised his carbine and fired, but Darrell had expected and provided for it; dodging to one side as he saw the cavalryman's finger on the trigger, he sprang like a wild cat at the Federal's throat, and with the muzzle of his pistol close against the breast of the blue blouse, fired. The Yankee fell like a stone as Darrell loosed his grasp upon his throat, and the scout's hand was on the rein. One moment more, and he would be in the saddle!

His break toward the road had been perceived by some of the comrades of the man he had killed, and they had closely followed him. Rapid as his movements had been, they were up with him when he grasped the rein, having the advantage of being mounted. A blow with the butt end of a carbine, and the Confederate lay senseless under the feet of their horses, that, suddenly checked in their course, reared and plunged above him, striking his prostrate body with their hoofs. One of the men threw himself from his horse and bent over the scout.

"Is he dead?" asked another.

"Dead as a herring," answered the first, rising.

But it proved to be a livelier corpse than he thought; for Darrel had been but momentarily stunned, and now, as he regained his senses, raised his head from the earth

"Get up," commanded one, roughly, assisting him by the time honored means of grasping his collar.

Dizzy and half-blinded, Darrel regained his feet, to find himself the center of a group of men, apparently gathered from all countries on the face of the globe. In his ears, that still rang

with the force of the blow he had received, there now sounded a perfect Babel of languages. Recovering himself by an effort, he wrenched the carbine from the hand of one of the cavalrymen standing by, and was about to club it, when half a dozen, seeing his intention, snatched it from him and again held him, this time more securely than before. As they were crowding about him, now pushing him this way, now that, there was a little man who held a cocked pistol in his hand, and who was endeavoring to make his way through the group to its center, elbowing his larger comrades right and left.

"Let the Italian at him," suggested one, and the cry was speedily taken up by others.

"Give me a pistol and put me in that field," rejoined the scout fiercely, "and I don't care whether it's an Italian or a Yankee that comes."

There was a shout of laughter at this defiance, which was redoubled when another party came up with the cry:

"Here's the girl you left behind you!"

It was Lieut. Decaradeux, whose delicate features and pale face looked extremely feminine under a black oil-cloth turban, with which they had replaced his lost hat.

"Humph!" retorted another, as he saw the dignified air of the young officer, "that fellow looks like he didn't care what the price of tobacco was. Who is he, anyhow?"

The question was addressed to Capt. Darrell, who made no answer.

The coarse raillery lasted for some time, being redoubled as Coleman was brought up. Carper had succeeded in getting away. The cavalrymen were only silenced by the appearance of a staff-officer, who, riding up to the group, addressed Capt. Darrell, claiming him as an old acquaintance at the University of Virginia. He was Capt. McKewn, an adjutant of Gen. McCall, and once in his care, of course, the prisoners were not further molested.

As the party approached Langley, they met a large force of Federal troops; it was Gen. McCall with his whole division. Having heard the firing, he had thought, as Bayard's command did, that the reconnoitering party had been ambushed by the whole Confederate force, and having no frightened female enemy to reassure him, had ordered all the forces at his command to march to the rescue.

“So you brought out your division to capture four men, General,” said Captain Darrell. “Was it worth while?”

Gen. McCall looked at him half angrily for a moment, and then, relaxing the muscles of his face as he saw the wicked gleam in the prisoner’s dark eye, replied :

“I don’t know. It succeeded, I believe.”

“Not quite,” persisted Darrell, “for one got away.”

The prisoners were well treated for the remainder of the journey to Langley, whence they were sent to Washington. There was an effort made to consider them as spies, and execute them as such ; and the fact that the officer who had been killed was a surgeon, a non-combatant, was made to seem a matter of great importance ; but they showed that they were on a reconnaissance with a force of four infantry, as Col. Bayard had been on a similar errand with a thousand cavalry, and the plea was admitted ; as to the killing of the surgeon, it was evident that if a uniformed, shoulder-strapped non-combatant chose to ride at the head of a column under such circumstances, he must take the consequences ; certainly the enemy could not be expected to draw such fine distinctions.

Cleared, then, of all accusations of a criminal nature, our three scouts were remanded to the tedium of a military prison. Here they occupied their time in discussing the best mode of escape and in laying various plans, until the officer in charge, growing suspicious, put them into solitary confinement. The trouble about exchanging prisoners had not then arisen, and it was not long before they were duly conducted, by the flag-of-truce boat, back to the Confederate lines.

## CHAPTER IX.

### GARFIELD'S DISPATCH BEARER.

Marshall's Invasion of Kentucky—Disposition of the Federal Forces—John Jordan—The Precious Bullet—Summoned to Surrender—A Wild Break for Liberty—Answering the Owl—Pursued and Treed—A Lucky Misstep—The Errand Done—Dangers of the Return Journey—The Result—Garfield's Reward—John Jordan's Reward.

MARSHALL, with his five thousand men, had invaded Kentucky in those early days of the war, when opinions as to a man's duty often trembled in the balance as to whether he owed most to the individual State which was his home, or to the country of which that State formed but a part. That was the time when men waited anxiously to hear the news, hoping or fearing, as the case might be, that Missouri, Maryland, Kentucky, had left the Union and joined the Confederacy. Among the simple-minded mountaineers of the Piedmont region went, not only the soldiers of the South, firing the younger men with the desire of bearing arms in a noble quarrel, but men eloquent with the rude powers which might best appeal to them, trying to convince old and young that this was the right side. They listened, but were not convinced. Many of them had sons or brothers already sworn to the service of the United States; others were ready to cast in their own lot with them whenever necessity demanded it. But persuasion or compulsion might, in the end, triumph over a sufficient number to turn the balance.

Such was the state of affairs against which the Union forces in Kentucky must contend. Four thousand four hundred infantry, six hundred cavalry, and twelve pieces of artillery—such was the measure of the enemy's strength. To contend with this

force, Gen. Buell had sent a young Ohioan, who, besides his own regiment, was in command of the Fourteenth Kentucky and the Fortieth Ohio, and a small body of three hundred cavalry. His own regiment and the Fourteenth were at Louisa; the Fortieth, under Col. Cranor, was at Paris; and the cavalry, commanded by Lieut.-Col. Woolford, was at Stamford. Between the fourteen hundred men at Louisa and the eight hundred at Paris, there was a mountainous, rocky country, reaching a distance of one hundred miles from one place to another. Nor were the natural difficulties all that was to be overcome: it was in the midst of this region that Gen. Marshall had established his forces.

To contend with the enemy with any chance of success whatever, it was necessary to effect a junction of the Federal troops. Even then, there were but two thousand five hundred men against five thousand; and dispatches must be sent through a region where Marshall had scouting parties in all directions.

But Col. Garfield (for the young Ohioan spoken of was the future President) was not content to so give it up. If a messenger could be found, he would endeavor to unite the forces and attack the Confederates, hoping that a surprise and a mistaken idea as to the number of his troops would do what mere courage would otherwise find impossible.

"Have you a man," he said, to the Colonel of the Kentucky regiment, "who would sooner die than betray his trust?"

"Many of them, I hope," replied the other, hastily running over in his mind the names of those whom he could put upon the list.

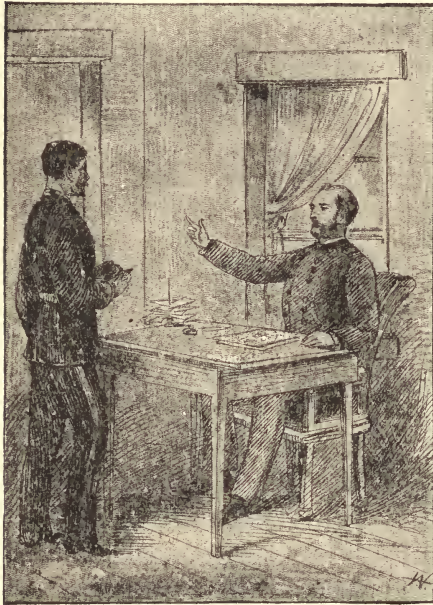
"I want only one," rejoined the senior officer anxiously; and in addition to his reliability, he must be well acquainted with the surrounding country. Otherwise, I could send one of my Buckeyes."

"My men are, as you know, mainly from these rocky hillsides, and are wholly unacquainted with anything else. They are earnest, even enthusiastic in their patriotism, as, indeed, all mountaineers are. But I will give you the best of all—John Jordan, from the head of Baine."

The Baine is a small stream which enters into the Big Sandy, not far from the point at which the regiments were encamped.

"Will you send for him? There is no time to be lost."

The mountaineer was accordingly summoned to the Colonel's headquarters. A tall, lithe frame, a gaunt and sallow face, a small, piercing gray eye, a high-pitched voice—these made up the first impressions which the Ohioan received when he first saw the Kentuckian.



*A Piece of Work to be Done.*

"My man, I have a piece of work to be done at once, and your colonel thinks that you can do it better than any one else."

The private looked abashed, and saluted awkwardly again, as if that were the only reply which he was sure was suitable for the occasion.

"Do you know the road to Paris? Don't be afraid to speak out, yes or no."

"I know putty well ev'ry part of the kentry round about here, cunnel; an' I reckon I could find the way 'most anywhar."

"Would you, if it was necessary for the good of

the country, undertake to ride to Paris with a message to Col. Cranor?"

"I'll go jist whar I'm told to go, cunnel," replied the soldier, gravely, revolving the matter in his own mind.

"I will not *send* any man;" replied Col. Garfield; "it is too perilous a journey for that. It must be a man who is entirely willing to risk his life for his country, even when not in strict obedience to orders. Only in the case of such a man could I be sure that he possessed the courage and endurance necessary to make the mission a success."

"I'm willin' ter do my sheer, cunnel," said the private, earnestly; "it's on the Lord's side, and I don't drive no bargains with Him. My life ain't mine; its His'n; an' if He wants it ter help the kentry along, I ain't the man to say no."

"You mean you don't expect to come out of the war alive?"

"That's it, cunnel."

"Will you die before you will let the dispatch be taken from you?"

"I'll die sooner'n furgit what I ought ter do."

"Very well; you must have a carbine, a pair of revolvers, and the best horse we can find in either regiment. Come back here at dark ready to start, and I will give you the dispatch. Your own colonel will see that you are armed and mounted."

The dispatch was written on tissue paper, which was then rolled into the form of a bullet, and coated with warm lead. When the scout again reported to Col. Garfield, accoutered as directed, he was given this sham bullet, with the repetition of cautions and injunctions. The short midwinter day (it was in December, 1861) had drawn to a close, but the night was a bright moonlight one. It was necessary then to wait until the moon should set. The programme was for him to journey by night and rest by day, either in the woods or in the house of some loyal man. Not a ray illumed the night when he set out.

"I know the road well, cunnel," he assured his superior, having by this time gained sufficient confidence to speak out his meaning; don't be afeared of my gittin' lost; I've druv mules to market at Paris many a time."

All night long he rode through the darkness as unerringly approaching his destination as if the sun had shone with full glory. When dawn came, he had covered about twenty miles, though he had not yet reached his proposed resting-place, the house of a friend. At last it was within sight; and tethering his horse in the woods, lest his friend's stable might be searched, he presented himself at the door of the humble log-cabin.

"Kin you let me stay here all day, Rachel?" "he asked of the mistress of this dwelling, who presented herself at the door.

"Sartin, John, ye kin stay's long's ye want ter."

"I've been a ridin' all night, an' I'm kinder tired."

"Hain't ye had no breakfus?"

"No."

"Then jest set right down thar an' I'll fry ye some bacon and make ye some egg-bread in no time; an' then ye kin go up stairs an' take a snooze."

The busy housewife bustled about, and true to her promise, soon had the meal prepared.

"Thar's lots of Secesh about," she observed, as he drank his

coffee and ate the homely viands; "air you putty strong?"

"No, I'm alone—I'm carryin' dispatches fur Cunnel Garfield."

He sank his voice almost to a whisper, and glanced cautiously about him as he revealed his errand.

"Sakes alive! What 'ud you do ef they was to git after you now?"

"Run fur it, I reckon," replied the scout, smiling at her fears.

"The woods is a quarter of a mile away—how'd you ever git over the clearin' 'thout being shot?"

"If I couldn't run, I could sell my life putty dear," he muttered.

"An' Jake's away, an' thar ain't a soul on the place but me an' old Pomp and the critters."

"Never mind that, but let me rest now; I must be in the saddle again as soon as night comes."

She conducted him to the upper chamber, which was really no more than an attic, extending over both the rooms on the first floor. Here she left him to his slumbers, and hastened down to find Pomp—old, black, ignorant, but faithful as a dog to his mistress. Mounting him on a mule, she sent him to scour the surrounding country—Pomp was "on a scout."

The morning tasks were done, and while the messenger slept, Rachel sat by the fireside, knitting at a coarse blue yarn sock "for the soldiers"—and waiting for the return of her emissary. It was noon before he came.

"Dey's comin', Miss Rachel! he cried, as he climbed down from his panting long-eared steed;" 'bout twenty or maybe a hundred Secesh—jest down thar by the wood-paster—ridin' like dey was 'feared o' blacksnakes!"

Many an officer found during the war that the negroes, as a class, had no accurate idea of number; but Pomp's estimate, though allowing such a wide margin for conjecture, was sufficiently to be relied upon to alarm his mistress. Darting into the cabin, she slammed and barred the door in the astonished darkey's very face; and hastened to the upper story.

"Hurry!" she cried, awakening the scout; "the Secesh is comin'. Jump from the window and run to the woods. They're comin' the other way."

"How many?" he demanded.

"Twenty. Hurry, they'll be here in a minit. Go, or yer'll be tuck, sure."



"Rachel," he said, looking gravely down upon her, "tain't much matter what becomes of me; I ain't but one man, an' thar's lots more. But every state means thousands of men, an' this"—holding up the sham bullet—"this means Kaintuck."

The terrified woman could only wring her hands and looked a mute appeal, glancing first at the window, then at the ladder where she half expected to see the "Secesh" entering the room.

"Ef yer love yer home, Rachel, and Kaintuck, and yer kentry—yes, an' ef yer love God and the cause, will you take keer o' this?"

"Yes, yes, only go."

"Will yer swar to do it, an' ter git it ter Cunnel Cranor ef I don't come back agin fur it?"

"I swar it," she replied, looking at the ladder.

"Take it, then; maybe I'll come back fur it to-night, but if I can't—that's ef I'm killed—you'll take it—"

"There they are!" she cried, sharply, as the horses' hoofs were heard in the door-yard; "oh, what fur did yer stop fur anythin'?"

"I had to," replied the scout, briefly; "go ye to the door and see who 'tis."

She descended obediently, and standing by the still barred door, demanded:

"What ye want?"

"John Jordan, from the head of Baine," was the reply.

No answer was given, but Rachel looked anxiously at her guest.

"Hurry, will ye?" came the voice, again; "we know he's here; he came from Garfield's camp, an' got here at sun-up this mornin'."

"John Jordan, from the head o' Baine," replied the scout, "ain't ter be had fur the axin,' so ye kin jest go 'way as ye come."

"Surrender at once!" cried a stern voice without. "It's too cold a morning to stand waiting here."

"Ye'll not complain of the cold in the place whar I'll send ye if ye don't go 'way," retorted the man within.

"Just give us that dispatch, and we won't trouble you."

"An' s'posin' I don't?"

"We'll swing you up to the nearest limb that's strong enough to bear you."

How had the Confederates discovered his arrival at this secluded cabin? How did they know that he was the bearer of a dispatch? There were many traitors in those days—not the men who fought for what they honestly believed was their right, but men who deliberately swore allegiance to one government, in order to obtain its secrets for the other. Spies are, of course, necessary; but we cannot wonder at the fate which the laws of war prescribe for him who is discovered by the enemy.

“Will you surrender?” again came the demand from without.

“My life, yes; thet’s mine—an’ I’ll trade it fur six o’ your’n; but I hain’t got nothin’ else ’at b’longs to me.”

“Fire the house!” cried one.

“Can’t smoke *him* out,” returned another; “’taint in him; an’ we’ll lose the dispatch that-a-way.”

The resolute man within could hear the murmur of their voices as they made various plans for capturing the wished-for dispatch; but not a word could be distinguished. Rachel, gathering courage from his composure, waited breathlessly for further developments. At last she could stand it no longer.

“I’ll go up stairs,” she whispered, “an’ see what they’re doin.’ I kin tell thar.”

The cabin had been built after the fashion of old times, when reconnoissance was often necessary before unbarring the door. The floor of the loft projected over the walls of the lower story, so that, by peering through the chinks purposely left, she could see what took place in the yard beneath without the slightest exposure to the eye of the enemy. Perhaps in that very spot the brave wife of a pioneer had once knelt to see the movements of the dusky savages of the surrounding forest.

She saw them gathered in a group at a short distance from the door—an officer with a score of men. Earnestly they talked, keeping a close watch over the house meanwhile. Then she saw that their plans had been made, for they separated. A dozen or so were posted as guards about the house, while the others, dismounted, proceeded to the woods a quarter of a mile from the house. From the window Rachel could see the movements of the latter group. Hastily she descended.

“They’re cuttin’ a saplin’ to batter the door down with,” she whispered excitedly; oh, what will you do?”

“How’re they posted around the house?”

“Thar’s two here at the door, an’ the others most anywhar.”

"Ef I cud scare the critters of these here two at the door, I might run to the barn, an' then to the woods; it's a slim chance, though," mused the scout.

"But the others are thar, John; what about them?"

"They'd have ter make their horses leap the fence, an' maybe the brutes wouldn't do it. It's a slim chance, but thar ain't no other. Maybe I'll come back to-night. Ef I don't, remember that Cunnel Cranor must hev that bullet. Hev ye got a red shawl, or anything of the kind?"

"Anything bright do?"

"Yes; only be quick."

She produced from her homely store of clothing, a gorgeous red and yellow striped petticoat, a garment worthy of the Pied Piper's wife, had he been a Benedict.

"Now open the door suddenly, so as to surprise them," he whispered, posting himself where he could spring out at once, and grasping the skirt with his extended hands.

She obeyed, and, as she suddenly flung open the door, the scout sprang forward. As he had foreseen, the horses reared and plunged, frightened into utter unmanageableness by the strange figure. Vainly their riders strove to control them; the scout had so far succeeded. In less time than it takes to tell it, he had cleared the fence which divided the door-yard from that surrounding the barn, and had reached the barrier at the far end of the latter enclosure. But his enemies were not lacking in vigilance. The two at the door were unable to manage their horses, but there were ten besides, and these rode after him. The hot breath of the foremost horse fanned his cheek as he put his foot on the fence-rail; and the rider, stooping from his saddle, grasped the collar of his blouse. Turning suddenly, he placed the muzzle of his revolver almost against the gray jacket of his enemy, and pulled the trigger; instantly he fired again, this time at the horse of the next nearest pursuer. Hardly had the dead Reb fallen from his saddle before he was over the fence; and he was far on the road to the woods before the other had disengaged himself from under his horse.

Once safe within that wilderness of undergrowth, not the whole Confederate Army could have found him in a day's search, unless by the merest chance. He was secure for a time; but for how long, was a question not easily solved. The enraged Confederates could only return to the house with the body of their comrade.

"We'll pay this back with interest," they threatened, with set teeth; "and we'd burn this house over your head if it wasn't for your husband's loyalty. What do you suppose he'll say of your work to-day?"

For Rachel's husband was not, like Jordan, an open supporter of his opinions; formally enlisted in the Confederate army, these men did not know, as she did, that he was a traitor to the South, as one of their number was to the North.

Rachel Brown could only listen submissively and in silence. She could not afford to provoke them, for was not the precious bullet hidden in her bosom at that very moment? Surely they would leave her alone very soon; and at dark the scout would return, and claim his own again. But they would be likely to watch the house, even if no visible guard were set. How should she communicate with John Jordan?"

Meanwhile the Federal, lying concealed in the laurel thickets, had determined to call her as soon as it should be safe to do so. Night came on, dark and drizzly; the keenest eye could scarcely distinguish objects two yards away. Little good, then, would any covert watching of the house do the Confederates.

Would Jordan dare come to the house? Hardly—but what was that? Ah, it was only the hooting of an owl in the woods. Pomp had gone to bed in his own little cabin, and was sleeping the sleep of the just; she was alone—listen! It is the owls again! Were they ever so noisy?

But if it is only the owl's voice which she hears, why does she wrap herself in a dark shawl and go out into the blackness of the night? Surely she is not expecting to find the scout in the darkness, when the Rebs have given up the search in daylight? The hooting continues, and she bends her steps directly towards the point from which the sound appears to come. Now, having reached the woods, and being close to the bush on which the owl appears to be seated, she stoops and whispers:

"They're a layin' in wait for you along the short road—take the other."

"God bless you, Rachel," responds the quondam owl; "you are His angel, I guess—the messenger He sends me."

And the hooting was heard again, for any cessation might betray them.

"Here's the bullet, an' here's suthin' to eat. Is yer critter all right?"

"Good fur forty miles afore sun-up. God bless you, again, Rachel, and good-bye. *Who, Who, Who!*"

And the woman glided back to her home like a shadow, while the man, his precious bullet secured, mounted his horse and rode

away through the darkness. The road which he must take was a strange one to him, and he could not, therefore, judge of the distance over which he passed; and although his steed was fresh and spirited, the road was so full of slush that the animal could make but little progress compared with what might have been done on a hard road. Dawn came at last, with a damp, raw cold, which seemed to chill him to the very heart. A heavy yellow fog overhung the earth, making it impossible to see anything distinctly. Farther he dared not go



at present. He had long left behind him the sheltering laurel thickets, and was now in the midst of a grove where the trees stood far apart, leaving the snow white upon the ground. Tethering his horse, he made his way a good distance back out of sight of the animal, as cautiously as he could, so as to leave but few footprints in the snow, to a huge walnut. Part of the way, to further mislead any one who might be passing, he adopted the old pioneer fashion, learned of the Indians, of walking backward.

Perched in the crotch of the tree, he sat for two hours, waiting for the fog to lift; but still it hung over the landscape, almost as dense as ever. But long after he had eaten the breakfast with which Rachel's thoughtfulness had provided him, he heard the sound of hoofs, and after awhile discerned the dim and ghostly forms of a body of horsemen.

They carried a lantern with them, and seemed engaged in

searching for something that had been lost; but as they drew near enough for him to distinguish their words, he found that they were examining the road for some particular set of foot-prints. Here and there the hoofs had sunk in the slush, and



*Treed, But Not Caught Yet.*

can't——”

“Gentlemen, gentlemen,” interposed another voice, “this is no time for quarreling among ourselves. We are evidently wrong in following this road, for I see no hoof-prints with the mark of the cork. He has taken the other road, and we shall have to go back to the fork.”

The scout's heart had beaten fast when he heard the trooper speak of the peculiarity in his horse's foot-print; for, as the Confederate had judged, the animal did have one foot sand-

left no trace; but in some places, it appeared, from their remarks, to be clearly defined in the half-frozen mud, on those parts of the road where the snow had not lain.

“I tell you, 'taint here,” said one; “he's tuck the other road. I'll bet on it.”

“'Taint so, nuther,” returned a comrade, sulkily; “here's the print again, plain as the nose on yer face?”

“Sure 'nough, thar's the print of the cork that some Yankee smart Aleck put in ter ease the sand-crack. God durn yer skin, what'r yer doin'?”

“My foot slipped,— thet's what I'm doin'; but I'll hev yer to know I don't perpose to stand any sech talk. Ef yer

cracked, and a cork in the middle of the quarter had eased the strain. He wedged the precious bullet tightly in the crotch of the tree, and tucked a dry leaf over it; then drew and cocked his revolver.

"They shan't git the dispatch, nohow," he told himself, as with set teeth he awaited their coming.

But he was too far from the road to be discerned through the fog, and having finally come to the conclusion that their officer was in the right, that there was no trace of him to be found along this road, they mounted and returned to the fork, three miles away, there to follow the other branch. The scout, as soon as they were out of hearing, repossessed himself of the dispatch and rode away in hot haste. No one knew how soon they might conclude that after all the probabilities were in favor of the road which they had so lately given up, and return to prosecute their search. His horse was nearly worn out, having traveled at full speed over a difficult country nearly the whole of the long winter night; but, by merciless urging, he got onward. He was riding now "ter save Kaintuck;" and if he spared not his own life, was he likely to spare the animal that he bestrode?

Onward he rode through mist and fog, into he knew not what perils; but there was certain danger behind him, or even in delay. Five miles from his resting-place of the morning was the dwelling of a Union man, to whom he applied for another horse, offering to trade, and urging the necessity of the case.

"Wal, now," replied the stranger, taking a critical survey of the proffered animal: "I ain't achin' to trade, fur 'twould be jest a clear case of cheatin' Uncle Sam. Don't you trade that horse off; 'taint got a dozen equals in Kaintuck; but I'll lend you one, and take keer o' this till you come back this way agin."

The scout's face had fallen when this oration began, but brightened visibly toward the close.

"Let me have your best horse, then, right away, and may God bless you fur helpin' ter save Kaintuck."

"Won't yer wait awhile? The old woman 'll git yer some breakfus.'"

"No, I've no time; it's eleven o'clock now. I must be on the road."

The horse was saddled and brought out. The scout mounted and spurred away. Forty miles there were yet to ride, and he must keep straight to the mark. Twelve weary hours he urged

the good steed onward before the lights of Paris were seen, a faint red glimmer on the horizon. In many a home that night there was mirth and music, in spite of the war which was to send mourning into thousands of them. The echoes of the church-bells, telling of peace upon earth, had scarcely died away; but still through the winter night the scout rode onward, his ears strained to catch any sound which might betoken an approach of his pursuers, his eyes fixed eagerly upon the constantly brightening lights of Paris.

Another hour, and he rode up to Col. Cranor's headquarters and delivered the dispatch. By daylight the column was on the march, and the necessary orders forwarded to Stamford.

But the messenger was to return as he had come—alone. He waited until nightfall, then began his journey, arriving early the next morning at the house of the honest patriot who had refused to trade horses. Here he rested during the day, setting off at nightfall on his own thoroughbred, fresh and full of spirits.

But his dangers were not yet over. Midnight found him riding at a fast trot over a road now frozen hard. But surely there is something beside yonder trees that in summer overshadow the highway; surely the gleam of the starlight falls on something beside ice-covered branches. As he rides onward, peering about him, from behind each tree steps a confederate, aiming directly at him. They form a long avenue, a score or more on each side. He cannot hope to pass them; so much he grasps in an instant; and is as quick to see the only possibility of escape. Wheeling his horse on his hind legs as on a pivot, he drives in his spurs, bends close on the neck of the steed and dashes away. Instantly forty shots ring out upon the clear and frosty air; forty shots, aimed by the most expert marksmen of Kentucky, but aimed at a flying shadow. Not one strikes the man; but he falls to the ground, for his horse has been killed. Leaping to his feet, he runs at his utmost speed, and in a few minutes is well within the shelter of such laurel thickets as those from which the owl called to Rachel Brown.

In their recesses he was safe, as long as he lay quiet. How close a guard they kept upon the road, he did not know, but, after two days, hunger and cold compelled him to venture out. He did not again take to the road—being on foot, he thought it safest to keep to the woods—and sought out the humble shanty of a negro. Here he found refreshment and opportunity for rest;



and here, at nightfall, when it was again comparatively safe for him to go on, he found a guide to the stable of a wealthy Southern man of the neighborhood. When in the morning it was discovered that the best of his horses was gone, the owner probably regretted deeply that he had not offered it to the cause which he professed to support.

Being now mounted again, he found it was even yet no easy matter to escape the vigilance of the enemy. More than once he



*The Steed, but not the Man.*

lay concealed within hearing of their search, but as often escaped. It was at midnight on the 6th of January (he had started at the same hour on the 24th of December) that he rode into Louisa and sought Col. Garfield's headquarters. The officer had given orders that John Jordan was to be brought to him at once, no matter what the time. It was at his bedside then that the report was made.

"Have you seen Cranor?" he asked, eagerly.

"Yes, Cunnel, an' I reckon he'll be here in about two days."

"You are a brave and faithful soldier, Jordan," returned Garfield, "and you have done us a great service."

"Thank you, Cunnel," replied the scout, something in his throat seeming to choke him; "thet pays me fur all."

Three days later Garfield attacked Marshall; Cranor's men came up, and though footsore and weary from the long march, not too tired to fight for the Union. The result was the Union victory of Middle Creek; Col. Garfield, who, to use the President's words, "had done in two weeks what a regular army officer could not have accomplished in less than two months," was commissioned a brigadier-general; and John Jordan—well, he felt that he had helped "to save Kaintuck," and went down a few months later to a bloody grave, unmarked, among his native hills. No man knows where he sleeps; he was only a private.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE GREAT RAILWAY RAID.

The Georgia State Railroad—The Backbone of the Confederacy—Going South—Twenty Minutes for Breakfast—An Unlooked-for Interruption—A Ridiculous Race—Cutting the Telegraph Wire—Beauregard's Powder—A Dangerous Delay—The Reason For It—A Fatal Mistake—First Signs of Pursuit—The Race Explained—Leaping Over the Obstructions—The Impossible is Done—Unsuccessful Ruses—A New Danger—A Ray of Hope—The Engineer's Plan—The Captain's—The Pursuit on Foot—Captured—Escape of Captain Andrews—Recapture—His Fate—Fate of His Companions—A Daring Escape—The President's Praise—The Missing.

AS long as the Georgia State Railroad, extending from Atlanta to Chattanooga, Tennessee, was in successful working order, there would be but little hope of ending the war in a manner acceptable to the Northern states. It was "the backbone of the Confederacy;" the means of transporting supplies of all kinds to the Southern army; and many a Federal commander studied to cut off communication by this route. There are thirteen bridges on the line of the road, and, were these once burned, the desired end would be accomplished; but it was an undertaking requiring such a combination of address and courage that only a party of volunteers could hope to succeed. Nor must the leader be an ordinary man. Many an officer racked his brain to think how and by whom it could be done, but up to the spring of 1862 no one had done more.

The importance of the undertaking was fully recognized by every man in the army, but there had been no actual call for volunteers when Capt. J. J. Andrews offered his services for the purpose. Just at this time, it was doubly important that such a step should be taken, for Gen. Mitchel was advancing upon Chattanooga, which would fall an easy prey if no succor could be sent

from Atlanta. Incited by his example, twenty-one men volunteered to follow where he should lead them; and the proffer was gladly accepted by the officer in command.

The whole expedition was most carefully planned; every link must be perfect, for on that chain of events hung their lives, nay, more—the success of the campaign. There must be no repetition of the old story—“For want of a nail, the shoe was lost.” Doffing their uniforms, they assumed the ordinary dress of the country through which they were to make their way, and, clad mostly in “butternut” jeans of various shades and qualities, in garments of many different styles, they set out. Of course so large a body would have excited suspicion, so sometimes singly, in some instances in squads of three or four, they pressed on to Atlanta. They were provided with a ready answer to all questions as to whence they came, and why and whither they were going.

“Came from Kaintuck. Got kind er’ tired of the Lincoln style of doin’ things, and thought I’d come South and join the army. Many of our troops in the neighborhood?”

It may readily be guessed that “our troops” did not mean the army to which the questioner belonged; but the reason for leaving Kentucky, and the inquiry were sufficient to ward off all suspicion; and their only difficulty was to escape from the garburity of the Southerner.

It was the 10th of April, 1862, when they met at the rendezvous appointed by Gen. Mitchel, a grove near Atlanta. The more completely to disarm suspicion, they were to separate again, and take the train at different points; most of them leaving at Atlanta, and the last one becoming a passenger at Marietta. All were to find seats in the forward car, and, of course, to treat the others of the party as entire strangers. The following morning, Saturday, was fixed as the time.

So well had their plans been laid that not an eye had penetrated their disguise. Marietta was but a few miles behind them when the train stopped at Big Shanty, and the familiar announcement: “Twenty minutes for breakfast!” greeted the ears of the hungry passengers. There were many who did not leave the cars; here a party of ladies and children had brought a goodly supply of luncheon; there, an early riser had breakfasted before leaving Atlanta, twenty-eight miles away. Nobody thought it strange, then, that some of the men in the forward car should

retain their seats, or lunch, like the rest of the travelers.

The manager of the railroad machine shops was on board the train, and he, with the engineer and the conductor, Capt. Fuller, made one of the numerous groups at the long table in the building which gave its name to the station. Every one had just fairly settled himself to secure as much as he wished in the shortest possible time, when Captain Andrews arose and walked out of the car. There was no obstruction; everything fell in with their plans. Hastening back, he entered the rear door of the car in which his men were seated, and walked slowly up the aisle. It was the appointed signal, and the twenty-one men were too alert and eager for the work to miss it. Not a moment was lost. Each one knew what place, what duty had been assigned to him. Following the officer, they reached the foremost box-car, but not until one, detailed for the purpose, had quickly withdrawn a coupling pin, leaving but three freight cars attached to the locomotive and tender. The passenger coaches were to be left where they were. Four of them, Capt. Andrews, W. W. Brown, William Knight and Alfred Wilson, mounted the engine; two, who were to act as brakemen, climbed to the top of the box cars, and threw themselves flat; the remaining sixteen entered the foremost freight cars.

The camp-guards, just aroused from their lethargy, looked curiously on, but did not realize that anything was wrong, until, at a word from Andrews, Knight jerked open the steam valve and the locomotive moved off.

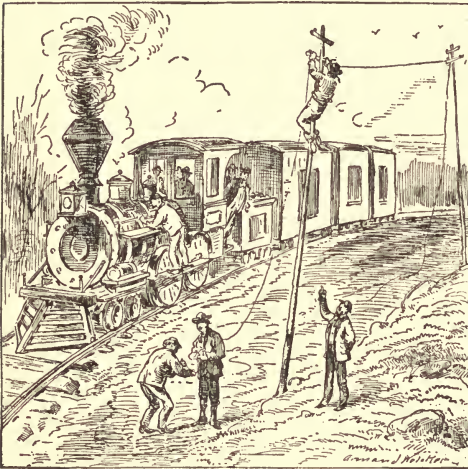
“And then and there was hurrying to and fro;”

for every one was anxious to find out what had been done, and how any further evil could be prevented. The alarm was given to the officers of the train, and with quick energy, Capt. Fuller rushed from the eating saloon, and shouting, “Come on!” to his companions, leaped from the platform to the road-bed.

“What’s he going to do!” queried the puzzled bystanders; and as they saw the three men run after the engine, a shout of derision went up. It was echoed by the party who had captured the locomotive, as, when rounding the first curve, they saw this seemingly ridiculous effort at pursuit.

Sixteen miles an hour was the schedule time of the train, but for some minutes this was much exceeded. The pedestrians were, of course, easily distanced; but there was a messenger swifter than steam, and if that were once in chase, all might

still have been lost. There was no telegraph station at Big Shanty, but they did not know how soon these panting runners might reach one, or whether there might not be an instrument which could be attached in such an emergency. But at such a distance must the wires be cut, that there would be no possibility of the point being reached, until they should have had time to cut the wire in another place. Onward at full speed then they went, until the sudden announcement that the steam was low, and good time could not be made. A rest of three minutes was sufficient to get the locomotive into first-class running order, and, once more they dashed onward with renewed speed.



*Cutting the Telegraph Wires.*

Only for a few miles, however, and again the engine slowed up. John Scott, lithe and active, scrambles up the telegraph pole, and knocking off the insulating box, swings himself to the ground by the wire. Such damage might easily be repaired, but no wire can be obtained to replace a piece taken out nearer than Atlanta. Fortunately a small saw was found on the engine, and while some occupied themselves in saw-

ing out a piece of wire several yards in length—ample for their purpose—others, with a smooth iron bar, which was the only tool at hand, pried some of the spikes from a rail, wrenched it from its place, and laid it with all the other obstructions near by, across the track. Of course, time was thus lost, but it was not valuable, for, until a certain irregular train had passed, they must keep to the schedule, and they had gained on this by shortening the stoppage at Big Shanty, and by their rapid run to this point.

“I guess we’ve got ahead of the lightning this time,” remarked one, as, with the wire in his hand, he followed his comrades into the box car. “If they do find out where it’s cut, they’ll have to go back to Atlanta for a piece to mend it with.”

So carefully had they investigated the condition of the road, that they knew the company had no engine between Atlanta and Kingston, sixty miles apart. But, though it seemed unnecessary to put more obstructions on the road, when they had such odds in their favor, there was another stoppage made for that purpose. Indeed, it seemed that everything was going according to their wishes; they had been assured that the chief difficulty would be to obtain possession of the locomotive; that if that were once done, success would be certain; and not a single accident had happened; had it been a pleasure excursion, there could have been no smoother course. There was no fear, then, of being overtaken, when they stopped at Cass Station for wood and water.

"What train's this yere!" asked the tank-tender, looking suspiciously at the three freight cars without any passenger coaches attached. "Tain't Fuller's, is it?"

"No," answered Andrews, readily, "I'm running a lot of powder through to Gen. Beauregard at Corinth. Got to hurry up, too; he wants it mighty bad. Reckon Fuller'll be along in a little while. His train ain't quite due yet. Can you get me a time schedule of the road?"

"Reckon I kin, if I try right hard. Much powder aboard?"

"Right smart," answered the disguised soldier, and in a moment more the train was on her way again, provided with a complete time schedule of the road.

Kingston, thirty-two miles from Atlanta, was reached, and here a telegram from the northern part of the road bade "Fuller's train" wait for the down freight, which Andrews had fully expected to find waiting for him. Inwardly chafing at the delay, he could only draw off to a side track and wait for the train that was already over-due.

"'Pears like you're in a mighty big hurry," said the station-master, discerning his impatience,

"I am," answered Andrews, thus encouraged to cast away disguise. "For I've got a lot of powder that Gen. Beauregard is in a hurry for."

"Pretty risky takin' it over the road now, ain't it?"

"Why should it be any riskier now than at any other time?" asked the captain, preparing to remount his engine, as he saw the delayed freight train approaching.

The long line of cars rumbled by, and the station master

pointed to a red flag on the hindmost, as it disappeared from view.

"Know what that means?"

"Yes; it means there's another train to come," was the reply, given from a sinking heart.

"And there's another behind that. You see, that d—d Yank, Mitchel, is coming down on Chattanooga like a thousand o' brick; providin', of course, he kin git thar; and all the rollin' stock's been ordered to Atlanta."

"I didn't expect to meet them here," answered Andrews, coolly, "I've got to get through before Mitchel gets to Chattanooga."

"You'll have to hurry up, then," was the suggestion.

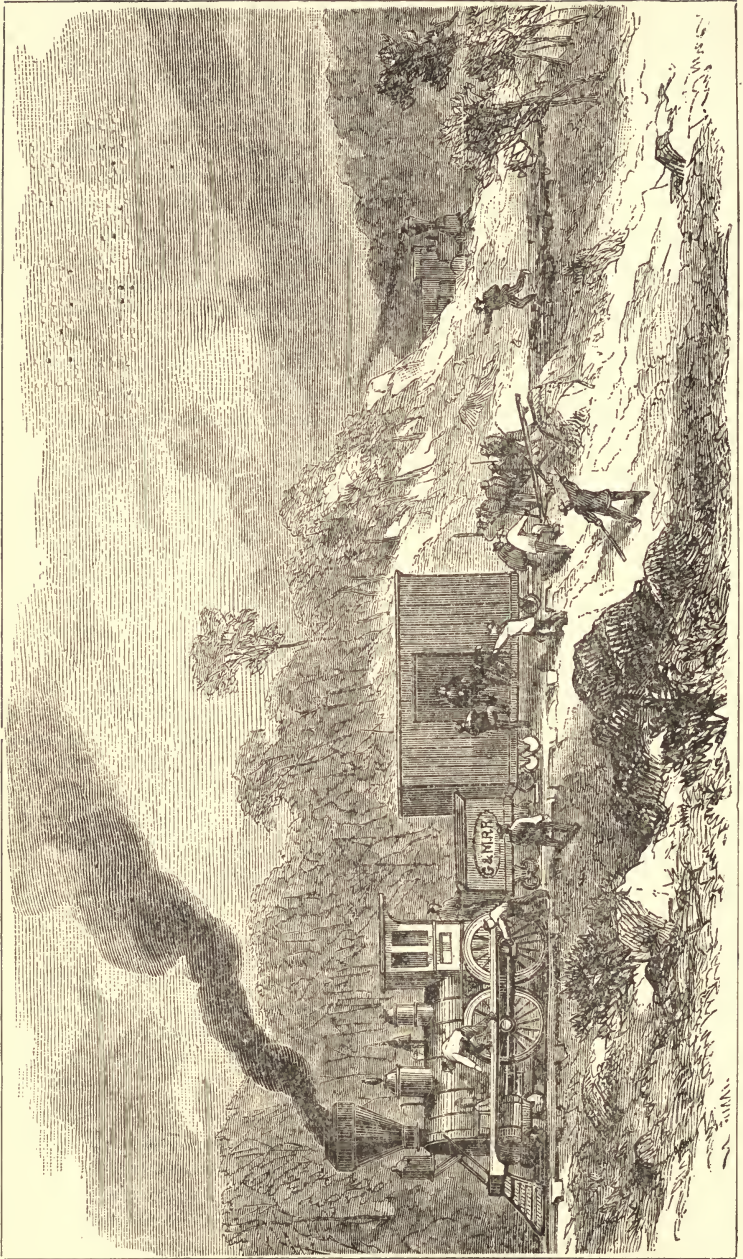
"I intend to," was the reply, with unmistakable emphasis.

After a delay of twenty-five minutes, the last car of the third train rolled by, and the track was clear. Onward, at a frightful rate, plunged the engine, as if the very metal knew what the men directing its course would have. The extra train, so much dreaded, had passed close in the wake of the freights; there was another (passenger) train to be met at Adairsville, ten miles from Kingston, but finding this behind time, Andrews decided to take the risk of collision, and dashed on towards Calhoun, ten miles further. Just as they neared the station, the belated train was seen approaching; but the stranger backed and gave the road to the "special powder train."

They had passed the bridge over the Etowah without destroying it, because they thought at that point in the race the immediate gain of time was the most important thing; but now they were approaching one which must be burned; now they were about to commence the work for which they had volunteered. Any moment might bring the Ostenaule River in sight, and with the long bridge which spanned that stream destroyed behind them, there need be no fear of failure. But all possible precautions must be taken; there were engines at Kingston, they knew; it was barely possible that a telegraphic despatch might have been sent around a wide circuit of two thousand miles, to send in pursuit one of the trains they had just passed. So a rail must be torn up; this would give them time, even in such a case, to burn this bridge. Again the wire, that, for all they knew, was even then transmitting their betrayal, must be severed; and while this was being accomplished by some, others wrenched some of the huge spikes from their rusted places, and endeavor-







The Pursuit.

ed to pull it loose; for their haste was too great to give them time for removing all the fastenings.

But as they worked with feverish energy, there was heard a sound more terrible than the growl of a tiger in his native jungle—the whistle of a locomotive behind them. The noise lent new strength to their muscles, and the rail, only half loosened, snapped like a dry twig. Losing their hold thus suddenly, the wreckers were precipitated down the embankment; but it was no time to think of small disasters, and gathering themselves up hastily, they scrambled into the train again. Their only chance, now, was to get the bridge to burning well before the pursuers could pass the gap in the track.

What train was it? Secure in his knowledge that there was no engine between Kingston and Atlanta, Andrews felt that it must be one of those that they had just passed, and was puzzled to account for the pursuit. Had the long telegraphic circle really been made? But the disclosure made at Kingston about the freight-trains reassured them; there could be few, if any, engines between them and Chattanooga, and this bridge burned—

It is time for us to return to the three men whom we left running after the locomotive as it took its flight from Big Shanty. Theirs was not so hopeless an undertaking as at first sight it appeared. Possessed of a much more intimate knowledge of the road, of course, than Capt. Andrews could command, Capt. Fuller knew that they might find a locomotive south of Kingston. True, the soldier had not been misinformed about the location of the company's engines, but from a point a short distance above Big Shanty there was a private track, some five miles in length, leading to some extensive iron mines and furnaces on the Etowah; and on this branch line there was an engine belonging to the owner of the mines. Of course Andrews could not know of the existence of this unimportant line, and had not, therefore, taken it into his calculations; otherwise, he would, at any risk, have burned the bridge over the Etowah.

The three men had not run many hundred feet before they came to the place where the telegraph had been cut; and just beyond this point, they espied a hand-car. This was a most valuable acquisition, for with it, by hard work, they could make seven or eight miles an hour; and speed was the more necessary, as they could not tell where they should find the locomotive—whether at the main road or five miles from it, at the mines.

With perspiration streaming from their bodies they worked at the hand-car, and it went, as we may well believe, at the utmost speed of which such a machine is capable. So anxiously did they look far ahead, so resolutely did they work, that the second obstruction in the track was not perceived, and the whole party, with their car, were flung headlong from the track. No bones were broken, however, and lesser injuries were disregarded; the hand-car was soon lifted on the track, and in a few minutes more they had reached the junction of the two lines.

Never was sight more welcome than that of the "Yonah," standing, fired up, on the main track, headed for Kingston. One wild, hoarse shout from the three throats showed that they were not yet exhausted, and they hastily mounted the engine; the engineer readily giving place to the men urging the necessity of acting for the Government. Onward to Kingston, then, they flew, congratulating themselves that they had arrived at that moment; for five minutes later, the locomotive would have left again for the mines.

Kingston was reached, but there was no fugitive train in sight.

Three long freights—the Yonah cannot pass, and there is no time to be lost. On a side track, joining the main one, beyond the freight trains, stood a small engine fired up, and although it is but weak and has very small wheels, it is better than the Yonah, because in a more available position. It was seized and urged onward at its utmost speed; the fireplace was crammed with wood, and because it was too small to hold the fuel necessary for great speed, an abundance of oil was used. Onward, faster, faster still, until a keen eye discovered a break in the track ahead—a rail was gone. One could have been torn up from the track behind them and laid in the place before the engine, but that would have consumed too much time. Impatient to be going onward, it seemed better to go forward on foot, and risk finding another engine, than to lose so much time there. Again they run along the road, and at last the freight-train, which the raiders had passed at Adairsville, came thundering on. Taking command of this train at once, Fuller backed it rapidly to Adairsville, uncoupled the greater part of the cars, and, tender first, made the ten miles to Calhoun in twelve minutes. The Texas, the engine now in their possession, was one of the largest and fastest on the road, and the result was almost certain.

At last the stolen locomotive was in sight, and almost as if

she had been possessed of human joy, the Texas gives the long scream of defiance which so startled Andrews' party. Onward she plunged in mad pursuit of her prey. But yonder, in the track before them, what was that? A blank, not the whole length of a rail, but still a blank that might prove fatal! It was too late to stop the engine, at so fearful a rate were they going; "faster, faster," Fuller signaled to the engineer. Fortunately, it was on the inside of the track; if it had been on the outside nothing could have prevented the wreck of the pursuing train. As it was, the increased rate of speed sent the Texas, with a bound, over the blank.

Onward dashed the foremost train, the men in it congratulating themselves upon the delay which the broken rail would occasion their pursuers. Still, they looked anxiously back. It was but a chance, after all, if they should succeed, and failure meant more than death; that chance was, whether it would take the enemy longer to replace the broken rail than it would take them to render the bridge impassable.

"O my God!" exclaimed the fireman.

"What is it, Wilson?" asked the others, struck by his tone of dismay and astonishment.

"They're still in chase," he replied, despairingly.

"Impossible!" broke from their lips, as from one man, and they looked at each other for reassurance. Surely the enemy was not still in pursuit; he could not so soon have replaced the broken rail.

"There's the smoke from their fire," he answered, pointing back.

"And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before,"

the whistle of the Texas broke upon their ears. Had a miracle been wrought against them? How had that broken rail been passed?

There was yet a possibility of stopping them without losing much time in the flight. They were now upon a steep down grade, where it would be difficult to check so large and heavy an engine as that in pursuit; so in the hope of wrecking it, the hindmost of the box-cars was uncoupled and left on the track. It was but little more than the truck; the top and sides had been used as fuel; but they hoped it might serve to delay the enemy. It was a hope doomed to disappointment, for the Texas picked it up and steamed on in their wake, gaining on them every

minute. Again the ruse was tried, but again it failed of its object. Soon the bridge over the Ostenaula was visible—the bridge that was to be the first to be given to the flames, but so close were the pursuers that they dared not pause, even to burn it, and they rushed on.

The enemy must be delayed, and after they had gone a few miles further, they stopped and braced up a rail under a cross tie, with the projecting end down the road. It was a loss of time that could ill be spared, but at last it was done, and the flight continued.

Again they had failed to produce the desired result; the Texas dashed onward, the small dark rail invisible to even the watchful eyes of the men upon her; fortunately for them, the obstruction was lightly cast aside by the cow-catcher, though a slight change in its position, a difference of an inch in height, might have thrown her from the track. As an eagle darts upon a falcon that holds in its beak a tempting morsel, the Texas seemed to swoop down, pitilessly, certainly, upon her prey.

It was a strange sight that the wayside stations saw that day—a locomotive with a single truck attached, dashing onward like a flash, followed at equal speed by two longer trains; for two other engines with their attached cars had taken up the chase, and were close in the wake of the Texas. Was it a party of madmen on the first? The loungers on the platform could not tell, nor could they imagine a more reasonable explanation. Only the twenty-two Federal soldiers, crowded into the cab and the nearly empty tender, could tell certainly; though Fuller and his companions might have given a shrewd guess.

But a new element of danger was now to be considered: Dalton, twenty-two miles from Calhoun, was the junction of this line and another; of course they could not destroy telegraphic communication on both roads, or even seriously interrupt it; no matter which wire is cut, along the other will soon flash from the pursuers to their comrades north of them, the message of capture, failure, perhaps of death! Looking back they could see that their pursuers were armed to the teeth; the truck of what had once been the first box-car, the only one remaining, and the tender, afforded them no protection; it was with a sickening sense of having committed some fatal error that they realized why no balls came whizzing past—their pursuers were certain of taking them alive.

There was no chance of accomplishing the end of their expedition by destroying the bridges on the road; they must go at full speed for their very lives. But one hope yet remained, the one car still attached to their engine had served them well in protecting the superfluous men from the curious scrutiny of the station masters and others with whom they had passed as hands of a powder train; its top and sides were the only fuel yet remaining to them; but it must do yet more. As they approach a long covered bridge, they slacken their speed; the car has already been set on fire, and just as they enter the bridge it is uncoupled. Carried onward by the impetus it has acquired, it reaches the middle of the bridge before it finally stops; and by that time the engine is once more dashing over the solid road beyond the stream. As they round the curve north of the bridge, they see the black smoke of the Texas approaching the entrance. One crash, and it will be over; the road hopelessly blocked, the pursuers delayed, perhaps killed; the bridge, it may be, destroyed. They strain their ears to hear, above the noise of their own engine, that terrible sound which would be so welcome; but it does not come. The pursuers are as determined as the pursued; there is no lack of skill in handling their engine, or in removing obstacles from the track; the blazing car is pushed before the locomotive until a side track is reached; then the road is clear; and with redoubled energy the Texas bounds onward.

More than a hundred miles had the exciting race continued, and both engines were nearly exhausted. The foremost one, however, as will be remembered, had run further than the other; besides, she was smaller and weaker, less fit for such a run, and had been less carefully oiled. As the natural and inevitable result of this lack of care, and her rapid rate of traveling, the brass on boxes and journals had actually melted, her tires were red-hot, and every joint was loose. She could hold out but a little while longer, and that only at a speed which would permit her to be easily overtaken.

A hurried council of war was held by the men, whose smoke-blackened faces were stern with the shadow of defeat.

"There's only three or four on that engine," suggested one, "and they seem to want to fight—all fixed for it. We could easily beat 'em; it's five or six to one."

"But what would be the use of that?" asked the leader, more than doubtfully, "we can't whip the whole Confederacy; and

their engine must be pretty nigh as bad as this, so we could not get off on that. You must remember there's two others behind this first one."

"Their engine ain't anything like as bad as ours," said the engineer; "and if we could get hold o' that one, we could run it back and wreck the second, and the third could pick up the pieces while we get off."

But Capt. Andrews shook his head decidedly.

"It can't be done," he said; "it's too big a risk; we'll have to leave the road and take to the woods—'Every man for himself, and God for us all.'"

The old, heartless, selfish proverb took a new meaning as this man spoke it; who knows but it was a prayer from the reckless, daring heart of the leader for those who had followed him into danger?

The soldierly habit of obedience prevailed over the American habit of independent thought and action, and the engine was run yet a few miles further, to give them all as good a start as possible. They were now fifteen miles from Chattanooga. The locomotive slackened speed, but did not wholly stop; man after man jumped from it as it moved slowly onward through the pine woods, until but one man was left. The pursuers were four hundred yards behind when he reversed the engine, and following his comrades, disappeared in the vast and trackless forest. Then the locomotive steamed backward, like the last missile hurled by the hand of a dying man; but again their efforts to obstruct the pursuers' course failed, and the Texas stopped but a moment to pick up the engine, whose power was almost spent when it reached her.

The flight through the woods was but a short one. Dismounting from the engine as soon as he saw what their plans were, Fuller pressed into service a sorry looking mule, the first steed that presented itself; and with a rope for a bridle, and no saddle, continued the pursuit; joined as he went on, by all the idlers in the neighborhood.

As the story of the chase spread, men left every occupation to assist in the work of the government; and soldiers and citizens combined to hunt the poor fugitives. Such was the numerical power of their pursuers, that Andrews and his scattered force would have had but little chance of escape, even if the advantage of a superior knowledge of the country had not been with







Escaped Prisoners Captured with Bloodhounds.

the Tennesseans. As it was, the odds were overwhelming. One after another was captured, until the whole party was in the hands of the Confederate authorities at Chattanooga, and lodged in the jail in that city. Here, handcuffed and chained together in groups of twos and threes, they lay for a week uncertain what was to be their doom.

It came only too soon. Just a week had,

“Like a wounded snake, dragged its slow length along,”

when Andrews was condemned to death. This was their first intimation that, although they had been engaged in a legitimate military enterprise, they were to be treated not as prisoners of war, but as spies.

Capt. Andrews made a desperate effort to escape when he learned the sentence that had been passed upon him, and succeeded in so far eluding the vigilance of his guards as to get beyond the walls of the jail, beyond even the outskirts of the town. But the man who could plan and so nearly execute such a daring project was too dangerous a foe to be allowed to escape in this way; the whole garrison joined in the hunt, aided by those dreadful allies of the man-hunters, bloodhounds. Once on the track, the capture was but a question of time; surely these hundreds could overtake the one half-starved fugitive, flying through a hostile country with which he was but imperfectly acquainted. The event soon proved that theirs was not a mistaken estimate; soon the bloodhounds were at his throat, only to be called off by the pursuers in human form.

Torn and bleeding, and so heavily chained that he could hardly move the limbs, once so powerful, but now weakened by hunger and fatigue, he was taken back to Chattanooga. But there was danger that Gen. Mitchel might advance upon this point; so, “to make assurance doubly sure,” he was taken to Atlanta for execution. Over the self-same road where, such a little while before, the exciting run had taken place; then, leaving Atlanta with high hopes of rendering good and much-needed service to his country, now approaching it with the certainty of speedy death, in its most ignominious form; then, with a thought of the bride whose hand awaited him on his return—a thought banished to make room for stern duty; now, with the knowledge that she would be widowed before she was a wife. But most of all, it was the form of death—the punishment of malefactors, the synonym of disgrace.

The people of Atlanta were gathered in solemn rejoicing about the scaffold. No one under-estimated the force of the blow which the success of the expedition would have given the Confederacy, and yet, an eye-witness tells us:

“There was perfect order; no jeers, no taunts, no unseemly behavior to mar the deep solemnity of the occasion.”

The joy of the people at the triumph of their cause grew silent, as they looked upon the brave soldier of the enemy, about to die.

Farther we need not follow him. We leave him in the sight of the scaffold, and return to those companions whom we left in the jail at Chattanooga. Twelve of them were in a short time removed to Knoxville, where a court-martial was to decide their fate; day after day the trial dragged on, the prisoners being tried singly. The same defense was offered for all; that if they were in citizens' dress, it was the same that the Confederate government had authorized the guerillas to wear; that they were sent for a purely military purpose, for the accomplishment of an object recognized as legitimate by the rules of war; that they should be treated, not as spies, but as prisoners of war.

The defense was not accepted by the majority of the judges, and in military courts a unanimous verdict is not necessary to conviction or acquittal. Seven had been tried and condemned, when the rapid advance of Gen. Mitchel upon Chattanooga recalled to their regiments the officers composing the court-martial. Hardly an hours' notice of their execution was given to the seven condemned men, before they were led to the scaffold, to die as their leader had died.

“We would not care so much to be shot as soldiers, but to be hanged like dogs is a burning shame.”

Such was the protest offered by one; he only spoke as Nathan Hale had spoken seventy-five years before, and with as little effect upon his hearers.

So uncertain were the fortunes of war, so rapid and perplexing the movements of Gen. Mitchel, that the fourteen who had not yet been tried were removed to the more secure prison at Atlanta. Here they found friends in the negroes employed about their place of confinement. As soon as the faithful creatures learned that the one thing most desired was news from the outer world, they contrived to smuggle newspapers in and out of the jail every day, by concealing them in the trays of food.

So the summer and autumn passed slowly by, until, one day, the provost-marshal informed them that he had received a letter from the Secretary of War at Richmond, asking why all of the "engine thieves" had not been hanged; that an order for their immediate execution would, in all probability, speedily follow. He was not mistaken. Replying that they awaited the orders of the Secretary, he speedily received instructions to execute them at once.

Narrowly, during the long days that had preceded the execution of this order, had they watched for a chance of escape, but in vain. So vigilant were their keepers that they dared not attempt it, for failure would entail worse treatment. However, there can be no punishment equal to death, and now that all hope was gone, they determined to make one last, desperate effort. Seizing and gagging their jailor, they wrenched the keys from his grasp and rushed down stairs. They came upon the guards before any alarm could be given, overpowered them by main force, and possessed themselves of their guns.

Scaling the walls which surrounded the prison, they fled through the streets, past the scattered houses of the suburbs, into the woods. A regiment was speedily ordered out to pursue them, with orders to take them, dead or alive.

The fugitives had no time for consultation; they knew only that they must separate, for they were too few for defense, and yet enough to excite suspicion. Two pushed in a southerly direction, and after almost incredible adventures, reached the shores of the Gulf—the Star-Spangled Banner waved, before their eyes, over a U. S. gunboat; never to shivering, starving men, with bleeding feet and half-frozen limbs, flying from a disgraceful death, did any sight appear so beautiful.

Two went westward, hiding by day in the thick, moss-covered trees, that even winter could not rob of their protecting power; and journeying with feverish haste by night until Corinth, then in the hands of the National troops, was safely reached.

Two others made their way northward by slow and painful stages, having to contend with a greater degree of cold than their comrades, who did not leave the extreme South. For three weeks they journeyed on, not daring to leave their hiding places by any light but that of the stars; living upon roots found in the woods and raw sweet potatoes dug from the fields,

save when some secret sympathizer with the Union would extend a trembling hand to help them. At last they reached a point in Kentucky which was held by the Federal forces, and were thence returned to their regiments, where they were received as if they had come from

“That undiscovered country, from whose bourne  
No traveler returns.”

Six were recaptured, taken back to Atlanta, and thence to Richmond. Why the sentence of death was not executed, we are not told; perhaps the authorities, at first, determined to wait until all had been retaken, and then, as this proved a futile hope, forgot them. Many times their hearts beat high at the report that they were to be exchanged, until at last they came to disregard all such rumors. They had sunk into apathy when there came an order from headquarters directing that they be placed on a flag-of-truce boat the next morning, to be transported, with others, to the Union lines, to be exchanged. The sullen calmness with which they had learned to endure life vanished at once in a wild rejoicing. Soon they were once more safely beneath the Stars and Stripes, that floated over the flag-of-truce boat. Honorable and affectionate was the welcome that awaited them—they had earned it all; and when they saw the tall, gaunt form and homely, kindly face of the President, and heard his words of praise and gratitude, they could but think of the eight who lay in dishonored graves in the far South, whose fate they were yet to learn; and regret that all had not been there, to share in the reward.

We have traced the fate of twenty—eight to the scaffold, twelve to liberty again; and twenty-two had volunteered for the undertaking. The story of those two has never yet been told—their wanderings in the forest, their sufferings from hunger and cold, their hopes, their fears, their despair—nor will it be told until the sea gives up its dead, and from many a nameless and unknown grave shall then come forth their long-forgotten tenants. Perhaps long afterward, two whitened skeletons essayed to tell the tale to adventurous hunter or pioneer farmer, but in a land where war had lately been, he could not read it aright.

## CHAPTER XI.

### A SOLITARY SCOUT.

His Errand—In the Enemy's Country—A Cordial Reception—A Mistaken Crowd—Cool Impudence—The Gunboats for Land Use—A Yankee Trick—Decidedly Brilliant—A Horse in Church—A Scared Justice—A Friendly Warning—Asleep in the Storm—In a New Role—The Guest of a Regiment—An Unsuccessful Attempt—Pursued by Bloodhounds—Running Water—A Novel Bed—A Dusky Friend—A Feast—A Horse and Buggy Impressed—Arrived in Style—Safe in Camp.

CORPORAL PIKE, of the Fourth Ohio Cavalry, was already most favorably known to his superior officers by his scouting services, when, early in April, 1862, he was dispatched by Gen. Mitchel to Decatur, Alabama, to gather information regarding the strength of the enemy, and, if possible, to destroy the railroad bridge at that point. He went alone, as he would thus be liable to less suspicion, and would be better able to escape, if pursued, than if accompanied by a small force; while a large one was, of course, out of the question.

His solitary ride was attended by no adventure, until he drew near Fayetteville, Tennessee. Night overtook him before he reached the town, and turning aside from the road he made himself comfortable in the woods. Bright and early the next morning he rode into Fayetteville. He had not attempted to disguise himself, and was in full blue uniform; but this was a dress often assumed by the Confederates, just as gray or butternut was donned by the Federals when occasion demanded.

His boldness in riding up to the hotel and ordering breakfast for himself and suitable attention for his horse, made the crowd that speedily collected believe him a Confederate in disguise. Perceiving this, he determined to take advantage of it. Returning to his room after having seen that his horse was cared for,

he found about three hundred men on the sidewalk in front of the hotel. Hailing him as he approached, one asked:

"What is your name, sir?"

"James Pike."

"Of what regiment?"

"Fourth Ohio Cavalry."

The men in the crowd cast significant glances at each other, as much as to say that he had it all cut and dried, but couldn't fool *them*—no, sir.

"Where is your command?" inquired another.

"At Shelbyville."

"What are you doing here alone, then, so far from your regiment?" demanded a third.

"Well, sir, if you must know it, I came to demand the surrender of the town."

As the cool impudence of the statement dawned upon them, the crowd indulged in a hearty laugh at the idea of one man's capturing a town like that, and from lip to lip passed the whisper:

"He must be one of Morgan's men."

"O, of course he's not what he says he is; he wouldn't dare."

He sat down to the breakfast table, at which several Confederate officers were regaling themselves, and made a hearty meal. Then, going out into the crowd again, he asked of one who seemed to be a man of authority:

"Can you tell me, sir, where I can see the mayor?"

"The mayor? May I ask what you want with him?"

"I want to demand the surrender of the town."

By this time the crowd were prepared to enter into the joke, and one answered:

"We couldn't think of surrendering until we see your gunboats coming along. A Yankee is'nt half a soldier unless he has a gunboat to back him."

"The gunboats will be along, you needn't be afraid," answered the Federal.

"How are they going to get here?" asked another, looking around, with pretended anxiety for the water which was to transport them.

"O, Gen. Mitchel has just had some made by a new pattern, intended to run on land, and they are made with steel soles and spring runners," replied the corporal, gravely.



"Well, he'll have to show us how they work, before this town will surrender to one man."

"O, he used them with great effect at Bowling Green the other day; hadn't you heard of it?"

"Say, if you're a Yankee, show us a Yankee trick; then we'll believe you," suggested one.

"Maybe I will before I go."

"Well, you might as well own up, and tell us where the Captain is."

"Yes, do; we'd like to know the best in the world."

"What Captain do you mean, gentlemen?"

"Why, Captain Morgan, of course."

"Well, I'm sorry I can't tell you, but I really don't know. I am Corporal James Pike, of the Fourth Ohio Cavalry, and am not informed of Captain Morgan's movements."

There was a general laugh at this disavowal of the character which they persisted in believing was his true one, and Corporal Pike, having ordered his horse, mounted and galloped off toward Huntsville, while they were still in a good humor. Just as he rode off, one called out to him:

"Where's the Yankee trick you promised to show us?"

"Just wait awhile and you'll see it," he called back.

Riding five miles, he came to Wells' Hill, where there is a fork in the road; one leading to Huntsville, and the other to Decatur. As he turned his horse's head to take the latter, he saw, coming along a branch of that leading to Huntsville, a wagon train. He immediately decided that, as there was no guard with the train, this was the opportunity for his "Yankee trick." He changed his course then, and went to meet the train.

"Drive that wagon up here close by the fence," he ordered the driver of the first.

"When did you get to be wagon-master?" asked the driver.

"When you put your musket out of reach of your arm as you drove," he answered, his finger on the trigger of his revolver. "Drive up, I say."

Without further question, the man did as he was bid, and the drivers of the other wagons prudently followed his example. The wagon-master was some distance behind the train, but spurred up when he saw the stoppage, and asked, in language more forcible than polite, what was the meaning of this.

"It means that you'd better get up into that fence corner d—d quick," answered the soldier. The wagon-master carried revolvers in his belt, but what are a dozen so disposed, to one, cocked, in the hand of your opponent, pointed directly at you? He was quickly disarmed; then—

"What's in those wagons?"

"Fodder," answered the wagon-master; "don't you see it?"

"What's underneath the fodder?"

No one answered for a moment; then one of the drivers said that it was bacon—four thousand pounds on each wagon.

"All right; it isn't Fourth of July, but I guess we'll have a bonfire now, for fear you don't have one then," answered the soldier.

Taking some matches from his pocket, he deliberately set fire to the dry corn-blades and other fodder with which the meat was covered, and soon a bright blaze, accompanied by a thick black smoke, rose in the air. The men in the fence-corner dared not move; the drivers had left their muskets in the wagons, and wore no side-arms; neither they nor the wagon-master dared make a movement towards them. The fire grew hotter and fiercer; no long time was required to consume such combustible material, and the wagons were soon so far destroyed that there was no possibility of saving them or any portion of them. Turning then to the men who still stood in the fence-corner, he ordered the wagon-master to mount his horse and the drivers to mount the mules which had been harnessed to the wagons, and had them ride before him to the junction of the two roads leading to Fayetteville. Halting here, he said to them:

"Now, you ride into town as fast as you can go. I am going to count one hundred, and if you're not out of sight as soon as I have finished, I'll shoot."

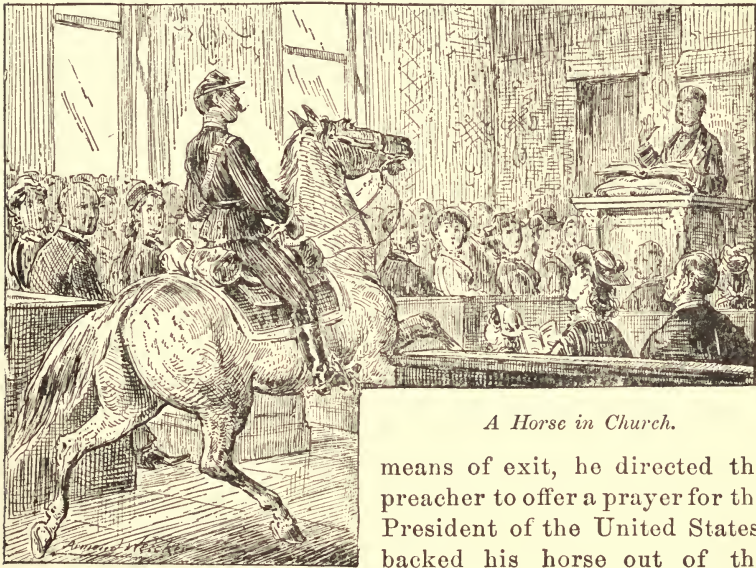
But long before he had completed the count, they were out of sight, and he free to turn down the road to Decatur. Riding rapidly until he had put about ten miles between himself and Wells' Hill, he came to a small country church. It was Sunday, and the congregation was most devoutly listening to the sermon; but in that congregation there might be Confederate soldiers. Determined, like a prudent general, to leave no enemy in his rear, and yet knowing that it might be dangerous to dismount in order to investigate, he spurred his horse up the two or three steps that the floor of the building was raised above the ground,

right into the middle and only aisle. As the horse's hoofs struck loudly upon the floor, the congregation started from its attitude of rapt attention, the preacher, whose hand was raised and in the act of coming down with a thump upon the pulpit, paused in the sermon and the gesture, to look at the singular spectacle of an armed horseman in a church.

"Sorry to interrupt you, sir," he said, addressing the preacher; "are there any Southern soldiers in the church!"

"I—I believe not, sir," replied the startled divine, turning his eyes instinctively to the back door, which stood open.

Suspecting that there had been Southern soldiers in the building a few moments ago, and that the back door had been their



*A Horse in Church.*

means of exit, he directed the preacher to offer a prayer for the President of the United States, backed his horse out of the building, and rode on, realizing that in rapid movement was his only safety from an aroused country, and he saw that he had already disturbed the worshipers only too completely. Soon, however, he met two unarmed Confederates, who were leisurely riding along to church, not dreaming of a roaming Yankee knight so far within the lines.

"Halt!" came the order, speedily obeyed. He demanded their names, regiments and companies; and having received the desired information, said to them:

"I am very sorry for it, but it is so far outside our lines that

there is only one way left for me to dispose of you."

"My God!" exclaimed one; "you don't mean to shoot us?"

"I am very sorry, but it can not be helped; it is the only thing that can be done, as I see."

"I pledge you my honor I will go with you in good faith," said the other.

"It seems mighty hard to be shot down without a chance of defending yourself," murmured the first.

Corporal Pike did not answer for a moment, being apparently lost in thought. Then, reluctantly:

"Well, if you'll take the oath of allegiance to the United States, I guess I'll let you go."

To this they agreed, and holding up his right hand and removing his cap, he caused them to uncover their heads and lift their right hands to heaven. But it seemed like blasphemy, this administering an oath when he had no right to do so, and having tested their willingness, he said to them:

"Well, gentlemen, I guess I'll rely on your honor to do nothing towards pursuing me or giving information of me."

And with lightened hearts they rode on to church. Proceeding on his way, he met and very much frightened an old man riding to Fayetteville, who admitted that he was going thither to try, as judge, a number of cases, chiefly "political;" court opening the next day. Knowing the meaning of the word as used in those times, the scout took a delight in scaring the old man considerably, and sent him flying on to Fayetteville at a greatly increased speed. Pushing on rapidly then, until he had passed several houses, he reached a shallow creek. Judging it advisable to leave the road, and to put all possible pursuers off his track as far as possible, he guided his horse into the stream, and a considerable distance along the current; so that it might not be easily determined just where he had left the road.

The creek led him into the woods; and here he rode along by-paths until nearly sunset, when he saw, through the trees, an old man crossing the road which he had left. Checking his horse, he waited until the new comer should be within easy speaking distance.

"Bless my soul!" exclaimed the old man, as, quietly threading his way and looking intently forward, he saw the horseman coming suddenly in front of him.

"You wouldn't have seen me if I hadn't spurred up then, and

showed myself, I guess," said the soldier, with a laugh.

"I reckon not, sir; I reckon not; wouldn't have seen you at all."

"Do you know who I am?"

The old man looked intently at him, but said not a word. Finally the corporal spoke:

"I am a Federal soldier—"

"Bless my soul! Are you, though, sure enough?"

"Don't I look like one?" was the Yankee answer given him.

"Yes, you do, but—do you know you're in danger, sir?"

"Anything particular?"

"There's twelve of Young's Tennessee Cavalry and fifteen mounted citizens out now after a man that they say has been raising a disturbance up the country."

"Well, do you think they want *me*?" asked the soldier.

"It looks like it. You kind o' answer to the description they give."

"A man that's been raising a disturbance?" asked the soldier.

"In every way. You'd better hide somewhere until dark, for the whole country will soon be alarmed."

"Are you a Union man, sir?"

"Every inch; you may depend on me. Now I'll tell you what you can do. But, first, will you keep to your horse?"

"I guess not; it would give them a better chance to see me and hear me. Do you know of any place where I could leave him and be likely to get him again?"

"Yes; there's a Union man lives down here in the woods—it isn't on any road; he'll take care of the horse for you."

And he gave the Federal directions for reaching the house. Leaving his horse here, he struck out for Decatur, keeping carefully to the woods, and guiding his steps by the sun. But it was already late when he had been cautioned about his pursuers, and slowly, but surely, the red glow faded out of the western sky. Nor was this the worst. Though here and there the trees were so thick as completely to intercept all light from above, yet, at other points, a more open space would have allowed him, on a clear night, to shape his course by the stars; but the sky was heavily overcast; there was a portentous stillness in the air, and suddenly the storm burst upon him. Shelterless, friendless, in a strange country, and weary from the long ride, he wrapped himself in his rubber blanket, and throwing himself upon the ground,

which was already soaked with the rain, slept soundly until morning.

The rain fell in torrents all night, and when he awoke at the hour of reveille, he was wet to the skin. He had no rations with him, had had no food since the breakfast at the hotel the previous morning, and could not tell where it would be safe to stop to get some. Making his way toward the railway, he followed it until about ten o'clock, when he stopped at a house by the roadway and asked for something to eat.

"Yes; I suppose we can find something for you to eat," was the ungracious reply, given in a tone which implied that the speaker supposed he would be obliged to provide it.

Such, indeed, was the tenor of all the few sentences his host could be induced to utter. Such behavior naturally made Pike believe that he was in the house of a violent Southern man; though he found afterward that his host was Union in principle, but distrusted him, believing him a Confederate in disguise. But if this belief lost him a friend, it probably saved him from capture. He had not been in the house long before some cavalrymen rode up to the door and demanded refreshment for man and beast.

"Hello, bluecoat," cried one as they entered the door of the room where he was eating, "who might you be?"

"Well, I might be a Fed, only I aint, you see."

"Don't see it. Who in the devil are you, if you aint a Fed?"

"Well, I used to run a ranch in Texas, but some of my steers tossed me clear to Alabama to fight the Yanks."

"What are you doing with that uniform on?"

"I'm obeying orders; and one of my orders is to keep dark about why I'm in blue. Do you see it?"

"I reckon so," with a laugh.

"Then just go one better, and I'll call—Who are you?"

"Second Tennessee Cavalry, Company A."

"What happened to Company A, that there ain't no more of it?"

"O, the rest are in camp, near Decatur."

"Guarding the bridge, hey?"

"Not exactly; that is, not altogether; we're rather scattered."

"Better look out for Mitchel; he'll be down on you like a thousand of brick and burn that bridge before you know it."

"If he could come down like one of the gunboats, he might

burn it up, sure enough; but that is not very likely."

"Don't they keep it well guarded?"

"O, I reckon there's enough to stand their ground against anything less than a brigade, and they could soon get reinforcements if they found themselves getting the worst of it. But what makes you so worried about the bridge, Texas? Heard anything?"

"No; nothing, except that they say Mitchel is determined to whip us."

"Burning bridges ain't whipping us, not by a long shot."

"It might help it along, though, if they cut off all railroad communication."

"But they won't, you see, because they can't. It would take a regiment to burn that bridge."

The cavalrymen insisted on conducting him to their camp, where he was most cordially received. The hospitality of these enemies, indeed, became somewhat oppressive, for they would not permit him to depart, and it was every day becoming more and more necessary that he should accomplish the work for which he was sent. At last, however, he escaped from them, though his resolution to leave them made them suspect that all was not as it should be.

On leaving the camp, he of course set out in the direction which they advised; but this was simply to lull suspicion, and no sooner was he fully out of sight than he changed his course, ascending the Tennessee. Fearful lest his late hosts might pursue him, he resolved to adopt the plan usual with scouts in an enemy's country, and travel only by night. Toiling painfully along, he lost his way; and became so puzzled as to what his proper course was, that he took the worst direction possible, and landed in a swamp, where he was obliged to stay until morning should enable him to find the way to dry land once more.

His plan now was to ascend the river for a safe distance, steal a boat, float down the stream, and set fire to the bridge from beneath. After a toilsome journey, he saw, drawn up on the river bank, the prize so much coveted—a skiff. Concealing himself as near by as he could find shelter, it was not until a late hour of the night that it seemed safe to venture out towards the boat. It was some distance from the water's edge, this being the season when freshets were liable to occur any day; and it was

not until the "wee sma' hours" that he finally launched the little vessel upon the river. Much of the way he could only float silently along, for the sound of oars might alarm some watchful sentinel on shore. However, he should reach the bridge a little before dawn, even if he were obliged to float all the way; and the darkness would enable him to arrange matters so that when he should be at a safe distance, just about dawn, flames would burst forth from various parts of the bridge, and speedily become uncontrollable.

While entertained by the Tennessee regiment as the disguised Texan Ranger, he had furtively made a close study of the bridge whenever an opportunity offered to examine it without exciting suspicion. Relying upon the knowledge so gained, he had freighted his boat with all the combustible materials obtainable, hoping to place these in the various crevices and openings of the bridge, to make the work of destruction the more certain. As he floated silently down the river through the darkness, he saw, "in his mind's eye," the flames rising higher and higher in the light of dawn, until the rosy clouds of the east were paled by the glory of the fire. He saw the soldiers running to and fro in confusion, some endeavoring to control the wild and fiery element, some cursing the daring foe who had inflicted this injury upon their means of communication with other portions of the army.

But, the distance was greater, or the time less than he had calculated. As he floated down the stream, the sky behind him grew lighter and lighter; he looked anxiously backward as he continued his westward journey, then forward again to see how far he still was from Decatur. He knew that the bridge was not guarded, being thought too far within the Confederate lines to be in any danger; and that for the same reason there was no close guard kept upon the river. The camp was situated upon an elevation some distance from the stream, and better fitted to defend the town than a lower place. His great danger, then, would be from either rangers or bushwhackers.

It was broad day when he came in sight of the town, and there were soldiers, plenty of them, in full view. Thus belated, with suspicion so frequently excited behind him, it was useless to think of attempting to burn the bridge under the circumstances.

There was but one thing to be done—leave the river, and strike due north for the Federal lines. Steering for the shore



as noiselessly as possible, when he found his plans impracticable, he thought that he had eluded observation. Plunging into the woods, although tired with the journey of the day before and the vigil of the night, he made good time, hoping to be soon out of reach of those who might suspect him. All day he traveled onward, and even when night came, he hastened his flagging steps, cheering himself with the thought that he had done as much as circumstances would permit.

But listen! What is that sound, that the wind bears onward, breaking the stillness of the night? Perhaps some housedog, faithful to his trust, has discovered the approach of a suspicious stranger. So he assures himself, and hurries onward. But if that supposition were correct, he would by this time have left the sound far behind him, and it is really nearer. Not until the baying of the one dog is echoed, fainter and fainter, by others less keen of scent, does he realize that he is pursued, and with bloodhounds.

His way had, for some hours past, lain over open ground, which, in the bygone time of peace, had once been cultivated, but was now permitted to lie fallow. Here and there, in some broad green pasture, was a pond, where in later months the "milky mothers of the herd" would stand knee deep; but these were not enough for his purpose; his footsteps would be easily tracked on the other side, for the hounds would, of course, make the circuit of so small a body of water.

At last he neared a dense grove, an almost certain indication of the presence of running water; and was soon lost to view in the deep shadows of the wood. His expectations were not disappointed; a stream, several yards in width and nearly waist deep, appeared when he had penetrated but a short distance into the grove. He plunged into the water, and swimming down the stream a short distance, emerged on the opposite side. This of course would break the trail, and cause the pursuers to make a delay, which would be fatal to their purpose; if, indeed, they succeeded in finding the trail again after all their search.

But Fortune favors the brave, and in this case she granted him still another advantage. He had not proceeded far when he came upon a swampy piece of ground, where there were several streams nearly as deep as the first, forming a network. Into these he plunged and waded for nearly an hour. At length, however, tired nature asserted her rights, and he began to look

for a resting-place. Sleep on the slimy, oozy ground near by, was out of the question; nor would it be safe to leave the swamp to gain such refreshment. What was his joy to discover a pile of new rails rising a few feet above the level of the swamp. Gaining the island on which they were, he disposed them so cunningly as to leave himself a place into which to crawl, while the arrangement did not seem any different from what it had been. As he worked to provide this shelter, he could hear the deep voices of the hounds as they ran hither and thither, seeking the lost scent. The pursuers in human form, he knew, would not



“Hi, uncle!”

be able to decide what direction to take, or when to leave the water. Lulled by these soothing reflections, he fell asleep.

It was morning before he awoke, and though he was no longer so weary, he was faint with hunger. Then, too, his clothes had been soaked through and through during his efforts to escape from the bloodhounds, and in drying had made him intensely cold. With the still damp garments clinging to his benumbed limbs, he endeavored to restore his body to its natural heat by exercise before leaving the swamp. Not entirely satisfied of the safety of immediately proceeding, however, he again waded about for

nearly half an hour in the water before making for dry land again.

He emerged from the morass at the rear of a plantation, and looking cautiously around him, saw an old negro at work, alone in a field. The lay of the land was such that great care was still necessary, for there might be plenty of white men just out of sight, but within hearing; and white men were presumably enemies. Slowly and silently, then he crept within hailing distance of the old man.

"Hi, uncle!" he called in a low tone, as the negro approached in the course of his work, the soldier's place of concealment.

"Who dat call me?"

"Come here, a little closer. Is there anybody near?"

"Not as I knows on, sah. Who is you?" peering curiously at him.

"I am a Yankee soldier—" began the Corporal.

"How de debbil did you git dah!" exclaimed the old man, starting back in fright or surprise.

"Well, I've been chased by the Reb's with their bloodhounds; but I've got away from them; and now I'd be all right if I only had something to eat."

"Law, Massa, is dat all you want? Ole Miss' she—but I reckon you wouldn't like to come up to de house much, sah?"

"Is your mistress loyal?"

"She mighty strong Secesh, sah; ole Massa and Mass' John, dey bofe in the army, an'—"

"I don't think it would be safe, then. Can't you bring me something out here?"

"Yes, sah, plenty; but, you see, it wouldn't be as nice as ole Miss' would give you if you dast go up to the house."

"Never mind that, so there's plenty of it and it comes quick," answered the hungry man.

The old negro started off as fast as the stiffness of his joints would permit, and soon returned with a bountiful supply of bacon and corn bread. When his hunger was somewhat appeased, the soldier began to ask about the way he had better pursue to get to Huntsville, where Gen. Mitchel's headquarters were then situated.

"Don't tink you can git dah, sah, by yo'self; might lose de way and get captured. Dem bloodhounds is mighty bad tings to be chased by," answered the old man, shaking his head as he called to mind instances of their keenness of scent in track-

ing runaway servants. "Ise afeared you lose de way, shuah."

"But what am I to do?"

"Reckon our Joe will show you de way, sah; I'll go see."

Sure enough, Joe was willing and able to act as guide; and the two set out on their journey.

"Dey'll miss me up at de house if I stay away long," said Joe, when they had gone several miles, "but I reckon you kin find the way from heah."

And he gave the soldier minute directions for what was really not a difficult road to follow.



"Stop a minute, won't you?"

"De Lawd bless you, sah; I hope you'll git through all right."

"Thank you, Joe; I guess I will. Good-bye."

"Good-bye, sah."

And they trudged off in their different directions; one back to servitude, one onward to whatever of freedom and safety a soldier's life possesses. The Federal had not gone far before he was overtaken by a negro

man, driving a fine horse in most lordly style.

"Whose horse and buggy is that?" called the soldier.

"Dat's Mr. ——'s propahty," answered the driver, with dignity, as he slackened speed.

"Stop a minute, won't you?"

As the negro drew rein, the soldier sprang into the buggy, and showing a revolver, said to the frightened darkey:

"I'm a Federal soldier, and I want you to drive me to Huntsville."

"Law, ole Massa so strong Secesh, he whip me good if he knowed I done dat, sah."

"But I'll shoot you if you don't do it," was the reply.

The whip was in the future, the revolver in the present, and the frightened negro, choosing the lesser evil, drove on towards





Huntsville, the blooded animal taking them along at a rattling gait.

“ You say Mr. — is Secesh ? ” asked Pike

“ Yes, sah ; mighty strong. ”

“ Well, I guess I ’ ll confiscate this horse and buggy, then ; you can take me clear into Huntsville. Drive on, fast. ”

And in spite of the darkey ’ s terrified remonstrances, he persisted in this demand. It was in good style, then, that he finally entered the town, safe from all pursuit. His driver was so much afraid of a whipping that he refused to return to his master, and finally became a cook for one of the officers ’ messes.

Corporal Pike continued to act as a scout, sometimes alone, sometimes in conjunction with others, for a period of nearly three years. He was finally honorably discharged, after having served more than the time for which he had enlisted, only a week before Gen. Lee ’ s surrender.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### STRINGFELLOW AGAINST ODDS.

A Small-sized Raid—Posting the Force—A Bearer of Dispatches—Disobedience of Orders—An Alarming State of Affairs—The Biter Bit—Injured Innocence—An Indignant Prisoner—Something Wrong—The Prisoner Refuses to be Released—Between Two Fires—A Strong Temptation—Resisted—A Sudden Revelation—A Little Battle—A Surrender and Skedaddle—Astonishing the Pickets—A Race—A Battle of Larger Forces—Retreat of the Confederates—Taking Stock of the Spoils—He Called Himself a Fool—And Nobody Contradicted Him.

THE pleasure which we feel in reading the numberless stories of scouts and spies, their daring adventures and narrow escapes, is often marred when we allow ourselves to look at the other side of the picture to see the partisan or the secret service agent with the eyes of the enemy against whom his operations were directed; then we observe that his clever performance of his part is but the acting of a lie; that every word is false; that the quickness with which he disposes of any soldier that is likely to thwart his plans shows a savage disregard for human life. That is the dark side of the picture, and it is darker than Erebus. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, we must shut our eyes to this, or the fell shadow will darken all the glowing colors. In reading the history of any war, we must harden our hearts, we must dull our understandings, if we would not be overwhelmed by the thought of the distress which even a single action must cause. But occasionally, there is a man employed in such service who hesitates to shoot down even an enemy, without warning him that he is in the very presence of death. Such was the man of whom we now write, one of the most trusted of all the scouts employed by the Commander-in-chief of the Confederate army; and with none will it detract from the interest of an "over true tale," that the hero of it has discarded the sword of the flesh for



that of the Spirit, and as the rector of a church in Powhatan County, Virginia, has since battled with the enemy of all mankind, rather than with the foes of a section of his country. He made none the worse soldier for being a Christian, and none the worse Christian for being a soldier.

Gen. Gregg was in the height of his fame as a cavalry officer when Capt. Frank Stringfellow, with a small force of men, picked from the Army of Northern Virginia to serve as scouts, determined to make a small-sized raid into the enemy's lines, and capture many horses or dispatches, as opportunity might offer. Setting out from the Confederate headquarters just before "taps" warned the infantryman that it was time for darkness and quiet, it was in the "wee sma' hours" that they reached and passed the enemy's lines. The eastern sky was just streaked with crimson when they halted in a small group of trees about two hundred yards from the county road; there lying in wait for their prey, like a cat at a safe distance from a rat-hole; for they knew that small bodies of Federals would soon pass that way. The force was carefully posted, the main body being concealed in the grove already mentioned, while a single man was so placed as to be able to communicate, by signals, with Stringfellow, who was to operate on the road, and with the men concealed in the grove.

Their expectations were not disappointed, for it was not many hours after completing these arrangements before a single horseman, dressed in a blue uniform, was seen coming down the road. Being far within his own lines, the new comer evidently regarded caution as superfluous, and made no attempt to conceal the dispatches of which he was the bearer. On the contrary, the mail-bag was so secured to his person as rather to indicate that he wished to proclaim his mission to all. For the same reason that he disclaimed caution and concealment, he carelessly regarded the soldier whom he now saw riding toward him, who, though wearing the trousers and overcoat of a United States officer, was no other than our friend the Confederate scout. The two rode towards each other, and the cavalryman—the "real article"—had just raised his hand to salute the officer when that person returned the salute in a manner somewhat unusual; being nothing else than the presenting the muzzle of a revolver full in the Federal's face.

"Halt! Surrender, or you are a dead man."

The astonished trooper could only gasp out that he complied with this demand, and yield up his arms and dispatches as the captor required. Signaling to the man who had been posted for the purpose of communication, Stringfellow said to him :

“Take this prisoner to the rear, and bring up the men for a fight. I hear cavalry not very far off. Bring them up at a fast trot.”

The soldier received the command with due respect, and departed from his chief's presence, to disobey that chief's express orders. For, unlike many organizations performing similar services to the army, this little force had a strict code of morality, which was never allowed to relax. Though, as soldiers, they must often disregard the commandment, “Thou shalt not kill,” they were scrupulous in their observance of that which is the second after it. Of course, arms and all government property, found on the persons of their prisoners must, according to the rules of war, be confiscated, but private property was as sacred in their eyes as in times of peace. When, therefore, Stringfellow sent his prisoner to the rear, he had no expectation of any delay resulting from such a cause ; but, by a strange fatality, just at the moment when such a course would most imperil the leader, this one man committed the only offense of the kind which stains the history of the little force of scouts. Instead of carrying the message to his comrades, he paused to plunder the prisoner.

In the meantime, Stringfellow, in order to give his men time to come up, and to prevent his own premature capture, had decided that it would be necessary to deceive the enemy. Accordingly, he buckled on the mail-bag in such a way that no one would doubt that he was a bearer of dispatches, and rode onward. He rode slowly, in order to give his men plenty of time ; but still they did not come. Never once supposing that his orders had not been received, he could not imagine why they were not obeyed ; he could not understand why the men who had been chosen for their desperate courage as much as for other qualities, who had stood by him in a score of contests with numbers far superior to their own, should fail him now. Nearer and nearer came the enemy, as the clatter of their horses' hoofs upon the hard road indicated, and though he was alone, he must go on ; to retreat was to give up all the advantages that had been gained by the capture of the courier.

But though he was considerably alarmed by the failure of his men to obey orders, his mind was more at ease when the enemy's cavalry came in view and was seen to number but two men. These he could easily capture single-handed, and since he would be obliged to escort his prisoners to the rear himself, he could thus learn the reason why his men had failed to come up in due time. Fortunately, their not coming would make no difference whatever, although, if he had met a larger force, his situation might have proved somewhat embarrassing.

He was just congratulating himself upon this situation, which might have been so much worse, when a third Federal trooper came in sight, and speedily joined his comrades. But, like a physician who sees new and unfavorable symptoms appear and yet does not wholly give up the patient, the scout determined to pursue the same course against the three upon which he had resolved when he saw but two antagonists. Upon the appearance of a fourth Federal a moment afterwards, however, he began to see that his plans could not be carried out. With ready eye he saw what would be the best, and indeed the only course that he could with safety pursue. His blue overcoat and trousers and the mail-bag so conspicuously displayed would lead them to think him a regular bearer of dispatches; he would ride past them unmolested; they would go on, only to fall into the hands of his men, when he would return and attack them in the rear.

All this time the solitary Confederate and the little group of Federals were drawing nearer together. Thinking to run through them before they could offer resistance, Stringfellow urged his horse to a gallop; but as he dashed up towards them, they opened out so as to completely bar the way. Before his quick wits could decide what course should now be taken, they had wheeled their horses so as entirely to surround him, and the muzzles of four pistols were in his very face. The figures formed by a kaleidoscope are made more beautiful by multiplication, but in the case of a revolver, it is different. It was by no means a pleasant sight for Stringfellow, and yet he could not shut his eyes to it. More to gain time than for anything else, he assumed an air of injured dignity, and demanded:

“What do you mean? Are you bushwhackers?”

“No; we're regularly enlisted men,” replied the sergeant, who was the only officer of the party.

"Then what does this behavior mean—capturing a United States soldier within the lines? You belong to Gen. Gregg's cavalry, don't you?"

"We do, sir," the sergeant admitted, doubtfully.

"Then you must remember seeing me at headquarters," persisted the scout.

"Hanged if I haven't," muttered one of the Federals.

"Believe I have, too," added a second, while the third nodded his approval.



*Four to One.*

"Well, I never have seen him at headquarters, I'm certain," rejoined the sergeant, decidedly.

Having succeeded in getting their revolvers out of his face, and still anxious to gain time, Stringfellow pressed his advantage, already secured, in another direction.

"It's easy enough for you to say that you are not bushwhackers, but how am I to know? With your uniform overcoats on, you could easily enough get into the lines. Let me see your pants."

The troopers, indignant at the suspicion, threw open their overcoats and disclosed the garments in question—regulation

cut and color. Then, on the principle that "what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander," they demanded that Stringfellow should submit to the same test. What was their astonishment when they saw that he wore the trousers of an officer in the United States army.

"Now," he said, in a tone of great indignation, "I suppose you know who I am. Don't you see what an insult you have offered an officer? But you shall answer for your disrespectful conduct; you may rest assured that I shall not allow it to go unpunished."

"Better beg his pardon and let him go, Sergeant," urged one of the men, in an undertone.

"Didn't you see him stop that trooper and take the dispatches from him?" demanded the sergeant; in the same tone.

"Ye-es," admitted the other, trying to reconcile the two things so different.

"But he must be an officer, Sergeant," chimed in another trooper, "or he would never dare to behave as he is doing."

"There's something wrong about it," replied the sergeant, doggedly; then, turning to the prisoner, he said: "Answer one question to my satisfaction, and I will release you. You say you are an officer, then why do you carry a private soldier's arms and a mail-bag? The officers don't carry the mails."

"Release me, will you?" asked Stringfellow, still indignant and without pretending to answer the question; "indeed you shall not; you shall keep me in custody until you are fully convinced who I am. I'll have ample satisfaction for this treatment yet. Ride on to the picket post—any of the men there can identify me."

"You must give up your arms before we go on, sir," insisted the sergeant.

"Give up my arms? Why, if you are bushwhackers you might as well shoot me now."

"We are not bushwhackers, sir," answered the other, sullenly.

"Then, if you do belong to our army, do you suppose that I'm going to make a laughing stock of myself for everybody at headquarters, as I should do if I were to give up my arms to our own men?"

Still keeping the air of injured innocence which he had so successfully assumed, he rode towards the picket post accompanied by the others. The four rode with drawn pistols ready to

use them at the prisoner's slightest motion to quit their company. Though the muzzles were not pointed into his face, as they had been, his situation was hardly less critical now than it was then; and the danger increased with every yard by which they drew nearer to the picket post. There was but one thing which could save him; his own men might see the party as it passed, and charge and recapture him. As they rode near the woods in which his men were posted, scarcely two hundred yards away, he looked anxiously forward, but no promise of deliverance was seen. In a Federal uniform with the exception of his coat, which was gray, he dared not surrender, lest the costume be completed by a hempen necktie. Just in front of him was the picket; at each side rode two soldiers holding cocked revolvers.

Rapidly he turned over in his mind the courses which presented themselves. There was but one which seemed practicable. He had purposely endeavored, by talking with them on different subjects, to draw their attention away from himself, and although he had only partially succeeded, still that small measure of success gave him some room for action. A sudden shot before they had time to suspect his intention would kill the sergeant, who was by far the most formidable of the four; then he could fight the other three; perhaps—for he had not yet given up all hopes of capturing his captors—carry the engagement so near to the point where his own men were posted that there could be no doubt about their coming to the rescue.

The plan was tempting, for though the execution of it would not be unattended by danger to himself, he saw no other way out of the still more imminent danger into which he was riding. But though he might kill a man in fair and open fight, and think no more of it than that he, a soldier of his native state, had slain one of her enemies, his whole soul revolted at the idea of shooting a man who was not looking for death, of sending a human spirit into eternity unprepared. Sooner than do this he assumed the greater risk himself. Suddenly interrupting one of the troopers in the rambling conversation which had been carried on, he turned upon the sergeant with:

“I am a Southern soldier, and you must surrender to me.”

Knowing how great an advantage they had over him, the scout threw himself upon the side of his horse; the action was just in time, for the words were hardly out of his mouth before they all fired, but, fortunately, missing him. It may be believed

that he lost no time in returning the fire, and, now that fair warning had been given, aimed at the sergeant. But the shot was hasty, and the ball lodged in the flesh, not of the rider, but of the horse. As the animal fell, the sergeant's attention was engaged in keeping himself from being crushed by the fall, and Stringfellow fired again before the Federal could use his revolver. The ball was better aimed than before, and, although it was far from fatal in its effects, inflicting only a flesh wound, yet the sergeant, thus disabled and unhorsed, had no resort but to surrender; while his comrades, judging discretion the better part of valor, rode off at full speed.

Stringfellow pursued them hotly, and they galloped past the astounded picket, who could not understand why these men, all in blue uniform, should be fighting with each other. One man was accordingly sent back to the reserve force for instructions, and reinforcements for the Federals were speedily heard making for the road. How many there might be coming up, the scout had no means of knowing; but feeling sure that the odds were too great for him, singlehanded as he was, he turned and rode back towards his own men. The cavalymen whom he had been pursuing, were quick to perceive the change, and having heard their reinforcements approaching, wheeled their horses and became, in turn, pursuers. Stringfellow dashed along the road, riding for his life, while the hoofs of a dozen horses clattered behind him. As he rode past the point where the wounded sergeant lay, a shot whistled past him, only narrowly missing him; for the Federal, seeing Stringfellow evidently getting the worst of it, considered himself recaptured, and his surrender thus nullified.

At last the woods were reached. Stringfellow was now to receive for the first time in his many moments of dire need, the assistance of his men. As we have already intimated, they had not received the orders which he had sent to them; and having been posted in the woods, with instructions to remain there until otherwise ordered, they had, with true military obedience, stuck to their post; though the temptation to indulge in the fight, when they heard the first shots between Stringfellow and the four troopers, was indeed a strong one. But now, "nearer, clearer, deadlier than before" sounded the pistols; and throwing discipline to the four winds, they dashed out from the wood to the aid of their leader.

The sight of eight more Confederates took the pursuers somewhat by surprise, and not knowing how many were still hidden in the wood, they checked the impetuosity of the advance. Perceiving that they were somewhat doubtful about holding their ground, Stringfellow and his men charged upon them, hoping to drive them back in confusion. But the scouts had reckoned on less resolute men than those with whom they had to deal, and when, as they rode into the open ground, the weakness of their party became evident to the Federals, the latter rallied from their first surprise and terror, and gallantly repulsed the charge. But as new squads of blue-coated troopers were constantly coming up, the cavalymen grew still bolder, and the scouts were driven in a headlong flight to the woods.

But not more than half of the scouts had been in the first party that came to the rescue of their leader; and as this party came flying for safety into the grove, the others joined them. Thus reinforced, they re-formed, and again charging upon the Federals, drove them back from the field to the road beyond. But each time that the Yankees were driven back, they returned with fresh men to the fray. And at last the Rebs were driven back into the woods, and hotly pursued into its recesses.

But our story would be incomplete did we omit mention of the sergeant, but for whom Stringfellow might have deceived the troopers completely. Struck by the second ball from the scout's revolver, as we have already seen, and dismounted by the first, he was too badly wounded to allow any active exertion; hence, though riderless horses galloped past him as his comrades advanced and retreated, he could not make any effort to secure one. With dogged persistency, however, he sought out, in every charge or retreat of the Rebs, the form of the leader, and aimed his revolver at the man that had been his prisoner and his captor.

It was not until this had been several times repeated that one of the scouts perceived the purpose of the wounded man. They were retreating for the last time, and the danger in lingering behind the main body was not small; but fearlessly riding away from his companions, he dashed up to the dismounted man, his pistol cocked and aimed. Arrived at a point whence the shot would be sure, his finger was on the trigger when Stringfellow, who had followed him closely, called:

“Don't fire on that man.”



"He's aimed at you every time yet, sir," answered the scout.

"Never mind that; he has surrendered to me once, and he must be treated as a prisoner of war."

"But he has fired——"

"Take him prisoner again, and treat him as such," was the order, in a tone that admitted of no further parley.

The running fight continued until nearly sunset; now one party, now the other, being driven back. Each time, the Confederates retreated a little greater distance than they advanced, so that the field was held by the Federals; but the former lost not a man nor a horse, while the latter had some twenty men and nearly thirty horses taken by the enemy. Indeed, the prisoners out-numbered the scouts. But they were, by the close of the afternoon, too near the Confederate lines for the Federals to pursue any farther, especially at night; so that the hard-fought action closed with the withdrawal of the Northerners from the pursuit.

When there was no longer any probability that the fight would be renewed, the Confederates paused to take account of their booty, to secure the prisoners and to divide the spoil. The indomitable sergeant was one of the captives, having surrendered to that scout who had been so intent upon avenging the attempts upon the Confederate leader.

"O, what a fool I was! What a d——d fool I was!" he said to Stringfellow; "I saw you take that man and take his arms and the mail from him. And I might have known that the mail wouldn't be sent by an officer. What a fool, what a fool!"

"You watched me pretty close, anyhow," answered the scout, smiling at the other's dismay and self-reproach.

"O, but I had no business to stop you. I ought to have let you go on. I might have known you were a bushwhacker, and wouldn't be taken alive."

The tears stood in his eyes as he pondered over the occurrence, and continued to mutter, at intervals, "What a fool, what a fool."

"Well, my friend, I'm sorry you have such a poor opinion of yourself, but I confess I cannot think it undeserved," replied Stringfellow; "now, there's only one thing I can do for you, to return your courtesy to me."

"What is that?"

"Give you free transportation to Richmond, and a letter of

introduction to a first-class 'War Hotel.' The gentleman in charge of it will be pleased to entertain you, free of cost."

"Well, I guess I'll have to do as you say, sir," replied the sergeant, ruefully; "but what a fool, what a darned fool I was!"

## CHAPTER XIII.

### CAPTURING A CAPTAIN.

A Ghostly Visitor—Investigations—A Woman in the Case—Trooly Loil—A Suspicious Officer—Determined to Find It Out—He Finds it Out—But Gets Lost Himself.

“I SENT for you as officer of the day, G——, to hear a report which was made to me in that capacity a few moments ago. There’s the devil to pay at Post Number Twelve.”

“How much is owing?” asked the officer addressed, with a gravity becoming to his dignity.

“That’s just what we’ll have to find out. This fellow will tell you what he saw there. We’ll have trouble around that post by to-morrow.”

“What did you see, my man?”

“It war a ghost, surr,” was the reply, in an awed tone, which yet could not disguise

“A brogue as thick as the fog,  
Whin Mother Maloney got lost in the bog.”

“A ghost?” repeated the officer, with some disdain.

“Yis, surr; it walked right out of the soide of the hill foreninst the ould graveyard, and shook its fist at me as it passed, and thin wint into the bush near the fort; and thin it dishappeared intirely.”

“In the bush?”

“It melted into the air, surr, jist as it got into the borders of the bush; or I could ’a seen the whoite longer nor I did.”

“Could you have seen a man in dark clothes as far in the bush as the ghost was when it disappeared?” asked the officer.

“No, surr, it war dark.”

“How did the ghost look?”

“Loike a tall banshee all dhressed in whoite, with oyes all of fire loike.”

Nothing more definite could be learned from the picket. To the officer it was evident that the ghost was an enemy in disguise, and that the so-called disappearance was but a removal of the ghostly apparel when once the spy was within the lines. He proceeded directly to Post Number Twelve, in order to make a minute examination of the ground, and ascertain whether the ghostly visitor had been material enough to leave footprints.

“Buy any pies ’n’ cakes? All clane and frish; twenty-five cents for pies and five cents a dozen for cakes.”

“Why do you come out here among the rocks and bushes to sell your wares?” demanded the officer of the woman whose voice thus saluted his ears.

“Shure an’ isn’t yer honor here to buy them? An’ I know if you’ll only be afther lookin’ at thim, to see how frish and temptin’ they’re lookin’, you’ll be tellin’ me to lave some at your tent,” replied the woman, insinuatingly.

“Why do you come here?” repeated the officer, sternly, without noticing the appeal to purchase.

“I’m jist on my way to the camp, surr, from me home foive moiles away on the hill, and I was stoppin’ here to rist meself. Me man’s in the Fourteenth Maryland, and he don’t loike to see me all tired loike when I come to camp.”

“Where is your pass, if you are a camp follower?”

“Sure an’ I’m the honest wife of Pathrick O’Meary, of the Fourteenth Maryland, Company D, an’ the captain—the saints bless him for a man that knows his business—has promised him that he shall be a corporal jist as soon as—”

“Very likely,” the officer cut her short with, “but you must go to camp and submit to a search of your basket and an inspection of your papers, if you have any.”

“Is itsarch me you would, surr? A good loyal woman as ever lived, and thries to make a bit more nor the government pay would be for the childer by selling nice clane frish cakes to the sogers, as their father is wan of thim, God bless ’em.”

“If you are a loyal woman, you will not object to what I say. If there is nothing in your basket but pies and cakes, what harm is there in showing that there isn’t?”

“It’s an honest, loyal woman that I am, surr, and yez can look in my basket and see as I haven’t any papers at all, at all.”

Without waiting to go back to the camp, Capt. G—— took the suspected woman to the picket post, where her basket was thoroughly searched. Nothing but cakes and pies were found, and the captain, baffled, but still somewhat suspicious, was obliged to admit that everything seemed all right. But suddenly his eye caught a sight of what seemed to confirm his doubts.

“Why do you wear a pair of men’s boots?” he asked, pointing to her feet.

“It’s a pair that he bought before he ’listed, surr,” she replied,



“Why do you wear men’s boots?”

making the pronoun refer to her husband, after the manner of Irish women of the lower class, “an’ the grass is so wet that me own ould shoes don’t kape out the wather.”

Still the captain was doubtful; and after some more talk, the woman volunteered the information that some two miles off, on the way to her own home, was the dwelling of some friends who could prove that she was neither a ghost or a spy. Thither Capt. G—— finally resolved to accompany her, and taking a single private with him, they proceeded on the way. It was then not later than half-past eleven. Noon came, but not the captain. Another hour, and still another, passed away, and still the officer of the guard was absent from camp.

Such a state of affairs was not to be tolerated, and the commander of the force at the camp (which did not include the Fourteenth Maryland) sent out a squadron of cavalry to dash up the hill and reconnoiter. Another hour passed. It was now three o'clock in the afternoon. The July sunshine beat fiercely down upon the camp and all surrounding it, and the men who were anxiously awaiting the result of the reconnoissance felt the heat burdensome. At last the cavalry was descried returning; they came back at full speed, notwithstanding the heat. They rode up to headquarters; the officer in command dismounted, and disappeared within the adjutant's tent.

The whole regiment was on the *qui vive*, for every man knew the circumstances under which Capt. G—— had left camp. What was to be done? Even as they were wondering the long roll beat, and they must fly to arms. In five minutes the whole regiment was in line of battle, only waiting for orders to move onward. To the assembled men was read the following note, which had been found four miles from camp, stuck on the point of the bayonet of the musket belonging to the private who had accompanied Capt. G——:

“COL. D.:

I am willing to exchange the pies, cakes and basket for the soldier and the d——d fool captain I caught with crinoline. Peddlers and ghosts are at a premium in these parts just now.

Yours in haste,

BLAND,

*First Lieut., C. S. A.*”

Whether the exchange was ever effected, history sayeth not. Lieut. Bland certainly did not rate his prisoners very highly; and if the exchange did not take place, we can only infer that the Federal officers thought the basket and its contents more valuable than the officer of the guard.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### A SOUTHERN HEROINE.

A Woman's Weapon—A *Reason for Refusing* a Pass—Which Was Not Appreciated—A Gallant Enemy—A Post of Vantage—She Heard Their Plans—A Midnight Ride—Almost Caught—Safe Again—An Enemy Not Whipped Out of His Boots.

ELSEWHERE in this volume will be found a chapter on Miss Pauline Cushman, who, to her reputation as an actress, added a yet more enduring fame as a spy for the Federals. As a companion to the adventure of this lady's, there narrated, we would now detail an exploit of a woman whose services were performed for the benefit of the other side—the no less noted and equally daring Miss Belle Boyd, the Rebel spy.

Miss Boyd's services had already made her well known both to friend and foe, when our story opens. Indeed, she had just been released from confinement at Baltimore, merely because there was no good proof of any recent offense against the United States Government, and not because she had given any evidence of her loyalty. A man, perhaps, would have been retained in durance vile for an indefinite length of time, under exactly the same circumstances; but a woman, especially a young and pretty one, holds weapons which our clumsy hands are powerless to combat; even if the gallantry of her opponent cannot be reckoned upon, being an infinitesimal quantity, she can perhaps worry him into doing what she wishes done.

Perhaps it was not in this way that Miss Boyd secured the order from Gen. Dix, permitting her to return to the family residence at Front Royal; certainly Gen. Dix was not so well convinced of her perfect innocence but that he directed that she should be kept under strict surveillance.

The lady was anxious to proceed to Richmond, where she had many friends and relatives; but the pass given her in Baltimore was only to Winchester, and it was with considerable difficulty that at that point she obtained the document which would enable her to get to Front Royal. Here Gen. Shields himself was in command, his headquarters being in the very mansion where Miss Belle had hoped to find a temporary home.

Her aunt's family was at home in a small cottage in the courtyard, and here their guest was received. Having duly refreshed the inner woman, she addressed a polite little note to the officer in command, requesting the favor of a personal interview. She had expected to be informed of the hour at which the general would receive her, but with true Milesian gallantry, Gen. Shields forgot his official position, and remembered only that he was a gentleman.

He was of course received with the courtesy due to him in both ways, and Miss Belle lost no time in preferring her request.

"A pass to Richmond?" he repeated, quizzically; "I am extremely sorry to refuse you, Miss Boyd, but the fact is, that I am compelled, by consideration for your own safety, to refuse the document."

"I do not understand you, sir," replied the lady, who was in truth not a little puzzled by his giving such a reason.

"The case is just this," he replied, with an air of great mystery; "old Jackson's army is between here and Richmond, and they are so badly demoralized that I dare not trust a young and charming lady to their tender mercies."

"I am entirely willing to trust myself, Gen. Shields, in the hands of any Confederate force in the field," retorted the lady, determined to show him that he could not compliment her into silence on the subject of her desires; "and if you will only give me the pass, I will sign a paper absolving you from all responsibility in this connection."

Her tone, like his, was that of the lightest badinage; but under the light and sparkling exterior there lay, in both cases, a determination as firm as if they had shown it in their manner.

"Ah," he made answer, "I fear you do not realize what you would undertake; and I really cannot accept your proposition. But I will compromise with you; I am fully aware that you would outwit me sooner or later, were I to attempt to detain you here always, so I will promise you this: we are going to whip



Jackson out of his boots pretty soon, and then the road to Richmond will be safer, and you shall have the pass."

Something more to the same effect followed, and though the lady tried her best, the soldier persisted in his refusal, veiling it under assurances of the most friendly consideration for her welfare. In short, for the time the cunning woman was completely baffled.

She did not allow herself to be blinded to the real state of affairs, however, though the wily Irishman thought that he had succeeded in doing so. Her quick wit saw the meaning of many remarks which he allowed himself to let fall, and which he fondly imagined would be all Greek to a young lady; and she could not only understand the information thus given, but she could forward it to the enemy whom Gen. Shields boasted he was going to "whip out of his boots."

To all appearances they were the best of friends; and some of the young officers on the general's staff whom he introduced to her, were equally forgetful of the mighty struggle raging about them. Indeed, she obtained not a little information of considerable importance to the Confederates from one of these officers, who of course was wholly unconscious of giving aid and comfort to the enemies of his country.

At last Gen. Shields decided to make a movement of some importance which he had contemplated for some time past. Thanks to her friend the captain, Miss Belle was fully acquainted with the fact that the forces were about to be removed from Front Royal, but definite information as to their objective point and other particulars she could not obtain without cross-questioning him, and she feared to excite his suspicions by seeming to take an interest in the movements of the troops; nor was her tender solicitude as to the whereabouts of one particular staff-officer productive of anything more than a vow to be at her side as often as the duty of a soldier would allow.

Now, the gallant captain was a very pleasant companion, especially when she could, without exciting his suspicions, worm from him any information which his position on Gen. Shield's staff made him the master of; but vows of eternal constancy were not a satisfactory substitute, and the lady, in her impatience, could hardly refrain from telling him so. She restrained herself, however, and cudged her wits for some other mode of getting certain and reliable intelligence of their plans. A council

of war was to be held on a certain night ; the next morning the troops would probably be on the move and the Confederates must know their intentions.

Considering the matter calmly, Miss Belle finally absolved the captain from the charge of tantalizing cruelty which she had privately made against him ; not even a staff-officer could tell more than he knew, and no one could exactly foretell what would be the result of their deliberations that night ; she would have no interview with the captain afterward ; it was clear, then, that she must be an auditor at their deliberations.

It would seem that such a determination was more easily formed than executed ; but she was well aware of the means on



*"Her very life seemed centered in her ears."*

which she could depend. The council, as she knew, would be held in the apartment formerly used as a drawing-room ; directly over this was a bed-room, now untenanted. Through the floor of the closet opening into this chamber a hole had been bored, to serve some long-forgotten purpose. This was her post of observation, and a better one she could not have had.

The occupants of the cottage which we have mentioned as used by the family whose residence Gen. Shields had temporarily appropriated for himself and his staff, were of course so far privileged as to be unquestioned in their movements about the grounds and the larger edifice. It awakened no suspicion, then, if any of the Federals chanced to see Miss Belle, about the time that the council was to assemble, stealing noiselessly through the halls and up the stairs of the larger house. But in all probability she was unobserved as she left her own apartment, and made her way to that spacious front chamber. Applying her ear to that blessed perforation (for so she could not help but style it to herself), she found, to her great satisfaction, that she could hear distinctly every word that was uttered ; and although

she could not see them, she was sufficiently familiar with their voices to distinguish the utterances of each individual, and thus the conference was much more intelligible to her than it would have been to a stranger.

Hour after hour she lay there, prostrate upon the floor of the closet; for the conference was a long one, and many points of importance were discussed. She dared not stir a limb, she scarcely dared to breathe, lest her presence be detected; and she well knew what would be the result. For herself she cared less than for the inevitable loss of the assistance which she hoped to render this very night to the Confederacy. Her very life seemed centered in her ears; every word was treasured in her memory, for she knew not how much of this information might be of incalculable value to the army which she served. Midnight came, and found them still debating and arranging; another hour passed, and at last they arose from the council table, and separated until the morning. As they passed out into the hall, she stole to the head of the back stairs; the coast was clear; they had not thought it worth while to post a guard anywhere near the council chamber, and in her inmost heart she blessed them for this disregard of the usual military precaution.

Silently she crept to the back door of the hall, keeping carefully in the shadows. She heard their regular tread as they ascended the broad stairway; then they went each to the room in which he was to sleep that night for the last time. Not until she heard the last one close his door behind him, did she venture to turn the knob softly.

But she was not yet ready to set out on the perilous errand of transmitting this information to the Southern officer whom she knew was most easily reached. Stealing across the court-yard, she entered the cottage and went straight to her own room. Here, by the light of a single carefully shaded candle (for her past services to the Confederacy were such that anything unusual might be the means of arousing the suspicions of some wakeful officer), she wrote down in the cypher with which she had been furnished every word of the discussion which her retentive memory supplied. This she regarded as a necessary precaution, for she could not tell how brief the interview would have to be. At last, however, the task was completed.

But the most difficult part of her work remained to be done. Ashby must be informed of the intentions of his enemy. There

were plenty of servants around who would have done anything for Miss Belle; for a sort of personal magnetism seems to have been one of the most effective weapons in her well-stocked armory; but on any of them she dared not call. A foot-fall a trifle too heavy, a gleam of light from an unshaded lantern, the sound of a whispering voice—any of these things so unusual at that hour, might arouse a soldier, and then good-bye to all hopes of rendering assistance to the Southern forces, either at that time or any other. It was alone, then, that she made her way to the stables, treading as softly as the cat stealing into the dairy when the mistress is in sight. Her own saddle-horse stood there fleet and spirited; she well knew what absolute dependence she might place upon him. Hastily saddling him, she led him slowly out of the stable-yard, muffling his foot-falls by guiding him along the grassy edges of the carriage-way. Once out of the grounds of her aunt's house, she had less need of caution; speed was more essential; for the sound of hoofs along the highway need not excite suspicion. Away she galloped, shaping her course rather by the stars than by roads, straight towards the point at which Col. Ashby had had his headquarters when she had last communicated with him. But suddenly it seemed as if she had met with a difficulty which she could not surmount. Straight in her way stood a sentinel, in the well-known blue.

"Halt! Who goes there?" he demanded in stereotyped phrase.

"A friend, with a pass from Gen. Shields," she answered boldly.

The night was a clear, starlight one, but there was no moon; she had in her possession a pass which she had that very day procured from the Federal commandant for a Confederate soldier returning South after being exchanged; this she determined to make use of, trusting that the sentry would not deem a close examination necessary after he saw that the document was drawn up in due form.

The man extended his hand for the paper which she had drawn from her bosom, and glanced at it; his eyes, accustomed to the darkness, could discern that it was on a printed form, and he saw that the familiar signature was appended. He therefore handed it back to her, and lowered the weapon with which he had at first barred her passage. She was safe from him.

Onward she galloped, only to be again brought to a standstill

by the sentry of the outer chain; for there were two lines of guards about the town. But this second one proved to be no more suspicious of evil than his comrade had been, and she passed him with as little delay. And now she was free from the surveillance of the enemy; and she taxed her horse's speed to the utmost. Away, almost on the wings of the wind, across fields, through groves, along the highway, skirting the dangerously soft ground of the intervening marshes, faster, faster still, until she was fifteen miles from her starting-point.

She drew rein before a large, rambling dwelling, of plain but substantial aspect. This was her destination for the present, for here, as she had good reason for being sure, the daring and dashing Col. Ashby had for some time had his headquarters; and he would find sure means of transmitting any information of importance to his chief, the famous "Stonewall" Jackson.

Springing from her horse, she ran lightly up the steps of the mansion, and fairly thundered at the door. In her impatience, the minutes seemed interminable, and after the lapse of a time so short that the echo of the original sound had not died away, she repeated the summons in the same vehement manner.

"Who's there?" came the sharp query, in a woman's voice, from the window just over the door.

She recognized the speaker as Mrs. M——, the mistress of the mansion, and knew at once that Col. Ashby was not to be found there, or the summons would not have been answered by a woman.



*The Urgent Midnight Message.*

"Belle Boyd," came the answer, in quick, nervous tones, that betrayed the excitement of the newcomer.

"Belle Boyd!" echoed the elder lady, who had expected to hear the answer come in a man's deep voice; then added, hastily: "wait a minute; I'll come down."

"It is Col. Ashby that I want to see," replied the spy;" "where is he?"

But the lady had already disappeared from the window, and soon opened the door to her unexpected guest.

"My dear," she exclaimed, with motherly solicitude for the girl whom she had known since infancy, "you surely do not mean to say that you have come from Front Royal to-night. Who is with you?"

"I am alone," returned the young lady, as calmly as if such midnight jaunts were quite the approved thing for an unprotected female; "and since I have come all this distance in this manner, you may know how urgent is my errand to Col. Ashby; where is he?"

"He is in camp, a quarter of a mile away, in the woods," replied Mrs. M——, anxiously considering the possibility of finding an escort for her young friend.

"At the same camp as before?" asked Miss Belle; "then, good-bye, for I am off."

And before the astonished elder lady could utter a word of remonstrance, she had run down the steps and was in the act of remounting. Just at this juncture a familiar voice accosted her:

"From what cloud did you drop, Miss Belle?"

"It seems to be nearer the point to ask from what cloud you have dropped, Col. Ashby," she retorted, saucily, as she turned from her horse toward the door at which he had so unexpectedly appeared; having changed his plans after seeing Mrs. M——, and returned without her knowledge to the house.

"Is it really you, or am I dreaming?" he continued, scarcely able even yet to realize the situation.

"I have a strong impression that it is the real Belle Boyd, and not the baseless fabric of a vision," she rejoined, mockingly; "and when you have heard my story, perhaps you will realize that you are as wide awake as you ever were."

Briefly she told of that night's council of war; of her post of vantage; of the many plans discussed; of those which were regarded with favor, and of route and destination decided upon.

“And here,” she concluded, “is the whole thing written out in the cypher agreed upon, so that you can study it at your leisure.”

The warmth of the thanks was no doubt in proportion to the value of the services rendered and the difficulties which the fair spy had encountered and surmounted.

“And now, my dear,” put in Mrs. M——, who had been anxiously waiting for this conference to end, “come in and rest a while; you must be nearly tired to death.”

“No, I am not tired,” replied the younger lady; “that is, not so very; and I must be back at Front Royal before daylight.”

“You can never do it in the world,” ejaculated the good soul; “ride back through all that lonely distance!”

“It is no lonelier than when I came,” returned the heroic girl, laughing banteringly at the horrified tone in which the remonstrance was uttered; “and besides, I am taking good care of myself in going; for if I did not return, they would see into the whole thing, and if they ever caught me, they would be sure to hang me as a spy.”

“I don’t believe even the Yankees would hang a lady,” began Mrs. M——, in a tone of deep conviction; but the person whose fate was thus being discussed cut the debate short with a laughing adieu, and galloped off.

Her night’s work was not yet at an end; for as she was aware and had hinted to her friend, any suspicion of her doings would not only result in her own apprehension, but in such a change of the enemy’s plans as to make the information, obtained and transmitted with such difficulty, practically worthless.

She chose a slightly different road in returning, hoping to elude the sentries, as her pass would hardly account for her speedy return. In this effort she was only partially successful. She managed to pass the outer chain wholly unobserved, and was now approaching the inner line. Once within that charmed circle, she would be safe; for although the proverbial “darkest hour” of the night was rapidly drawing to a close, she knew that, if unhindered, she would be able to reach the shelter of her own chamber before the Federal drums should sound the reveille. A few whispered words of encouragement, and her tired horse pricked up his ears, and nerved himself to fresh efforts. She hoped to dash unquestioned by the sentinel, whom from his posture she judged was sleeping at his post. One moment more, and

she would be safe, for even if he awoke just as she passed, a sudden turn in the road at this point would shelter her from sight.

But alas for her calculations. The sleeping sentry awoke, not as she passed, but as she approached. He challenged her; she, knowing that her only chance was in flight, urged her horse onward; he raised his gun.

“Halt!” he cried in tones loud enough, it seemed to her, to arouse Gen. Shields himself.

She dashed onward, and hoped to escape so; nor was she mistaken; the abrupt turn in the road was an effectual shield. And she was too well acquainted with the rules of war to fear the sentry would betray her; he could not do so without confessing that he had slept upon his post—a capital offense in a soldier.

At last she had reached her starting-point. Unsaddling her horse, and providing for his comfort, she entered the cottage, and gained her own chamber just as the first rosy streaks appeared in the eastern sky.

Leaving a sufficient force at Front Royal to hold the Confederates at bay, Gen. Shields set out on the proposed expedition; but if he was not exactly the counterpart of the gallant Secessionist who, as the poet relates:

“Went out to capture Yankees—  
—But the Yankees captured him”—

he certainly did not succeed in whipping the redoubtable Stonewall “out of his boots.” How far this was due to the efforts of Belle Boyd is a question for the reader to determine.



## CHAPTER XV.

### A SPY'S ADVENTURE.

The Spy—His Work Done—Leaving the Camp—Hunting the Boat—A Vain Search  
—His Character Suspected in Camp—Pursued—Bloodhounds—The Stream  
—Nearly Caught—The Dog's Fate—The Spy's Escape.

THE spy's life is one of danger, while he is but little honored even by those whom he serves. He is a base creature—he who stoops to deceive; and the name of his office is a synonym of much that is vile and nothing that is good. If he performs his services, he receives, sometimes, the thanks and praise of the commander, but his comrades look upon him with a feeling that is half jealousy, half contempt; if he fails, there is but one mode of punishing him—that reserved for the meanest of criminals; the form of death which Andre prayed might be spared him, which Hale so heroically endured. And the spy's name is remembered only by those at home, who have waited so patiently for his letters.

Yet the work is difficult, and extremely necessary. In spite of the dangers it presents, of the slight regard in which the individual is held, there are men who willingly undertake and resolutely perform it. As the boy delights to dart over the places marked "dangerous," and thinks rather of the going where no one else dare venture than of the black waters under the thin ice, so the man finds a certain satisfaction in undertaking a task more perilous than his comrades will essay, and no shadow of a noose falls across his calmly courageous mind. Yet the boy who hears the ice cracking beneath his feet feels the chill waters already engulfing him; and the spy who finds one part of his plan fail him feels an uncomfortable stricture of the windpipe. Let us follow the fortunes of a certain Missourian, who, in the spring and

summer of 1862, had been acting in this capacity for Gen. Curtis, commanding in Missouri and Arkansas.

His name has not been preserved in any of the various records that have come down to us from the days of the war ; for to have published it then, or while sectional feeling was still bitter, though open combat was ended, would have been worse than useless ; it would have been fraught with the greatest danger to the spy. Let us recount the story of one of his adventures, then ; a story which, though unsupported by his name, rests upon the best authorities of its own time.

Ten days had been spent in hanging around the outskirts of the camp, talking, laughing, drinking, betting with the Confederates, and cautiously securing as much information as possible without arousing suspicion. At last he had obtained satisfactory answers to all the questions which had been given to him, and he determined to get back to the Federal lines while his news was still fresh enough to be of value. Stealing away from his late boon companions, he bent his steps towards the stream where he had concealed his skiff.

The night was a dark one. The feeble rays of the new moon were wholly obscured by the thick clouds that had gathered over the sky, hiding the stars, and threatening every moment to pour a torrent of rain upon the parched earth. The spy stole silently onward, cautious as an Indian approaching an unsuspecting foe that not a twig should snap under his foot. So he stole past the pickets, though compelled to make a wide detour in order to escape their watchful eyes. He reached the border of the wood that fringed the stream, and peered through the darkness in the direction where only the sullen murmur of the waters betrayed the presence of the rivulet ; but, in the intense darkness, not a landmark could be discerned. He stooped to the earth, and groped along on his hands and knees ; but could find nothing familiar, nothing to tell him where he was. Yet he was so near to the Confederate pickets that the slightest sound might betray him.

Under the shelter of the thick bushes that, growing out from the side of the bank, lined the edge of the stream, there was hidden his boat ; but where ? Was it above or below him, and how far ? As he vainly endeavored to find some familiar object, however trifling, a cold sweat bathed every limb. His character would be revealed by his departure ; how soon his enemies would

find out that he had gone he could not tell ; it might be discovered an hour hence, it might have been noticed already. The plashing of the stream against its banks, the shrill noise of insects, the plaintive song of the whip-poor-will, the deep bass of the frogs, all united in a chorus of mockery at his perilous and utterly helpless state.

The Federal pickets must be reached before dawn, or our spy would stretch Confederate rope—one of those grim acorns which the old French king loved to see hanging from the oaks around his summer castle. There was not a moment to be lost ; the boat could not be found, and he prepared to wade and swim the stream that separated the two armies. Cautiously he descended the steep bank, clinging to the bushes to preserve his footing ; a single misstep, a single unwary movement, a stone displaced and rolling into the water, might alarm the enemy ; for he knew not but that there was a guard within a bayonet's length. He gained at last the narrow strip of wet and sandy shore that borders the shoaling stream, and stepped cautiously into the water. Not a moment too soon had he made the resolution to cross without further search for his boat ; for as he felt the cool current upon his fevered skin, he heard the deep bay of a bloodhound. The enemy had already discovered his absence, suspected his mission and started in pursuit. The unerring instinct of their terrible ally had put them at once on his track.

There was still hope of eluding them, however, for the hound would lose the scent at the edge of the stream ; the bloodhound's instinct, like the witch's power, cannot cross the midst of the current. But to cross directly was to expose himself to their view, in case the clouds should for one instant draw away from the sky ; he dared not risk it. Wading down the stream, still sheltered from sight by the overhanging bushes, he heard the pursuers coming nearer and nearer ; he could hear the dog pushing aside the branches as he made his way along the bank, searching for the lost scent. The uneasy growls of the brute were music in the ear of the spy, for they told that the scent had been lost—might it long be unfound !

Devoutly praying thus, his knee suddenly struck upon something harder than the water, more regular in form than a stone. It was the gunwale of a boat. In the joyful surprise of the moment, he could hardly repress the cry that rose to his lips ; and with trembling hands he began to search for the painter almost

before he was fairly in the little vessel. It was found, and the boat, the very one which he had sought so unsuccessfully, was cut loose from her moorings just as the moon came out from behind a cloud and revealed the surroundings. In all probability, the pursuers had no boat near; they would be obliged to lose time which would be of incalculable advantage to him.

But the sudden glimpse of the moonlight showed him more than the boat in the dark waters, shadowed by the overhanging bushes. On the log, half-buried in the earth, to which his boat had been secured, crouched the bloodhound; and as the spy cut the rope and grasped the oars, the dog sprang towards him. With desperate energy the soldier pushed off, hoping that the animal might miss his mark and fall into the river; but it was of no avail. The savage brute had sprung at the throat of his prey; he fell short of that, indeed, as the boat darted from the shore, but he clung with a firm hold to the side of the boat.

The spy raised an oar, and aimed a blow at the brute's head; but the dog evaded the stroke. In his effort to do so, however, and the sudden movement of the man, the boat careened sideways, and the water rushed in, in a torrent. The blow evaded, the dog, to enable himself to scramble into the boat, seized the gunwale in his teeth. Action must be quick, now, if the spy would escape, for in a moment more the dog would be at his throat. His revolver was aimed and cocked; but a shot would betray his whereabouts to his human enemies, and would be answered by a shower of balls from them. He dared not shoot, then, though the red eyes of the hound were glaring savagely at him, though the dog was making strenuous efforts to spring into the boat.

There was but one resource remaining. Throwing the pistol from him into the bottom of the boat, the spy drew his bowie-knife, keen as a razor, and shining blue in the fitful moonlight. He leaned towards the dog, and in an instant more had drawn the sharp edge from side to side across the animal's throat, cutting through the brawn and muscles to the nape of the neck. The red eyes, that had gleamed so furiously upon him, lost their dreadful lustre; the grasp of the firm white teeth on the gunwale relaxed; the huge body sank into the water that closed above it with hardly a ripple; and he was safe from the one pursuer.

Five minutes more, and the spy had reached the opposite

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*The Spy and Bloodhound*

shore. He was safe; for the Confederates dared not follow him to a point so near the Federal lines. That very night he gave his information at headquarters, and in a few days was, in another disguise, seeking for "green fields and pastures new" among the enemy's tents.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### ESCAPING THE DEATH-PENALTY.

At Lexington—A Violated Parole—Alton Penitentiary—Solitary Confinement—  
A Mysterious Door—The Mystery Solved—Difficulties of the Undertaking—  
The Tunnel—A Friendly Boatman—Alarmed—Puzzled Guards—A Generous  
Comrade—Final Escape.

A PRISONER of war, who had been tried by a court-martial, found guilty of one of the gravest offenses known to military law, and condemned to death, would most certainly be so closely guarded as to prevent all effort at escape. The one with whom our present story deals, was confined in an upper room of a strong building, through the iron-barred windows of which many another prisoner had looked, in vain longing, at the free air without. To this apartment there was but one mode of access, a door opening upon an outside staircase; and here a sentinel was stationed day and night. This stairway led down into an inclosure surrounded by walls fifteen or eighteen feet high, guarded as vigilantly as prison yards usually are. What were the chances of escape for such a man?

Col. Ebenezer Magoffin, a prominent citizen of Pettis Co., Mo., and a brother of Gov. Beriah Magoffin of Kentucky, was held at Lexington, Mo., as a prisoner. It became necessary for him to attend to some private business of importance, and as his detention was only a precautionary measure, he was paroled to enable him to do so. During his absence, Gen. Price drew his lines closer and closer around the beautiful eminence on which the Northern forces were entrenched; the besiegers cut the garrison off from the river; the cisterns within the fortifications went dry; and in September, 1861, the famishing Federals surrendered.



Col. Magoffin heard of the capitulation, and supposed himself free, since to return to Col. Mulligan would be to place himself in the custody of that officer's captor. Acting on this opinion, he joined a body of something more than six hundred volunteers from that portion of the State, whose purpose it was to report to Gen. Price. But this intention was frustrated by a force of wary Federals, who captured the whole regiment at their camp on Blackwater.

Col. Magoffin of course supposed that he would be treated as the other prisoners were with whom he was taken. Instead of this, he was brought before a court-martial for breaking his parole. The Federal authorities claimed that when he heard of Mulligan's capture, he should have surrendered himself to some official, civil or military, of the United States Government. Under this interpretation of his duty he was of course guilty; and so the court-martial decided.

The offense was a capital one, and the condemned man was placed in solitary confinement in one of the cells of the Penitentiary at Alton, Illinois, whither the prisoners had been removed after six weeks' incarceration in McDowell's Medical College (Gratiot St. Prison) in St. Louis.

So much of explanation is not only due to Col. Magoffin, as showing that he had not intentionally committed the offense esteemed most dishonorable in an officer and a gentleman, but is necessary to the proper understanding of some portions of our story.

Then, as always, political influence availed much, even for a condemned "Rebel"; and a respite was secured, pending efforts to procure a pardon. The Penitentiary building had been abandoned by the State of Illinois, on account of the insalubrity of its situation; the dampness of the cells being the cause of much sickness and some deaths among the convicts. Its use as a military prison was open to the same objection, as was shown by the mortality among the prisoners. Confinement in the cells was especially injurious, and Col. Magoffin's health had suffered seriously. It was represented to the authorities that although they might have a right to execute him for an offense which military law decrees shall be so punished, they had no right to kill him by inches; especially as he had been respited for the express purpose of bringing the matter before the President, that he might decide if the parole had really been broken. The prison-

er was accordingly removed to another apartment, drier than the cell, but considered equally secure.

In order to understand clearly the difficulties of escape and the means by which they were surmounted, some description of the prison grounds will be necessary.

The Penitentiary was situated on ground gently rising from the left bank of the Mississippi, north of the city of Alton. On the western side rises a high, steep hill, almost from the base of the wall; only the sentinel's walk, close under the masonry, being leveled. In the southwestern corner of the prison-yard, overlooking the river, is a two-story building, intended to serve for the offices of the Penitentiary, at the date of our story used for the headquarters of the regiment on guard duty there. Adjoining this, and extending along the western wall of the yard, was the higher building containing the cells; in this the ordinary prisoners were quartered during the night, their beds being laid in frame bunks opposite the entrances to the cells, along the corridors of the different tiers. These two buildings may be considered as forming a single oblong, with a partition nearer the southern than the northern end. Extending westward from it was another much smaller, two stories in height, which the writer's informant believed had been used as the female prison. This joined the others, but extended only a few feet south of the partition wall; so that the staircase, leading directly south from a door opening from the second story of this smaller building, ended very near the entrance to that in which the cells were located.

Col. Magoffin was confined in the second story of this smaller structure; and, as before stated, there was a perpetual guard placed at the only entrance. If, as some of his friends in prison surmised, he had feigned a greater prostration than his illness had actually produced, he had certainly failed to gain any advantage thereby. It was of course impossible for a man without tools or assistance, and closely watched, to escape from one of the cells. But was he any better off now? As month after month passed on, and executive clemency failed to remand him to the general prison, his comrades became exceedingly anxious. They felt that some plan of escape must be devised; but how should they elude the vigilance of the sentinel especially posted to guard him? A peculiarity in the construction of the building, however, made this the easier part of their task.

Two sons of Colonel Magoffin had been captured at Blackwater, and one of them was permitted to visit him, in order to attend him in his illness. Being, of course, allowed all the privileges which the other prisoners enjoyed, and free to go back and forth from his father's bedside to the prison-yard, subject only to the surveillance of the soldier at the door, he was a most valuable medium of communication with the world without the condemned man's cell.

It was after one of these visits that the young man was observed by an intimate friend intently studying that part of the wall which formed the partition between the cell-building and the old female prison.

"What's the matter, Bee?" inquired this friend, using the nickname by which Mr. Magoffin was familiarly known.

"It's the strangest thing I ever saw," was the answer, in a low tone, as the speaker glanced cautiously about him, to make sure that his words were heard by no other ear than that for which they were intended. "I never saw a door that did not come through, until now."

The other man, who was engaged upon some one of those numerous pieces of carving with which many of the prisoners whiled away their time, looked up inquiringly.

"It's a fact," was the earnest reply to the look.

"I suppose it is," answered the carver, dryly; "doors are generally cut clear through the wall."

"Don't speak so loud," said Magoffin, coming nearer to him; "it is a serious matter, for it may be a chance for father."

The carver dropped his work in his surprise.

"I rolled a big wardrobe in father's room out this morning, and found a door that ought to come through just about here, but there's no sign of it on this side."

"Maybe it opens into the officers' quarters," suggested his auditor.

"It cannot," replied young Magoffin decidedly; "you see, I thought of that myself at first; but I have just been making as careful measurements as I dared, and I find it ought to open into a passage-way ending just about here."

"Then it is not only a door, but a whole passage-way that has mysteriously disappeared?"

Magoffin nodded, and strolled slowly away; for if the door was to be found and opened, not a guard must suspect that any

prisoner knew of its existence. What had become of the other end of that suppositious passage, on the other side of the door so long concealed from view? There was nothing to conceal any opening here—only a bare, blank, plastered wall, where there was no trace of any mode of access to another part of the building.

The bit of soft, fine-grained gray stone, which the prisoner had been fashioning into a pipe (they had cut many such pieces from the walls of McDowell's College, until the authorities feared lest they might destroy the building, and forbade it) lay untouched by his side as he sat revolving the matter in his mind.

It was in the early days of the war, before the ingenuity of scores of men, resolved upon freedom at the cost of any amount of danger or labor, had taught prison guards the necessity for constant watchfulness, by day as well as by night, inside the prison walls as well as about its bounds. It is only by remembering that this was the early summer of 1862, that we can understand how they could secure the necessary freedom from observation.

The carver seemed deep in a brown study, until aroused by the sound of footsteps. It was Magoffin returning.

"Is the coast clear?" was the first question.

"It was to make sure of that, that I went out," was the reply.

His companion nodded approval, well knowing that a son of the condemned man would be more liable to suspicion than any one else, not only from his greater interest, but because he was the only one of the prisoners who could possibly know of the existence of the concealed door.

"I don't believe there is any passage-way at all," announced the confidante, with an air of firm conviction.

"Why?" was the brief query in reply.

"It isn't reasonable that there should be. Think of it a moment, and you will be convinced. There would be no reason whatever for cutting a door from the second story of that building into one of these corridors; this is the level of the second range of cells; and the floor of your father's room is just about half-way between the floor of this and that of the range above. Any door from that building to this would open from the ground floor of this. See?"

"You mean, I suppose, that there is a staircase leading direct from father's room to this cell-building?"

“Exactly; and now let us go down stairs and see if there is any sign of a door in that wall.”

Down stairs they accordingly went, although both had seen the wall a hundred times, and knew perfectly well that there was no door there.

“I did not think that there was,” observed Magoffin.

For answer, the carver applied his pocket-knife, which he still held open in his hand, to the blank wall. In a moment Magoffin came to his assistance with a similar tool. A very little work served to penetrate the plastering, and they saw behind a small net-work of lath and studding a surface of painted iron. They had found one of the doors through which the solitary must pass on his way to liberty, if at all. True, even if this door were opened, Col. Magoffin would be no nearer to freedom than the others were, but it was something to have him as near.

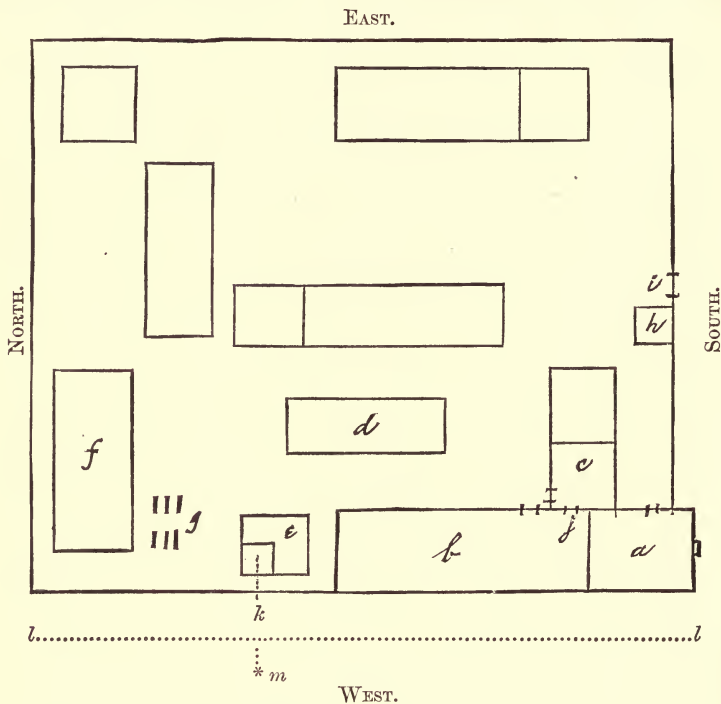
The two men paused from their labors and looked at each other without a word of comment on their success. It was now certain that the surmised staircase had an actual existence, and that this was the door at its foot, as that in Col. Magoffin’s room was at its head. To penetrate to this door, to unlock this and the other, to find a means of exit from the walled and guarded enclosure surrounding all these different buildings, all without attracting the attention of the Federals on guard—these were the tasks that still lay before them.

The prisoners were allowed considerable liberty inside the buildings and in the prison-yard; and most fortunately they could depend upon any work done in this dark corner of the cell-building being wholly safe from other eyes than their own; for every man attended to his own bed, and the buildings were not inspected by the guards; the commander of the regiment posted there relying upon the vigilance of the sentinels.

Of course it would be necessary to tunnel under the walls; but here another difficulty presented itself: the town, intensely loyal, as a matter of course, lay to the east; on the northern side there were many dwellings; to the south was the river, plainly visible from the headquarters of the guard, its gently sloping bank wholly devoid of shelter. What remained then but to make their exit on the west side? But west of the yard rose the hill, while between the wall and the hill a sentry paced his watchful round.

The case could hardly be called a promising one, and yet they

undertook it cheerfully. "Fortune favors the brave," says the proverb; and so it seemed in this case; unless, indeed, their ready wit, that could turn every circumstance to account, and



*Diagram of Escape of Fifty Confederate Prisoners from Old Alton Penitentiary.*

*a.* Adjutant's Office and Headquarter's Prison Guard. *b.* Cell-Building. *c.* Former Female Prison, in which Magoffin was Confined. *d.* Prisoner's Dining-Room and Kitchen. *e.* Old Bake-Oven Building, used as a Wash-House. *f.* Excavation for New Building, where Prisoners Dumped Earth. *g.* Clothes Racks. *h.* Gatekeeper's Office. *i.* Gate. *j.* Hidden Door and Passage-Way Discovered. *k.* Tunnel Under Wall. *l-l.* Sentry's Beat. *m.* Opening of Tunnel on Side of Hill.

their willing hands, that shrank from no labor as too great, were not the chief factors in what the careless observer would call their good luck.

Adjoining the cell-building on the east was a slight frame structure, used as a wash-house. That it had not been intended for this purpose was shown by the large brick oven which it contained. But since the Penitentiary had been abandoned by the original owner, this oven was no longer used; so long had

it been neglected that it had fallen into disrepair, and become a mere harbor for rubbish of all kinds. A tunnel begun in this oven would be as well concealed from the guards as they could hope to have it; and it had the additional and very necessary advantage of being near to the northern wall.

The next question that arose was: what shall be done with the dirt? But to this query, so often a puzzling one in similar cases, an answer was ready. An excavation was being made in one corner of the yard preparatory to the erection of another building; and this was a receptacle that would tell no tales, since the men at work on it would never discover how, in the intervals of their labor, a portion of what they had already accomplished was undone.

Clothes-lines were of course a forbidden article in the prison, as any rope might be made to give help in scaling the walls. To supply the place of this necessity of the laundry, the prison authorities had caused racks to be erected in that part of the yard which was best adapted and most available. It was no fault of the colonel or any of his subordinates that this point happened to be just at one side of the excavation mentioned, work upon which had been temporarily abandoned; for the racks had been placed first, and long before Col. Magoffin entered the gates. But the men engaged in tunneling found it extremely convenient; a clean white sack, carried from the wash-house to the drying-ground, could excite no suspicion, for that was the way in which they had always carried the wet clothes to the racks; and a judicious system of reliefs prevented any remark upon the quantity of washing that was being done.

Matters progressed favorably, their operations being managed with such care that the guards had not even a suspicion of the work going on beneath their very noses. The plaster was stripped from the door, and arrangements made to cover the defaced wall so as to conceal their work in case of a cursory examination; though anything like a thorough one would of course have put a most effectual damper upon all hopes of the condemned man's escape. The tunnel was almost completed, only a thin crust being left over the end, that no suspicions might be aroused by a broken sod. The locks and hinges of both doors had been carefully oiled, that no grating sound might fall upon a Federal's ear; and keys had been, with no small labor, filed to fit the keyholes.

Their preparations were at last completed ; the escape must be made at once, for every moment added to the danger of detection ; and detection meant, for them, the cells, in which some of them had already been confined at various times for trifling offenses ; while for the man for whose sake chiefly the work was undertaken, detection meant a total abandonment of hope.

In consequence of the heat, the prisoners were allowed a somewhat unusual privilege ; the door of the cell-building was left open, and they had the freedom of the yard during the early night as well as by day. A prisoner who left the bunk in which he was quartered and went out for a breath of fresh air, then, was violating none of the rules in force, and, consequently, was unnoticed by the guard.

As it happened, one of these men strolled around by the wash-house. Nobody was looking, and he entered the shed known by that name ; he had not been noticed. He entered the old oven and crawled down into the tunnel ; the air was stifling, but he no longer felt the same craving for fresh air that he had indulged in leaving the cell-building, or else he preferred it fresher and freer than could be found within the prison-yard. At last he reached the point where he felt the earth above him. Breathlessly he listened to the tread of the sentry, pacing to and fro outside the wall, waiting until he had passed the point where the tunnel was to end ; then he broke the sod which was the one slight barrier between him and liberty, and quickly ascending into the open air, ran up the side of the hill into the deep shadows that lay upon its slope.

At the other end of the tunnel there were stationed men who anxiously awaited the result. "No news is good news," and so it was esteemed in this case ; for when a sufficiently long interval had passed, another made the underground trip. But it was not until the entire safety of the effort to reach the outer air was well assured that they would permit the chief prisoner to try it. By some means friends without had been advised that an escape was contemplated, and Col. Magoffin found a skiff awaiting him at the river bank, where, as the oarsman informed him, it had been in readiness several nights, as no exact time could be fixed in the secret communication.

And here we would say that there was no collusion on the part of any Federal soldier, officer or private. How the fact that an escape was being planned was made known to friends



outside, is something which the writer certainly cannot say. There were many ingenious devices for sending forbidden news in letters which passed under the eyes of Federal officers; for instance, one lady, in the guise of an innocent bit of family gossip, informed her husband that Gen. Price was expected to invade Missouri again, and it may have been in some such way that the tidings were conveyed.

More than forty-five had passed safely through the tunnel, and had gained the sheltering shadows of the hill. At last Dr. F——, a large, stout man, essayed the passage, but returned.



*A Southern Underground Route.*

“They’ve found it out, boys” he said, in a whisper, to the little group of men waiting anxiously in the wash-house; the Feds have found it out, and are busy stopping up the tunnel.”

Nothing could be done; they could only return to their quarters, resolved to give no sign of anything unusual going on. Not only were their own hopes of escape effectually quenched, but they were in great anxiety as to the fate of those who had passed through the tunnel; how many of them would be brought back? And if any were captured, would Col. Magoffin be among them?

So they waited for morning to come; and morning showed them that the alarm had been a false one. The Federal officials

had no suspicion that anything was wrong. Only one guard gave any token of a disturbed state of mind—the sergeant stationed on that outside staircase which we have described as the only apparent means of reaching the room where Col. Magoffin had been confined.

“I wonder if he has discovered that his bird has flown?” said one prisoner to another, noticing the sergeant’s uneasiness.

“Looks mightily like it, was the reply; “but don’t let him see you looking at him; we must play ignorance if we don’t want to be questioned. The longer they are asking about it, the better start the boys will have.”

Whether or not the sergeant had discovered the flight of his charge, the extent of the escape was not known until late in the forenoon.

The prisoners had been divided into squads, the chief of each one of which was required to report to the adjutant, every morning, the number of his men who were fit for duty, the number sick in quarters, and the number in the hospital. Nine o’clock came, and the report could be delayed no longer. The chiefs (what there were left of them) presented themselves, in somewhat straggling order, at headquarters.

With much surprise the blue-coated adjutant heard the reports. It was no unusual thing for a man to be reported as “missing,” when the chief had failed to find him before making up his report; and in such cases the man so reported was immediately hunted up by the guards. But he did not know what to make of the reports this morning—three, four, or even more men missing from a single squad, and some of the chiefs not presenting themselves at all—but suddenly the truth flashed upon him. The alarm was at once given, and the whole regiment turned out to hunt up the missing men. To the bewildered Federals, it seemed that the Confederates must have flown over the wall, so well had the starting-point for the tunnel been chosen, and so carefully had all traces of work been removed. The ground outside the walls was carefully examined, and at last the exit of the tunnel was discovered; but they could only find the other end by starting a soldier through from the hillside, and looking to see where he came out.

Of course the prisoners were overjoyed at this perplexity of the Federals, for every moment which the prison authorities lost was gained to those who had escaped.

“How came you to give the alarm last night, when the Feds didn't know anything about it until this morning,” was asked of Dr. F——.

“Well, you see,” he answered, “some of the boys had intended to take their baggage with them, but found the tunnel a tighter fit than they had expected it would be, so they had to leave their carpet bags behind them; these things blocked the way so that some of the others had to leave their boots and hats behind them. When I got there, the tunnel was pretty full, and as I was pulling myself through, I just thought that some fellows wouldn't have any more sense then to raise a row if they happened to get stuck, and that would mean a recapture of Magoffin; so I thought I'd stand Uncle Sam's boarding-house a little while longer. But mind you, this is in confidence; it might make some of the boys mad.”

Some few of the prisoners were recaptured; one of them was found in a blackberry patch, without shoes or hat, having discarded those useful articles in his eagerness to escape; and, being arrested on suspicion, was identified at the prison.

As for the man of most consequence, the prisoners still at the Penitentiary heard of him, by the grape-vine telegraph, at various points; in St. Louis County, in Southern Missouri, and finally at Little Rock, where, being within the Confederate lines, they knew he was safe from the vengeance of Uncle Sam.

The preparation of the present volume has involved an examination of all books and articles on the subject to be found in the well-stocked public libraries of large cities, together with many newspapers and other periodicals not to be found in such accumulations; but the writer is not aware of the foregoing story ever having been in print before the present time. Thanks for the information on which the article is based are due to a former citizen of Saline Co., Mo., himself one of the Confederates confined in the military prison at Alton at the time of the escape. The writer believes all statements of fact accurate and reliable, and without in any way impugning the credibility of the other stories, would present this as substantially the narrative of an eye-witness.

But there were no more escapes from Alton. It had cost the guards nearly fifty prisoners to learn that a watch over the outer walls was not sufficient; but they had learned it. At the time at which the Magoffin escape was planned, the fact that a

man was a prisoner showed that he was worthy of confidence; but the introduction of detectives in Confederate uniform effectually put an end to all such enterprises that were to benefit more than a very limited number of individuals who were able to keep their own secrets even from their friends.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### NOT QUITE.

Federal Vengeance—The Confederates Take a Hand—Drawing Lots for Life—A Little More Time—His Turn Comes—A Flight Through the Darkness—A Grisly Hiding-Place—A Friend in Need—A Familiar Voice—Ready to Sell His Life Dearly—Nobody Wants to Buy—Not Quite a Dead Man.

THE life of a partisan is one of double danger; not only must he face the perils which encompass the soldier of the regular army, but he is constantly threatened by others peculiar to himself. He styles himself a ranger or partisan, and his friends claim that he is an accredited soldier of the government which is benefited by his services; his enemies often call him a bushwhacker, and, if he is so unfortunate as to fall into their hands, the consequences, although entirely satisfactory to the captors, are (to put it mildly) very apt to be exceedingly unpleasant to the partisan.

Such a term as bushwhacker was very frequently applied to Mosby's and similar commands during the war; an erroneous application, of course, but still used and acted upon occasionally. Our present story deals with such an instance, and the consequences.

A body of about fifty men of Mosby's famous command had swooped down upon a Federal train, and driven it off toward their own camp. A superior force had at once pursued and recaptured the ambulances and wagons; but in the melee in which this was accomplished, the horse of a wounded Federal officer became unmanageable; the injured man was carried into the midst of the flying Confederates, and while there, virtually a prisoner, was mortally wounded. He survived long enough to relate the

circumstances to his comrades, who speedily came to the spot where he had fallen. Volunteers were at once called for, to pursue the scattered squads of Confederates to their posts of vantage among the hills, and avenge on them the death of Lieut. McMaster. A sufficient number was readily obtained, and they were successful almost immediately. Six men were taken; three of these were shot on the highway, one within the borders of the town (Front Royal), and two were hanged. Thus was the young cavalry officer avenged.

This was done by authority of Gen. Torbert, and no effort was made to shirk responsibility. The two men were hanged near the borders of the town, a paper being fastened to the tree, bearing their names and the threatening legend: "Such is the fate of Mosby's men."

As may easily be imagined, this action of the Federal general awakened the bitterest resentment in the breast of the famous partisan and his followers. The men who had been hanged had threatened their self-appointed executioners with retaliation in kind; and they were not mistaken in their estimation of their leader. Mosby in his turn swore that he would avenge the men whom he considered murdered in cold blood; and impatiently awaited an opportunity to execute the threat.

It was not many days before the chance came. Toward the close of the first week in November (Lieut. McMaster had been killed Oct. 15), a number of men were captured by a portion of Mosby's command, and, in accordance with the custom of the organization, taken to an appointed rendezvous, that the colonel might decide upon the course to be pursued regarding them. Twenty-seven men in all were brought before the partisan chief, who glowered angrily upon them.

"To what command do these men belong?" he demanded.

"They belong to various regiments of Gen. Custer's division," replied his adjutant.

"It was Custer's command, was it not, that murdered those men of mine at Front Royal the other day?"

The adjutant replied in due form, though the lowering countenances and half-clenched hands of the men around him, as they thought of the fate of their comrades, made words unnecessary.

"Then choose six of them by lot; of these six, shoot three and hang three."

With grim satisfaction, the leader and his men watched the



*Drawing Lots for the Death-Penalty.*



preparations for the execution of this sentence. Twenty-seven slips of paper were ready, all as nearly alike as possible; twenty-one of these were blank; on the others was written the single word: *Death*. The slips, folded so that no one could possibly tell which were blank, and which bore the fatal word, were dropped in a hat; the prisoners were ranged in line, and the adjutant slowly offered each in turn his choice of the folded papers. Pride and habit alike taught them to stand in the soldierly style of utter indifference to the outer world; their eyes were fixed on vacancy, as if they had been on parade; but who shall say what thoughts stirred in their breasts?

Among the men who stood there was a young man named Ross—or so, at least, he may here be called, since our authority, speaking with assurance as to every other point, is doubtful as to this. He stood near the far end of the line, watching with anxious eyes the faces of the men as they drew the fateful slips from the hat. He had seen the faces of five darken a moment with the shadow of their cruel fate, and then resume that studied indifference. At last, after what seemed an eternity of anxiety, the hat came to him. There were but three slips in it, and the two men at his left, who had not yet drawn, waited the result breathlessly. Looking full in the adjutant's face, he drew forth a paper, and opened it. Glancing down at it with as much coolness as he could command, he saw written there the little word that meant so much.

The whole matter was now settled, and in accordance with the decision of the commander, the sentence was to be executed immediately. Yet Mosby would not allow it to be said that he had retaliated in an underhand way. Consequently the squad who had charge of the condemned men were instructed to convey them along the valley pike, almost to Winchester, and there execute his vengeance upon members of the offending division.

Ross had quite made up his mind to one thing: he was not going to be shot or hanged that day. As to the means of avoiding this fate, he was not quite so sure. If he could do no more, he could break away, and compel them to kill him in the attempt to recapture him. Perhaps it would be a little more exact to say that he did not intend to stand up before them for a target.

As they reached the point which had been designated by Co. Mosby, the party divided: three of the prisoners, whom a sec-

ond casting of two lots had consigned to death by the rope, being taken to a small grove in the vicinity of the road, while the others were conducted by their guards to an open field or pasture. Among these was Ross, and it was decided that he was to be the first to be shot.

The short November day was drawing rapidly to a close; the Confederates had but little time in which to complete their work of vengeance, for it would soon be too dark to take aim. The firing party was rapidly told off, and posted at one end of a small level space, at the other end of which the doomed men were to stand, each in his turn. The officer in charge turned to his prisoners:

"I can give you but five minutes more," he said; whatever preparations you have to make must be completed within that time."

The lights of Winchester twinkled faintly red through the gathering dusk; dark and gloomy against the gray sky rose the trees of the grove where the other scene of the tragedy was being enacted; not a sound broke the stillness of the air, though it seemed to each man there that the beating of his own heart must be plainly audible to those around him. The voice of the officer broke the silence:

"Time's up."

Though really spoken in a low tone (for the speaker was not insensible to the spirit of the occasion; he was but fulfilling his duties as a soldier), the words seemed to ring out like the blast of a trumpet. Obedient to his silent command, the firing party looked once more to their arms. A guard motioned to Ross.

"Can't you give us a little more time? Only a moment more?" plead the Federal.

The guard looked inquiringly at his superior. The officer nodded.

"Put him last, instead of first," he curtly commanded, and added, half by way of apology to himself; "time presses—that is the best that I can do."

"Sir," began the second of the doomed men, addressing the officer, "I believe you are in your heart reluctant to execute the sentence imposed on us by your ruffian commander. To you, then, I address myself freely. This act of his will be punished severely by the Federal authorities. Every man of Mosby's

who falls into the hands of our boys will be made to bear the penalty."

"You gain no favor in our eyes by insulting our colonel, sir," returned the Confederate with more dignity than the blue-coat had given him credit for; "it is certainly with regret that any soldier acts on occasions like the present, knowing that comparatively innocent men are made scape-goats for the offense of many; but so far as doing our duty is concerned, Col. Mosby's men have never yet failed him; and his resentment of the murder of our comrades is no greater than ours. We are the instruments of vengeance, and not unwilling ones. As for the retaliation that you threaten, we are of course in constant danger of being captured—the partisan's life is not a safe one—but we will not leave all the retaliation to be done by your friends."

What the Federal hoped to gain by his appeal to his guard is forever a mystery; but as the sequel will show, it was not without its effect upon the fortunes of one of his comrades.

But as far as the Confederates were concerned, the remonstrance of the Federal, or at least his stigmatization of their commander, only aroused their indignation; for Mosby was the darling of his men. The execution was delayed not a moment longer. The crack of the rifles rang out sharp and clear, and the presumptuous Yankee fell forward, pierced by a half-dozen bullets. Hastily removing his body, the Southerners made ready for the second victim of this retaliatory warfare.

What had Ross gained by the delay requested and granted? Apparently only a few minutes in which to anticipate death, so swiftly and surely approaching. Such a gain would be one only to the coward, who would fain postpone the inevitable, merely from the dread of dissolution. But Ross feared neither the supreme moment of existence nor the "something after death" before which so many tremble. The brief space of time was nothing to him; he was resolved to prolong it indefinitely.

A man under sentence of death fears nothing; for the worst that his fellow-mortals can inflict upon him is only that which already hangs over him. Mosby understood this; and, determined that the ends of justice (as he saw them) should not be defeated, had sent upon this duty a force amply sufficient to perform it. With a sinking heart Ross saw how closely they were watched; would he be able to elude their vigilance?

A second time the flash from their guns brightened for a mo-

ment the fast deepening twilight ; and the second man had fallen. A moment more, and, their duty performed, this squad would join the other, and the united force would report to the partisan chief that their comrades had been avenged.

"Your turn now," said a Confederate to Ross, and would have led him to the place of execution.

The rangers had heard with pity allied to contempt his appeal for a little more time. To their stern, rough natures, it seemed the expression of a weakness that looked very much like cowardice. But then, he was little more than a boy, they told themselves, with a glance at his youthful form. However, he must die now ; his time had come ; and he, weakling as he was, could not prolong his life one instant.



*A Mean Yankee Trick.*

So thought the gray-jackets; the blue-coat thought differently. Obediently allowing himself to be led toward the spot where his comrades had fallen, he saw at a glance that the firing party were busy reloading. With the quickness of thought he turned toward the man beside him ; a single well-aimed blow laid the Confederate sprawling on the ground ; and almost before he had touched the earth, the nimble Federal had reached the limits of the field which had been the scene of the tragedy so unexpectedly interrupted.

The rangers sprang to their horses and dashed after the fugitive. Grim and ghastly upon the half-frozen ground lay the corpses of the two men who had fallen; and a vision of a third form beside them still haunted the bloodshot eyes of the flying Federal. The clatter of hoofs approached nearer and nearer every moment; it was man against horse, and the result seemed, to the riders, certain.

Not so to the pursued man, however; for he had no intention of making it a mere question of speed; he had served them one Yankee trick, and he felt sure that the necessity of the occasion would inspire him as often as it should be the condition of escape.

Most fortunately for him, night was drawing on so rapidly that his pursuers had not the sense of sight to depend upon; and Ross thought gratefully of the delay which his disputative comrade had caused. But for that he must have fallen an easy prey to the enemy.

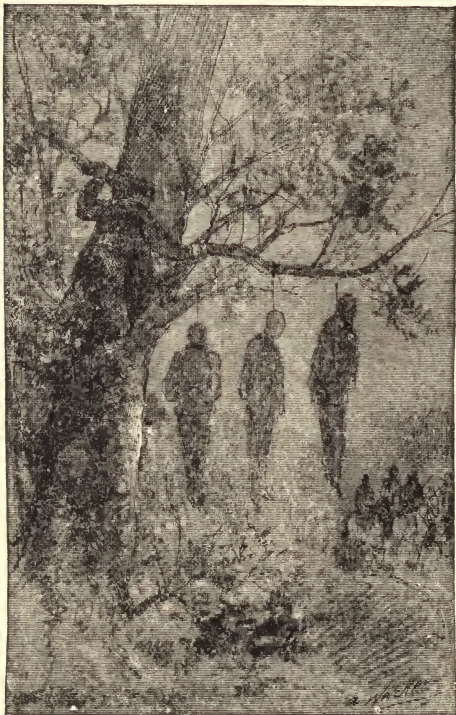
On they came, hallooing wildly in the excitement of the chase, and firing at every well-defined shadow which fell athwart their path. To run at his utmost speed would be to fall into their hands almost at once; he must contrive to double upon them.

The Federal encampment lay to the northeast, and to that point of the compass he had naturally turned his face. Having imbued the pursuing Confederates with the idea that he was seeking to distance their horses in a race to this haven of safety, he quietly altered his course as soon as it was dark enough to enable him to do so without being detected, and slipped back, almost under their horses' noses, to that same grove where his three comrades had so bravely met the death which the law decrees to the most criminal of men.

If anything had been needed to sustain him in his resolution, the ghastly sight now before him would have been sufficient. Even through the darkness he could discern the forms of the three Federals hanging from the limbs of one tree; and with a shudder of natural horror at the dreadful circumstances to which he must be callous, he scrambled up that very tree.

Though the autumn was far advanced, and the leaves of this tree were withered, but few of them had fallen. During the darkness, then, the foliage would be sufficient to hide him, especially as they would not be likely to suspect his presence in this tree, of all others, even if they became aware of his change of direction soon enough to follow his footsteps hither.

The time passed slowly to the man perched in this grisly hiding place. At last, after what seemed hours, or rather ages of waiting, he heard the sound of a body of horsemen coming along the pike. Peering cautiously from his leafy shelter, he saw by the light of the slender crescent moon, that they were his pursuers. From his covert he could distinguish their words.



*A Grisly Hiding-Place.*

"Well, there are five safe, anyhow," remarked one, as he glanced at the oak which bore the human acorns in which the cruel old French king so delighted.

"For my part," returned a second, "I hope Custer, Sheridan & Co. will soon come to terms, for such work is not exactly to my liking. Of course, we must keep it up as long as they do—"

The remainder was lost as they turned into the field where the other executions had taken place, their object being so to dispose the bodies that no doubt might be left, in the minds of those who chanced to pass that

way, of the manner and cause of these men's death.

Ross remarked that they appeared to have given up the chase, and was not a little relieved to find that it was so. But, as he was only too well aware, many dangers still lay between him and the tents of his regiment.

The work of the Confederates was completed at last, and they had turned their horses' heads toward their own camp. As soon as they were at a safe distance, Ross left the shelter of the tree, and once more bent his steps to the northeast. It was his aim to gain before morning some place of safety in which to rest during

the day, and then continue his journey during the night. The succeeding dawn, he trusted, would see him safe within the Federal lines.

Crossing once more the field which was to have been the scene of his own death, he struck into a by-path which was heavily shaded by large forest trees. Every sound seemed full of ominous meaning to the man who had so narrowly escaped the Rebel bullets; the rustling of the withered leaves in the wind more than once alarmed him with the idea that a number of horsemen were riding beneath the overhanging branches; the moaning of the wind itself often seemed like the sound of voices in the distance; while the fall of an occasional nut made him listen with anxious ears for the succeeding footsteps of the stealthily approaching foe.

So he journeyed onward through the night, eluding the Confederate pickets without difficulty. But although on nominally neutral ground, he was by no means safe; indeed, this very debatable land was a favorite haunt of the daring partisan, and was, for that reason, more dangerous to him than the territory within the lines of the Southern army itself. But the Federal, escaping from his captor, had one advantage over a soldier of the Confederacy in similar circumstances; the supporter of the Union could always rely upon finding one class of the community favorable to him—the negroes.

Only partially acquainted with the surrounding country, Ross could scarcely hope to find an entirely secure hiding-place without some assistance; and assistance could most certainly be obtained, with the least possible risk to himself in asking it, from an "intelligent contraband."

He was fortunate enough to find a cabin without much difficulty. A cautious knock brought a venerable looking old "uncle" to the door.

"Who is yo'?" inquired the old man, peering out into the darkness; for the Federal had stepped back from the little circle of light made by the candle which was held high above the white head.

"A man in great need of help," he responded, not without some anxiety lest it be refused.

"Good Lawd, mas'r, but we's drefful po' folks heah; 'taint much as two old darkeys kin help white folks."

"If a soldier was to come to you, asking for shelter during the

day from his enemies, who were trying to catch him to shoot him," ventured Ross, "could you not hide him?"

"I dunno, sah; we kin try, ef hit's you: but dey's a powerful lot o' sogers around heah."

"Which kind?" demanded the Federal, eagerly. Perhaps the danger was already past, and he was within the Union lines, or nearer to them than Mosby dare approach.

"Mostly bofe kin's, sah," replied the negro, with due caution; "what kin' is yo', sah?"

He had gone too far to retreat, now; it was possible that this might be one of those Africans who had clung to their masters, but it was not probable; so, trusting to the good fortune which had so far attended him, Ross, without uttering a word, stepped forward into the little circle of dim light. The questioner started back at the sight of his uniform, and almost dropped the candle.

"Praise de Lawd!" he exclaimed; "hit's a Fed'ral soger. Come in, mas'r, come in. De old woman 'll be powerful glad to have yo'."

Thus welcomed, Ross lost no time in accepting the old man's invitation; and early as it was, the "ole woman" soon had a smoking repast spread before the hungry fugitive. The inner man refreshed, he was invited to the loft, where a bed was hastily prepared, his entertainers explaining very elaborately that only consideration for his own safety kept them from assigning him to a resting-place in their principal room.

"De Secesh is powerful bad around heah, sah," said the old man, with a shake of his hoary head; "an' dere's no tellin' when dey mout come right in and find yo', ef yo' was down stairs."

Ross was only too glad to get a comfortable resting-place, after his long tramp over fields and through woods; and he did not object to having his safety thus considered. Hardly had his head touched the pillow before he was sound asleep, to waken no more until late in the afternoon. Then the sound of voices outside the door of the cabin aroused him. They sounded strangely familiar.

"Are you sure?" demanded one.

"'Fo' de Lawd, mas'r, I's been up eber sence daylight, and I hain't seen no sogers, 'ceptin' you."

Ross peeped from the window of the loft, a rude opening with-



out a sash ; and understood why he had seemed to recognize the voice of the questioner ; it was the officer who had been sent by Mosby to see that the six Federals were duly executed. That the present party was in quest of him, his fears left him no room to doubt ; and he hastily put on his clothes and prepared for flight. What would be the outcome, he could not foresee ; but he resolved not to be taken alive.

What was his surprise to hear the sound of their horses' hoofs as they turned from the cabin door, evidently trusting implicitly the assertion of the old negro. When they were safely away from the cabin, the old man climbed to the loft, to see if his guest had heard the arrival of the party.

"What did they want?" he asked eagerly.

"Dey'd lost some of deir own men, and wanted to know ef I'd seen 'em. Lawdy, mas'r, but I was skeered fo' yo' when dey rode up."

"So was I," said the soldier, frankly ; "though I couldn't understand why, if they were after me, and suspected I was here, they should give it up so easily."

"Dey was some of Mosby's men," replied the negro, looking around fearfully, as if the very mention of his name might invite danger ; "and ef dey'd a knowed dat dere was a Union soger heah, dey'd a bu'nt de house down but w'ut dey'd a had yo'."

This was practically the end of Ross' adventure ; for, piloted by his faithful old host, he reached the Federal lines in safety that night. It may be believed that he related the tale around the camp-fire.

"Well, you came pretty near being a dead man," observed a comrade, when the story was finished.

"Very near a corpse," returned Ross ; "but *not quite*."

The retaliatory measures which had so nearly cost our hero his life, were continued for some time ; another escape of a man, captured by the same command about this time, will be found in another chapter.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### A DARING CAPTURE.

The Prince George Cavalry—An Enterprise of Privates—Betrayed by a Dog—  
The Arrest—To McClellan's or Lee's Headquarters?—The Captors Prefer to  
Go to Lee's—Effect on the Crew.

IT was Friday, July 25th, 1862. The James River was, for a long distance, thronged with the vessels belonging to the United States Government. On the northern shore was Gen. McClellan's camp; south of the river were the Confederate forces. It was a tempting sight, that array of vessels, to certain adventurous cavalymen of the latter army, who had been for some days wishing for something more exciting than lounging about camp or going out on picket duty. Before long a fertile brain had conceived a plan which was soon arranged, and about one o'clock that night five troopers of the Prince George Cavalry entered a boat and pulled off from Coggins' Point.

There were no military sounding titles or glittering epaulets to distinguish these men; so far from wearing the velvet collar and brass stars of a colonel, there was not a shoulder-strap among them; the one officer wore simply a corporal's chevron on his sleeve; the others were distinguished by the honorable initials, "H. P."—High Private. Nor was their vessel a large one; neither steam launch nor more pretentious vessel, it was by rowing that it must be propelled to the objective point.

This was a schooner of one hundred and sixty-three tons, loaded with corn and provisions, and valued at eight thousand dollars, exclusive of her cargo. She was called the *Louisa Rives*, was owned in New York, and commanded by Capt. John A. Jones. Of course our five troopers were not thus minutely informed regarding the vessel; they only knew that she was nearly new,

and that her cargo was valuable to the enemy. Just why this particular schooner should have been selected for their attempt, when two hundred other steam and sailing vessels of various kinds lay at anchor around her, is not easily determined. The fact remains, the reason is forgotten.

In accordance with the plans laid before setting out, one of the privates, Thomas Martin, was to act as leader, Corporal Cocke remaining in the background with the others, Daniel, Dimitry and Williams. Pulling off from the shore, they reached the Rives and were about to board her with the same quietness, when the alarm was given by means of a little dog. No watch of any account was kept, being thought unnecessary, since there were two gunboats not more than a hundred yards away. The dog barked furiously, however; and although the Confederates endeavored to silence him in the river, he danced around at a safe distance, snarling and snapping and barking as only an abominable little black-and-tan can do; keeping out of reach of the strangers.

His noise did all that he hoped and the Confederates feared; for the captain came on deck in a few moments, and in surly tones demanded of them:

“What in the devil do you want here at this time of night?”

“This is Captain Jones?” inquired Martin, saluting.

“It is,” replied the officer.

“At Gen. McClellan’s order, sir, I have come to effect your arrest,” rejoined the Confederate, in a tone which blended regret with dignity and firmness.

“You must be mistaken, sir,” returned the surprised sailor.

“You are Captain Jones, of the Louisa Rives, I believe.”

“I am, but I have done nothing to merit arrest. What are the charges against me?”

“I am not here to decide upon the question of your guilt or innocence, or to prefer charges. I am sent simply to arrest you. I am ordered to do so by Gen. McClellan; and if you are really innocent of whatever charges may have been brought against you, you will be glad to have an opportunity of clearing yourself,” rejoined the supposed emissary of the Federal commander-in-chief, in a grave but friendly tone. The argument seemed to impress the sailor, who signified his readiness to go with them; and as he seemed to have no idea of resisting or attempting to escape, they did not secure him in any way; but allowed

him to descend, untied, into the boat, where he seated himself.

While this conversation was being carried on between Martin and the Captain, the other four Confederates had reached the cabin of the vessel. There was no one there, the officers, except the captain, and the most of the crew having gone on shore. A straw bed, found in one of the state rooms, was ripped open, a match set to its contents, and the cabin door closed and fastened, so that the flames must spread without chance of interference from without. This duty performed, they were ready to leave



*Boarding the Vessel*

the vessel as soon as Martin and the prisoner; and entered the boat along with them. There was no effort made to secure the crew, for their boat was so small that the six men already in it made an ample load. Even the weight of these few sunk her dangerously near to a hole near the top of one side.

Having accomplished their object, and knowing that much now depended on speed, they pulled off in all haste from beside the Rives; but it was, of course, towards the southern and not the northern shore of the stream that they directed their course. The captain noticed this, and his suspicions were aroused.

"Gen. McClellan's headquarters are not that side of the river," he remarked to Martin, whom he supposed to be the

officer in command, from the leading part he had taken.

"No," replied that individual, carelessly, "but you needn't worry; we know what we're about; only we've changed our minds, you see, and concluded to take you to a Confederate general's headquarters, instead of a Federal."

"My God!" exclaimed the prisoner, as he heard his worst fears confirmed; "what are you going to do with me, anyhow?"

"Don't be worried, sir; you'll not be hurt; but as you are engaged in the service of the Lincoln Government, you see, your capture is strictly legitimate, and you are a prisoner of war. Of course, you will be treated as such."

"If I'd seen you come from the southern shore I'd have seen you d—d before I'd have surrendered," rejoined he, greatly chagrined. "I had a watch stationed on that side, but didn't suppose it would be necessary right opposite the gunboats. I had plenty of arms on board."

"Well," answered Martin, with secret satisfaction, "we made allowance for all that, Captain; we thought you wouldn't expect danger from that quarter, or we would not have taken the trouble to row to the other side of your vessel."

"Hang it," growled one of the Confederates to his neighbors, "I don't believe she is going to burn at all. Look at her, will you? There isn't a light anywhere about her but the lamp in the rigging."

"It does look like it," returned the man addressed; "but it seems hardly possible that the straw shouldn't have kindled the flame."

By this time they had reached the shore; and landing, ascended the bank. As they turned to look behind them upon the dangers they had dared for such a trifling result as the capture of a single prisoner, they saw that this was not all; the flames, smothered in the cabin while they were crossing the river, had suddenly burst forth in all their fury; the more ungovernable because, so long confined, every timber of the vessel had been thoroughly heated. From bow to stern surged the fiery waves, while here and there the spray dashed up into the rigging. A ship of flame, she stood out against the dark blue sky of the summer night, casting a weird, unearthly radiance upon the dark waters around her, upon the white tents on the shore, and even upon the sombre trees beyond. The gunboats and transports, meantime, crowded on steam, in the effort to get to a safe dis-

tance from the burning schooner; and hither and thither, on the decks of the sailing vessels, ran the sailors making every effort to escape sharing in her fate.

Lamenting that their force was too small for them to have done any more, since the other vessels were too dangerously near gunboats, the Confederates pushed onward to camp, their prisoner being conveyed the next day to Petersburg, where he was confined until removed to Richmond. So ended a most daring attempt, in which five men penetrated into the very midst of the enemy's fleet, carried off the commanding officer and burned one of the vessels, escaping not only unscathed, but not even fired upon by one of the many armed vessels lying within a few hundred yards of the fated schooner.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### CAPTAIN LIGHTNING'S TRICKS.

Morgan's Kentucky Raid—One of his Assistants—Reason for the Nickname—A Good Beginning—A Strange Coincidence—A Practical Joke—Lebanon—A Vanished Operator—A Bet Won—And Information Gained—An Astonished Operator—An Important Message—The Enemy Knew Too Much—But Not For Long—A Missing Instrument—An Alarmed Operator—Embarrassing Questions—Unsatisfactory Answers—Telling the Truth Does No Harm—A Prudent Operator—"Fixing Up a Plan to Capture Morgan"—A Sharp Reprimand—An Astonishing Statement—The Signature Explained—General Orders No. 1—No More Such Work—Ellsworth's Invention.

**I**N June, 1862, when John H. Morgan was but a colonel, although in command of a brigade in the Confederate Army, there was, among the gallant young Kentuckians who flocked to his standard, a certain George A. Ellsworth. In time of peace, the new recruit had been a telegraph operator, and he intimated to Col. Morgan that if provided with a pocket instrument he might be able, by intercepting messages sent from one Federal officer to another, and by sending spurious dispatches, render a greater service to the command than the ordinary trooper. The officer lost no time in providing the private with the instrument for which he had asked; and, as our story will show, he never had reason to regret having done so.

July 4th, 1862, Col. Morgan, with a force of about eight hundred men, left Knoxville for his afterwards famous raid into the interior of Kentucky; a military exploit only eclipsed, in its own peculiar way, by that later one, the details of which will be found elsewhere in this volume. Crossing the Cumberland River, at a point near where it cuts the southern boundary of the state, the first telegraph wire which they came upon was at Horse Cave, on the Louisville and Nashville Railroad. Leaving

the command encamped at some little distance from the railway line, Col. Morgan went forward to the telegraph wire, with eleven men, of whom Mr. Ellsworth was of course one. It was dark when they struck the wire; and, curiously enough, the first word which the operator heard, upon attaching his instrument, was the name "Morgan."

Using all possible care, so as not to interrupt any message and thus give the alarm at one end or the other of the line, Mr. Ellsworth cut the wire, and attaching his instrument to that which came from the north, prepared to obtain as much information of the enemy's intentions as he chose to commit to the telegraph. The Confederate soon found that he was receiving messages from Gen. Boyle, commanding the forces at Louisville, to Col. Bruce, at Bowling Green. The dispatches, generally, did not afford much information, except that all the Federals in the state appeared to be on the defensive against Morgan, and did not intend to fight him unless he attacked them.

A violent thunderstorm was raging around them, and the discharges of electricity were so frequent that they seriously interfered with the work; but as not more than a word or so was lost at any one time, they were enabled to make out the general purport of the messages. But they could not, of course, expect Louisville to "talk" all the time; there must be something sent in reply. Accordingly, Col. Morgan directed that Gen. Frye, who was in command at Nashville, should inform Gen. Boyle that Forrest had taken Murfreesboro in a manner most disastrous to the Federals; with some particulars as to the losses of men and supplies. This was, of course, purely fictitious; but by a strange coincidence, Gen. Forrest did take Murfreesboro a day or two afterward, under precisely such circumstances as were thus stated.

To avoid all suspicion, such as the sending of purely military dispatches might entail, Col. Morgan directed that a certain wholesale liquor dealer in Lexington should be telegraphed to send two barrels of a specified brand of whisky, to a customer in Nashville. They learned some time afterwards that the liquor had been duly forwarded, C. O. D., and the man to whom it was addressed having declined to receive it, it was returned to the wholesale dealer, who swore at Morgan, who had given him two sets of express charges to pay. In answer to the inquiries of the operator at Louisville as to why no messages were received from



the south, Mr. Ellsworth answered that the southern wires were badly out of order; but whether it was the work of the storm, or of "that Rebel Forrest," he could not tell.

This one trial had thoroughly convinced Col. Morgan of the usefulness of his new assistant; and Mr. Ellsworth was placed on his staff, with the rank of captain. But the more formal title by which he was known to the War Department was only seldom heard in the command to which he belonged. Whether it was because of this one stormy night in which he worked, exposed to all the fury of the elements, or because of the agent which he employed to discover the secrets of the enemy, he was familiarly known as *Captain Lightning*. From whatever reason it may have been given, the name was so appropriate that it stuck to him.

It is not our purpose to trace the progress of the command, or to narrate their adventures, except so far as it is necessary to the understanding of this one man's actions. We omit mention, then, of all between this night in the woods, when the summer storm raged so fiercely around the little squad of men, and the 12th of the month.

It was three o'clock on that July morning when the brigade rode into Lebanon, Ky. Looking down the main street of the town, there was but one light visible; and from the arrangement of the wires, Capt. Ellsworth felt convinced that the telegraph office was located in that very building. Nor was he deceived. The light was left, like everything else, just as it had been when the operator had been in possession; but now he had "left for parts unknown," and the enemy was in his place. That same enemy would have much preferred that he should have stayed, for a while at least; for some puzzling questions suggested themselves: What was the signal of the office? There was nothing to indicate the answer—the signal book must have been carried off. Then, too, what had been the last thing that the operator had said? Had he announced his intention to "light out," and advised his comrade to "go and do likewise," or had haste compelled him to take French leave?

But if doubts were not resolved, they were soon ended, for a time, by the necessity of attending to a call for "B" from "Z." Now, Capt. Lightning had not the slightest idea who "Z" was, or what point he represented; and he had serious misgivings as to whether "B" meant Lebanon. But as he had no way of

finding out, he concluded to answer the call ; and he received the question :

“ What of the marauders now ? ”

He could probably have told all that “ Z ” wanted to know about the “ marauders,” but contented himself with the modest reply :

“ We are still holding them at bay—no further news.”

Swiftly back over the wires flashed the astonishing information, doubly useful :

“ There are eight hundred troops here coming to Lebanon to your aid.”

We have said that this information was doubly useful ; for not only was the statement regarding the troops highly important, but the wording showed him that “ B ” really meant the operator at Lebanon. But in order to make use of the message itself, it was necessary to know from what point the troops were to come ; so that the time of their arrival and their freshness might be duly calculated. The case was duly explained to Col. Morgan, who had just entered the office.

“ Ask him where he is, was the ready suggestion.”

“ That would never do in the world, Colonel ; he'd be sure to ‘ smell a rat.’ ”

There was silence for a moment, as the telegrapher endeavored to think of some feasible plan. At last, exclaiming, “ I have it ! ” he stepped to the instrument, from which, in his perplexity, he had turned away, and rapidly sent the following message :

“ There is a gentleman in the office here that has offered to bet a box of cigars that you can't spell the name of your station right.”

“ What does he take me for, anyhow ? ” was flashed back.

“ Don't know,” Ellsworth answered ; “ but I've taken the bet. Don't go back on me, now. Send it along, and be sure you spell it right.”

The ticking spelled out the name “ Lebanon Junction.”

“ Thank you,” went the reply, “ he acknowledges that he has lost.”

“ How did he think I'd spell it ? ”

“ With two b's.”

“ Lebanon Junction was about thirty miles away, and Col. Morgan decided that it would be best to move onward. Accordingly, after having burned all the United States Government

stores, including some four thousand stand of arms, they took up the line of march toward the northeast. Camping at Versailles the next night, Captain Ellsworth was ordered to take a squad of men with him and tap the wires between Midway and Frankfort. He of course obeyed, but no information of any importance was gained. The Federals were still on the defensive, determined not to fight unless they were attacked. From this point they pressed on to Midway, so called from its position relative to Frankfort and Lexington.

It was the 15th of July. They were two or three miles from the town when Capt. Lightning received orders to take one or two men with him, and ride into the town in order to capture the telegraph operator before he could give warning that the Confederates were approaching. Selecting one reliable man, he rode rapidly onward, and found the operator sitting on the platform in front of his office. Kentucky is no less famous for its fine horses than for its pretty girls and good whisky—every one rides; so that the appearance of these two men on horseback created no alarm in the mind of the operator. They were not in uniform—such luxuries were hard to obtain in those days; people had to be content with such clothes as they could get; and they were armed only with pistols, which were hidden by their coats. Dismounting and tying their horses, in so leisurely a manner as to indicate their peaceful character, they spoke to the operator, and, preceded by him, entered the office.

“There’s a blank,” he said, pushing a number towards them; supposing that they were only ordinary senders.

“Thank you,” returned Capt. Ellsworth, “it’s hardly worth while to write it. Just ask the operator at Lexington what time of day it is, will you?”

“Sir!” exclaimed the operator, starting back in astonishment. He was yet more surprised to find the muzzle of a revolver in his face, while the quiet tone became deep and stern as it said:

“Do as I tell you, at once.”

The command was at once obeyed, and Capt. Lightning thus learned the operator’s style, so that he could send the messages in the same way.

“Why are there two wires here?” was next demanded.

“This one is what we call the railroad wire; the other is the military wire. The military dispatches don’t come here at all.”

“They don’t? We’ll have to fix that, Maddox,” to the soldier

who had accompanied him; "climb up and cut that wire, please."

"Really, sir, I must protest—" began the operator, aghast at the other's cool impudence.

"Really, sir, it will do no good for you to protest. I am Capt. Ellsworth, of Col. Morgan's staff. That cloud of dust down the road means that the whole command is coming up. You are my prisoner, and I will take charge of the office. What is your name?"

"Woolums," was the reply.



"Do as I tell you, at once."

"I hope you will see the wisdom of giving me all the assistance you can, Mr. Woolums. Maddox, you will take charge of the prisoner while I answer the call."

The call chanced to be from Cincinnati, from which point a dozen or so of unimportant dispatches were received. Shortly afterwards, there came a summons from Lexington, and the following message was received:

"LEXINGTON, July 15, 1862.

To GEN. FINNELL, *Frankfort*:

I wish you to move the forces at Frankfort, on the line of the Lexington Railway immediately, and have the cars follow and take them up as soon as possible. Further orders will await them at Midway. I will, in three or four hours, move forward on the Georgetown pike; Morgan left Versailles this morning with

eight hundred and fifty men, on the Midway road, moving in the direction of Georgetown.

BRIG.-GEN. WARD."

By the time that this message was received, the entire command had entered the town, and Col. Morgan had come to the telegraph office to see what was being done there.

"That's a little too near the truth, Ellsworth," he said, as the dispatch was read to him; "they mustn't be allowed to know so much. Can't you throw them off the track?"

Captain Lightning reflected a short time, and then dashed off a few lines, and handed them to Morgan.

"How will that do, sir?"

The dispatch was dated at Frankfort, addressed to Gen. Ward, and read thus:

"My last message was founded on unreliable information. Morgan, with his combined force, has driven in our pickets, and will make a desperate effort to take the capital. Come to my assistance at once. Do not come by railroad, as Morgan has undoubtedly destroyed it by this time."

A short time afterward, they learned that three thousand men were marched at double-quick for thirteen miles before it was discovered that the dispatch was a hoax. When he heard this Capt. Lightning congratulated himself that he had not been captured by those men while the memory of that march was fresh in their minds. But enough had been done at Midway, and in an hour after the troops had entered the town, they were on the march to Georgetown. Arrived at this place, the telegraph office was found to be locked, but a certain Mr. Smith was pointed out to the Confederate as the operator.

"You are the telegraph operator at this point?"

"I am, sir."

"I am Capt. Ellsworth, of Col. Morgan's staff. I must trouble you to turn your instrument over to me."

"I—I am sorry, sir, but I have just sent it to Lexington to be repaired."

"Key, magnet and sounder?"

"All, sir; every part."

"That is too bad. I have the Lebanon and Midway instruments, and was anxious to add another to my collection."

Mr. Smith stuck to his story, and Capt. Ellsworth, affecting to believe it, became very friendly. They had a pleasant chat, and finally the soldier invited his new acquaintance to take supper

with him at the hotel. The invitation was accepted, and the guest, in due time, introduced to Col. Morgan.

"Ah, by the way, Ellsworth," said the commander, "I suppose you added to your collection here?"

"No; Mr. Smith informs me that he has sent his instrument to Lexington for repairs."

"That's unfortunate, since you were in such a hurry to complete the magic number. What do you intend to do about it?"

"O, if I can't get the instrument, I'll have to take the operator. I don't much like to send him to Dixie, but I don't see how I can do any better."

When supper was over, Mr. Smith requested a private interview with Capt. Ellsworth, at which he produced the instrument. Col. Morgan and his aid repaired to the telegraph office soon afterward, and the latter desired that the operator at Lexington should be called.

"I hardly think we can fool him, Colonel," objected Captain Lightning; "for I think that Smith must have told him his reason for stopping work; but I'll try it."

Lexington was called, and answered. After a few unimportant dispatches both ways, the question was asked of the Georgetown operator:

"Where is Morgan now?"

"Hadn't I better tell him the truth, Colonel?" asked Ellsworth, as he received the dispatch; "they must know our whereabouts so nearly that any attempt to deceive them would result in their finding out who is sending."

Receiving an answer in the affirmative, he sent a statement of the true position of the camp, and the real number of men. Back came the question:

"If Morgan's camp is only a mile from town, and his officers in town, how can you be working the line? He has an operator on his staff; what has become of him? How did you prevent his taking your instrument?"

The reply was a judicious mixture of truth and falsehood:

"I concealed my instrument and told him that I had sent it to Lexington for repairs. I can have no light in the office, as no one must know that I am at work. I receive by sound only."

It was less usual, twenty years ago, for the operator to read by sound than it is now; many, especially in the smaller towns, clinging to the paper strips used in the earliest forms of the in-

strument. Whether for this, or for some other reason, the Lexington people did not think the pathetic picture of telegraphing under difficulties was drawn from life; the story was, to use a more modern expression, too transparent. Back came the question, short and sharp:

“Where’s your assistant?”

Georgetown didn’t know; in fact, the present operator didn’t know that he had one, but he omitted to say so to Lexington.

“Haven’t you seen him to-day?”

Ellsworth ventured a “no;” the reply was evidently not in accordance with Smith’s dispatches, for the batteries were suddenly disconnected, and communication with Lexington entirely cut off. The military authorities at Lexington, learning that Morgan’s operator was at Georgetown, refused to believe the true information that had been received from that point; and because Ellsworth had said that eight hundred and fifty Confederates were encamped on a certain farm, they straightway concluded that the force was moving in some other direction. It was certainly one instance in which truth-telling served better than lying.

Captain Lightning added another instrument to his collection after the fight at Cynthiana, on the 17th. The operator had fled the town, and the apparatus had disappeared; but a little close questioning disclosed the direction of the flight; and in a hollow tree that stood near the line of retreat, the instrument was found, snugly stowed away. The brigade turned southward from Cynthiana, that being the most northerly point which they struck during the raid; and returned to Tennessee by a route about forty or fifty miles to the eastward of that by which they had advanced. No event of importance occurred in the telegraph department until they reached Somerset, about forty-five miles north of the Tennessee line, and nearly due south of Lexington.

It was nearly 10 o’clock on the night of July 21st, and the men, who had been in the saddle since early morning, were thoroughly worn out. They were still six or eight miles from Somerset, when the order was given: “Captain Lightning to the front!” It was some time before he could be found; for, in the darkness, one man riding along fast asleep looks very much like another under the same conditions; but at last he was discovered. Wide awake as soon as he learned that he was wanted, he urged his horse forward to the head of the column, where

rode the colonel. There he received orders to take two men, and pushing forward into the town, capture the telegraph operator before he could learn that the raiders were near. When he arrived at the office, there was but one man in it.

"Are you the operator?"

"I am not."

"Where is he?"

"Well," drawled the other, "he looked out of that window and saw you and your companions riding down the street; and being a bashful man, he went out of this window just as soon as he saw that you were coming to see him."

"Did he send any message in regard to leaving the office?"

"My friend," returned the stranger, "not being a telegrapher, I cannot tell what message is being sent, unless I see it written out; but I am quite sure that he did not send any such dispatch, for he didn't take the time. He was intent on saving his own bacon, and lit out without any regard for any one else."

But a call from Louisville at this moment claimed Ellsworth's attention; and responding to it, he was asked:

"Any signs of Morgan yet?"

There was a signal-book in the office, and this enabled him to find the signal for his station. In a moment's time he replied:

"None. What are the latest reports!"

"Morgan, with a thousand men, left Crab Orchard at 1 P. M. to-day. Keep a sharp lookout and let us know of his approach. Be sure to secure your instrument, so that it will not fall into the hands of his operator."

Several dispatches, of little or no interest, passed to and fro, and at midnight the operator at Somerset asked permission to close the office that he might get some sleep. Of course he did not urge that he had been riding since early that morning; if he had, they would have excused him, beyond a doubt. As it was, the answer came:

"No, you must stay. We are fixing up a plan to capture Morgan, and may need you."

For two hours longer the worn-out man remained at his post, waiting to hear their plan for capturing Morgan; but when he found no information seemed likely to come, he begged off. But they would release him only until six o'clock; and promising to be on hand promptly at that hour, he betook himself to bed. Instead, however, of returning promptly at six, the office did



not see him again until nearly nine. He gave the signal that he was on duty again, and received in reply a withering rebuke—only it didn't seem to wither him worth a cent. Even the conclusion of the message, which might have been alarming to any other operator produced no other effect than a grim chuckle of satisfaction.

"If you cannot attend to the duties of your position any better, we will send a reliable man to relieve you."

His news that there were no signs of Morgan yet, however, seemed to exert a cooling influence upon their anger, and a few messages, of little importance, were received. Evidently they had not yet fixed up their plan to capture Morgan. At any rate, they had not yet tried it when, an hour before noon, that officer came in and dictated this message :

"SOMERSET, KENTUCKY, July 22d, 1862.

To GEO. D. PRENTICE, ESQ., *Editor Louisville Journal, Louisville, Kentucky:*

I have passed through seventeen counties, captured two thousand prisoners, four thousand stand of arms, and destroyed \$1,000,000 worth of United States Government stores. I am now off for Dixie.

JOHN H. MORGAN,

*Colonel Commanding Brigade."*

The sending of the dispatch progressed smoothly enough until the words "United States Government stores" were reached, when Louisville suddenly interrupted Capt. Lightning with the question :

"What in the world do you mean by that?"

"The signature will explain it all," returned Ellsworth, and went on with the message. Sure enough, the signature *did* throw a flood of light on the subject. And now Louisville began to question :

"How long have you been in Somerset?"

"Since eleven, last night."

"Have you captured the operator there?"

"Haven't seen him. He went out of the window before I got here. You ought to employ more polite men."

"It's a good joke on us, anyhow. You've fooled us completely."

As a pianist closes a sparkling series of notes with a few heavier chords, so Captain Ellsworth wound up his operations in Kentucky by the following dispatch :

*Captain Lightning's Tricks.*

"HEADQUARTERS,  
TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT OF KENTUCKY,  
CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA. }

## GENERAL ORDERS, No. 1.

When an operator is positively informed that the enemy is marching on his station, he will immediately proceed to destroy the telegraphic instruments and all material in his charge. Such instances of carelessness as were exhibited on the part of the operators at Lebanon, Midway and Georgetown, will be severely dealt with.

By order of G. A. ELLSWORTH,  
*General Military Superintendent C. S. Telegraphic Dept."*

Captain Lightning's services, thus memorably begun, were in frequent demand in all of Morgan's expeditions. Cutting telegraph wires and communicating with one end of the lines by means of a pocket instrument, was, of course, a means frequently used, by many other officers, to gain information of the enemy's plans; but Morgan's aid seemed to possess, in the highest degree, the power of deceiving those with whom he was in communication. Finally, as if to prove how thoroughly he had studied the subject, he has, since the close of the war, perfected an invention which makes it impossible for any one to play the operator such tricks as he played the Federals while he was in the Confederate Army.

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NOTE.—Since preparing the above article, the writer has come into possession of a slip from the *Atlanta Confederacy*, dated in August, 1862, giving a number of dispatches sent from Somerset. In addition to those in the text, there is the following:

"SOMERSET, July 22d.

GEN. T. J. BOYLE, *Louisville:*

Good morning, Jerry. This telegraph is a great institution. You should destroy it, as it keeps you too well posted. My friend, Ellsworth, has all of your dispatches since July 10th on file. Do you wish copies?

JOHN H. MORGAN,  
*Col. Commanding Brigade."*

## CHAPTER XX.

### A WONDERFUL RIDE.

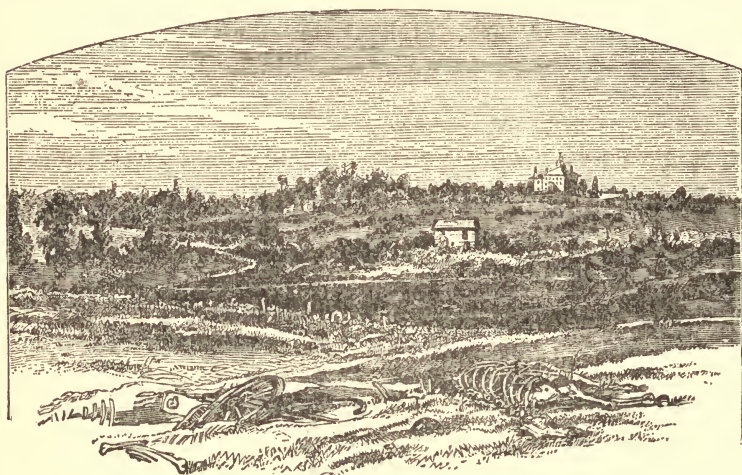
Self Praise is Half Scandal—An Enemy's Generosity—Charge on the Battery—A Cannoneer's Resolve—Saving a Gun—Five Hundred Bullets—The Mark Unhit—Cheered by the Enemy—Safe.

MANY a man who manifests no extraordinary courage on the battle-field is extremely brave when with his comrades beside the camp-fire; and, when sitting, pen in hand, with a sheet of smooth white paper before him, remembers gallant deeds and daring achievements which no man ever witnessed. How many a broken soldier who "shoulders his crutch and shows how fields were won," has done himself the chief part in gaining that victory, although the unjust world has given the glory to another! Far be it from us to cavil at any man's just claim to honor; but that such may not be deprived of any portion of what is due them, let us examine rigorously each claim that is advanced, and receive none that do not deserve our acceptance.

Sometimes the case assumes a different form. Was there ever a great man without his admiring biographers? Sometimes a partial friend narrates the exploits and adventures of a man who cannot or will not speak for himself. Whether it be told by the chief actor or by another, who is really a satellite, the story must be carefully considered; especially when, as in the case of adventures during the "late onpleasantness," there is a partisan feeling, hot and bitter, for which we are to make allowance. But when an enemy tells the story, what then? Then indeed it must be true—all that is said in praise of the heroism displayed; for nearly every instinct of our poor, weak human nature tends to blind us to the merits of our foes. Not a word, then, would

we disbelieve of the story that follows; for it rests on the word of an enemy, who could have no reason for enhancing the courage of the chief actor; not even the motive which leads the wrestler to represent his conquered opponent as possessed of extraordinary strength and skill.

The second battle of Bull Run, or Manassas (for the opposing forces named it differently) lasted for two days. At the end of the first, August 29th, 1862, neither side could claim the victory, and neither would acknowledge itself whipped. At dawn of the 30th, then, the veterans of both armies went at it again with renewed energy, and before night the result was seen—the

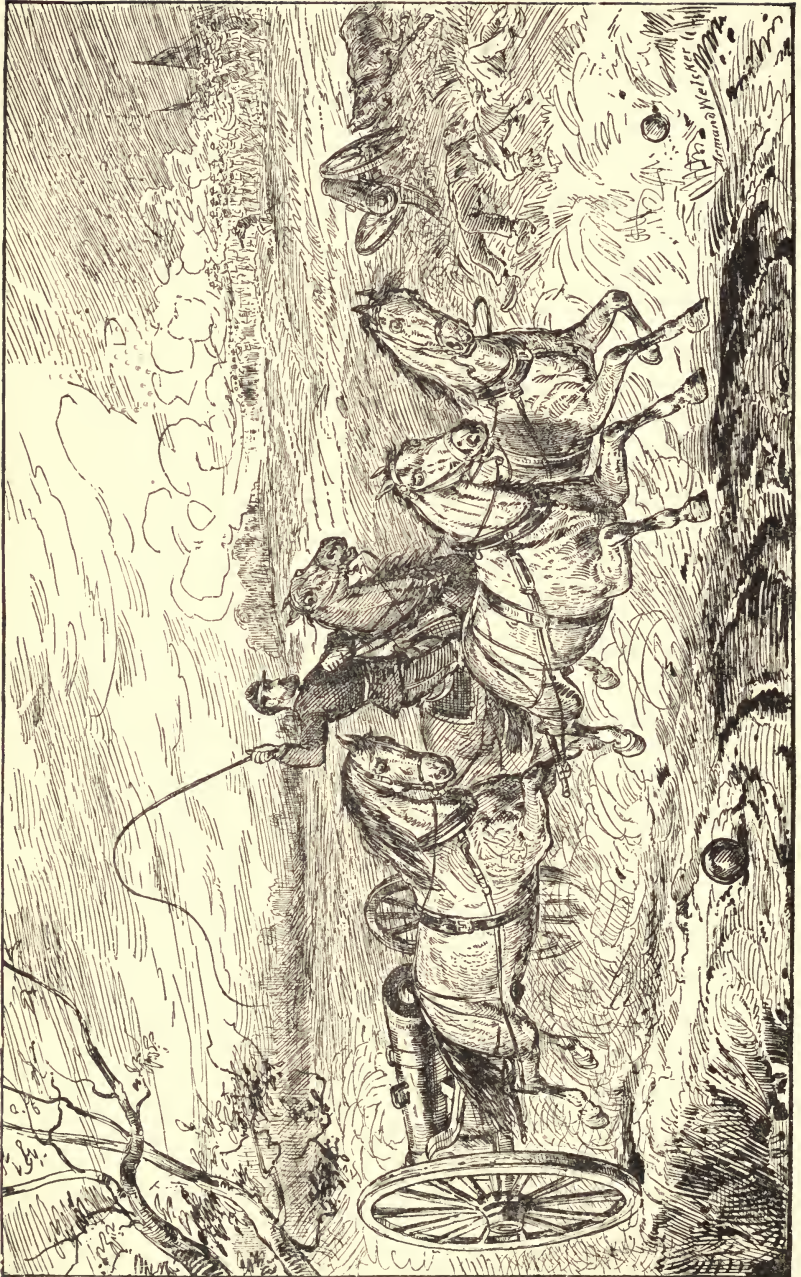


*Bull Run Battle-Field.*

Federal forces retreated, leaving the field in the hands of the Confederates. But before the forces of Pope and McDowell had given up hope, there occurred the incident of the battle which is our present subject. Told, as the story is, by one of the Confederate officers, many of the points we would wish to know in connection with it are not related; not even the name of the hero is recorded.

Hood's men charged down the hill from the Henry House upon the first Federal line; and the gunners saw that their battery was doomed. One, at least, was resolved that one of the guns should not fall in the hand of the Confederates; but the task of saving it was a fearful one. Between the battery and the nearest point to where the cannon would be safe, there was a ditch, four feet





The Cannoneer's Ride.

wide, and equally deep. This, of course, was a barrier which the heavy gun-carriage could not pass; he must drive around it, and the end was half a mile or more from the starting point. The horses, four magnificent light grays, had not been unhitched, so that no time was lost in the start. Along the ditch he drove, and his driving was like that of Jehu; for Hood's men were not far off, the whole brigade wreathed in smoke from their own muskets.

Thick and fast fell the balls around him; but not one hit the mark. The powerful horses seemed to understand fully the state of affairs, and strained every muscle to win in this terrible race with death. Onward, onward still, with no slackening of pace—he did not spare the noble horses—he had not spared himself.

Now a portion of this dreadful ordeal by fire is passed; the Confederates of that one brigade have swept down upon the line of Federals; it has broken, and fled in disorder. The gunners have left their post, and their guns are turned against them—all but one. The hot sun of a Southern August, though clouded now by the smoke of the battle, has drawn every drop of moisture from the parched earth; and the dust rises at every step the horses take, until they are almost hidden from sight. The first brigade, that which was attacking the battery itself, had been passed, and man and horses escaped unnoticed and unscathed. But the real trial had hardly begun, for here was another body of troops ready, as it appeared, waiting for him.

The gun-carriage thundered along in its attendant cloud of dust. The Confederates took in the situation in a moment; orders to fire were unnecessary; they took aim as by common consent, and hundreds of bullets were sent on their way, that death might win the race. But it seemed all in vain. The heroic charioteer seemed to bear a charmed life.

“Aim lower, boys,” cried an officer, as he rode along the line; “fire at the horses, not at the man.”

Perhaps, while he recognized the desirability, in a military point of view, of capturing the gun, he was not unwilling to spare the life of the heroic enemy. Perhaps he was anxious only to take the gun and cared nothing for the gunner; more probably he realized that if he could disable the horses he would capture the man. At any rate, the mad progress must be stopped.

His orders were obeyed, and he marked one man, especially, from whose shot he hoped much. This soldier was known in all the regiment for the excellence of his marksmanship; and as he dropped on one knee, sighted his piece, and sent the ball on its way, his comrades looked confidently to see one of the horses fall to the earth. The bullet sped through the air, and the carriage still thundered on. Again the sharpshooter took aim, and again he missed his mark. The brave cannoneer seemed to be made of other material than flesh and blood, else surely some one of those five hundred bullets would have reached his heart.

Onward, onward still, and at last the head of the ditch is reached and turned at full gallop—he has run the gauntlet; he has passed the ordeal of fire; he is out of range; he is on the hillside. He rises, turns in his saddle, and looks defiantly towards the enemy whose bullets could not harm him; he waves his hat, and cheers; they see the gesture, though they cannot hear the sound; in all those regiments, there is hardly a man who can find it in his heart to regret the cannoneer's escape; and from the Confederate ranks rises an answering cheer for the brave Federal. Then they press on, intent only on driving from the field the army to which he belongs, and this incident passes down into history to be almost—but not quite—lost among the innumerable throng of brave deeds by brave men.



## CHAPTER XXI.

### A GENERAL'S ESCAPE.

Manassas or Bull Run—Hunting for Troops—An Unexpected Meeting—A Trio of Stragglers—Who Exchanged Opinions—One is Suspected—They had Better have Let Him Go—A Surprised Federal.

IN the latter part of August, 1862, when, for the second time, the thunder of the guns was heard upon "Manassas' solemn plains," and Bull Run was again crimson with the blood of two armies, Brig.-Gen. Pryor found that it was necessary for him to call up certain regiments which he had hitherto held in reserve. Every aid had been dispatched on various errands, not a man could be spared from the line of battle; the general then decided to be his own messenger, and started off on foot. He reached in safety the position held by the two regiments, ordered them forward to that which he wished them to occupy, and started on his return; expecting, of course, to find his men where he had left them. But the position of the two armies sometimes changes so suddenly during a great battle that one can never be quite certain as to the whereabouts of any one particular command; and so Gen. Pryor found to his sorrow.

For his troops were nowhere to be seen when he arrived at the point they had so recently occupied. Doubtless, he thought, they had moved onward; he would follow them to the front. Trudging forward, he soon came upon a most remarkable sight—two Federal soldiers, sitting at the foot of a hayrick. What could it mean? They were evidently not prisoners, for they retained their arms; near them stood their two muskets, one with, and the other without a bayonet. He had come upon them too suddenly to admit of retreat; and being covered by a Mexican poncho, which completely concealed his uniform and all insign-

nia of rank, he decided to pass by as unconcerned as he could, as if he were one of their own comrades. But his plans were foiled.

"Hallo, you!" called one of them. It would not do to disregard this, especially as it was repeated with some emphasis, and he replied in Yankee fashion, with a question:

"What do you want?"

"Come over here a minute."

He dared not disobey; it was two to one, and very close quarters.

"Come from the front?" asked one.

"Yes, just now," he replied.

"How's everything going on there?"

"Oh, all right. I got tired of it, though, as you seem to have done."

The Federals laughed at the hit, and one replied:

"Well, it *is* apt to tire a fellow. Just listen to that firing! Don't you feel good about it when you think you're a mile and a half inside the lines? I do, and I don't count myself a coward either."

Gen. Pryor could not say that it made him "feel good" to know that he was so far within the enemy's lines; so he evaded the question, and returned in the same frank tone that the Yankee had used:

"Well, it does very well to be in the battle for a little, but it's hard work, and we can fight all the better for having a little rest once in a while."

"You were taking a stroll for the benefit of your health, weren't you, when we hailed you?"

"Yes, and found it pretty hot weather for walking, too. You seem to have a pretty comfortable place of it here," answered the Confederate, who found it decidedly uncomfortable, and was beginning to wonder how in the world he would get out of it.

"Which division do you belong to, Pope's or McDowell's?"

"Pope's; and you?" the general asked in reply, hoping to divert their questions from such a decidedly personal course.

"Pope's, too. What regiment?"

The stranger had been abstractedly gazing in the direction of the firing ever since he had asked about the division to which his companions belonged. He now turned suddenly, and to gain time, pretended not to have heard the inquiry:

"I beg your pardon, but what did you say?"

"I asked you what your regiment was," returned the Federal, in a somewhat sharper tone than he had yet used.

Here was a dilemma; he had unfortunately laid claim to be a member of their own division; there was nothing about them to indicate their regiment and brigade; he might happen upon the very one to which they belonged, and that, of course, would increase the unpleasantness of the situation. He was completely taken aback and had no answer ready.

"The—the Thirty-first New York," he hazarded with some hesitation.

"You're a d—d Rebel, and my prisoner," exclaimed the Yank, springing to his feet, all his lurking suspicions confirmed by the other's hesitating tone, no less than by his having named a regiment in Gen. Mc. Dowell's division.

As quick as thought the active and powerful



*Turning the Tables.*

Confederate had sprung towards the two muskets, grasped the bayoneted one, and before the Federal could turn towards him, had run it twice through his body. The wounded man fell heavily to the earth; the second Federal, who had been reclining at ease beneath the hayrick, started to his feet as if to make off. It would never do to leave an enemy in his rear, and the Confederate, by a third thrust, laid the second Federal helpless on the field. Dropping the musket as a useless encumbrance, he started at full speed along the course he had been pursuing when he was stopped by them.

The information they had unconsciously given, that they were

a mile and a half inside the Federal lines, was of considerable service to him, as it enabled him to calculate very nearly the position of his own command. Much time was lost in dodging the Federal stragglers, who were pretty thick now, for the tide of battle was again turning, bearing the Stars and Stripes backward, and the Stars and Bars forward this time. It was more than an hour before he regained his own command, not being again halted by any of the Federals.

The two days of battle ended at night in a victory for the Confederates. The next day, Gen. Pryor sent an aid to the various hospitals in the neighborhood, to see if there was a man wounded by one or two bayonet thrusts; for he was desirous of knowing the fate of the two Federals. The aid returned with the intelligence that one was in a certain building, and the brigadier, mounting his horse, rode over to see if it was the same man. It proved to be the one who had taken the foremost part in the conversation.

"Do you know me?"

"Yes, sir, I do," replied the sufferer, with emphasis; "you're the man who stuck me. Who are you anyhow?"

"Roger A. Pryor, of the Confederate Army."

"Gen. Pryor? Oh, my good heavens, if I could only have caught a brigadier!"

## CHAPTER XXII.

### A PAIR OF FORAGERS.

They Want their Breakfast—How They Got it—A Traitorous Hostess—Pursued—Close Quarters—A Narrow Escape—Detected—A Good Thing for the Command.

LATE in the fall of 1862 four companies of cavalry were detailed to carry ballot boxes to Smithfield, twenty-two miles north of which place the main body was encamped. The march was safely accomplished; the ballot boxes were placed in the hands of the proper authorities; and, after a very short stay at Smithfield, the guardians of the ballot box set out on their return trip. By marching directly back, it was not, of course, expected that they would reach camp that same night; but they could bivouac in the open air—the weather was still, notwithstanding the advancing season, extremely moderate—and they would be in camp at a much earlier hour than if they did not leave Smithfield until morning. A suitable place was selected for the bivouac, and after discussing the uninviting rations with the keen appetites which their long ride had given them, the men wrapped themselves in their blankets and laid themselves around the fires, to rest for the night.

But even hard tack and salt pork were not over plentiful, and two adventurous troopers decided that they would have a breakfast more palatable than their suppers had been; so rising some time before reveille, they mounted their horses, and, slipping past the guards, made their way out of camp. After riding two or three miles they came to a very comfortable looking farm-house, where they concluded to make their demands. The family were already stirring. Dismounting, they gave a rousing knock at the door. "Good morning, madam," said one of them to the woman who

made her appearance in answer to this summons. "Can we get breakfast here?"

"I reckon you can," she replied, somewhat ungraciously; she had no objection to breakfasting soldiers, but she preferred those in gray uniforms. "I can't give you a very nice breakfast, she added, as they entered, "for I haven't got it. The War interferes with everything, it seems."

"Just so it isn't hard-tack and pickled mule," was the reply. In a few moments the meal was announced; and to the hungry



*The Mysterious Signals.*

Federals the fried bacon and eggs and rich corn-bread were a welcome relief from the monotony of camp-diet. They ate heartily and without any thought of the danger that threatened them; for they were barely three miles from the famous Blackwater, where a large force of Confederate cavalry, as they knew, had been posted on the previous day. They finished their breakfast, and were quietly wending their way to the stables, whither their horses had been taken for feeding, when they saw a somewhat alarming sight. In the rear of the house, at some little distance, there was swamp, covered with a thick growth of trees. At the

back door of the house stood their hostess making mysterious signals towards the pine woods.

"Rogers, do you see what she's doing?" asked one of the other.

"She's carrying on some game, I guess," replied Rogers; "she looks like a witch trying to enchant us."

The boy who had attended to the feeding of their horsee had by this time come too near them, as the performance of his duties called him hither and thither, to permit them to speak without being overheard; so that the first speaker, who had looked sharply about him, could only nudge his companion to call his attention to another new-made discovery. At one point on the edge of the pine thicket stood a Confederate; some little distance from him, in a spot where the woods appeared to recede slightly, there was another. The first watched the house closely, and evidently was looking for the signals made by the mistress of the mansion; a gesture noted, he would turn and repeat it to his comrade, who in his turn would convey the meaning to some person or persons within the shelter of the woods.

The two Federals realized at once that they were being betrayed by their unwilling entertainer, who had been afraid to refuse their request. There was not a moment to lose, and they hurried on towards the stable, hoping to mount and ride away in such haste that the Confederates would not have time to bring up that larger force which was evidently within the shelter of the woods. But they had hardly reached the building when their ears were saluted by the crack of a rifle, followed by a yell as blood-curdling as an Apache war-cry. They sprang into their saddles; the horses, startled by the "Rebel yell," needed no spurring, but were off at once. Over fences, fallen trees and deep trenches they went, neither horse nor rider caring much how rough a road it might be. Now, and now again, came a shot speeding after them; but their rough road served them well, for not a ball hit.

They had nearly reached the boundary of the farm; yonder was the snake fence that separated it from the public road; only a few bounds more of their trusty steeds and they would be upon the highway, and bound straight for camp. Once upon a good road, their horses, they knew, would make good time, and could easily distance the average cavalry horse. But the fence was overgrown with vines, and in the corner grew high weeds—withered now, but still thick enough to be an excellent shelter

for the two Confederates who now started up directly in front of them with a demand for their surrender.

The Federals, however, had no notion of being captured; Rogers drew his sabre quick as thought, and at the first pass laid upon the shoulder of the foremost Confederate. The other Federal, whose name has not been recorded, unslung his carbine and took hasty aim at the second Confederate, who was sighting his own gun. The two reports seemed blended in one, but the Confederate's ball passed harmlessly onward, just grazing his opponent's cheek; the Federal's, although more hastily aimed, went



*Quick Work.*

true home; it pierced the brain of the Southerner, who fell without a groan on the dead grass at the roadside.

Hardly two minutes had been occupied in this little skirmish, but even that short time was enough to enhance their danger. Fast and furiously behind them came the clatter of hoofs; there was a force of at least twenty in hot pursuit. The fence was cleared; the two Federals set spurs to their horses and rode, if not for their lives, at least for their liberty. The chase was a close one, and the Confederates, relying upon their superior numbers, did not fire a shot; preferring to take the two men alive. Onward, onward, at their utmost speed, they rode; and stead-



ily, though slowly, the pursuers gained upon the pursued. They were not fifty yards apart when the Federals saw they were safe; yonder were the pickets. Rising in their saddles, they turned partly around, and waving their caps, cheered defiantly. The Confederates understood the meaning; they dared not venture nearer the camp; and with a few parting shots, sent at random, they wheeled their horses and returned to the shelter of the pine woods.

The two Federals had hoped to slip into camp unobserved as they had left it; but the condition of their horses told the tale of hard riding and the colonel demanded to know where they had been. Evade the question they could not, answer they must. Hearing their story, the officer concluded that the more rapidly the force moved on, the better, and gave orders accordingly to proceed to the main camp by a road different from that by which they had advanced. They had not proceeded three miles before an attack was made on the advance guard. Learning from a prisoner that the Confederates had a large force, the Federal commander gave the order to retreat; but hardly had the retrograde movement begun when the rear was attacked by nine hundred Confederate cavalry.

It was with difficulty that this force was kept at bay long enough for the main body of the Federals to get out of range; but the task was accomplished with but slight loss; for, if we may believe the veracious historian, the nameless trooper who took breakfast at the farmhouse, the Federals did not linger unnecessarily on the road. Perhaps the Confederates had been lying in wait for this force; but certainly they would not have discovered so exactly and with so little trouble the camp and the route of the Federals if it had not been for the two who preferred bacon and eggs and corn-bread to hard-tack and mess-pork.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### RESCUING A COMRADE.

Infantry Curiosity—Cavalry Disgust—Moral of the Story—Attack on the Train—The Charge—Repulsed—Harper's Perilous Position—A Generous Offer—A Warm Meeting—Safe—A Close Shave—A Frank Confession—A Second Charge, and its Result.

THE story goes, that some twenty odd years ago, or thereabouts, a Confederate trooper was hailed by a lounging infantryman with :

“Mister, did you ever see a Yankee?”

The cavalryman, somewhat affronted at the question, answered curtly in the affirmative.

“Did he have on a blue coat?” continued the questioner, drawlingly.

“Yes,” was the reply, still shorter.

“Did you stop to look at him?” was the next query, doubtful in tone.

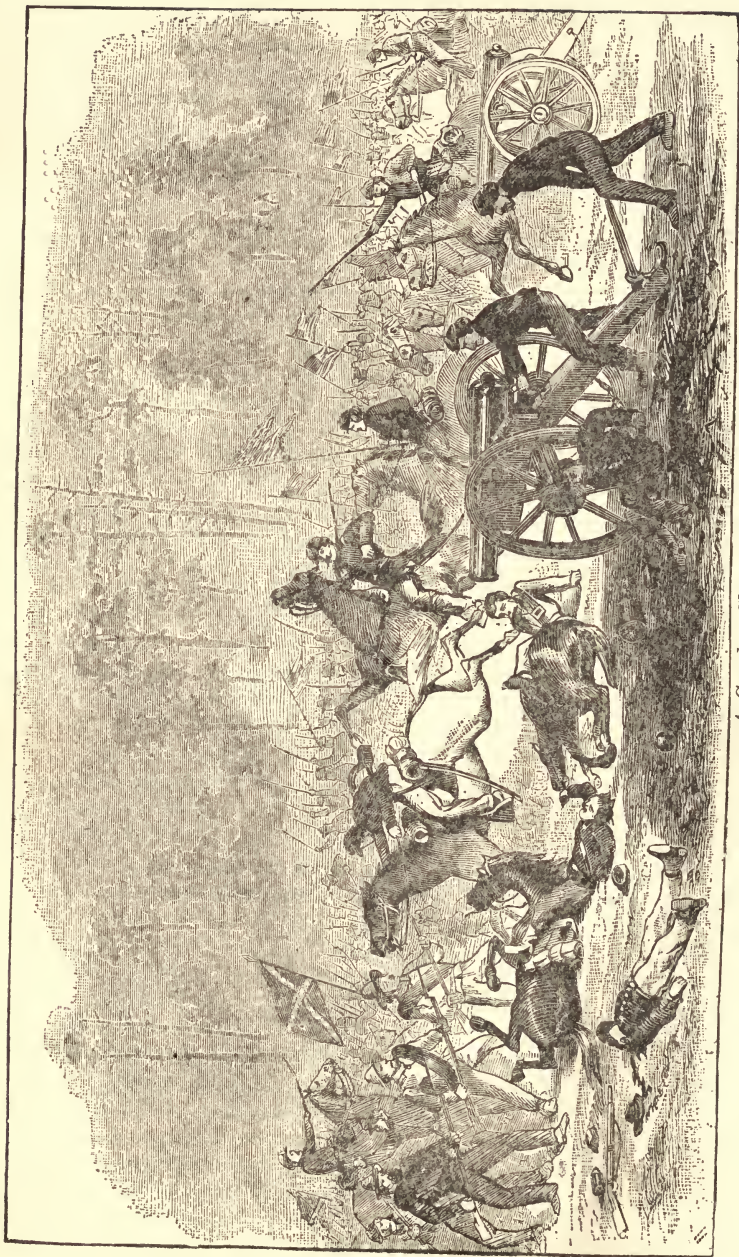
“Yes,” with something that sounded suspiciously like an oath.

The first soldier's face expressed the most affectionate interest as he slowly drew himself up with a deep breath of surprise, and drawled out :

“Mister, will you please tell me if your spurs were broke or your horse was lame? Which was it?”

We regret to say that the trooper's reply is not on record; although the regret is somewhat tempered by the reflection that perhaps it was not altogether fit for “ears polite.” But incomplete as it is, the story shows the estimation in which the infantry too often held the cavalry. The bulk of the fighting was done by the former, as they justly claimed; but they forgot that there was something to be done besides fighting great battles;

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*A Cavalry Charge.*

An Infantry Charge.





they must be won; and in order to win them, sleepless vigilance on the part of the much despised cavalry was necessary. Much of the depreciation, of course, arose from jealousy of the trooper's easier way of getting over the ground in a long march; the remainder originated in the feeling we have already described.

Of course, in a collection of such stories of adventure as the present, the services of the cavalry are not likely to be viewed with an infantry critic's eye; indeed, the mounted men had so much greater opportunity for seeing service that included daring attempts and hairbreadth escapes, that their importance is apt to appear overrated. The cavalry is the comet that flashes across the sky, the wonder and admiration of all while it lasts; while the infantry may be compared to the stars that shine steadily all the time, whether there are comets or not. At the very mention of the word cavalry, however, what stirring pictures throng the brain! The clank of sabre and spur, the sound of hoofs along the hard road, are the overture to the play; the curtain rises, and we see upon the stage the forms of Sheridan and Stuart, of Custer and Wheeler, often apparently assuming romantic shapes of knights of the olden days of chivalry.

But to leave fancy, and come down to history; not the grave and solemn lady who presides over the pages of Rollin and Gibbon and Dryasdust, but the genial creature who, in the guise of an old soldier, sits by our fireside, with interminable stories of what happened to him and his comrades during "the War."

"And, tales of sorrow done,  
Shoulders his crutch and shows how fields were won."

It was during the progress of the battle known by the name of Stone River or Murfreesboro', commencing December 31, 1862, and lasting five days; an action which ended most disastrously for the Confederates, who were compelled to evacuate the city from which the battle has taken one of its names. But before the result was yet decided, while the fate of the armies still hung in the balance, Gen. Wheeler was sent to the rear of the Federal forces, to annoy them by attacks upon their wagon trains. A long train was at Lavergne, and upon this he intended to make a furious assault. Unfortunately for his plans, however, his presence in the vicinity was ascertained, and his purpose suspected by the Federal general, who immediately ordered the usual guard of the train to be reinforced by a considerable body of infantry. No time was lost in preparing for defense, and when

the Confederates came up they found the wagons corraled, and the blue-coated infantry ready for business.

Wheeler, however, was determined to have those wagons for the materials for a bonfire; his men were equally determined. When, therefore, they received the order to charge and capture the wagons, there was no hesitation, no hanging back. Not a man had straggled on the way, and the whole command dashed over the uneven ground like so many birds on the wing. But, as often happened during the War, courage upon the one side was of no avail, because met by equal courage on the other. The great American eagle may carry a lamb to its eyrie, but it would probably find a buffalo somewhat unmanageable. Such was the state of affairs at Lavergne, this January day in 1863. The Confederates charged bravely enough, but the Federals stood their ground, and repulsed the charge. It seemed like the old conundrum—"If an irresistible body strike an immovable body, which will give way?" Cavalry cannot fight at a stand, as infantry can; it must either advance or retreat; and in this case, being unable to do the former, it did the latter, retiring a short distance to re-collect its strength for a second assault.

When the cavalry was within thirty paces of the enemy, one of them, Joe Harper by name, but better known in the command as Wisham, lost his horse by one of the misfortunes of war. As his comrades rode back, he was of course left behind, and in a most dangerous position, exposed to the full fire of the enemy. But no matter how brave a man may be, when he knows that he is the mark for forty or fifty carbines at the distance of thirty paces, his instinct leads him to find a shelter; Harper's position was even worse than the case we have stated, for many more pieces were aimed in his direction. Hardly had his horse rolled to the ground, then, before he realized the situation, and had decided upon his course of action. There was a small tree near by, and behind that he sprang for shelter. This, however, did not make matters much better; it was literally a checkmate, for he could not move without being taken, not by knight or castle, but by one of the innumerable bullets that might be called pawns.

The keen-eyed Federals had seen his efforts to shelter himself, and were now peppering the tree with shot. The trunk was barely large enough to conceal his body from view; the slightest swerving to either side exposed him to their sight. Nothing could be hoped, of course, from the branches, which in



summer time might have concealed him yet more effectually ; the only indication he had that there were really limbs to the tree was the occasional crack and fall of a bough as a bullet struck it. The trunk of the tree was soon deeply indented in many places by the balls which had buried themselves in the wood ; how soon one might penetrate to him, he could not tell. Yet, as time went on, and a fresh volley came past every few seconds, he could see no chance of escape ; indeed, as he thought it over, the probabilities of such an ending grew "small by degrees and beautifully less." Doubtful visions of Northern prisons danced before his eyes as the bullets whistled by.

When we spell out, slowly and painfully, in our school-days, the classical stories of friendship, we think it wonderful that men should entertain so much affection for each other ; but then that was two or three thousand years ago. Has the world, has human nature changed since ? "Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friend ;" and sometimes, amid all the horrors of warfare, the worst of all strifes—a civil war, when the ties of blood are forgotten, when brother is pitted against brother, father against son—we see beautiful instances of a "love passing that of woman" shining out from the dark and bloody background. In recalling the friendship of Orestes and Pylades, of Damon and Pythias, of David and Jonathan, we have not wandered far from the cavalryman sheltered behind that lonely tree at Lavergne, with the enemy's bullets whistling around him.

A friend and messmate, familiarly known as "Tom" Gan, or more familiarly still, as "Heck," was among the troopers who had retreated. He saw the peril of his friend, and instantly resolved to do all he could to save him. True, the man in danger might be secure when the whole Confederate line advanced, but Heck did not know when that would be, and had no mind to wait for that time.

"Hello, Wisham !" he called, from his place in the group of troopers.

"Hello, Heck !" came the answer, somewhat dolefully, from the tree.

"If I come to you, will you meet me ?"

"I will," came the answer, with as much emphasis as the distance would permit.

It must be remembered that this one tree was the only shelter

between the Confederates and the Federals, that the former were barely out of range, and that Gan would have to ride nearly the whole distance exposed to the guns of the entire force of Federals. The volleys, he knew would come with hardly any intermission, for the Boys in Blue were armed with those repeating carbines which one observing Reb had characterized as "them guns you load on Sunday and fire all the week." But the gallant Tennessean thought only of saving his friend; and putting spurs to his horse, dashed forward.

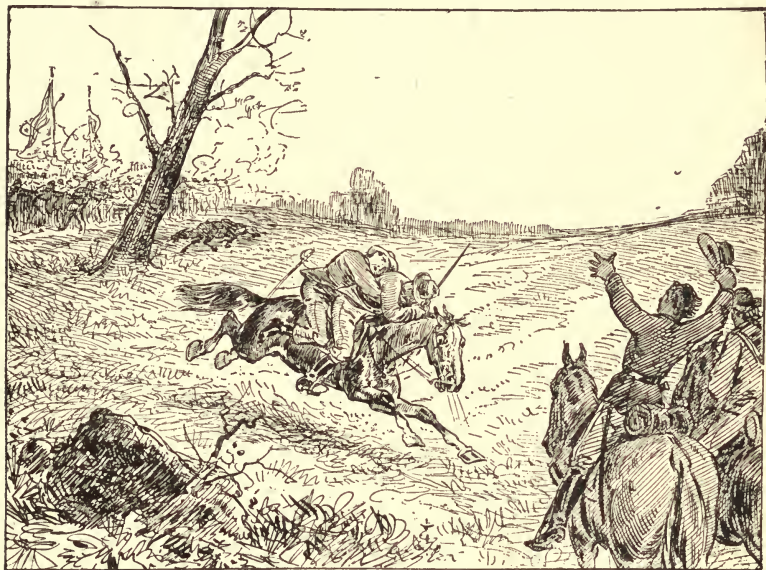
No sooner was his intention to leave the ranks perceived by the enemy than the carbines were leveled, and a perfect storm of shot greeted his advance. It could hardly be called "Hail to the chief who in triumph advances," because he was not a chief—"only a private"—but the bullets certainly came like hail, or rain, or anything else of the kind you please. When the Feds saw what the whole plan was, as they did when Wisham left the shelter of his tree, they divided their attentions pretty evenly between the two; certainly, neither had reason to complain of being neglected.

Upon leaving his post of vantage behind the tree-trunk, Wisham took a zigzag course, in order that he might the more surely avoid these messengers from the enemy; but Gan rode straight onward, trusting in the speed of his horse to carry him safely through to his friend.

Wisham had run fully one hundred yards, measured in a straight line, before he met his friend and rescuer; both being meanwhile exposed to the fire of the enemy, but neither having been hit. Then ensued a scene which, for the activity and strength displayed, might have graced a tournament. As Gan, with one hand upon the rein, wheeled his horse, he extended the other to Harper; and before the animal's head was once more towards the Confederate line, the latter had, with the slight help of his friend's hand, swung himself up behind the saddle. There was not even a momentary halt required for this action; and they had hardly met before they were galloping at full speed to their friends.

As the success of the daring attempt became evident, there was intense excitement among the Confederates, and cheer after cheer went up—not the wild "Rebel yell" which was Stonewall Jackson's favorite music, but deep and hearty cheers. Meanwhile, the Federals did not relax their attentions, but continued

to waste powder and shot upon the two friends, who seemed to bear the charmed lives which, in the old classical days, they would have been said to possess. Thus they reached their friends, and Wisham was speedily provided with a horse; for though he had been endangered by the loss of his steed, many of his comrades had been less fortunate; their horses had returned with the repulsed cavalry, riderless. Riding up alongside of Gan, after the first wave of gratitude had somewhat subsided, he said :



*Rescuing a Comrade.*

“Heck, old boy, that was a close shave, wasn’t it?”

“Yes, Wisham,” answered Heck, soberly, “it *was* a mighty close shave.”

A moment was passed in silence, and then Heck asked :

“What’s the matter, Wisham? What makes you so quiet?”

“I was just thinking of my feelings when we were both on that horse, with the Yanks peppering us.”

“How’d you feel? Scared?”

“Well I don’t know if you’d call it scared or not; but I just felt like, without wishing you any harm, I’d like mighty well to be the one in the saddle with some other fellow behind.”

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### SECRET SERVICE.

A Mysterious Order—The Man Needed—Explanation of the Order—Disappearance of the Soldier—Sudden Appearance of the Quaker—Interviewing the Picket—Distributing Tracts and Examining Fortifications—An Innocent Note—With Much Meaning—An Unlucky Meeting—The Quaker Disappears—The Kind of Tracts He Meant—Suspicious Verified—News to Gen. Bragg—A Fine Old Country Gentleman—And Equally Fine Old Whisky—Gen. Bragg's Intentions—Tom Sees the Joke—Delay—Dangerous Proximity—Allaying Suspicious—A Narrow Escape—A Second Mysterious Order.

GENERAL ORDERS, No. — —.

Captain Carter, —th Indiana Volunteers, is hereby relieved from his command indefinitely, and will report at these headquarters immediately.

By order of Maj.-Gen. Rosecrans.

LIEUT.-COL. C. GODDARD, A. A. G."

SUCH was the order read to the Indiana regiment above mentioned, on dress parade, one day in January, 1863. No one could tell what it meant; on the face of it, it implied disgrace, or censure at least; yet in what had punishment been deserved by the gallant officer so frequently praised by his superiors, so highly esteemed by his brother officers, so idolized by his men? As the soldiers returned to their quarters, all were busily conjecturing the reason for issuing such an order; Captain Carter in as much perplexity as any one. He went to his tent, however, and putting off his accoutrements, set out for headquarters.

These were in a private mansion in what had been the most aristocratic part of Murfreesboro; but many of the inhabitants had deserted their residences at the approach of the Federal army; so that it was through a wilderness of houses, either unoccupied or filled with the soldiery, that our gallant captain

took his way. Stopping before one of those substantial brick double houses, with a piazza running along the whole front, upstairs and down, that always appears the embodiment of solid comfort, he made his way, duly announced by the orderly, to a room in the second story, whose French windows opened on the piazza. Before the blazing fire sat an officer in undress uniform, whose rank was indicated only by the buttons of his coat being grouped in threes. As Captain Carter was announced, this officer arose, and advancing with a pleasant smile that dissipated all the anxiety of the subordinate, said :

“This is Capt. Carter, of the —th Indiana Volunteers?”

“It is, sir.”

“You received orders this evening to report immediately?”

“Yes, sir, and I have done so.”

“Sit down, sir. You see, I have for some time been in want of a man possessed of certain qualities that would render him fit for a very important service. Courage is needed, but that is not all; many a man in the army would do. There must be a considerable degree of judgment and at the same time rapidity of thought and combination. Gen. Thomas has been on the outlook for some one possessing these qualities, and has selected you for the purpose. I need not say that I have every confidence in Gen. Thomas’ judgment. It will be a mission of some danger and difficulty—will you undertake it?”

“I will do anything to further the cause of which I am a sworn soldier. It is connected with the secret service, I suppose, sir?”

“Yes. Please make your arrangements for remaining here to-night, sending to your quarters for anything you may need. Do so now, and then I will give you the full details of the plan which I wish you to execute.”

When Capt. Carter, whose black servant had accompanied him to headquarters, had made all the arrangements indicated by the general, he again reported for instructions. The general was seated before a large table, on which was spread a map of the surrounding country.

“You see, Captain Carter, the two armies form nearly a semi-circle. The Rebel right is at Hartsville, here on the Cumberland, above Nashville, and the left rests on the shoals below. Gen. Bragg’s headquarters are at Tullahoma and Gen. Van Dorn is at Spring Hill. I want you to go to Van Dorn’s headquarters first, then to Bragg’s, and ascertain the numbers, arms,

fortifications, efficiency and probable movements of their troops."

Such was the brief outline of his duty, illustrated, as the general spoke, by the use of the map. After making sure that the main points of the expedition were clear in the mind of his listener, he proceeded to give various minute directions, and at a late hour, dismissed him, with instructions to set out early in the morning.

"But let me impress upon you, Captain, the necessity for extreme caution; not only among persons whom we would naturally suspect, but even among friends. Hold no communication whatever with any one in camp regarding this expedition. Much of the efficiency of the secret service is lost, if those composing it are known. Is your servant entirely reliable?"

"Perfectly, sir; he is devoted to me. You need have no fears as to him."

"Then he had better, as we arranged at first, accompany you; that plan, besides, would keep him from talking to his fellows during your absence, if he were so disposed."

It was a day or so after that, and Captain Carter had not been seen about camp since the mysterious order was issued. For all that his men knew, the commanding general might have had him served up for supper, so completely had he disappeared from his usual haunts. But riding leisurely along from a certain staunch Union man's house near town, there were two men, in one of whom a keen observer might have detected some faint resemblance to the man who had disappeared; though the difference in dress and manner and age were sufficient to reassure the most suspicious.

This was a man clad in the quaint garb of a Quaker, and seemingly, from the peaceful expression of his countenance, intent on anything but war. His grizzled locks were longer than usually seen, certainly much longer than Capt. Carter's dark hair, and though the close-buttoned vest had something of a resemblance, in that respect, to a military coat, its hue was sufficient to allay distrust. His servant or companion, whichever the Society might have been pleased to call him, seemed a shadow of himself; so exactly did the demure peacefulness of the dusky face imitate the expression of the fairer one, so exactly was his dress patterned after that of the white man. "A merciful man is merciful to his beast," and the animals which the two Quakers bestrode certainly illustrated this; that of the white man was a

spirited bay that, possessed by a more worldly man, might have made an enviable record on the race-track; and that of the negro, though a stouter, heavier animal of less speed, was the very model of a well-kept, stout roadster. The pair rode sedately onward, until challenged by a vidette of the Confederates.

“Halt! who comes there?”

“Friends we claim to be to all. Is thee a man of war?”

“Nary ship, nor sailor neither.”

“Isn’t thee one of the fighting men of the South?”

“Well, I rather reckon so, if that’s what you mean. What do you want, Broadbrim?”

“Does thee know another man of war, called Van Dorn?”

“I reckon I do,” replied the soldier emphatically, and smiling at the simplicity of the Quaker’s speech; “but you’d better be careful how you talk that way about him. The old cuss is apt to be a little particular about having his handle to his name.”

“I scarcely understand thee, friend, but thy face appears friendly and inclined to peace to me and mine. Can thee direct me to the place where friend Van Dorn tarrieth at this present?”

“Headquarters? O yes; let me just call the Corporal of the Guard.”

That officer being duly summoned, the innocent old Quaker and his dusky attendant were duly directed to the general’s headquarters, and were soon on their way thither.

“Well?” asked Gen. Van Dorn, raising his eyes from the maps and charts over which he had been bending, as his orderly entered the room.

“There’s an old Quaker gentleman out there, General, who says he has urgent business with you.”

“Show him in.”

The Quaker was ushered into the apartment.

“Thee is the friend Van Dorn that is called General?”

“What is your business with me, sir?”

“Unworthy vessel as I am to be made of such importance, I am the one chosen by the Society of which I am an humble member to disseminate spiritual comfort and counsel among the misguided men who are gathered around thee, to slay their brethren.”

“Humph!” ejaculated the soldier; with as much fierceness as could be thrown into that simple sound.

“Notwithstanding the fact that they have taken deadly weap-

ons into their hands, they have not been so sinful in so doing as these same brethen who have begun the contest and have invaded the South; whereas the men of the South would be content to live in peace if the men of the North would but return to their homes."

"Humph!" a little more mildly.

"Nevertheless, it is sinful for them so to resist even oppression, inasmuch as all men are commanded to live in peace and brotherhood; but they are fellow-creatures, and we would not willingly



*Gen. Earl Van Dorn.*

see them led forth to slaughter without some effort to comfort and strengthen their spirits."

"What is it you want, sir?" asked the general, his eyes turning towards his maps again.

"Permission to distribute among the men that follow thee such tracts and other matters of the kind as I or my friends may have been able to purchase or otherwise procure."

"Have you any letters of introduction?"

"Yea, verily, for I had heard that thee was a man of blood, and did not readily believe thy fellow-men; fearing that having taken the sword, thee should perish by the sword."

"Let me see them, please."

The Quaker produced a formidable packet and delivered it to the soldier; who, finding the writers as prolix as the speaker, glanced over one or two, and turned to his desk.

"What is your name?"

"Ezra Thurston."

"Well, Mr. Thurston, here is a pass which will enable you to come and go at will, with any supplies you may wish to bring into camp."

As the Quaker left the room, the general's face relaxed into a smile at the character of the visitor; but he soon settled himself to his papers again, dismissing the whole matter from his mind as unworthy of further thought. The Quaker, for the present



at least, had no need to make use of the pass, for in his saddle-bags and capacious pockets were stored a goodly quantity of tracts and religious papers. He made his way about the camp, with a pleasant word for all; a gentle rebuke for the curses that fell upon his ear, although it must be acknowledged that these were but few; for roughened as they were by the soldier-life, the men, looking at him with a sort of good-humored smile, for the most part spoke as they might have spoken in the presence of a little child.

Ezra Thurston certainly did not slight his work; not only



*Van Dorn and the Quaker.*

among the well, but among the sick and wounded, he took his way, followed faithfully by his sable companion. He seemed specially anxious that no part of the camp should miss his friendly ministrations, and trudged patiently about the forts and fortifications to insure that none should be neglected. Nor were his offices purely spiritual; for one wounded man he wrote a letter, for which the overtaxed nurse could not find time; to another impecunious individual he gave money; bestowing such petty favors where he saw that they were desired, until the soldiers were ready to swear he was a regular brick, had he not gently checked them with the injunction:

“‘Swear not at all,’ friend.”

So the day passed on; evening was approaching, and the day's work was done. Friend Thurston had seated himself in a retired angle of the fortifications to note in his substantial memorandum book the quantity of religious reading matter of various kinds, which he could distribute to advantage among the soldiers. Some of the articles, to be sure, were rather indicative of bodily than spiritual comforts, but, as we have seen, his ministrations were practical. This was what he wrote:

"2 overcoats and 6 hats; 37 shirts; 3,200 tracts—2,000 for the unconverted, at Spring Hill."

Strangely enough, Gen. Rosecrans, to whom Capt. Carter's colored servant delivered this, shortly afterward, read it thus:

"Two forts of six guns each; thirty-seven additional guns; three thousand two hundred troops, two thousand of which are cavalry, at Spring Hill."

But to go back to the Confederate camp. The Quaker, Ezra Thurston, was busily making that innocent memorandum which was to be so strangely perverted, when a soldier, whose uniform and decorations denoted that he held the rank of lieutenant, came towards him. The usual greetings were exchanged, in the bluff, hearty tone of the soldier, and the even, peaceful one of the man of peace.

"I think I have met you before this, sir, haven't I?"

"It can hardly be so, friend; I lead a secluded life among the members of the Society, and rarely mingle with the world."

"Haven't you been in camp before, sir? Maybe I saw you then."

"Nay, friend, this is the first time that duty has called me to the dwelling of the men of blood. Thee must have known some one whose face or bearing resembled mine."

"Well, I reckon that must be it; I beg your pardon, sir."

"Thy error hath given no offense, nor hath it done me injury, friend; therefore it needs no pardon," answered the Quaker.

The soldier turned away with a puzzled look upon his face; this man's appearance was so familiar, he felt sure that they must have met before; yet there was something so strangely incongruous between the old and the new image in his mind that he could hardly reconcile them. Thus endeavoring to decide whether or not the Quaker had spoken the truth, he strode away to his quarters.

"Massa, we'd better be trablin', shuah; dat man didn't half-

way belieb you, sah. Dis place gettin' too hot, shuah."

"No, I don't think he did quite believe me, and no wonder. I remember well enough. I took him prisoner at Stone river, but he got away again. I'm done, now; we'll go right away."

Returning his memorandum book to his pocket, they sought out their horses, and mounting, rode away; Gen. Van Dorn's pass answering all objections which the sentinels might have been prepared to raise. They rode swiftly onward as long as there was no house in sight, slackening their speed and trotting gently where there were signs that they were approaching a residence. It was nearly dark when they reached a point where a road that was little more than a bridle-path through the woods joined the pike. Turning their horses' heads to pursue this by-way, they were soon lost to view among the trees. Once out of sight of the main road, the natural order of traveling was reversed, the servant leading the way, the master following, for they were tolerably sure that if danger should threaten them, it would come from the rear.

They had traveled but a little distance in this manner when they came to the edge of a clearing, in which a log-house was situated. Arrived at this point, Capt. Carter (for we may now drop the assumed name and character of Ezra Thurston, the Quaker missionary) halted, while Tom, dismounting, went forward to reconnoiter; having previously exchanged the outer garments of the demure cut for others better suited to his genuine character. Advancing into the clearing, he paused every moment, almost, to peer cautiously around him; but at last was so well satisfied that all was as he wished it, that he threw a small chip against the window-pane. In response to this signal, which had been previously arranged, the door opened and a man, issuing from it, came through the darkness directly towards the spot where Tom stood.

"It's all safe," he said; "where's Captain Carter?"

"He's jist back in de woods a little piece. Is it all right, sah?"

"Yes, I tell you there's nothing at all wrong. Go call him."

Tom trotted off obediently, and the two were soon safely housed, warmed and fed. The night having passed, the colored man set off on his errand to Murfreesboro, it being nothing else but the delivery of the Quaker's memorandum to Gen. Rosecrans. Whether or not the unconverted at Spring Hill ever re-

ceived the two thousand tracts which Friend Thurston desired for them, history does not, in so many words relate; but the present writer leans to the opinion that tracts of land, seven by two, or perhaps a few larger ones in joint ownership, were what he really meant to give them.

Tom returned in good time, and once more changing their clothes, the two again set out. This time, Capt. Carter appeared to be a planter of some means, and accustomed (to judge by his rubicund face) to high living and hard drinking; attended, of course, by his negro servant, who was carefully costumed for his present role. The adoption of this second disguise, so totally different from the first, which had been successful, will at first sight appear a superfluous caution; but although it had been provided long before the Confederate lieutenant half-recognized the Quaker, the sequel proved that it was well that they had done so. As has been said, the Reb was not more than half satisfied with the assurances of Thurston, and went to his quarters trying to recall the circumstances under which he had seen that face before. Again and again he tried to accept the Quaker's words as true, but always failed. Half an hour, perhaps more, was passed thus, when suddenly it flashed across his mind, and he sprang to his feet with the words:

“It's the Yank that captured me at Stone River!”

It may well be believed that he lost no time in communicating his suspicions, or rather, knowledge, to Gen. Van Dorn. It was of course, at once apparent the guileless Quaker was a spy in the employ of the Federal general, and every effort must be made to prevent his return to that officer. The lieutenant who had made the discovery was dispatched with a force to scour the woods to intercept the flight of the fugitives, for, as will be remembered, they had left the camp as soon as they perceived the approach of danger. Thus the Confederates had lost, and the Federals had gained valuable time, which the latter had been enabled, by the excellence of their horses, to improve to the utmost. They had been so far favored by the delay as to have reached the clearing when the pursuers set out. But Van Dorn had calculated on not catching the spies, and had dispatched a courier with a note to Gen. Bragg, warning him of the pretended Quaker's real character.

Gen. Bragg had received this note and given the necessary orders for the course to be pursued in case such a person were

found about the camp, and had dismissed the whole affair from his mind until he should have attended to certain other matters of immediate importance, when "Col. Ashcroft" was announced as wishing earnestly to see him. The orderly was directed to admit him, and Capt. Carter was ushered into the apartment.

"I live near Brandyville, General," the new-comer explained after the usual salutations had been interchanged; "and came down to see if you couldn't do something for us; the Feds are worrying us nearly to death up there."

"Indeed! In what way?" inquired the general, with sympathetic concern for the story so often heard.

"Why, they drive off our horses and cattle, and carry off every bushel of grain they can find. Then their accursed foraging, as they call it, is nothing more than theft, sir, theft. Eggs, and chickens, and butter, and honey, and vegetables, and fruits—everything of that kind they carry away."

"Excuse me, sir, if I ask your name again; the orderly does not always speak distinctly."

"Ashcroft, sir."

"Ah, I have heard of you and your family in very favorable terms, sir. I shall be glad to do all in my power to protect so loyal a citizen."

"Yes, sir. I am loyal, and always expect to be so." [The truth, Captain Carter, but Gen. Bragg did not understand your emphatic assertion.] "We've tried to do our duty by the Confederacy, sir, and you're welcome to the little we have left, if you take the last bushel of grain and carry it off on the back of the last mule; but we're good Secessionists and don't want the d—d Yanks to be living off of us."

"Certainly, sir; I will see what can be done; and, believe me, I will make every effort to protect you and your property from the Yanks. But you have come some distance, haven't you? I am sorry I have nothing better than this whisky to offer you—maybe when Semmes has swept the seas, Cognac will be obtainable once more. The French are as friendly to us, nearly, as the British."

"You decry your whisky without cause, General, for, allowing for its age, which isn't very great, it is not bad. But allow me to send to my portmanteau for a bottle of fine old Bordeaux I have there—imported before the war. It's not only old, but it was good to begin with; but it will speak for itself—good

wine, you know, needs no bush. I want you to try it, General."

The colored servant soon returned with the bottle.

"It is, indeed, one of the best wines I ever drank," said the General, as he sipped the rare wine. "Let me pledge you, Colonel—here's to your freedom from annoyance from the Yankees."

"And here's to your army, General; may it find plenty left when it comes to drive away the Feds."

"That would be but a poor return, Colonel, for your loyalty," the general answered, laughing.

"It isn't the value of the things that worries me, General, it's the idea of the d—d Yankees getting it. I sent a hundred bushels of meal to Gen. Wheeler as a gift, the other day, just to keep the confounded Feds from getting it."

"By the way, Colonel, did you see anything of a Quaker on the road this morning?"

"With a bundle of tracts? Mr., or rather Friend, Thurston, he calls himself, I believe; with a nigger servant?"

"I don't know his name, but that is the one I mean. He's a spy."

"A Yankee spy!"

"Exactly," replied the officer, smiling at his visitor's angry surprise.

"The devil! I gave him and his darkey their suppers last night. If I'd known who he was, I'd—I'd—"

Words failed him, or appeared to do so; while the general answered, reassuringly:

"Well, Colonel, never mind. We can't help being taken in some time; he deceived even Gen. Van Dorn, who is pretty apt to have his wits about him. Why, he *might* have deceived *me*—I don't say he would, but he might have done it. But we'll catch him, yet. In fact, we must do it, for he has some valuable information. I'm going to make a feint on the enemy's flanks tomorrow with my cavalry, and hope to get him that way. Anyhow, we'll soon have that cunning old Dutchman, Rosecrans. I'm expecting some Georgia and Alabama troops in a few days."

"Well, General, I can't tell you how much I hope for your success. Don't leave one of the d—d mudsills on our soil—it's every whit as sacred as that of Virginia—the soil of the whole Confederacy is. But it's getting late, and I want to try and get some supplies before I start home. Will you be kind enough to give me a pass?"

"Certainly; and a bill of protection for your person and property; we'll leave you whatever you have, so you can give it voluntarily, you see," the soldier replied, in a jocular manner.

"I am sure your kindness—"

"No thanks, my friend; I have not deserved them. It wouldn't speak well for the Confederacy if her soldiers did not protect and help those who befriend them. Good-night."

The "planter" mounted his horse, and followed by his trusty darkey, made his way out of camp. They were scarcely out of earshot of the last picket, when Tom, unable to contain himself any longer, burst out:

"Golly for Moses, Massa, but you been right in de middle ob de fire talkin' to de ole debbil hisself. Don't see how you done it."

And Tom showed all his teeth, as a proof that he had enjoyed to the full the little comedy which we have just described.

"Don't talk so loud, Tom; there might be some one lurking around. We've done now, and we'll take a straight shoot up Hoover's gap and get to camp as soon as we can."

"Heard de Cunnel say dars a regiment just gwine up de Manchester road toward Hoover's Gap; dey gwine to ketch dat damned Quaker spy, dey say." And Tom grinned again, rolling up his eyes until nothing could be seen but the whites.

"Then we'll take the Shelbyville road, and run the risk of meeting Van Dorn. It's the best we can do."

They rode on for some distance, when Captain Carter's horse became frightened at some trifling circumstance, and in spite of all the efforts of his rider grew quite unmanageable. Rearing and plunging, he scorned the control of bit and bridle. Behold our gallant captain, then, laid sprawling upon the road, while Tom did his best to capture the frightened animal; since their safety might depend, before they got back to camp, upon the swiftness with which they could go.

"Is you hurt, massa?"

"Not much, Tom, I believe. I fell on my right shoulder pretty heavily, but I don't think there are any bones broken. I wish you'd go to that house at the top of the hill and ask them if they can keep us over night. I can't go on now, but I think I can in the morning."

Tom was off in an instant, and speedily returned to conduct his master to the shelter which had been cordially granted. His

hostess (for, as usual in war times, there were no men about the house) bathed his shoulder and prepared him a bed by the fire. How long he slept among her soft blankets and downy pillows he did not know; but it seemed only a moment before he was awakened by the noise of horses' hoofs in the yard below. A call aroused the people of the house, and a conversation ensued of which he could only catch such fragments as:

"Gen. Van Dorn—stay here to-night—give us beds—to-morrow morning—."

The reply was in so low a tone that he heard only an indistinct murmur that gave him no clue as to whether this was Gen. Van Dorn himself, or whether he was to be expected. He knew, however, that he was in very great danger, for if these were a portion of Van Dorn's command sent out to seek for the Quaker, he might be recognized, in spite of his second disguise. But whether Van Dorn were here, or had sent his soldiers to look for him, or these were a portion of another command, he resolved to trust to luck, and stay where he was. Fortune favors the brave, and it certainly was propitious in this case.

"Just walk into this room, sir, if you please; supper will be ready in a short time."

And the lady ushered him into the room where our bruised and battered hero lay. Reconnoitering through his half closed eyelids, the Federal saw that the new comer's uniform was liberally bedizened with gilt buttons and gold lace, the ornaments being arranged so as to indicate that the wearer held the rank of lieutenant-general in the Confederate army. Who it was, he could not tell; certainly—and he breathed more freely—not Van Dorn or Bragg.

"The gentleman on the sofa was thrown from his horse a short distance down the road, general, and asked me to give him shelter for the night. Had I known that Gen. Hardee was to honor me with a visit I would not have put him to bed in my sitting-room."

"I trust I shall not disturb him, and I hardly think he will annoy me. You are not acquainted with him, then? You don't know his politics or sympathies?"

Just at this juncture, as if in answer to the question, the supposed "planter" started up and cried:

"Run, Tom; take the horses and niggers down to the wood pasture and keep them there. The Yankees are coming."



Muttering, "Be quick about it, be quick, quick," he sank down upon the pillow again, all the time apparently fast asleep. The Confederate had paused to hear the order, and now turned to the hostess with a smile:

"'A man says when he is drunk what he thinks when he's sober,' and I reckon it's the same as to his sleeping and waking hours. I haven't any doubt about his politics now. The reason I had for asking was that there is a spy in our lines we're anxious to catch, and we naturally suspect every stranger. But he's all right."

If it were a relief to find that this was not Gen. Van Dorn, it was still a matter of anxiety that there should be searchers in the very house in which he had been obliged to take refuge. If questioned by them, what should he give as his residence? Whatever locality he might fix upon might be the home of one of the Confederates and thus be the very means of convicting him.

Whatever was to be done, must be done quickly. He lay upon the sofa apparently asleep, but really racking his brain to plan an escape, as the Confederate officer awaited his supper. At last the summons came, welcome alike to Confederate and Federal; and as the general followed his hostess from the room, the captain opened his eyes, to see the faithful Tom beckoning as wildly as he dared. Springing to his feet, forgetful of all injuries, he was soon at the side of the darkey.

"I'se got de horses all ready, sah," whispered Tom, "come out dis way. Dey'll be busy for some time yet in dar."

Tom had thoroughly reconnoitered the premises, and led his master safely out of the house, by way of a side door. As they passed under the dining-room windows, they could hear the clink of knives and forks, and the sound of voices—certain sign that they were not suspected. Fortunately, the absence of the injured man was not discovered for more than an hour; and by that time the two fugitives had far distanced pursuit. It was nearly midnight when they started, and not until the afternoon of the next day were they able to reach the Federal lines, and report the result of observations to Gen. Rosecrans.

In the meantime, curiosity had been rife amid his comrades as to what had become of Capt. Carter. They had discussed the matter in the various circles that make up the army, and not being able to discover any new facts by the light of their own under-

standing, determined upon inquiry; the private asked the corporal, the corporal asked the sergeant, the sergeant appealed to the commissioned officers of the company, they to the field officers of the regiment, until finally the colonel put the question to Gen. Thomas, who shamelessly disclaimed all knowledge of the captain's fate. Since Gen. Thomas, who said he did not know, did not ask Gen. Rosecrans, the inquiry stopped there; nor was any one the wiser about it until Capt. Carter's return to camp, when the following order was read to the regiment, assembled for parade as it had been on the evening on which our story opens:

"SPECIAL FIELD ORDER No. —

"Captain Carter, (—th Indiana Vols.) is hereby ordered to return to his command, and is recommended for promotion.

By order of

W. S. ROSECRANS, *Maj.-Gen.*

LIEUT.-COL. C. GODDARD, *A. A. G.*"

## CHAPTER XXV.

### ONE OF MOSBY'S RAIDS.

Affairs at Fairfax Court House—Disposing of the Pickets—The Meaning of It—Prisoners and Booty—A Narrow Escape—Different Statements.

IT was the night of March 8th, 1863. There was a Federal force encamped in the village known as Fairfax Court-House, Virginia, and the usual precautions had been taken to prevent a surprise; pickets were duly posted, though there was no countersign out; and the night bade fair to be unmarked by any other event than the relief of the guard at the usual time. It was a dark and rainy night, and as the sentinels paced their beats they wished that something might happen to take them "in out of the wet," it did not much matter what. But the hours passed slowly away; the rain still fell in torrents; and the tired guards still kept watch over their sleeping comrades.

Meanwhile, the event of the night was drawing near. That very evening a body of men had ridden away from a camp some miles distant, and had bent their course towards Fairfax Court-House. There were but thirty of them in all, including their leader; a man whose very name was yet to be a terror to small parties of Federals apart from the larger forces—John S. Mosby, then captain, afterwards colonel. They had timed their ride so as to reach their destination about midnight, but in the rain and the darkness they mistook the road, and lost two hours. It was two o'clock on the morning of March 9th, then, when they rode towards the Federal guards posted to the east of the village.

The sentry stood at his post, wearily wondering when the night would clear, and cursing the luck that put him on duty in such weather, when two horsemen were seen approaching.

"Halt! Who goes there?" he challenged, sleepily.

"I'll blow your brains out if you say another word," hissed one of the horsemen in his very ear.

There was just enough light for him to see that a pistol was pointed at his head at a disagreeably short distance; and as he turned slightly, he saw the same spectacle in another direction. He accordingly kept his eyes fixed, lest he should see the same thing again in this dreadful kaleidoscope, and answered never a word. His arms were demanded, and he gave them up without a sound of remonstrance or objection. The other pickets were disposed of in much the same way, their horses, arms, and accoutrements being carefully secured. This work, however, did not require the entire force; the detachment to which the duty had been assigned before setting out had engaged in it without hesitation, while the others rode on. Captain Mosby, with two of his men, sought out the headquarters of Gen. Stoughton, and ascended to that officer's apartment. Walking into the room where the Federal lay sleeping, the Confederate shook him by the shoulder with the summons:

"General, get up."

The rudely awakened man started up in bed, rubbed his eyes, resumed his dignity and severity of manner, and demanded sternly:

"What does this mean, sir?"

"It means that this place is in the possession of Stuart's cavalry, and you are a prisoner. Please dress quickly—I can give you but little time."

"Who are you?" asked the general in astonishment.

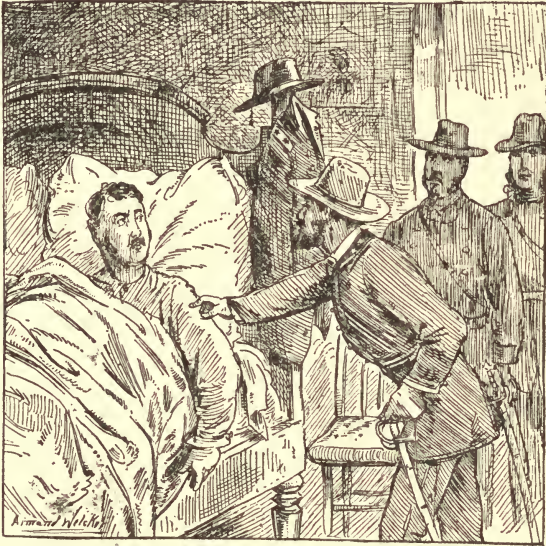
"John S. Mosby, commanding the force of cavalry that is at this place."

Mosby's name, even at that early day, meant daring and dash, but Stoughton never once supposed that he would be so foolhardy as to enter Fairfax with such a handful of men as he really had; and surrendered himself to the partisan. In other quarters, the Confederates were less fortunate. Col. Wyndham, who was acting-brigadier of cavalry, had, luckily for himself, started for Washington a short time before; but their visit to his headquarters was not without its results, for his aid, the Austrian Baron Vardner or Wordener, was captured, as were several fine horses. Capt. Barker, of the Fifth New York Cavalry, was also made prisoner, and thirty privates were taken. Col. Johnson, however, escaped capture by concealing himself under a barn. Five

minutes after securing this place of safety, a guard of three men was placed on the building; but they did not think of searching beneath it. The provost-marshal had just gone to interview one of the videttes, regarding horses and horse thieves, and thus was not found by the Confederates, who searched diligently for this important officer.

In order that the prisoners would not be obliged to walk, the Confederates helped themselves to horses from the officer's stables; fifty-eight in all, including those of the pickets, being taken. This capture of horses was of course solely on account

of the prisoners, who numbered thirty-three. A larger number of horses could have been captured, but the small size of the raiding force prevented it, as they feared to encumber themselves. The stores were all so protected that they could not be destroyed without burning the town, and this, for pruden-



*"What does this mean, sir?"*

tial reasons, Mosby wished to avoid. Such a measure would, of course, alarm not only the two hundred Federals who were in the town itself, and who, so quietly was the whole thing carried out, did not suspect the presence of the enemy, but would bring down upon them the two brigades, infantry and cavalry, encamped near by, as well as the two thousand troops at Centreville. Into such a hornet's nest had they deliberately plunged their hand.

Contenting themselves with the thirty-three prisoners, fifty-eight horses and the arms and equipments that they had thus easily captured, the thirty Confederates retreated; being in somewhat of a hurry, for they must be beyond the Federal lines

before daylight, and more than an hour had been consumed by the operations in the town. In leaving the village, they passed within two hundred yards of the fortifications at Centerville, and were hailed by one of the sentinels there; but they were not delayed, and they reached camp in safety with all their prisoners and booty, without the loss of one of their own number. Gen. Stuart issued a congratulatory order, warmly commending all who took part in the expedition for the daring courage and the executive power displayed.

Two statements in regard to this raid curiously illustrate the difficulties of the historian in obtaining correct figures. The first is from the report of the provost-marshal of the post to Col. Wyndham, commandant; the second, from a letter written by Capt. Mosby to a friend, and published in the *Richmond Enquirer* a few days after the raid took place:

“I am told by parties who had seen them that they were some three hundred strong.”

“I had only twenty-nine men under my command.”

We leave the reader to determine for himself whether the process used was multiplication or division.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### AN ADVENTURE OF PAULINE CUSHMAN.

Startling Advice—The Toast—Effect on the Audience—"Banished South"—Her Wanderings—Securing a Disguise—Setting Out—A Camp Fire—Friends or Foes?—Foes—Betrayed—Pursued—The Wounded Federal—Help—Captured—Scaring Her Captors—Escape—After Adventures.

"IF you will take my advice, Miss Cushman, you will do what they have asked."

"Col. Moore!"

"Of course, I know that you would not feel it; if I were not sure of that, I should arrest you immediately; but if you are willing to serve our country, do this."

"Willing to serve my country? I would die for it!"

"Die for it, if need be; if not, live for it. If you will only do this, you can do more real service than a regiment of men."

The scene was the provost-marshal's office at Louisville, in March, 1863; the speakers were Col. Moore, the provost-marshal, and Pauline Cushman, then known only as a popular actress, now more famous as a scout and spy for the Federals. The question which they were discussing was whether, in accordance with the request of some gentlemen, she should drink a Rebel toast in public that night. As soon as those who urged it upon her had left her, she hastened to the official, and on reporting the matter, was advised to drink the toast. Sending word to her friends that she would comply with their request, the news was soon all over town—at least, among those of Southern sympathies. For it must be remembered that while Kentucky and Missouri ostensibly remained in the Union, there was a large population in both states that was intensely Southern; and along the border generally, the feeling was even stronger than

in those parts of the country farther removed from the seat of war. Then, too, in a place situated as Louisville then was, with a large Secessionist population, but in possession of the United States troops, the dominant party was considered fair game, to be worsted in an encounter of wits or tricks whenever possible.

The theater was packed that evening, with an unsuspecting array of Union people and an expectant host of Secessionists. The moment arrived when the action of the piece required Miss



*Pauline Cushman.*

Cushman to drink a certain toast; it was given—  
"To Jeff. Davis and the Southern Confederacy!"

A moment's pause, and then broke forth the storm of cheers and hisses—a combination due, of course, to the peculiar circumstances. The play went on, after a considerable delay, and at last it was finished. Going behind the scenes when the performance was over, Miss Cushman found a

guard in waiting, to convey her as a prisoner to the provost-marshal's office. After some persuasion from the manager, they were, however, induced to postpone the execution of their duty until the next day.

Of course, the arrest was a ruse, and only intended to enable Miss Cushman to get the confidence of the Southern people about town. The authorities were aware that there were many persons in Louisville who supplied the Confederates with information and valuable stores; but it was done so adroitly that the guilty persons could only be discovered by some such means as this.

In accordance with the directions of Col. Moore, Miss Cushman behaved quietly in public, talking very little; but while in company with those whom she knew to be Southern in feeling, gave way to the bitterest denunciations of the Federal authorities, and the most violent admiration of everything Confederate.



In this way, she removed herself far from suspicion in the eyes of the Secessionists, while the Union people came to look upon her with hatred. Assuming various disguises, she brought to light many important secrets, and performed many valuable services as a scout.

At last, however, the provost-marshal informed the pseudo-Rebel that he could no longer tolerate her violent secession proclivities, and she was, in accordance with the custom of the day, banished from the lines. In reality, she was detailed by Col. Truesdail, Chief of the Army Police, to visit the headquarters of Gen. Bragg, and secure all information possible. The fact that she had a brother in the Confederate army would make it comparatively easy to do this, as under the pretense of looking for him, she could travel without suspicion from one camp to another, and would be most gallantly assisted in her search by the chivalrous soldiers of Dixie. Southward she went then, having been duly instructed in what to do and what not to do, and properly sworn into the service of the United States.

We need not follow her steps minutely in her journey to Gen. Bragg's headquarters, and, subsequently, in the rear of the Confederate army, as it moved into South Carolina. There is no lack of interest in the story, but it is eclipsed by the part which we propose to recount. Desiring to make her way back to Col. Truesdail at Nashville, she pretended that she wished to recover her theatrical wardrobe, in order that she might accept a proffered engagement in Richmond; she having been deprived of all her baggage in her banishment.

On her return, then, she had gotten nearly to Shelbyville, when the disturbed state of the country rendered it advisable for her to remain a few days at a small village called Wartrace. Only a day or so before her arrival at this place, there had been a pretty heavy skirmish there, and the country was full of scouting parties of both Federals and Confederates. Could she only fall in with one of the former, she knew that she could send much valuable information to headquarters; intelligence that, like griddle-cakes, would be of no use when stale. To openly communicate with them would be to forfeit all further chance of escaping suspicion; it must be done secretly, if at all.

The first difficulty was to secure a disguise. In Louisville, she had been well provided with a number of costumes, male and female, but, of course, it would not have done to take these with

her when she went South, for her baggage might be liable to search; and the presence of disguises would at once brand her as a spy. The matter was carefully considered, and after long cogitation, she hit upon a plan. There was a boy of about seventeen living in the house where she was boarding, and her quick eye saw that his clothes would not be a bad fit on her. But how to become possessed of them? He must, of course, know nothing about it; secrecy in every respect was essential to her safety; hence the meditated expedition must be undertaken and accomplished in one night—between the hour for retiring and that for rising.

She had decided what clothes she would wear, and she was not long in determining how to get them. Had she known the exact locality of his room, the task would have been easier; as it was, she knew only that it was, with half-a-dozen other bedrooms, in the upper story of the house. Tradition says that she made herself lovely in what the modest writer, taking refuge in French, would wish to term a *robe de nuit*; but not having been there, he can only repeat what others have said. The reader must know that even in this part of her plan disguise might be necessary, and in case any one discovered her roaming about the passages, she intended to play the leading *role* in *La Somnambula* for his especial benefit; though perhaps he would be kind enough to take her for a ghost, and run away without attempting to interview the dreadful apparition.

As we have said, there were several bedrooms upon this floor, and she did not know which was the one for which she was looking. Of course, to have entered the wrong one would have alarmed the house, and, in spite of her costume, perhaps have betrayed her. There was a moment's pause at each door, as she listened to the deep breathing of the sleepers within; trying in that way to decide which was the door to open. Having at last arrived at a solution of the problem, as she supposed, she touched the knob of one door lightly, turned it softly, and was about to swing the door open, when a voice from within cried:

“What do you want?”

“O, what's the matter with you?” growled another; “Lay down and go to sleep, do.”

“There's somebody at the door.”

“Well, get up and see who it is, and don't holler out that way in a fellow's ear.”

She had listened long enough to know that neither of these was the voice she had expected to hear, and hearing noises in the surrounding rooms which indicated that all the occupants had been disturbed, she glided softly into a small apartment whose door was near by, and which she had supposed, from the silence within, was untenanted. But the moonlight which shone in the low window told a different story; it revealed to her the form of the very person she was seeking, and, more important still, it showed her his clothes on a chair near the bed. Amid all the noise which the occupants of the other rooms were making, he slept on, in the heavy, dreamless sleep of youth. Possessing herself of the prize, she waited breathlessly until the tumult without should have subsided; then, gliding noiselessly out, she made her way to her own room.

The flowing white robe in which she had expected to play the part of sleep-walker or spirit was quickly discarded for the less beautiful, but more substantial garments of butternut jeans, and passing the ebony sentinel of the household fast asleep in the hall, she bent her steps to the stable, there to select the most promising horse for her purpose.



*A Midnight Visitor.*

It was the early summer-time, and the grass, not yet thinned and deadened by the heat and drought of July, formed a thick carpet over the ground, save where beaten paths and dusty roads formed street and sidewalk for the little town; for plank walks were a luxury reserved for the public square, and macadam was a thing unheard of. But the lack of a substantial roadway, which in March might have proved a drawback by reason of the mud, was an advantage in June; for her horse's hoofs

fell so softly upon the thick verdure that no sound aroused the sleeping citizens, in vague alarm lest the enemy were coming.

She rode somewhat cautiously until there was no longer any danger in that direction, and then, urging her horse to greater speed, went to work in dead earnest. Her difficulties were considerably increased by her ignorance of the movements of small bodies of troops in the immediate vicinity. She who could have told the Federal officials all about Gen. Bragg's army, was afraid of falling in with a Confederate picket.

Great caution was, of course, necessary, for if she came near any camp, she must not be perceived until she had reconnoitered, and found the soldiers were friends. The necessity for such careful proceeding was shown before she had gone three miles. A glow, other than the pale moonlight, lit up the woods; it was, beyond doubt, a camp-fire. That, of itself, was nothing; it might be friends, it might be foes. A reconnoissance became a necessity; so, dismounting, she carefully tied her horse, and crept noiselessly toward the fire.

Being under the necessity of sheltering herself from observation, she could not get near enough to the group to distinguish any marks of service to which they belonged. Here and there were visible the letters "S. A.," but by a strange fatality the first of the mark was hidden from her sight; it might be "C." or "U." In the fitful light of the camp-fire, and at such a distance, she could not distinguish whether their uniforms were blue or gray. Gradually and cautiously she crept nearer, determined to discover the character of the party before she revealed her own presence in their neighborhood.

As she crouched in the thicket, peering earnestly through the thick foliage which surrounded her, she heard them laughing and talking among themselves, unconscious of listeners.

"This is good liquor, and no mistake," said one, as he passed a flask to his nearest comrade.

"Pity that a fellow that carried such stuff as that about with him had the bad taste to be on the other side."

"Wal, I dunno about that. If he'd been one of us, I reckon he'd a finished it himself, before the enemy got a chance at it."

A guffaw followed this brilliant piece of wit—any joke is good when washed down with good liquor—and the conversation was resumed by the same speaker:

"'S long 's he was a good judge of whisky and had the ear-





G.A. FLETCHER

Guerillas in Camp.

marks of a gentleman, let's drink to his comrades. Here's to 'em, boys! May they all soon be with him!"

"And may we help to send them there—amen," responded another, in a tone of mock devotion.

"Tell you what, boys, that was a close shave, wasn't it now?"

"You bet it was; it was jist nip and tuck which should whip, us or the Yanks."

"Wouldn't mind one like it every day, so's we could git rid of as many Feds."

The last two speeches had solved the problem; it was a camp of Confederates, or, perhaps, of guerillas, and she must get out of their neighborhood as quickly as possible. Stealing cautiously towards her horse, a twig turned and snapped under her foot. Instantly one of the soldiers by the fire, more watchful than his companions, started to his feet and looked about him.

"What's the matter with you?" asked a comrade, looking up at the man, who stood peering into the darkness beyond the light of the fire.

"Didn't you hear that?"

"Hear what?"

"There's somebody over there."

"O, it's some innocent old cow; do sit down and—"

"It wa'n't no cow, Captain!"

This last word, in a somewhat louder tone, to attract the attention of the officer who sat on the other side of the fire.

"What is it?"

"There's somebody prowling about the camp, I think."

Instantly the order was given that each man should resume his heavier arms, which he had laid aside for greater comfort, and that the force should scour the woods until the straggler should be found. The words had hardly been spoken before the stack of arms beside the fire had been demolished and the men, now fully armed, were in the saddle. What had lately been a picture of rest after the battle became a scene of wildest confusion. Miss Cushman had hastened to her horse's side as soon as she saw that her presence was perceived, and hastily mounting, had dug the spurs into his side. But her pursuers lost as little time, and were soon within a few yards, mounted upon animals in as good a condition, apparently, as her own. Onward they flew, threading their way between the trees, bounding over the slighter obstacles which there was not time to avoid.

"Halt!" shouted the oncoming pursuers. "Halt! Surrender!"

But of this she had no notion. Again came the summons:

"Halt and surrender, I say, you d——d Yank."

As if to emphasize the order, a bullet whistled past her head; and, as she continued on her course, regardless of the summons, another and another musket were fired in rapid succession. Dangers thickened around her; if capture were perilous, escape might be worse; to ride into Wartrace with these men following her, would be to arouse the whole town; for they were yelling like so many devils let loose; and to be seen in her present costume by those who knew her as Pauline Cushman would be to reveal her character as a Union spy. She dared not, then, take the direct road to Wartrace, but must choose a more circuitous route, trusting to elude her pursuers somewhere on the way.

Galloping onward through the dense woods, where only here and there the moonlight could penetrate the thick foliage, and all else lay in black shadow, she came to a more open space, and horrified at what she saw, endeavored to check her horse. Before her lay a wide gully, with its sides rendered almost precipitous by the flood of water which in the early spring had foamed along it; but now, the raging stream had dwindled to a mere brook that rippled gleaming in the moonlight, in the lower part of its bed; and, a month later, would have disappeared. But it was not the rivulet which caused her alarm; true, had the water been level with the top of the banks which enclosed its bed, it might have added to the danger; as it was, she feared that her horse could not leap it, that she would be landed in the brook, and there captured.

But her horse, a blooded animal, entered into the spirit of the chase as fully as his rider. Trained as a hunter, he was not used to consider as obstacles anything less than a house or a tree. He did not, then, regard in the least her efforts to stop him; but maddened by the shots and yells of the pursuers, dashed on—on—to the very brink of the chasm that gapes to receive them—on—and with one mad bound the noble animal has cleared it and gallops free on the other side.

The pursuers had never quite lost sight of her, and at this moment they are in full view. One raises his musket.

"Don't fire," calls a comrade; "the boy and horse deserve to escape—they're both so plucky."

"D——n their pluck," replied the other, as the bullet sped on



its way; "'tain't the right kind; it's the Yankee article, not our'n."

"Yank or Secesh, I'll be darned if I feel like chasing him any more."

"It's a good thing, seein' as none of us has got a horse that'll take the gully."

"Tain't that, but ——"

"Come on, boys; here's a bridle path to get down, and one on the other side. Don't lose so much time."



*Nearing the Chasm.*

"Thought you wa'n't going to chase him any more?"

"Have to; orders."

"For my part, I can't see no pluck in runnin' away; seems to me there's a little more in fighting."

"One wouldn't be anything against us."

"That's mighty true; but then, hunting's right good fun; that's why I took to the bush."

As we have seen, the guerillas had lost considerable time in finding a way by which they could cross the gully, and their proposed prey was many hundred yards in advance of them—far out of sight. Wishing to rest her horse a little, she allowed him to fall into an easier pace than that with which she had started, and rode quietly along, seeking for a road by which she might re-

turn to Wartrace without danger of pursuit. She came to a spot where the grass was trampled as with the hoofs of many horses, where the dust beneath was, here and there, caked into a strange, reddish-brown mass by the action of a liquid, where there were small holes in the trunks of the surrounding trees, such as Nature had not put there. It was an open space in the forest, once beautiful, but now, as the ghastly moonlight showed her practised eye, a skirmish ground but recently used. Confirming this suspicion, a groan met her ear. Hastily dismounting, she went towards the spot whence it proceeded, and found there a Federal soldier, badly wounded.

"How did you come to be here? Are your comrades near by?" she asked, as she tenderly raised his head.

"Don't know where they are. There was a skirmish here this afternoon between our squad and some bushwhackers; but I don't remember anything after I was hit. Who are you?"

"A friend. Can I do anything for you?"

"I am afraid not; I ought to have my wounds attended to, but it would take a surgeon to do me any good."

"Will you help *me*?"

"Help you? Why,——"

"Listen; have you ever heard of a woman who is scout and spy for the Army of the Cumberland?"

"Pauline Cushman? I've heard enough of her to fill ten books. Why," said the wounded man, kindling into an enthusiasm that made him forget his pain, "that woman is the idol of the army."

"Will you help me? I am Pauline Cushman."

"You? O, I'd die for you."

"No need of that, I'm glad to say. Now, I started out to get some information to our army, but have been chased by some Rebels, and I must get back to Wartrace before day, or all my work will be lost, and I shall be hanged. It will be impossible for you to escape, so I want you to pretend that I wounded you again."

"I'll do anything in the world for you, ma'am."

"That is all I can ask of you. Now be sure and stick to your story."

And depositing him gently upon the earth again, she rose to her feet, and rapidly fired her revolver three or four times.

"What's that for?" asked the soldier in surprise.

"Some of these shots wounded you," she replied, gravely.

"Now don't forget the part you are to play. Good-bye."

And springing on her horse, she was off like a flash. The shots, while carrying out her plan more perfectly, had served her a bad turn, for they guided the bushwhackers directly to the spot where the skirmish had taken place.

"Hello, there, who are you?" asked one, drawing rein beside the wounded Federal.

"I surrender, sir. I was wounded in the skirmish to-day, and just now a boy that rode past shot me again. Maybe you heard the shots."

"What did he shoot you for?"

"He seemed to think I was one of a party of our men that had been chasing him."

"Aint you a Fed?"

"Well, I guess so."

"And he said the Feds were chasing him? I reckon you've got things a little mixed, haven't you? Here get on your horse, and come along."

Slowly and painfully the prisoner was mounting, when two or three of the others, who had gone on, came riding back with another captive, who was no other than Miss Cushman.

"Here, captain, we've got him."

"You d——d Yankees," muttered the boy, as if in impotent scorn.

"What's that he says?"

"He's swearing at his Yankee friends."

"Friends!" broke in the boy; "I hate you worse'n p'ison; you're no friends of mine, you abolition Yanks, you."

"Why, who do you think we are?"

"Aint you Feds?"

"Feds? Well, I reckon not. Did you think we were?"

"'Course I did. That's why I run."

A hurried consultation was held.

"Is this the boy that shot you?"

"Yes, sir."

"What did you shoot him for?"

"Why, you see, I thought it was one of you, and I thought I'd keep him from following me or telling which way I went."

"Well, you talk all right, but I reckon you'd better let us escort you home. You needn't be afraid of us; we're good Secesh. Ask this fellow if we ain't."

"Durned if I don't believe you're the very man that shot me in the fight to-day; I know I took aim at you," said the Federal.

"Well, that's all right, all in the way of business. Come, boys, mount and fall in."

Away rode the little cavalcade, with their two prisoners; for Miss Cushman, of course, could hardly be considered anything else. As she rode on, she revolved many plans of escape, but even her busy brain could not hit upon one that appeared feasible. Under pretense that her horse was very much exhausted, she frequently fell behind the main body, hoping to ride off in another direction as soon as they were sufficiently far in advance of her. But this plan was frustrated by the vigilance of her captors, who would never permit the desired state of affairs to be accomplished.

She soon found, by the conversation carried on among them, that they were indeed bushwhackers, men who were unauthorized to fight for either side, and who, if captured by either party, could expect only a short shrift and a hempen necktie. Just at present, it suited them to be on the Confederate side, and they had possessed themselves of several articles conspicuously marked "C. S. A.;" but when these might be exchanged for others marked U. S. A., the advance and success of the Federal army must determine.

As was natural to men in their position, they were very much afraid of being captured, or even of being attacked by any but a very small number. The woodland road along which they were now riding was here and there bordered by thickets which would afford excellent opportunity for an ambush, and the guerrillas were fully aware of this. As they approached and passed one of the suspicious spots, Miss Cushman could see that every precaution was taken to prevent a surprise from the rear, and speedily determined to take advantage of their fears to escape.

As they drew near one of the densest of these thickets, she allowed her horse to fall into a walk; by this means, she was enabled to lag several yards behind the squad. They had just reached the middle of that part of the road that would be most exposed to a fire from a party ambushed in the thicket, when, drawing her revolver, which she had been enabled to reload before her capture, she emptied all the chambers in rapid succession. Her expectations were most beautifully fulfilled. Not stopping to see who had fired the shots, but taking it for granted

that there was a considerable body of Federals near by, they dashed off as rapidly as their horses would carry them.

We may believe that she lost no time in making use of her opportunity. Striking off through the woods in the direction of Wartrace, she reached that place a short time before daylight. Having carefully removed all traces of his midnight journey from her steed, she next proceeded to divest herself of the suspicious attire; and once more a white spectre ascended to the room where slept the owner of the clothes, and carefully deposited them on the chair from which they had been taken. The owner had not awakened since he first sank into slumber early in the night; and, of course, had not the slightest suspicion of the stirring scenes through which his wearing apparel had been carried.

There were literally no traces of her adventure remaining; for, gifted naturally with a peculiarly hardy constitution, she had seen too much service as a scout to permit one night's work to wear her out; and when the inmates of the house met at the breakfast table that morning, there was not one who found Miss Cushman less blooming and brilliant than usual.

Of course, there was nothing accomplished by her night's ride. She had failed to communicate with a Federal scouting party, which she desired to use as the means by which to send the information she had gathered to headquarters; but of actual service to the Government there was, in her career, no lack. We have not the space, however, to follow her as she penetrates the secrets of the Confederate generals; as she is suspected, brought before them, convicted as a spy, and sentenced to be hanged; as they reprieve her out of pity for her condition, when she is enfeebled by disease; and finally, as her guards retreat before the advance of the Federal army, and she is once more safe, and in the hands of her friends. Hers was indeed a history that embraced many stirring adventures, and hers was a name well known to every man in the Army of the Cumberland.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### A DARING RESCUE.

A Mysterious Hero—Seeking Danger—Stirring News—Friends in Peril—Reconnoissance—The Journey—A False Alarm—Outside the Jail—In the Jail—Keys of the Cells—A Single-Handed Attack—The Keys Secured—Release of the Prisoners—Retreat—Pursuit Eluded.

**A**MONG the many who did good service as scouts and spies during the War was a Georgian, known only by the assumed name of John Morford; for sectional spirit ran so high in those terrible days that the relatives of a devoted Unionist or Secessionist were often violently persecuted by the neighbors who held different views; and since his home was in a Southern State, and his services done to the Federal government, Morford assumed the name by which he was generally known. Indeed, his own has been well-nigh lost in the stories that are told of him.

He was attached to the command of Gen. Rosecrans when, in the spring of 1863, he went from Murfreesboro to McMinnville, and operating from the town as a base, performed several important tasks. One of these was the burning of a bridge, over a neighboring creek; a piece of business which he managed so cleverly that no one suspected him of having a hand in it; and which he afterwards discussed with the citizens as coolly as if he knew no more about it than he pretended to know. But times were dull in McMinnville after the talk about the bridge-burning had died away, and there seemed to be no prospect of anything similar; so he bent his steps towards Chattanooga. But affairs seemed to be as dull in Chattanooga as in the other towns, and he had all but made up his mind to go farther when he found that by such a course he might fare worse, as is proverbially the case.

By faring worse, he of course meant the failure to meet with adventure. Danger, excitement, opportunity for serving the cause which he had espoused, these were as the breath of his nostrils; he felt that he could not live without them. But to Chattanooga came the news that three Federal scouts were confined in the jail at Harrison, Tennessee, and were to be shot on May 1st. He began at once to plan a rescue, and soon had the train laid.

There were plenty of Union men in town, but not all of them could be relied on for dangerous work; had they been more courageous, they would have been, like him, engaged in active service. One was found, however, to go to Harrison and find out various particulars which must be familiar to those who should undertake the enterprise, such as the name and character of the jailer, the number and disposition of the guards, and the general arrangements of the jail. But though it was difficult, it was by no means impossible to find men possessed of enough courage and ability to assist in such an undertaking; and by the time that the messenger returned, there were nine ready to follow Morford to the rescue of the condemned scouts.

They left Chattanooga on the night of Tuesday, April 21, 1863, proceeding very cautiously; for to awaken suspicion in the minds of the Confederates would be to thwart their plan entirely. Of course, the very fact of such a party journeying from one place to another in those days was sufficient to provoke remark, so they traveled mainly at night; concealing themselves in caves and thickets of the Tennessee mountains during the day. They of course knew men in the surrounding country to whom they could safely apply for information, and from these they learned on Wednesday, that the guard of the jail had been greatly strengthened, as the jailer had heard that a rescue was intended. This filled them with dismay, for they feared that the reinforcements would be more than equal to their own party; and, after all, the success of their enterprise depended, in a great degree, upon taking the guard unawares.

But the man who furnished this information was known to be particularly "scary," as were many non-combatants on both sides during the war. Many a country village has been left to the women and children at the approach of a force of cavalry which turned out to be a drove of cattle; and in one instance that we know of, the advance of a load of hay over the prairie

produced similar results. Since their informant, then, was hardly to be relied upon, they resolved to reconnoiter again. Accordingly, the same man who had acted as a messenger in the first instance, went to Harrison Wednesday night. Their distrust of the judgment of their friend was not unjustified; for the scout returned on Thursday morning with the information that there was no extra guard; that there were but two, besides the jailer, as before; that there had been no alarm of a rescue, so far as he could ascertain; that the guard did not appear to be particularly on the alert, as they would have been if there had been any such report.

But discouraged by the delay, and fearing that the unwelcome news might prove true, four of Morford's men had returned home, leaving only six, including himself and the messenger, to carry out the undertaking.

Late Thursday afternoon they left their hiding-place and went by different paths to the river; loitering about until dark, they hastily repaired to the rendezvous appointed, where they found the leader, with two boats that he had procured in the neighborhood. Crossing the river, and concealing the boats until their return, they took the road to Harrison. They entered the town and approached the jail without difficulty, there being evidently no soldiers in the place.

"There are two gates in the board fence around the jail; S—, you will keep guard at the one on the east side, and L— at the southern one. J— will be the prisoner that I am to put in the jail. The other two must stand in the jail-yard as if they were part of the escort."

Such were the leader's instructions. The sentinels having been thus duly assigned to their posts, he, with the other three, entered the jail yard and rapped loudly at the door. The dim light that was visible inside the building became brighter as a window was raised.

"What do you want?" called the jailer, as he thrust his head through this opening.

"I have a prisoner in charge; will you receive him?"

"Wait a minute, and I'll open the door."

In a moment he had admitted Morford and J— into the entry; but something alarmed him, and with the words, "Just wait a minute, will you?" vanished outside the door. Morford felt no alarm at his absence, for the sentinels had been posted at the gates



for the very purpose of preventing the escape of the jail officials or any one else who could give the alarm to the Southern men in the town; but when ten minutes had passed, he began to wonder what kept the jailer so long; he ended by investigating, and found that the sentinels, contrary to orders, had permitted the fugitive to pass.

"We'll have to be in a greater hurry, then," said Morford; "for there's no telling when he may be back with help."

Returning to the building with his prisoner, he roused the jailer's family.

"I can't wait for the jailer to come back. I've got to get this man out of my hands and get back to camp. Can't you get me the keys?"

"I would give them to you, sir, if I had them or knew where they were," replied one of the women.

"Where are the guards?"

After some hesitation, one of the women designated a room in which a guard was sleeping. To this the two men went.

"Get up? I've got a prisoner here and want the keys."

"I'm not the jailer."

"Get up and get the keys, I tell you. I know you're not the jailer."

"I'll be d——d if I get up. Get the keys yourself, the best way you can."

"I have a prisoner here that—"

"Confound you and your prisoner! Let him go, and then you won't be bothered with each other."

"Where are the keys?"

"Ask the women, if the jailer ain't here. They'll know."

Nothing more could be gotten out of him, evidently, without a resort to force; this they were unwilling to do, as they did not wish to betray their real character until the unfortunate scouts were safely out of their cells. They accordingly went again to the room where they had seen the women.

"You must let me have the keys, madam. I don't know when the jailer will be back, and I must be in camp again as soon as possible."

"I am very sorry, sir, but—"

"The guard says you have the keys, or know where they are, interrupted Morford, in a firm voice; "please get them for me."

The tone in which the words were spoken made the question

sound more like a command, and the jailer's wife answered:

"I can give you the key of the outer room, but have not that opening the cells. Here is the key of the outside door."

Morford took it as she offered it, and unlocked the door she indicated. He found himself in a long room, or rather corridor, along one side of which was a row of cells constructed of wrought iron, in such a way as to resemble cages more than anything else. In these he saw the three condemned scouts, one other white man, and a negro. Determined not to reveal his true character until he had succeeded, he began to abuse these men roundly.

"D—n your sneaking Yankee tricks; I've a notion to hang you now, and not wait for next month."

"You have no authority," began one of the prisoners, in a mildly argumentative tone, as if he would reason with the savage Rebel before him.

"O, to h— with your authority. What does it matter to you whether you're hanged with it or without it, so you stretch rope? Get me the keys, I say."

"I have told you, sir, that we have not the keys, and do not know where they are."

"Get me an ax, then, and be quick about it."

"There ain't any ax about the place."

Morford, seeing that they were determined to resist him as far as possible, decided that he would have his orders obeyed, and that without delay. Collaring a boy, a son of the jailer, he drew his sabre, and thundered out:

"If you don't get an ax in two minutes, I'll cut your head off."

The boy was off like a shot, as soon as Morford let go of his collar; and returned with the ax in less than the time specified. But the Federal had hardly begun to cut at the lock when he was startled by the command, "halt!" at one gate. Ax in hand, he started out, followed by his prisoner.

"What is it, L—?"

"I've halted an armed man just outside the gate, sir."

Walking out to where the new comer stood, Morford asked:

"Where are you going?"

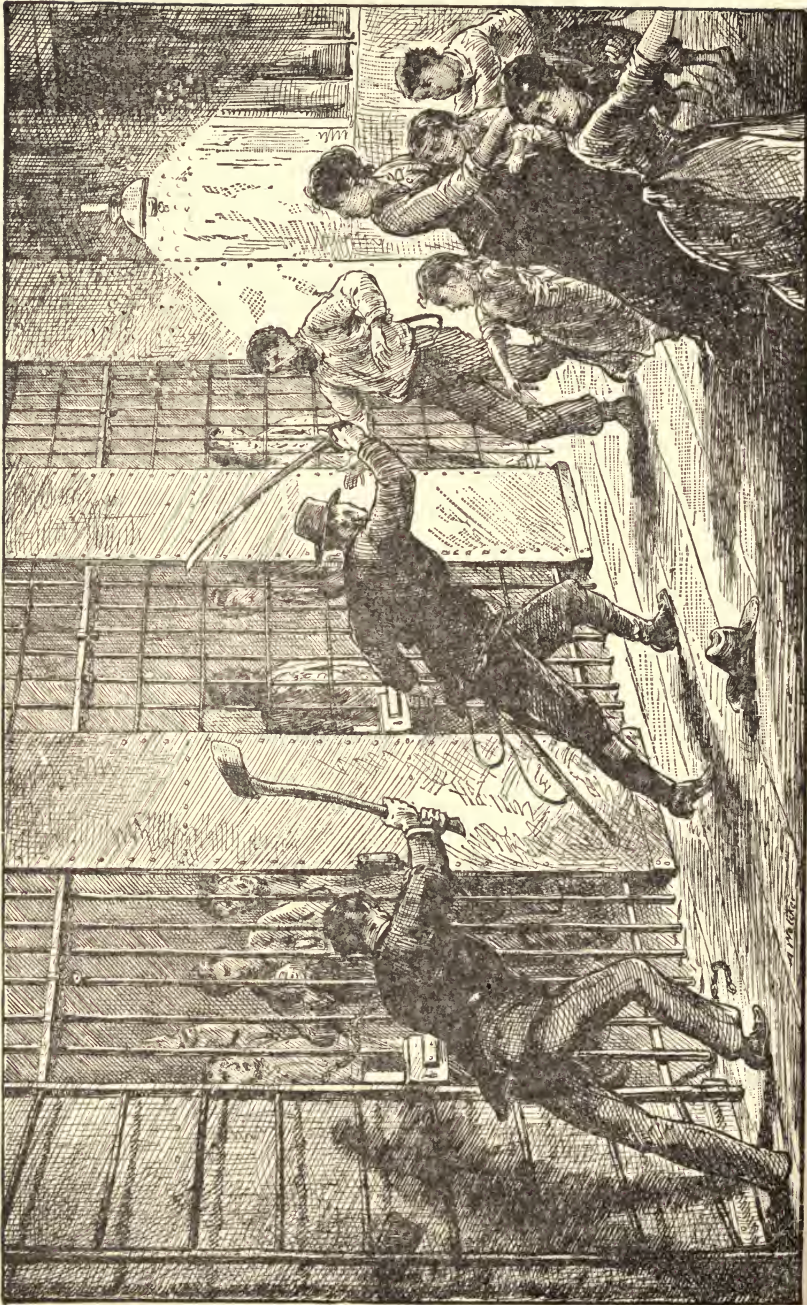
"Where is the jailer? The messenger said you were breaking down the jail."

"What messenger?"

"One that just came out."

"Well, what are you going to do about it, if I am breaking





down the jail? Suppose I carry off the whole jail, what then?"

"I am going to stop it, if I can."

As he spoke, he raised his gun, but Morford was too quick for him, and grasped the barrel.

"Let go of this gun," was the Federal's command, "or I'll give orders to my men to shoot you."

But the stranger vouchsafed no reply in words; every muscle was strained to wrench the gun from the other's grasp. Morford, without relaxing his hold on the weapon, drew his sabre and brought it down with a heavysweep upon the other's neck. The wounded man, drawing back as he felt the blow, lost his hold of the carbine, and Morford began to search him for other arms. He recovered himself, however, in a moment, and with desperate strength tore himself away. Morford followed, firing his revolver as he ran. Five shots were heard, but only three took effect, the most serious wound being in the fleshy part of his arm. He succeeded, however, in reaching the hotel, which was kept by his brother, and bursting in the door, sank down exhausted.

The hotel-keeper came out as soon as his brother had made known the state of affairs, together with several men who were in the building; and Morford soon found himself the centre of a crowd.

"If you want to guard the jail you'll have to be mighty quick about it," he replied, fiercely, to their muttered threats; "I'm going to burn that, and the town in the bargain."

With white, set face and blazing eyes, he strode forward; the crowd fell back before him, and unmolested, he returned to the jail.

"Cheer, boys, cheer," he cried; then added in a lower tone: "Make them think there's a company here."

The order was manfully obeyed; and the six men made as much noise as ten times their number would have made under ordinary circumstances. Frightened at the idea of such a large force in their midst, the townspeople scattered to their homes; the streets were deserted; lights, which might be guides as to where to shoot, were extinguished; darkness and silence reigned everywhere, except in the jail.

There, everything was in confusion. The character and purpose of Morford and his party were now unmistakable; and the women and children huddled together in a frightened group as

the Federal hacked away at the burglar-proof lock on the door of the cells ; while he and his party felt themselves encouraged by the uncontrollable joy and gratitude of those whom they were about to release from "durance vile."

Half an hour passed, and at last the lock gave way ; only to reveal, however, that the door was a double one, the inner being secured by a similar lock, and by three heavy log chains. Blow after blow from the brawny arm of Morford was rained upon these defenses ; and in a few minutes the chains hung idly on the doorposts. But the lock still remained.

"Bring me the key without any more fooling, or I'll murder every one of you," he said, sternly, to the women, who were cowering near.

"The key ain't here," called the guard, who was still in bed.

"Get up out of that bed," was Morford's reply, in such a tone that the guard dared not disobey.

As he approached, Morford struck at him with his sabre, more for a show of ferocity than for anything else ; but the man was too far off, and the blade struck one of the children, barely drawing blood, so slight was the cut. But it was enough to produce the desired effect. The children screamed with terror ; the women stood with white faces and trembling lips, expecting momentarily that the Federal would fulfill his threat of murdering them all. Seeing that they would no longer dare to withhold it if it were indeed in their possession, he again demanded the key ; which was produced without the slightest attempt at further delay.

Words cannot describe the scene which ensued when he flung open the door, and set the condemned scouts free. And yet it was but simple. A grasp of the hand, a few broken words, a suspicious brightness of the eye—

"For hearts must speak, though the lips be dumb"—

that was all ; and Morford turned to make arrangements for the retreat. One of these men was armed with the gun which was wrested from the hotel-keeper's brother, and all were provided with the clothes and other property which had been taken from them when they were captured. Then the whole party made the best of their way to the river, and seeking out the boats in which they had crossed, were soon on the other side.

The danger was by no means over. By morning of the following day, by noon at the latest, the whole surrounding country

would have heard of the rescue, and all the Southerners would be on their track. The boats, then, were carefully concealed in a wisely selected place; they would probably be found, however carefully hidden, and they were so placed as to give the pursuers the impression that the pursued had taken an entirely different path from that really chosen. Bending their steps, then, to the mountain fastness which had sheltered them before the attack upon the jail, Morford and his men lay quietly there while the surrounding country was being scoured by the Confederates, anxious to capture both the condemned men and their rescuers.

The chase was finally given up, and the huntsmen returned in disgust, supposing the game had reached a safe covert. When they found that this was the case, Morford and his men issued from their hiding-place, and journeyed as rapidly across the country as human endurance would permit.

Once, at least, their chance of escape seemed anything but a good one. Their presence becoming known to a body of Confederate cavalry, they were pursued, fired on, and nearly surrounded; escaping only by scattering, each man to some hiding-place well known to himself. The cavalry force encamped for the night, and threw out pickets; but made wise by their previous experience, the Federals remained in their places of concealment until the Confederates, baffled by their mysterious disappearance, moved on.

Collecting his scattered men as soon as it was safe to do so, Morford proceeded to Murfreesboro, which was reached in safety on the very day on which the scouts were to have been shot.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### A PRISONER'S NEWS.

A Friendly Chat—An Unwilling Listener—Exciting Tidings—His Resolve—Circumstances Favoring His Escape—His Departure—Asking Aid—The Guide—Progress Under Difficulties—The End of the Journey—What Was Saved.

“GOOD morning, colonel; fine morning, sir.”

“Yes, it's the season for fine weather—the middle of May. You are out early to enjoy it.”

“Yes, I believe it is only a few minutes after sunrise. There seems to be a good deal of stir in the camp this few days past. The state of the weather favors military operations, I suppose.”

“Yes, we are guided to some extent by the state of the weather, though not so much as our grandfathers were. They went into winter quarters, and we fight all the year round; that's the difference.”

“Well, here in Mississippi, there isn't much need of going into winter quarters, anyhow. But all these men that are coming here look right fresh, considering their steady fighting and scanty supplies.”

“Yes, they're ready for work, and the best of it is that the work is ready for them. There's a nice little expedition in view.”

“Ah! A reinforcement for Vicksburg?” asked the civilian; for it was in 1863.

“No, we'll only help Pemberton indirectly by cutting off Grant's supplies. Our spies and scouts have brought us word that a large commissary train is to leave Grand Gulf to-morrow, and we intend to attack that. Kill two birds with one stone, you know—keep Grant from getting the supplies, and secure them for our own use.”



“You must have had the information sometime ago. The troops have been coming in for several days past.”

“Oh, this movement is only one of a series. We’re concentrating here for the purpose of waylaying all his trains. There are ten thousand men here.”

Such was a portion of a conversation which took place at Port Gibson, on the morning of the 16th of May, 1863. The speakers met on the veranda of the hotel, and conversed in ordinary tones, not suspecting how eagerly their words were drank in. They had not noticed that they stood very near a window, only the shutters of which were closed, nor did they know that in that room lay a wounded Federal officer. Suffering severely, he slept but lightly and uneasily; the first murmur of voices outside his window had awakened him; he tried in vain to compose himself to sleep again, while the chat went on; but when the Confederate officer (for such he evidently was) began to inform the civilian regarding the next day’s expedition, he had no wish to go to sleep again; he must not lose a syllable. He raised himself on his uninjured arm and leaned forward, anxious to catch every word. There was but the information which we have set down, and the talk turned to other subjects, which had no interest for the wounded man.

Some two weeks before the date at which our story begins, the Confederates had charged upon and captured a train. Much to their disgust, the five wagons turned out to be ambulances, filled with wounded Federals. The comrades of the wounded prisoners were in great excitement over the capture, and eager to rescue them. A force of three hundred men, under the command of Col. Clark Wright, of the Sixth Missouri Cavalry, was sent out for this purpose; the main force of the Federals being at Rock Spring, forty miles from the point where the seizure had taken place. Starting at dawn on the 6th of May, Col. Wright’s command reached the Confederate camp at Oakland College, near Rodney, the same evening; and drove in the enemy’s pickets. The Confederates retreated; but only, as the Federals soon learned, to secure reinforcements and advance again. The Missourians accordingly took ten prominent men of the town as hostages, and, to avoid being surrounded, fell back to Port Gibson. Their retreat was not unmolested, though the march at night through a broken country was not, at best, an easy one, and the pursuers were as tired as the pursued. Continual skir-

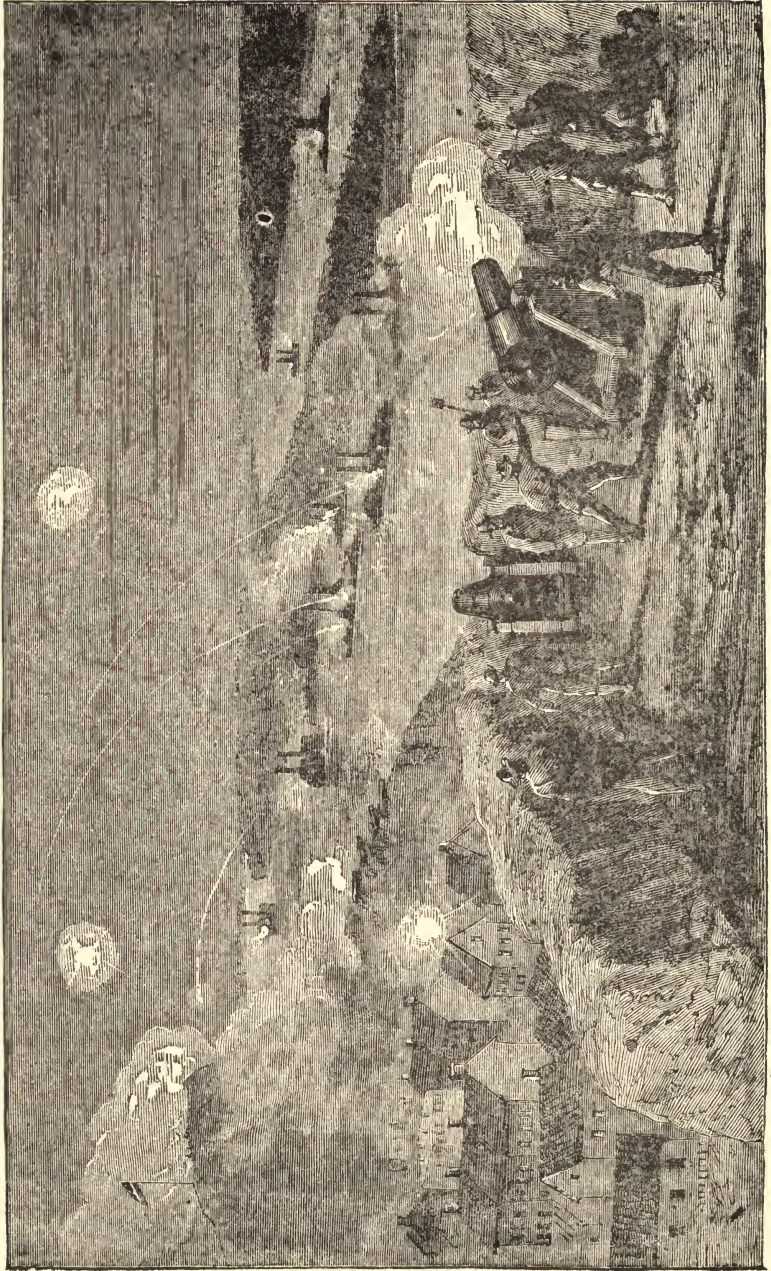
mishing was kept up until they reached the town, about 2 A. M.

During this running fight, Major Kiernan had been severely wounded in the shoulder and thrown from his horse. He was transported to the town with as much gentleness as circumstances would allow, and left in charge of his orderly and a nurse. The next day, however, the Federal force retreated in such haste to a hill beyond Bayou Pierre that their wounded officer was left to the tender mercies of the enemy. Fortunately for him, he fell into good hands. For often, during the War, narrow-minded men became suddenly elevated to a power which they did not know how to use, and the Government which placed them in such positions was held responsible for the abuses committed. The captors of Major Kiernan, however, were made of other stuff. His orderly and nurse, of course, were not permitted to remain with him, but the place of the latter was immediately supplied by an equally efficient person. "He was very kindly attended by a Confederate surgeon," says a contemporary Northern newspaper; which, to say the least, was not apt to ascribe too much credit to Southern humanity. Twice he was offered a parole, but both times he refused. As he was quite disabled by his wound, however, there was no very strict guard kept upon him; the visits of the surgeon being the only surveillance to which he was subject.

But ten days had passed since he was shot, and although he was still far from well, the conversation on the veranda had quelled the sense of pain, had dulled the perception of danger, the remembrance of the distance that would have to be traversed—everything but the intense desire to reach the Federal headquarters at Grand Gulf and give notice of the contemplated attack in time to save the train. He rose and dressed himself as well as he could, with his wounded shoulder. Fortunately, the nurse, seeing him safely asleep at midnight, had left him for much needed rest, and would not return for two hours more, at least; so that there was no one to wonder at his sudden activity. The early hour was another circumstance in his favor, for but few of the guests or employes of the hotel were as yet stirring. He descended to the ground floor, meeting no one but a negro chambermaid; and, save in very rare cases, the Federals could always depend upon the fidelity of the colored people.

Nor was there any one to stop or challenge him as he left the building, and made his way through town. Unacquainted with





*Passing the Batteries at Vicksburg*

the country immediately around Port Gibson, what he most dreaded was losing his way. Guidance of some kind must be secured. He dared not address any white person, or even let himself be seen by one; for even if such a person were not a strong Secessionist (and it was but one chance in a hundred that he would not be), fear of the consequences, or an ignoble desire to curry favor, might induce him to secure the suspicious inquirer. Day was rapidly advancing, and he must be out of town before his absence from his room was discovered; he must be off the public streets before they were thronged with citizens and soldiers.

In this state of affairs, he bethought himself of the source whence aid so often came to those in similar situations—the colored people. He had not much difficulty in finding a little cabin occupied by a family of these friends in need.

“Hi, daddy!” he called, to an ancient “uncle,” who was busily at work in a confused mass of rude and humble household goods, with which the front yard was filled.

“Good-mawnin’, boss,” was the respectful answer, as the old man dropped his work and advanced towards the soldier, pulling the lock of gray wool that hung upon his retreating forehead.

“I’ll come in,” the officer continued, suiting the action to the word; “I want to see you privately.”

“Lawdy, massa, ’taint a berry nice place fo’ you to come in, fur we’s agwine ter move, an’ de tings is all ebery which way.”

“Never mind that. Do you know who I am?”

“I spec’s you’s a Fed’ral soger, sah; ain’t you now?”

“Yes, and I am a prisoner, or at least was,” answered the officer, determined to throw himself at once on the old man’s mercy; “will you help me to get away?”

“Goramity, massa, I’ll tote you on my back cl’ar to General Grant’s headquarters ef you says so.”

The earnestness of the old man’s profession was so totally at variance with his decrepid old age that the officer, anxious and suffering, could hardly suppress a smile.

“No need of that,” he answered, in a kindly tone; “but I want you to show me a path by which I can get out of town without being seen by any white people. Can you do it?”

“O, yes, sah; dat’s *easy*. But you wants to go pretty fas’ now?”

“As fast as I can.”

“Ef it’s all de same, dar’s my son Jim what’s more activer dan

I is, sah ; I got de rheumatiz so bad dat I jist hab to hobble along. I'll call him, sah."

Jim was summoned, and readily undertook the task of guiding the prisoner. Major Kiernan had passed the more public part of the town before applying for this aid, wishing to expose his guide, whoever it might be, to as little danger as possible ; for it would be dangerous for a colored person to be found guiding a Federal prisoner back to freedom. Their route, then, lay by

and among the houses to which a considerable portion of open ground was attached ; and by making their way through backgardens, far from the windows of the houses, and partially concealed by trees and shrubbery, they could gain the outskirts of town unobserved. At last they were fairly into the country, and Major Kiernan, after learning the



*Seeking a Guide.*

route that he must take to reach Bayou Pierre, dismissed his guide with many thanks and a suitable reward. On through the brush, then, he pressed, the sun his only compass by which to direct his course.

The stream, sluggish and turbid, like all the manifold branches of the Mississippi, was reached at last. Swollen by the spring rains, it was too deep to wade through, and he was too badly disabled to swim across. With some difficulty he loosened a half-decayed log, which had become partially imbedded in the soft ooze bordering the stream ; and armed with a rude pole,

which he found a few yards off, he managed to cross the stream.

But with the passage of the stream, his difficulties were by no means ended. He found that the camp on the hill to which Col. Wright had retired from Port Gibson, had been abandoned. He was not unprepared for this; even if Jim had not informed him of it, he knew that it could not be held with so large a force of the enemy at so short a distance; but as he toiled painfully onward, and still there were no signs of his comrades, he felt almost disheartened. Weakened by pain and fever, nothing but indomitable will sustained him, as, now through marshy forests, now through thick canebrakes, he made his way. Every step was hard labor, for often his foot would sink almost to the ankle in the soft and slimy ooze; and the effort made to release the one would, of course, but sink the other deeper. Mile after mile he journeyed, until it seemed so many hundreds. Yet he dared not, he could not, he *would* not give up the the undertaking, so difficult of execution.

He began to look forward to the end of his journey as the child, at midsummer, looks forward to Christmas; half with disbelief that it will ever come, half with dread of the long ages which must first pass. Wearily, wearily, he dragged himself on. The fever which had coursed through his veins was leaving him now, and a terrible weakness was succeeding it. Yet he must, he would go on. At last his tired eyes caught the glimmer of the sun on something white; far off, indeed, but still a hope; though he half fears that his imagination, his very sight, is playing tricks upon him. But no; the white spots slowly grow larger as he presses on; at last they assume a definite shape, familiar to the soldier's eyes; he sees the tents of the Federals at Grand Gulf, eight miles from Port Gibson.

The sight, or rather the certainty that his eyes have not deceived him, puts new vigor into his limbs, and he hastens forward as if he were neither wounded nor wearied. But when the necessity for exertion ceases, when he is in the presence of the Commandant of the post, words fail him in which to tell that for which he has undergone so much; he falls, fainting to the ground. They revive him, and press on him every attention; but although they would sooth him to rest, he must tell his story; nor will he be satisfied until informed that all necessary precautions shall be taken to save the train from capture. His self-devotion was not forgotten, but rewarded in the manner

dearest to the soldier's heart—the praise of his superior officers, and a more substantial recognition in the shape of a recommendation for promotion.



## CHAPTER XXIX.

### A BLOCKADE-RUNNER'S FATE.

A Volunteer Messenger — The Captain at Last — A Tempting Prize — Yankee Shrewdness — Outnumbered, but Victorious — A Collection of Johnnies — Destruction of the Cooper — A Hundred Men to the Rescue — Only They Didn't Get There — The Penalty of Being Good-Looking.

“HALLO, Pomp, what's the matter with you?”

The speaker was a midshipman on board the United States steamer *Shockokon*, a vessel of the blockading fleet stationed off Wilmington, North Carolina; the person addressed was an ancient negro who was making every effort to reach the ship by means of a small row-boat; the time was an evening in August, 1863.

The old man rested a moment on his oars, and lifted his ragged hat in answer to this speech.

“Oh, I suppose you want to come on board,” remarked Mr. Middy; “well, seeing it's you, I'll let you.”

He watched the old man, as he clambered painfully up the side, with a look of intense superiority. Nor was this expression altered when the newcomer stood respectfully before his Middyship.

“Ef you please, sah, is you de captin'?”

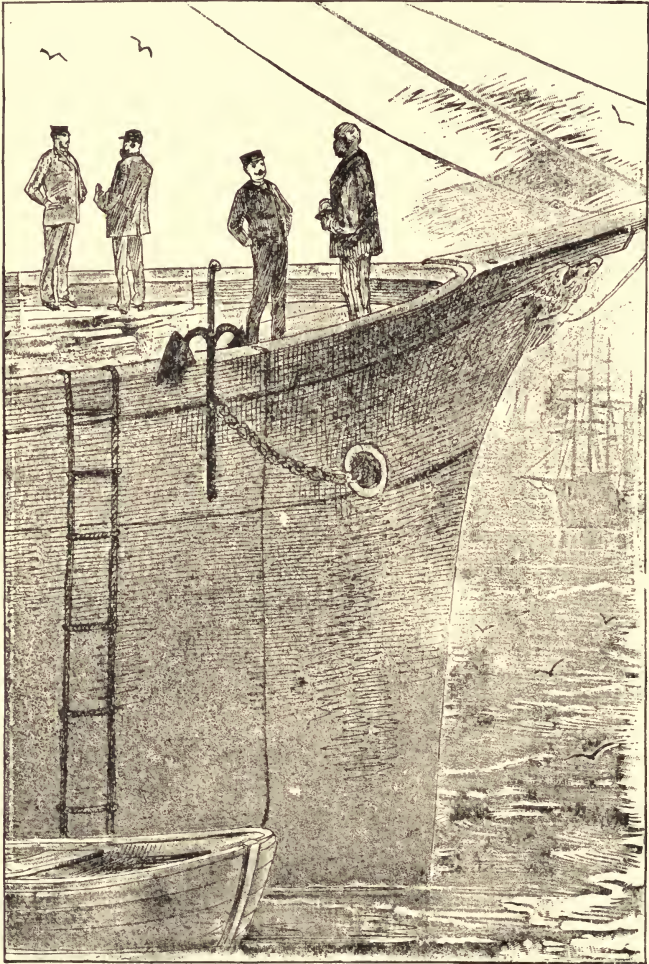
“Well, no, not exactly; do you think I look like the captain?”

“I dunno, sah; I neber see l him, sah; but I'd like to see him now, ef it's quite conbenyent, sah.”

“I don't know that the old man is on exhibition at this time of the day,” returned the midshipman, facetiously; “what might be your business with him this evoning, Pompeius?”

"Hit mout be somefin' of importance, sah," replied the colored man, looking as if he felt his communication of great moment.

"And then again, hit moun't," rejoined the youth, mimicking the old man's dialect." Come, tell what it is, and I'll tell you if it will be necessary to bother the captain about it."



*"Leave your address, Pomp."*

But this condescending offer did not produce the desired result.

"Hit's somefin the captin 'ud like to know about, and I've jest come free miles to tell him of hit."

"Kind of you, I'm sure, and I know that the captain will be very much obliged to you when I tell him of it; I shall certainly let him know that you've been here. Leave your address, Pomp, and I'll send you word when to call again."

The poor old fellow looked quite bewildered by all this brilliant and delicate raillery, and stood twirling his brimless and almost crownless hat with an air of painful uncertainty.

"I—I dunno, sah, but I'd kinder like to see the captin'; becuz, sah, you see, I've got somefin to say to him—somefin 'ut mout be important," he stammered in reply; his voice becoming steadier as he recollected that he could make use of the imposing word with which he asserted his right to be heard, even by the captain.

"The old darkey is mighty close about this important business of his," thought the middy; "and I guess I'd better quit chaffing him; it would raise no end of a row to send him away, if he really should have something of importance to tell."

Thus reflecting, but dreading the laugh which would most certainly be against him if the sable visitor's business should be of no more dignity than his appearance argued, he concluded to shuffle the responsibility upon another pair of shoulders, and with due gravity informed the dusky visitor that the officer standing yonder was the captain.

Nothing doubting the truth of this assertion, the old man addressed himself to the officer in question; who, by the way, was a beardless ensign.

"Ef you please, sah, dar's somefin I t'ink you'd like to know about, sah," began the badgered darkey, humbly.

"Maybe there is," returned the ensign, good-naturedly; "what is it that you have to tell me?"

"Hit's about a Secesh ship, Mas'r Captain, ut's a layin' to up Popsail Inlet; and I t'ought mebbe you'd like to ketch her."

"I am not the captain," replied the ensign, "and he is the one who ought to be told of this. Wait until I come back, and I will go and see about it."

So at last the bearer of intelligence was permitted to behold the greatest of all potentates, the commander of a man-of-war on the deck of his own vessel. The midshipman's trick, which the ensign explained to him in reply to his many expostulations, had rather unsettled his confidence in the statements of naval officers, however, and it was with much difficulty that he was induced to tell his story. Divested of the protestations that he

would tell it only to the captain, it was substantially as follows :

The *Cooper*, a Confederate merchantman, which had several times eluded the vigilance of the blockading fleet, was lying at a certain point pretty clearly indicated by the negro, up Topsail Inlet, an arm of the sea a short distance above Wilmington. Her crew were on leave, the enormous wages paid to seamen by the masters of vessels engaged in this dangerous business being supplemented by many privileges. The vessel was guarded by a force of Confederates, who were engaged in making salt, and a short distance from the schooner was a larger force. But, like most of his race in those days, their informant could tell them nothing definite and reliable about the strength of these two forces. There was "a right smart chance" of men at the other camp, by which expression he meant the one last mentioned ; but there were nothing like as many salt-makers. The negro had heard it reported that the *Cooper* expected to make the run for the open sea somewhere about the end of that week.

Captain — was on the alert at once to devise some plan to make sure of capturing the saucy schooner. The mouth of the inlet was of course too wide to be completely blockaded by his single vessel, and the others of the fleet had each its appointed station. To call them to his assistance might be only to give some other Confederate a chance to elude them ; for many such a false alarm had been raised with that end in view, and the old negro might be only a cunningly instructed decoy, who had at heart the interests of his masters rather than those of his liberators. Besides,

"The fewer men, the greater share of honor."

The position of the camp of the larger body was such that the commander of the *Shockokon* felt assured that an attacking party could flank it without too wide a detour, and made his plans accordingly. A sufficient force to overpower any such body of men as it would be reasonable to suppose would be engaged in making salt, was ordered to advance up the inlet ; a careful reconnoissance having failed to ascertain anything definite about the strength of the schooner's immediate guards. But the Confederates were not to be thus caught napping ; the Federals had hardly got fairly into the inlet before a battery, cunningly masked in the thick cypress woods that clothed the swampy ground, opened upon them. The presence of these guns had been entirely unsuspected by the Federals, and their force was wholly unable to cope with an enemy so protected. They therefore re-

turned to the Shockokon, and for several days nothing was done on either side.

Of course the Cooper, knowing that she was closely watched by at least one vessel of the blockading fleet, made no effort to put to sea; and the attitude of the two antagonists was that of simple waiting. But this could not last long; time was too precious to be thus wasted, and it was unbecoming in a vessel of the blockading fleet to be unable to bring an enemy to terms whose location was known. Something must be done, and that at once.

It was decided to resort to strategy. Any attack from the southward would be received by the masked battery or some similar defense; but an enemy from the other direction would be unexpected, and therefore more likely to succeed. But how was this to be accomplished, since they had no reliable guide to pilot them through the marshes surrounding the Confederate camp, and there was no entrance to the inlet from the north?

Yankee ingenuity had solved the puzzling question. Running up to a point on the outer coast a few miles north of that on the inner one where the Southerners were known to be, the Federal made his arrangements for the attack. Two boats were to be sent, each manned by six men, under command of an ensign. One of these parties was to act merely as a reserve force, in case the other should be driven back to the boats; the other was to surprise the Confederate camp.

The coast had been carefully reconnoitered during the day, and a landing place selected. As night came on the air grew sultrier than ever, and the clouds, which at sunset had been banked in the west, had overspread the whole sky. The night was intensely dark. Through the blackness the two boats set off from the ship, the oars muffled, lest by some unlucky chance an unfriendly ear should hear them and alarm the Confederates; and so great was the disparity in numbers that the only hope of the Federals lay in the unexpectedness of the attack.

A later reconnoissance had been so far successful as to give the officers of the Shockokon an accurate idea of the strength of the enemy—about twenty-five men were at the wharf to which the schooner was moored, and a force of one hundred and fifty men at the lower camp. To send seven men against nearly two hundred seems the rankest foolhardiness; and indeed, it was an interesting question. what part the men at the lower camp would

take in the conflict; but the commander relied upon the Confederates becoming demoralized by an attack coming from a direction in which they fondly imagined themselves safe; and he knew that the men sent upon this risky errand were not likely to fail.

At the point where they landed, a neck of land not more than a mile in width forms the boundary between the waters of the inlet and those of the open sea; the narrowness of the barrier being the chief reason for the selection of the landing-place. Leaving one boat drawn up on the beach here they carried the other across the neck, and launched it in the inlet. This task being accomplished, the reserve force returned to its own boat, to await the coming of the others; while the attacking party rowed down the inlet.

The Confederates, relying upon the patrol which the officer in command at the lower camp had promised to maintain, had set no guard of their own. But this officer, lulled into fancied security in regard to attack from any direction except from the south, had not thought it worth while to extend his watchful care so far to the north. Unobserved and unhindered, then, the little force of Federals silently approached the camp.

The Confederates, oppressed by the heat, were dispersed about the camping-place in considerable disorder. The Federals approached the landing-place unheard, and disembarking noiselessly, stole toward the camp. The first intimation the blockade-runner's guard had of the presence of an enemy was the stern call to surrender. They sprang from their resting-place on the earth, bewildered and wholly uncertain as to the strength of the attacking party.

Meanwhile the Federals had striven to conceal the weakness of their force by scattering among the Southerners, so that the latter, finding themselves apparently surrounded by a foe of unlimited numbers, had no recourse but to yield. Some of them, it is true, had prevented such a consummation as far as they individually were concerned, by taking to their heels as soon as the state of affairs was discovered. A few shots were fired, but in the darkness it was impossible to take aim, and they buried themselves harmlessly in the trunks of the surrounding cypress trees. It was but a few moments after their landing that the Federals found themselves in possession of the camp.

The victors argued that the men who had so hastily retreated

were probably privates; that the officers in command of the force had no doubt remained at their post, and endeavored to defend their trust. Ten men had been captured, and now stood in sullen submission; among them, their captors felt assured, were the leaders; and while their numerical weakness rendered it unwise to attempt to take all their captives with them to the boats, they must secure those of most importance. But they wore no insignia of their rank; how were the Federals to distinguish between the two grades?

Some pine-knots cast a fitful light over the scene, revealing to the mortified Confederates how small a body of men had triumphed over them; and this illumined the face of one to whom the ensign in command now turned.

"What is your name?"

"John Smith," was the prompt answer; which seemed to excite some interest among his comrades.

"What is your rank?" again asked the ensign, not deigning to notice the little ripple of suppressed merriment, but speaking with all the sternness which he could command.

"Neither general nor drummer boy," replied the *soi disant* Smith.

The ensign turned from him · evidently this prisoner did not mean to reveal his identity.

"What is your name?" he asked of another.

"John Smith," returned the second Confederate, as promptly as his comrade had replied.

Even by the uncertain light the Confederates could see the astonished look which the ensign, in spite of himself, turned upon the two men who had been interrogated, and the last speaker replied to it:

"Oh, we're all genuine Johnnies, every one of us."

"Are there any officers present, sir?" inquired the Federal, in a tone of stern dignity. He saw plainly that the prisoners were in hopes of being rescued by a force from the lower camp, which the fugitives must be very near by this time. Every moment was precious to him, and of this fact his prisoners were as well aware as any one.

"There are, sir," replied the Secessionist addressed, the same who had been first questioned.

"How many?" demanded the ensign.

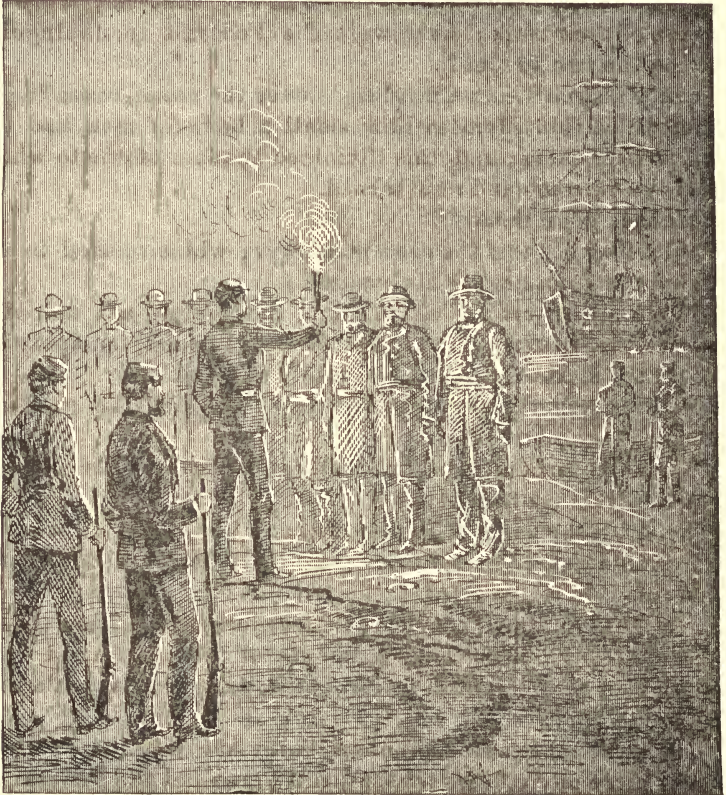
"There are three," was the answer, the speaker looking

around him to assure himself of the accuracy of his statement.

"Will you point them out?" was the next question; to which the equally terse reply was returned unhesitatingly:

"I will not."

Having no time to lose, the ensign spent no more of the prec-



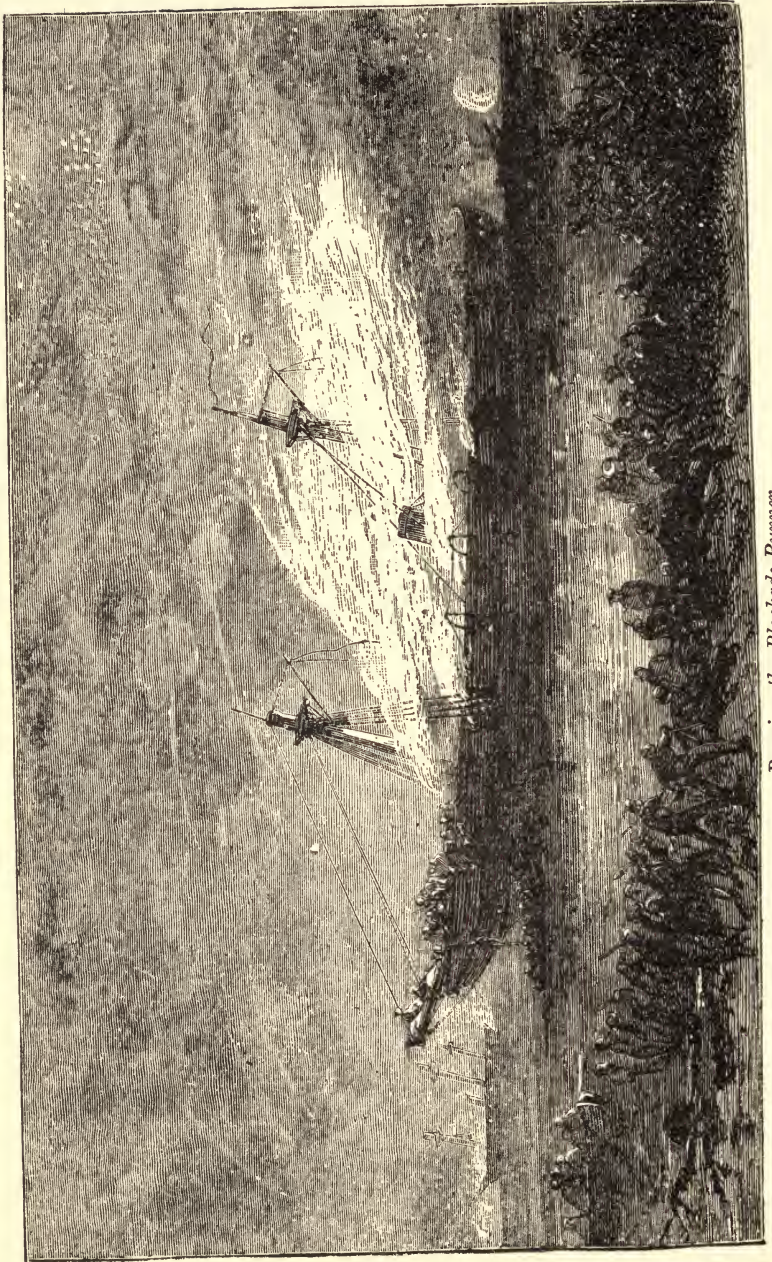
*"We are all genuine Johnnies."*

ious moments in interrogating his prisoners, but ordered them to stand up in line. As they obeyed, he took a lighted knot in his hand and scrutinized each one closely. As a result of his examination, he selected three of them, as looking the most like officers. These were to be taken to the Shökokon as prisoners of war, the remainder being paroled.

"There is no time to be lost, men," said the ensign to his subordinates, as soon as this vexatious question had been thus settled.







*Burning the Blockade-Runner.*

“R—— will remain in charge of the prisoners who have not been paroled; L—— and H—— will go to the wharf, and see that the salt works are fired beyond the possibility of saving them after our retreat; S—— and M——, you will accompany me on board the schooner.”

The men set to work as directed, and a column of smoke soon arose from the salt-works. The ensign's party, proceeding to the vessel, found that it would be impossible to get the schooner out, and the blockade-runner therefore shared the fate of the works. In order to destroy this harbor of the Rebels as completely as possible, the wharf was also fired. The guns on board the Cooper were spiked, and the carriages destroyed. In an incredibly short time, the Confederate property at this point was a total wreck.

But these operations had consumed time; the escaping Southerners had probably reached the lower camp by this time, and given the alarm to the large force there. True, the main object of their errand had already been accomplished; no human power could quench those ever-rising flames; and as if heaven itself smiled upon their efforts, and refused to send its rain upon the fire, the clouds had now cleared away, leaving the sky a deep clear blue. But though the schooner and other stores of the enemy had been destroyed, the Federals had not yet fulfilled their whole plan; they must return to the ship, with the prisoners whom they had taken.

But though the commandant of the lower camp had been criminally negligent in his failure to maintain the patrol as he had agreed to do, he lost not a moment when the tidings came of the Federal attack. The flying soldier who came first from the scene of disaster, could scarcely tell whether the attacking party had come by land or water; nor were those who had followed him much better informed. The salt camp had been surprised—of that much they were certain; but no farther information was to be obtained from them.

Although he could ascertain no details, the mere fact that there had been such an assault was sufficiently alarming, and he hastily aroused a hundred men to rescue the prisoners, and endeavor to save the schooner and her surroundings. The march was a forced one, for to them, as to the Federals, every moment was precious. With what chagrin and dismay they beheld the huge columns of black smoke, with here and there a shooting

tongue of flame outlined against the clear sky of the summer night, may better be imagined than described. They could not save the property of the Government, but it would be a wonderful consolation to catch the destroying vandals.

Meanwhile the Federals had worked rapidly, and were safe in their boat and upon the waters of the inlet. They were not a moment too soon, for, as they rowed away from the land, they could hear distinctly the measured tread of a column approaching from the south. It could only be from the lower camp, the anxious Federals and no less anxious Confederates assured themselves; and the bluecoats bent to their oars with renewed energy.

Meanwhile the column from the lower camp had reached the scene of the late bloodless combat. But every boat had been destroyed along with the Cooper. To pursue by land was impossible, for the marshy ground to the north of them was too soft to bear the weight of any number of men. Besides this, the retreating force would of course reach the shore long before they could hope to do so, and, without a boat, they could do nothing.

The baffled Confederates therefore gave up the chase, and returned to the lower camp. The little body of Federals, having so narrowly escaped their numerous pursuers, returned as they had come, and rejoining their comrades upon the beach, put off from the land which had seen such a daring venture. They had been completely successful except in one particular, and that a minor one.

When the captain of the Shockokon came to question the three Confederates who had not been paroled, they owned to being known by other names than John Smith; and his inquiries as to their military rank were answered more exactly than the ensign's had been.

"Are you all privates?" he asked, in some surprise, as he heard the various statements.

"Yes, sir," returned one of the number, with a meekness never surpassed by Moses; "the ensign who commanded the attacking force was considerate enough to parole all the officers of our party."

And he added, *sotto voce*, but quite audibly to his comrades: "That's what we got for being good-looking."

## CHAPTER XXX.

### CAPTURE AND ESCAPE OF MORGAN.

The Partisan—The “Marion of the West”—Different Opinions—Reasons for Raid—First Triumph—Called Back—Second Start—In Kentucky—Capt. Hines’ Scout—A Warm Reception—Marauding—General Scare—Rapid Marching—High Water—Lessening the Force—Surrender of Morgan with Remnant of Command—Securing the Prisoners—Ohio Penitentiary—“Old Man Hevay”—The Prisoners Ride the Guard’s Hobby—The Tunnel Begun—A Second Guard Taken in by Flattery—Reconnoissance Made Possible—A Prize in the Shape of a Spade—Tunneling—Necessity for Haste—A Brother’s Devotion—Outside the Penitentiary—Was there Collusion?—A Traveling Companion—The Escape—Discovered—Morgan’s Death.

THE partisan is naturally the hero of song and story. So much of the romance has been taken out of war, by the constant improvement in weapons, that it shows, more than ever, its more terrible side. When each man marked his antagonist; when each individual victory was the result of personal courage and skill; when the result of the battle was made up from these individual victories and defeats; then, there was that about war which could inspire the lay of the minstrel and furnish the epic poet with a theme beautiful, although in that very beauty there were elements of the terrible. But now, when the mark is often but a dim grayish line, there is nothing of the wild impulse which drives men to fight when opposed by an enemy; it is simply obedience to the orders of a general who thinks about as much of his privates as the chessplayer thinks of the elephant from whose tusks his pieces were made.

But the partisan comes into actual contact with the enemy—penetrates to his camp, carries off his messengers, intercepts his scouts, and often pays the penalty of his daring by becoming a prisoner. Such was Marion during the Revolution:

*Capture and Escape of Morgan.*

“The band was few, but true and tried,  
 The leader, frank and bold—  
 The British soldier trembled  
 When Marion’s name was told.  
 Grave men they were by broad Santec,  
 Grave men with hoary hairs,  
 Their hearts were all with Marion,  
 For Marion were their prayers.  
 And lovely ladies greeted them  
 With kindest welcoming.”

Such is the estimation in which the partisan is held in his own country and among his own people. The opinion of his enemies is often different; widely, and it may be, in case of capture, painfully different; but with that, save for the purpose of correcting the extravagant praises and the incredible achievements related of the Ranger, we have but little to do. We speak only of the admiration which thrilled the breast of the colonial New Englander in the days of the French and Indian War, when Putnam’s name was mentioned; of the South Carolinian, in the Revolutionary days, when the praises of Marion and Sumter were sounded; and of the Kentucky Rebels of the recent War, when Hayne sang:



*Gen. John H. Morgan.*

“Hath the wily swamp-fox  
 Come again to earth?  
 Hath the soul of Sumter  
 Owned a second birth?”

and added, by his song of “The Marion of the West,” a new lustre to the already famous name of John H. Morgan.

As we have intimated, the question of this soldier’s merits has been differently decided by the two parties, friends and foes; but as time goes on, and the bitter feelings pass slowly away, men of the North are more ready to recognize that his was a peculiar genius, particularly adapted to the kind of warfare he chose. His method was irregular, violating the established rules, but still supported by the broader principles on which

those rules are based. In the condemnation of him by the stricter officers, we must take into account the fact that he occasioned them much trouble. Such was the rapidity and unexpectedness with which he moved that he has been compared, by a recent writer, to the Irishman's flea—"I put me hand roight on him, and, begorra, he wasn't there!" But after two years of learning in that dearest of schools, the Federal cavalry began to take in the lesson which the old plainsman stated thus, as applied to one case:

"Whar thar ain't no Injuns, thar you'll find 'em thickest."

They began to fight Morgan with his own weapons; to look for him where he was least likely to be; to guard every point; to be continually on the alert; and at last their efforts met with the due reward, so long wished for, so often despaired of, and only attained by hard labor, incessant care and much loss of life. How that capture was effected, and the efforts the gallant Kentuckian made to escape, it shall now be our business to narrate.

It was early in the summer of 1863. Gen. Bragg, whose army lay around Tullahoma, knew that he could not long hold that position, and would soon be compelled to retreat before the advancing forces of Gen. Rosecrans; while Gen. Buckner, who commanded a small body of men in the eastern part of Tennessee, would be driven southward as soon as Gen. Burnside should march upon him. But this was not all. The retreat must be attempted, but there was but little hope that it could be accomplished with a reasonable degree of safety; on the contrary, there was much danger that the army would be cut to pieces.

Of all the officers engaged in the War, in either army, there was, perhaps, none who excelled Gen. Bragg in the skill and judgment with which he used his cavalry. On this occasion, he saw that a vigorous demonstration in Kentucky made by this arm of the service would engage the attention of the Federal generals sufficiently for him to retreat unobserved. Accordingly, Gen. Morgan's command, long regarded as invincible, was ordered out for the purpose. The leader, bolder even than the general commanding, desired to make the raid yet more extended, and crossing the Ohio, penetrate into the very heart of Indiana and Ohio. This, he urged, would create so much terror in the states thus invaded that all the troops in that section of the country would be sent after him; and even if he and his men

should be captured, the benefits to the South would far outweigh the losses.

But while Bragg fully appreciated the generous courage which prompted the offer, his prudence would not permit him to accept the proposition. He gave Morgan *carte blanche* to go wherever he would, south of the Ohio, but peremptorily refused all permission to cross it. But though the orders were plainly stated, the subordinate resolved to commit that offense, unpardonable in a soldier—disobedience to a superior. To his second in command, Maj. (afterward Gen.) Basil Duke, he expressed his determination to cross the Ohio, and make the horrors of the War felt in the North as they had been felt in his native state.

The plan, indeed, was one that he had long nourished; and fully three weeks before the time of which we speak, he had ordered intelligent and reliable men to examine the fords of the upper Ohio. Nor was he alone in his desire to penetrate into the enemy's country, to "carry the War into Africa;" for at this very time, the officer who stood deservedly at the head of the Confederate Army was advancing into Pennsylvania toward Gettysburg.

It was the 11th of June when the division, consisting of a little less than two thousand five hundred men, set out from Alexandria, and marching to the Cumberland crossed it not far from Rome. The main body encamped near the pike, while a detachment was sent some two or three miles forward to intercept a mail train. In that disturbed section, it was necessary to protect the mail carriers, and in this case, a guard of eighty or ninety men had been detailed to insure the safety both of the messengers and of the several sutlers' wagons which accompanied it. Many times had such a train passed on its way unmolested, and on this occasion no danger was anticipated. Had it been, a braver guard would probably have been chosen; for this turned and fled in the wildest confusion as soon as the Confederates fired; not a shot being returned.

Such was the first triumph of Morgan's invincible command (for so it was considered) on this its great exploit. It seemed to strike terror into the hearts of those who would have stopped his progress, for no opposition of any account was met with until the 2d of July. In the meantime, the necessity of intercepting a Federal raiding party which had made its way into East Tennessee and was threatening Knoxville, had obliged Gen. Morgan



to recross the Cumberland, and retrace his steps for some distance. But, retarded by a local rain which rendered the roads impassable for their four pieces of artillery, the Confederates did not arrive in time for any real work. On this 2d of July, then, during the great battle of Gettysburg, which was to drive Gen. Lee from Pennsylvania back to Virginia, Morgan's division again recrossed the Cumberland, this time, at two unimportant points, a few miles from the southern boundary of Kentucky.

The river was unusually high, owing to those very rains which had so lately retarded their progress; and Gen. Judah, in command of the Federal forces in the vicinity, supposed it impassable. It was, indeed, a dangerous thing to attempt; the stream had risen high above its ordinary level, and foamed and fretted and rushed along like a mountain torrent. Nor had they boats fit for their purpose; two or three small canoes, and two rickety flat boats on which, in ordinary circumstances, no one of them would have trusted a dog for which he cared, were the only means of crossing which had escaped the vigilance of the Federals. But necessity knows no law, and having come thus far, they were not the men to give up the task they had undertaken. While they crossed the raging stream in these crazy crafts, the enemy, secure in the notion that the river was utterly impassable, had not even posted videttes to give information as to the movements of the Confederates.

Vain security! Delusive hopes! Judah had hardly become aware that Morgan had accomplished what he had thought impossible, before a portion of the gray-coated cavalry had charged upon a body of his command and driven it back to the main encampment on Marrowbone Creek. But it would require too much space to detail their Kentucky fights; a bare mention must suffice. Columbia was taken on the third, while Col. Moore, who had thrown up fortifications at the bridge where the road from Columbia to Lebanon crosses Green River, found the national anniversary an unfortunate day on which to oppose Morgan. Elsewhere will be found a hint of the way in which the Confederate leader discovered that Louisville would be an unhealthy place to visit; so after three Federal regiments had been encountered and defeated some five miles from Lebanon, on the fifth, and Bardstown had surrendered on the following day, the division marched in a direction northwest-by-west, to the Ohio River; striking that mighty stream, at a point some

thirty miles southwest of Louisville, measured in a bee line.

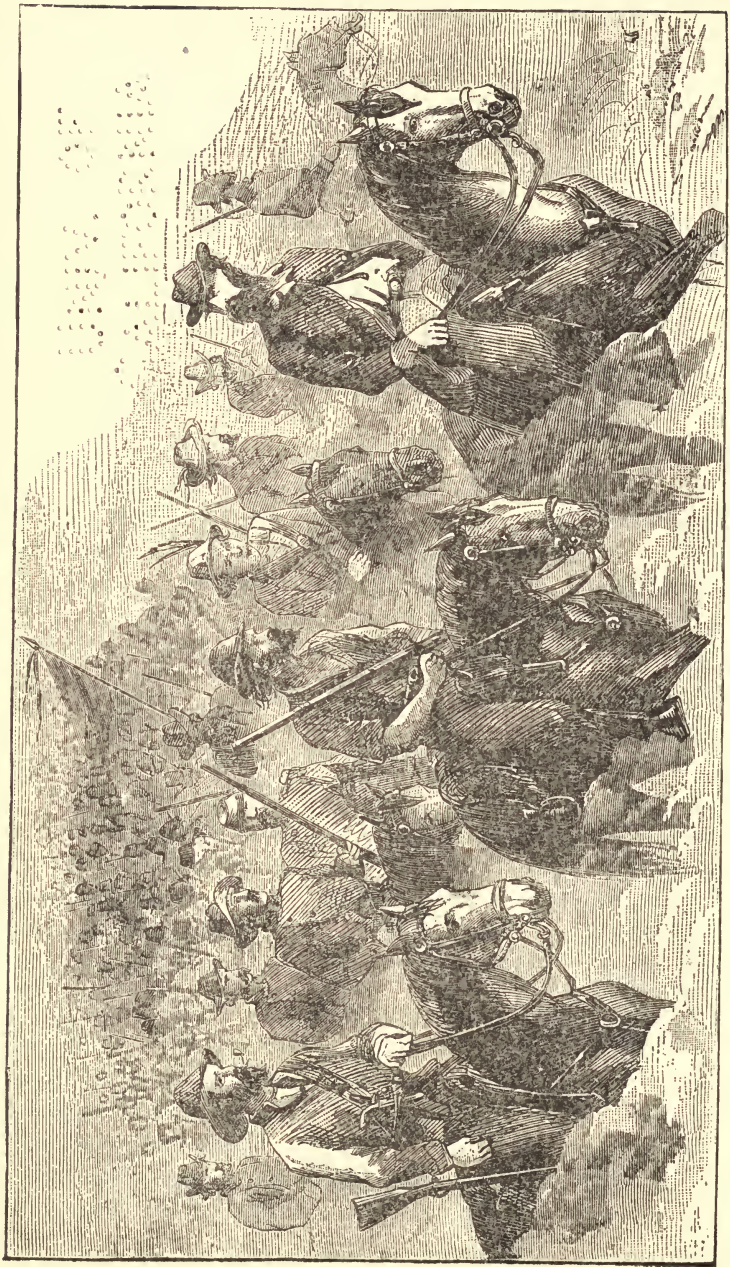
All this time, of course, the Federals were not idle; but Hobson's command was following Morgan as closely as the great raider's speed and unexpectedness of movement would permit. But the blue-coats were full fifty miles behind when the boys in gray reached Garnettsville. It has been said that Morgan crossed the Ohio to escape from this officer, who was in command of all the cavalry of Judah's division; but a sane man would rather "bear the ills he has than fly to others that he knows not of;" to leap from the frying-pan into the fire is the act of a very foolish fish indeed; and the absurdity of this theory is the best answer to it.

Captain Thomas H. Hines had, some two months before, been given permission to scout "north of the Cumberland" with some eighty men. The orders fixed no time at which he must return to his command, and tempted by the latitude which the vagueness of stating time and place afforded him, he made rather an extensive scout. There is rather a large extent of country lying "north of the Cumberland," and the loyal state of Indiana is included in it. When, therefore, Capt. Hines had crossed the Ohio and raided the southern portion of this state, he had not disobeyed the letter of his orders; and the letter pleased him better than the spirit. But, as we shall see, his presence there prepared an unexpected difficulty for the main command.

Morgan reached Brandenburg on the eighth, having previously sent scouts forward in advance of the main column to procure means of crossing the river. These had succeeded in capturing two steamboats, and as soon as the command came up, the work of embarkation began. But the raid of Capt. Hines had greatly alarmed the Indianians; the militia had been called out, and two gunboats had been sent down the river. Capt. Hines' little force had been scattered by the combined efforts of the army and navy, as thus represented; some were captured, while a few, including the gallant leader, of whom we shall hear again, escaped across the river to the main command.

As soon as the Confederates were perceived upon the southern bank of the river, the gunboats opened fire upon them; but the high bluffs which there overhang the river on the Kentucky shore afforded an excellent position for Morgan's artillery; and the grim, black crafts were soon driven off. By midnight of the eighth, the entire command had crossed the river; the militia retreating rapidly before them. A popular song of the day,





Morgan's Raiders.

among the Union people, was a parody on the finest lyric of the War, and began thus :

“John Morgan’s foot is on thy shore,  
Kentucky, O Kentucky ;  
His hand is on thy stable-door,  
Kentucky, O Kentucky.”

It simply reflected, as most such songs do, the popular idea regarding its hero ; he was a robber, an incendiary, come to steal and ruin, not to fight. There is, of course, much truth in the plea put forth by Gen. Duke, that the nature of the service attracted to the command many men who came merely for the sake of plunder, and who could not be deterred, by any effort of their officers, from securing it. There is another point to be considered : As destruction of property which may afford assistance of any kind to the enemy is a legitimate object of war ; harrying this portion of the country was no more guerilla warfare than were the Federal raids in the Southern States. So much allowance must be made ; but when it is made, even the historian, who was Morgan’s lieutenant and successor in command, admits that much mischief was done for which no necessity existed. For instance, a bird-cage and its tenants are hardly to be missed by the enemy or valuable to the captor ; and a man who, in July, carries off half-a-dozen pairs of skates, can scarcely be said to be driven thereto by stern necessity. Yet both were taken.

Over the wires, before they had fairly landed, flashed the ominous words : “Morgan is in Indiana.” The message struck terror to the hearts of all who heard it, and the wildest confusion prevailed through the entire state. In case of a flood, each man stays in his house until the last moment, feeling assured that the river will certainly fall before it can injure him or his property ; but in case of an invasion, such as this, no one waits for the invader to be driven back ; every one flies before him. Even the militia were no exceptions to the general rule, and the militiaman’s courage is proverbially equal to the truthfulness of an amateur fisherman.

Everywhere people fled from their homes, taking with them all valuables that could be carried off. The press denounced the military authorities for having permitted Morgan to cross the river—let the war be carried on any place but here ; while the military authorities excused themselves by stating that the in-

vaders far outnumbered any Union forces which could be brought into the field at such short notice. Although this was so far from being true that Morgan's men numbered less than one-fourth of the militia sent against him by Indiana alone, he endeavored to confirm them in their own statements by making his force appear much larger than it really was.

The Confederates advanced rapidly towards the eastern boundary of the state, and by one o'clock on the afternoon of the 13th, they had entered Ohio, and reached Hamilton. Up to this time, every man within two hundred miles of the line of march had anxiously watched the course of the column; fearing that some rapid movement, totally unexpected, might bring it full upon his own town. But now, this feeling of uncertainty was, to a great extent, ended. Some breathed more freely, as they felt that some degree of safety was assured them, for a while at least; and the people of the doomed city gave themselves up to blank despair. There was absolutely no hope for it. Cincinnati was, beyond a doubt, his objective point, and the Queen City would be laid waste.

Such was the rapidity with which he moved, and the difficulty with which information was obtained in a country so bitterly hostile, that Morgan could not ascertain how large a force was stationed at Cincinnati, and he therefore dared not attack it. Besides, there was no reason why he should do so; the capture of it could do him no good; it would simply be an elephant on his hands, and he was not in the menagerie business. Having determined, then, to pass the city without molesting it, it became necessary for him to use the utmost speed in order to escape attack himself. At four o'clock on the afternoon of the 14th, they reached Williamsburg, twenty-eight miles east of Cincinnati, having accomplished nearly one hundred miles in thirty-five hours.

The men had been worn out when they passed Cincinnati, many of them being fast asleep in their saddles, and it was an imperative necessity that they should halt here for a night's rest. By daylight they were again in the saddle, moving forward over the terrified state. Every effort was made to retard their advance; the populous state poured forth thousands of men to defend her own soil; every road swarmed with militia, who were driven back only with difficulty after they had placed almost impassable barriers in the path of the invader. Every day the resist-

ance became more determined; every day the numbers of the state troops increased, while those of the Confederates diminished; and at last, almost worn out by the long and rapid march, but still exultant as they thought of the end they had accomplished, Morgan and his men were ready to recross the Ohio, and return via Kentucky, to the bounds of the Confederacy.

It was 8 o'clock on the evening of July 18th, that Buffington was reached. This was one of the points at which the fording had been examined some time in the previous May; and those who had performed that work had reported that the river would be easily forded at this point when the water was at the stage usual in July. Their judgment was based on a knowledge of the river for twenty years, during which time it had invariably been low during the summer months. But now, by a strange piece of bad luck, the river had risen; swollen by the summer rains, it was too deep to be forded; they had no other means of reaching the Kentucky side; and the presence of numberless gunboats warned them that an attempt to cross on rafts or in open boats of any kind would be worse than useless.

As they waited at Buffington for an opportunity to cross, their situation hourly became more desperate. The enemy was closing around them; the command was being scattered; they were bushwhacked and harassed on every side. Gen. Duke, with a considerable force of which he was in command, was captured on the 19th. Col. Johnson, with three hundred men, was more fortunate, since they escaped by swimming the river and making their way through West Virginia. By these and the losses previously suffered, the force remaining to the commanding general was now less than two hundred and fifty men. Capture was inevitable, and yet he hardly dared to surrender, for he feared that he would never be exchanged. Resolved to fight to the last, he led his handful of men towards Salemsville; now advancing, now retreating, constantly skirmishing with forces far outnumbering his own.

The news of Gettysburg had already reached the Confederates, who were thus fighting for their very lives. It was this tidings that led Morgan to fear to surrender; for the number of prisoners in the hands of the Federals was so much increased that he suspected the cartel would be broken. He desired, then, to make special terms before giving himself up, and actually did so, Capt. Burbeck, a militia officer, receiving his surrender. But the terms

were repudiated by Gen. Shackleford, who was in command of the Federal forces in the vicinity of Salemsville, and the prisoner was treated as if he had made an unconditional surrender of himself and troops.

The authorities at Cincinnati had already been severely reprimanded by Secretary-of-War Stanton because Gen. Duke and the officers captured with him had been sent to Johnson's Island, a purely military prison, instead of being confined in the Ohio penitentiary. Gen. Morgan's protests, therefore, against being



*Harassed Raiders.*

subjected to the indignity of an incarceration in the police station, were useless; the head of the Department must be rigidly obeyed.

Gen. Rosecrans having intimated to Gov. Tod, of Ohio, that

there was no military prison sufficiently secure for the daring men that had been captured, the civil official proffered the use of the penitentiary at Columbus, until other provision could be made. To this building, then, the Confederate officers were conveyed; the warden being directed to keep them separate from the convicts, to provide them with necessities of food and clothing, and to impose only such restrictions on them as might be necessary for the sake of security. But it is not our purpose to trace the daily round of their prison life, nor to explain their treatment farther than is absolutely necessary for a proper understanding of their ensuing effort to escape.

The prisoners, sixty-eight in number after the consolidation of all parties, were confined in the first and second ranges of cells in the south side of the east wing; the north side, and the higher ranges of the south, being unoccupied. During the day they were allowed the liberty of the narrow passage upon which



their cells opened; but they were required to be in their cells by 7 o'clock every night, when every door was locked, after the warden or his deputy had looked in the apartment to see that its proper occupant was there.

With such precautions, it appeared almost impossible for them to escape from a slighter building. But even admitting that they might be able to deceive the warden and his deputies, how could they, without tools of any kind, hope to tunnel the stone pavement and the immense walls of the penitentiary? It seemed, indeed, a hopeless case to most of them; but one, the same Capt. Hines who had raided "north of the Cumberland," and who has since worn the ermine as the chief-justice of Kentucky, had heard something of a peculiarity in construction which might render it possible for them to tunnel.

The chief warden, Merion, was a narrow-minded, tyrannical man, generally disliked by the military prisoners as well as by the convicts; but among his deputies was one familiarly known as "old man Hevay," whose many kindnesses and general good-nature stood out in strong contrast to the petty meannesses of his chief. To him Capt. Hines addressed himself, hoping to set the old man on his favorite hobby, and thus find out what he wanted to know.

"Good-day, Hevay; pretty wet weather outside, isn't it?"

"O, it's very wet weather we're having this fall, Captain. You folks in here don't know how much rain we've been having."

"That's a fact, we're in out of the wet, sure enough. Indeed, we don't suffer from it in any way. The cells are not even damp."

"No sir, they're right dry, they are right dry, sir, every one."

"Yes, I've noticed that there isn't even any dampness on the floors of the cells in the first range. That's rather remarkable, isn't it?"

"Well, I don't know as it's so remarkable; it's a well built edifice, sir. I tell you, sir, this Ohio penitentiary is the best building in the country, sir. The Capitol at Washington don't begin to come up to it; and Westminster Abbey, that the Britishers make such a darned fuss about, don't begin to come up to it. Do you know why the cells in the first range are so dry?"

"Is it because they have such a thick, cemented floor?"

"Well, the floor is pretty thick—eighteen inches of concrete,

but the dampness will work through the thickest floor in the world if it's laid flat on the ground. There's an air-chamber four feet high under the whole wing. That's what keeps it so dry, sir."

This was a confirmation of the wildest hopes that the soldier had dared to entertain; but he answered, with a careless laugh:

"No wonder we don't get wet, then. But I reckon we'd all rather sleep on damp ground as soldiers than be kept so dry as prisoners."

"So I suppose, sir, so I suppose," assented the old man, nodding good-naturedly as he went on his way to attend to his duties.

Having ascertained this much in regard to the structure of the building, the next difficulty was to obtain tools with which to perforate the eighteen-inch concrete floor to the air-chamber. Their cells were inspected every day, and it would be impossible to tunnel directly from them without being discovered; but they could work by relays in the air-chamber, and manage so carefully that no one man would be absent from the corridor for any suspicious length of time. The problem of tools was solved by the abstraction of two knives from the dinner table; more they dared not take, for fear that the loss would be detected. The blades, though but small, were keen; and were cut off square at the end, instead of being rounded or pointed, as are most table-knives. The shape was intended to make them less useful than a pointed instrument would be, in case any should be secreted by prisoners intent upon escape; but they could not have been better adapted to the purpose, being, to all intents, excellent chisels.

Work was begun in Capt. Hines' cell, under the iron bedstead, which could be hung against the wall or let down at pleasure. The substances removed were put in the stove, or concealed in their beds, and it was not long before there was a hole in the solid floor large enough to admit a man's body into the air-chamber. A carpet-bag, carelessly thrown down in the corner of the room, hid the aperture during the day. A single kick at the valise might have blasted all their hopes, and sent all in the first range to the dungeons.

They could make but slow progress until the air-chamber was reached, for though speed was desirable, it was necessary to keep the guards in their present state of security. But when it

was once possible for the workmen to be out of sight, the work progressed more rapidly. To prevent all suspicion, each labored for only an hour at a time; pickets were posted, and an ingenious system of signals arranged, so that any one who happened to be below might be speedily recalled to the upper air in case of being asked for by the officials of the prison.

Among so many, one or two men were hardly likely to be missed if absent only for an hour—they might be in their cells, or unobserved in one part of the corridor or exercise ground while the warden was in another; but once the absence of one came very near being detected.

“Where’s Capt. Hockersmith?” inquired one of the turnkeys, called Scott, or, familiarly, Scotty.

“He’s not at all well, this morning, and is lying down. Are you in a hurry, Scotty? Because if you are not, I’d like to ask your opinion about this memorial.”

It was Gen. Morgan himself who spoke, and his tone was so natural in its ease and unconcern that Scotty was completely taken in.

“O, certainly not, General, certainly not. No hurry at all, sir. What is the memorial, sir?” he asked, very much flattered at the idea of being thus consulted.

“It’s one that I’ve drawn up to send to Washington, regarding our removal to a military prison. Here it is; will you be good enough to look it over?”

The poor deluded Scotty took the paper and looked at it for a few moments as wisely as an owl looks at the great book of nature; and gained, perhaps, about the same quantity of information. In the meantime, Hockersmith, who, as the reader has already guessed, was at work in the air-chamber, had been summoned to the upper regions by the appointed signal, and now made his appearance; and a very sorry and sickly appearance it was, for he had been warned of the part he was to play. Scotty gave back the paper, with the sage remark that he thought it would do, and turned to the sick (?) man without a suspicion of the reason why Gen. Morgan had asked his opinion of the memorial.

But Scotty was destined to render them a real, tangible service, rather than to discover the plan of escape. They were wholly ignorant of the lay of the land immediately around the walls of the penitentiary, and it was absolutely necessary that

they should reconnoiter. To do this at second-hand was impossible, for not only would such questions excite suspicion, but they could not obtain sufficiently minute information in that way. Plans were cleverly laid, and Scotty, who was in charge during the day, was engaged in conversation on a subject of which he never tired; being nothing else than the remarkable escape of two convicts some years before.

"Yes, sir," he said to Gen. Morgan, "they climbed up the railings of the balconies in front of the cells there, and got out on the roof through the skylight. There ain't two other men in the world that could do it, either, sir."

"O, come, Scotty, you think too highly of the escaped convicts. That wouldn't be so hard a task for an active man. Why, Capt. Sam. Taylor, as little as he is, could do it. The trouble in escaping, I should think, was after they got on the roof. At least, I shouldn't like to try it."

"Well, if Captain Taylor thinks he can climb up to that skylight and git on to the roof, he kin jest try it, that's all. I'd like to see it, for my part."

"Are you in earnest, Scotty?" asked Capt. Taylor, who was of course, near by; "may I try it?"

"Yes, try it," answered the turnkey, doggedly; "but you'll not git on to the roof. You'll find it ain't so easy as it looks."

Captain Taylor was a short, slight man, but very strong and active. No sooner had the desired permission been obtained than he proceeded to make use of it; and despite Scotty's assurances of failure, was soon airing himself at the top of the building. Apparently looking about him only as a man who had been in close confinement for months would naturally do, he really obtained a very correct idea of the prison surroundings. Of course not many minutes could be spent thus; and he soon descended; but he had accomplished all that was desired.

The work went rapidly on; two or three of the immense stones which formed the wall of the air-chamber were removed, and the tunneling through the earth began. "Fortune favors the brave," and just at the juncture when it was most needed, a rusty spade came into their possession. The manner of obtaining it was so characteristic of the whole attempt that we cannot omit the story. It was early in the morning, and they had passed out into the yard for the usual ablutions. Two long troughs, filled with water, were placed along the walls of the court-yard, and

the men washed at these, first one relay, and then another. While waiting to wash, there was always a good deal of rough play, and this morning they were especially sportive—only by accident, of course. It was equally a matter of chance that one of them wore a loose sack-coat, though the fact that the spade was there was discovered before he donned the unusual garment.

Strangely enough, in a friendly wrestling match, the wearer of this coat was thrown by his opponent. He happened to fall just upon the spade, but when he picked himself up and emerged from the little group of five or six men that closed around him, the spade was no longer to be seen. Somehow or other, the wearer of the sack-coat sat unusually straight and stiff at breakfast that morning and he didn't have a ramrod down his back, either.

At any rate, the spade was obtained, and the work progressed more rapidly. Gen. Duke, in his "History of Morgan's Cavalry," does not indicate any collusion whatever on the part of the prison officials; but a more recent writer, who speaks as one having authority, asserted boldly that their escape, without any assistance from others, was utterly impossible. The manner in which they obtained possession of the very tool most needed would seem to point to some aid received from those in charge.

Removing the stones from the wall, they tunneled out into the yard, but met with their first misfortune, coming up directly under an immense pile of coal. This necessitated a tunnel in another direction, and of greater length; so they set to work manfully, and, in a little more than two weeks after the day that they began on the floor of Capt. Hines' cell, the tunnel was as nearly complete as they dared to make it before the very night on which it was to be used. The minor preparations, too, had gone on bravely. A stout hook had been made from a poker; in some mysterious way, probably by help of others, they had obtained possession of other knives than the two with which they had dug through the floor; strong ropes had been plaited from bed-quilts torn into strips. Finally, since the escape must be made at night, when they were locked into separate cells, apertures were made in the ceiling of the air-chamber extending so near the upper surface of the concrete that a very slight blow would be sufficient to make a hole like that already made in the floor of Capt. Hines' cell. Through these, each man

was to drop to the air-chamber beneath, where the party would unite.

There were, as we have said, sixty-eight officers confined at that time in the penitentiary; but of these, of course, not all could attempt the escape for which all had worked. Setting aside all other difficulties which would have attended the getting away of a large party, there were only about half lodged in the cells in the first range, from which alone the air-chamber could be reached. It is touching in the extreme to read how all worked, when they knew that but few could go; and that, in all probability, those who remained behind would pay dearly for the liberty of their comrades. Seven men were to make the effort; the commanding officer, and Captains Hines, Taylor, Hockersmith, Sheldon, Bennett and McGee. That Gen. Morgan should be one of them was a matter of course, but why these particular officers should be selected to accompany him, when men of far higher rank in the army remained behind, is not so easily explained, nor do the many writers on the subject attempt to give a reason.

The work was completed, and the seven men were only waiting for a favorable opportunity. They must choose a rainy night, for in such weather the dogs in the prison yard would probably keep fast in their kennels, while the guards would be less watchful. The watched-for rain came at last, and not an hour too soon, for they had heard rumors that there was to be a change of military commanders at Columbus. "A new broom sweeps clean," and the new commandant might discover their tunnel. It was on the 27th of November, 1863, when they decided that it was best to wait no longer.

Gen. Morgan's cell was in the second range, but his brother, Col. Richard Morgan, was lodged in the lower tier, and it had long since been arranged that each was to personate the other on this night. There was a sufficient resemblance between them to enable them to deceive any one who did not look too closely. The guard made his round as usual at 7 o'clock, flashing the light which he carried into each cell, to make sure that it was occupied, then, locking the door, passed on to the next. At last this duty was performed; the first part of their plan had succeeded; he had not detected that Gen. and Col. Morgan had exchanged cells. Every two hours he made the rounds, for these were important prisoners, and caution was very necessary.

To prevent surprise, the floor of the hall had been carefully

strewn with small bits of coal; for one of the prison officials was fond of stealing upon them unawares, his tread being made noiseless by means of his list slippers. For the third time that night they heard the footsteps of the guard, crunching the coal, die away, as he completed the round of the cells and returned to his post. Then, Capt. Taylor, dropping down into the air-chamber, gave the appointed signal—a tap beneath the floor of each of the six cells. In an instant, the thin crust of concrete was broken, and the rest of the party joined him; each one having left a dummy in his bed, to deceive the guard as he passed in his rounds.

Once outside the walls of the building in which they had been confined, there was still another difficulty to surmount; for the prison-yard was surrounded by a wall twenty-five feet high. But they were not unprovided with means for getting over this. The iron hook, before mentioned, was fixed in the coping which crowned the wall, the rope made of the bed-quilts having been first attached to one end. They drew themselves up by this means, and descended by the same rope on the outside of the walls. But all their efforts to dislodge the hook proved unavailing, and they were forced to leave that and the rope attached to the wall.

Whether, with several large, fierce dogs, specially trained for the purpose of catching prisoners who were attempting to escape, ranging the prison yard, and with two sentinels, fully armed, who could not be more than a hundred feet away from them, the obscurity of a stormy night would be sufficient to hide their efforts, is a question for the reader to decide. Grave doubts have been thrown upon the many men who had it in their power to assist the prisoners; but on the other hand, Gen. Duke asserts that \$15, which Gen. Morgan paid for a railway time-table, was the only money used in effecting their escape. But this very assertion (on which, be it understood, we wish to cast no suspicion) shows that some help must have been given; that some one within the prison walls, besides the Confederates there confined, knew of the contemplated attempt to escape. Who procured the time-table? It was not forwarded by stealth by an outside friend, or it would have cost them nothing. If it was furnished by any of the prison officials, how much more did he do to assist them?

Once having reached the outside of the wall, they separated into three small parties, Gen. Morgan and Capt. Hines forming

one. These two went boldly into the ticket office of the Little Miami Railroad, and bought tickets for Cincinnati. A friendly conversation which they were wary enough to strike up with a



*The Escape.*

Federal officer who chanced to be traveling on the same train saved them from all suspicion on the part of the train officials or other passengers. It was daylight when they reached the suburbs of Porkopolis; and leaving the train before it reached the city, under the pretext that they lived out there, they walked to the river and hired a boy to row them across.

Once in Kentucky, they were safe; for Gen. Morgan was so popular among the Southern people there that they would make any effort to insure his escape. It was not long before they were safe at the Confederate headquarters in Tennessee. In the meantime the rope hanging over the outer wall of the prison-yard had attracted attention as soon as the day broke; the alarm was given, and the prison was searched, only to prove that the bird had

flown. No effort was spared, now that the most important prisoner had escaped, to guard against the others following his example; the most sensible of the precautions being the remov-



al of all from the first range of cells. It was the old story—"The stable-door was shut after the horse got away."

But though the man had regained his liberty, the charm of his name was broken; he was no longer the invincible Morgan, attracting to his standard more men than he could arm and equip, and striking terror into the hearts of the enemy. The prestige of success was dimmed by his capture and imprisonment; and though he rallied his men and prepared for more work like that already done, he never again rode such a raid as the earlier one into Kentucky or the later one whose history we have traced. Indeed, there was not much more time remaining to him; for on the 4th of September, 1864, less than ten months after his escape, he fell, pierced to the heart by the bullet of a Federal sharpshooter.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### A PERILOUS JOURNEY.

Necessity for the Trip—Volunteers—The Extra Tallow Cans—Running the Batteries—Pursuit—The Obstacles—Useless Efforts—The Fireman's Plan—Oiling the Track—Pursuit Baffled—Escape—Delivery of the Dispatches.

IT was the summer of 1863. The "Rock of Chickamauga" had not yet earned the name, but was simply Brig.-Gen. Thomas, endeavoring to hold his own against the very force of Confederates he was yet to annihilate. Intrenched upon a spur of the hills around Chattanooga, the Federal soldiers were exhausted by hard fighting and long marches. Help must come soon, or they would be conquered by the Confederates or by starvation. But from what quarter was help to come? Or how was any information of their danger to penetrate the lines which Bragg was daily drawing closer and closer around the apparently doomed force?

Forty miles to the eastward of the position they held there was a body of thirty thousand men, commanded by Gen. Stockton. That officer had been ordered to hold a certain pass in the mountains until further orders, and Gen. Thomas knew him well enough to know that unless those orders were sent, the pass would be held. Yet if the danger of the main corps were but made known to this large detachment, help would come; otherwise they would be attacked separately and beaten in detail.

No messenger could elude the wary foe, no force they could send would be strong enough to defy him and keep the dispatches from his hands. The only practicable plan was to make one bold dash and carry the message through by sheer speed; providing, always, the bearers were not killed on the way. The Confederates, confident of their own strength, had not destroyed

the railroad line between the two Federal camps; an engine might be run through. True, the importance of this road had not been overlooked by the Rebs, for both sides of the track were lined with guards; but drowning men catch at straws; and in the black waters of despair which were surging about them, the Federals saw no other means of saving themselves.

There were but few engines at Gen. Thomas' disposal, the more powerful being in the hands of the Confederates; but the best of these few was selected and made ready for the perilous journey. An adjutant, Capt.—, was to be the bearer of the dispatches. Two of the men, who had left the railroad to volunteer as soldiers, offered their services as engineer and fireman. No more were necessary, for an escort could not protect them against an army, and any superfluous weight it was judged would but retard their speed.

Night was selected as the best time for the purpose, and at half past ten, on an evening when no moon would betray them to the enemy as a target, when even the stars were covered by heavy clouds, they were to set out. They were brave men, but they shook hands with their comrades and bade them good-by, as if they never expected to return, and each had left with some confidential friend a letter to be sent if he were not heard from in a given time. It was better to die thus, however, than to starve or surrender; and though it was but a chance in a thousand, they could not afford to lose even that one of saving the army.

"Put in a couple of extra tallow cans, John," said the engineer to the fireman, "for we'll need an extra allowance. She must make good time on this trip."

The wisdom of the precaution was seen; such speed as was necessary would rack the engine terribly if there were not plenty of tallow; and provided with the extra quantity, they mounted to the caboose, the throttle valve was opened, and they moved off; the noise of the engine the only sound, though the whole corps was watching. Two miles away lay the first battery; so much they knew; but how many more there were, or how many riflemen were posted along the road, they had no means of telling. Slowly they moved onward; they were half a mile from their starting point when a report suddenly broke the stillness of the night, and a bullet whizzed past them. It was the first salute from the enemy's outposts, the first chord in the prelude to what might be the dead march.

The ball crashed through the window of the caboose, but fortunately, struck no one. There was but one thing to be done—the road was too closely guarded for them to slip through; the Confederates knew that there was an enemy on the track; the little engine must be put to her utmost speed, that the flying balls might miss their aim, that she might dash untouched past unwary gunners. Vain hope! The pressure of steam was increased—the engine bounded along with great leaps, swaying now to one side, now to the other, but thick and fast came the whirl of the bullets, as the alarm was spread among the watchful Southerners.

Through the darkness they could see the lights flashing here and there at a certain point ahead of them—it was the first battery, and the gunners were making ready for a warm reception of the three men on the engine. The locomotive thundered by and the guns belched forth their fire; a solid shot was followed by a shower of grape that cut the framework of the caboose almost to pieces, but, luckily, struck no vital part of the engine and missed the men upon her.

The men stood resolutely at their posts, as the shot whistled around them; and their only reply was to urge the engine to yet greater speed. A parting salute from the battery, as they whirled onward, cut the support of the bell, which was carried, clanging as it was borne onward, into the bushes by the force of the missile. They were out of the range of that battery; they had indeed leaped out of the frying pan, like certain foolish fish; but it was into the fire. The junction of this road with another was protected by two batteries, past which they were now to run. This junction was an important point, and there were a number of tracks; upon one of which—horrible sight—there was an engine standing, ready fired up, and headed for the east.

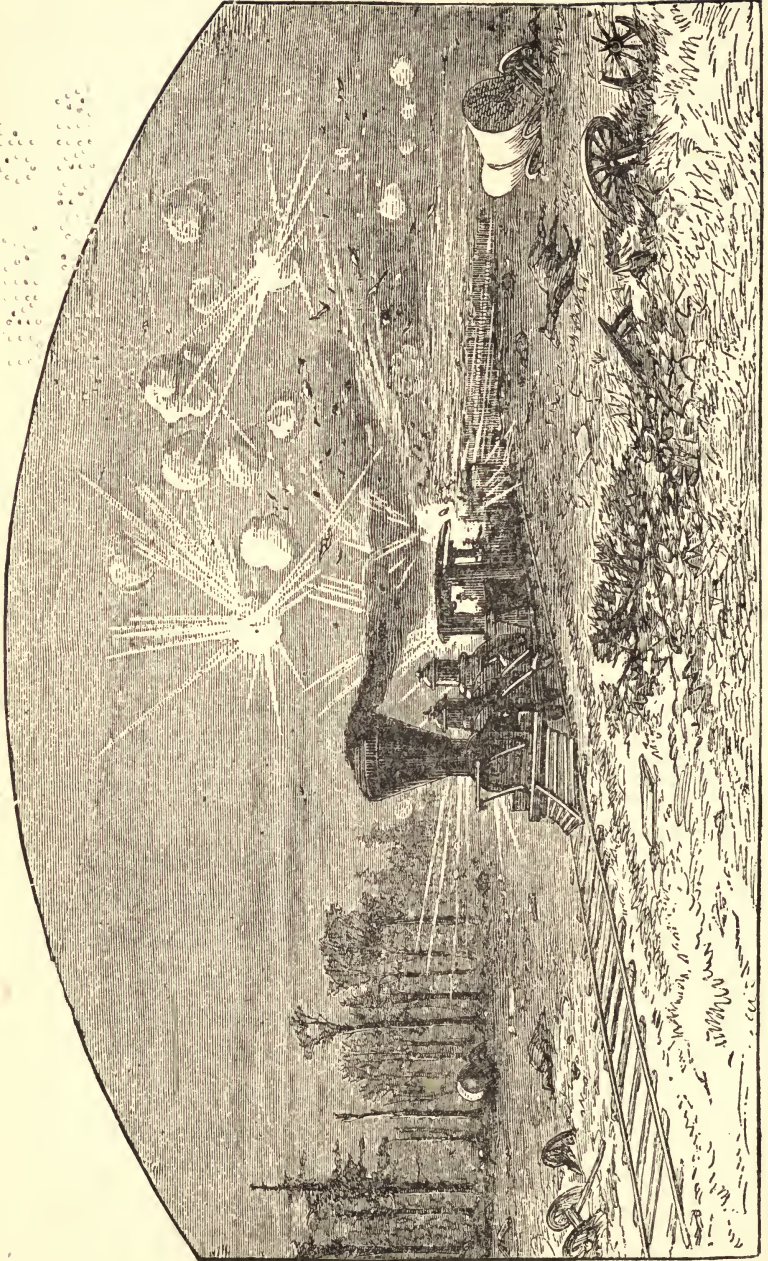
“Then and there was hurrying to and fro;”

and although the shots from these batteries were not so well aimed as those previously fired, there was this other, this worse danger to face. The Confederates rapidly coupled a car to this engine, and the Federals had hardly passed when the exciting chase began.

“More fire, John,” cried the engineer, as he saw that the batteries were again ready for action. “Ram her full—it’s neck or nothing with us now.”

But the words were hardly uttered when a cooler or more ex-





Running the Gauntlet.

perienced gunner took aim, and a shell burst nearly directly over them. It was a miracle that they escaped; but though the roof of the caboose was shattered, and the fireman lay wounded on the floor, the engine was not disabled. His place, however, was assumed by the officer, and although a shot or two was sent after them, they were already beyond the range of the batteries, and the shots spent themselves harmlessly in the air. As they heard the last one, and knew by the faintness of the report that they were out of range, the officer heaved a sigh of relief.

"We're safe now," he said to his companions; "that is certainly their last battery." "Yes," he added, as a bullet whizzed through the broken windows of the cab, "that is from the picket on this side their camp."

The engineer looked steadily forward into the night, half smiling as he thought that that letter need never be sent to tell that he had died in trying to save his comrades. But the wounded fireman had raised himself on one arm, and now a groan burst from his lips.

"Is your wound so bad, John?" asked the engineer, his face suddenly becoming grave again.

"'Taint that," replied John, briefly; "it's worse; they're following us. Listen!"

The captain turned to the engineer with a pitying smile on his lips; surely the poor fellow was delirious with pain. But the other had turned, startled, to listen; and he shook his head gravely in reply.

"It's true, sir; every word of it; they've got out that engine at the junction, and are after us."

"But they cannot overtake us, surely; not even so nearly as to get within pistol shot. You know the road, don't you? There need be no stoppages on that account."

"Nary stoppage, sir; know this road like a book, for I used to run an express over it before I volunteered. I know that engine, too, for I was on her for a time. She was just put on a month or so before I left." And he shook his head.

"Is it a better engine than this?" asked the captain, his confidence of escape somewhat abated.

"She can make fifty miles an hour without any trouble, and this one can't make forty. Then she's heavier, too, and has a car attached."

"That's an advantage for us, though, isn't it?"

"No, it's on the other side. This one hasn't anything to balance her, and if she goes too fast, may leap the track. She'll gain on us at the rate of about ten or fifteen miles an hour, unless—"

"Unless what?"

"Unless we can stop her. But we can't do that till we get on a little farther. More fire, sir. We must keep her going as fast as we dare."

Not one of the three men thought of surrender as a means of escape; nothing should prevent the delivery of the dispatches but the strong hand of death laid upon all of them. They had been well chosen for the task; they would do or die. Anxiously they looked back at the pursuer; she was indeed gaining upon them, rapidly, fearfully. Now the Confederates lost a little time, as the lighter engine flashed over a long trestle work, which the heavier one must cross with more caution. The flames leaped madly as the fire was being replenished, and the two dark figures stood out in strong relief against that glowing background. The pursuing locomotive thundered on with redoubled speed when the solid road-bed was once more gained, and as the tempting target offered itself, more than one bullet was sent towards it.

"That's pretty close," said the engineer, as one struck the clock and crashed through the works; "it was meant for me, but the engine swayed so that no marksman in the world could be certain of his aim."

Ten miles more, and the Federals would be so near Stockton's lines that the Confederates must turn back; but could they make that ten miles? In the last ten, the pursuing engine had gained nearly half the distance which had separated them—could they hold out for ten miles more, or would they be overtaken before that time? Fortunately, the fire was now burning fiercely, and needed no immediate replenishing; so that any shot must be a chance one.

"It will be all up with us in five miles more," said the engineer, as he looked out into the darkness and thought that, after all, it was well that he had written that letter; it would comfort "the folks" to have one from him telling them why he had gone "into the jaws of death."

"Isn't there anything we can do?" asked the officer, anxiously, as he glanced backward at the pursuer. The engineer shook



his head, but answered not a word. The case looked desperate.

"Can't you throw something on the track?" suggested the fireman, from his corner. "There are the firebars."

"Hurrah, John," exclaimed the engineer, his face suddenly lighting up; "that's the ticket! Captain, can you climb out on the truck and drop one across the track? It may stop them."

The officer, with one of the long, heavy rods in his hand, climbed out upon the truck and carefully dropped the rail across the track. He regained the cab, and the three men anxiously awaited the result—listening breathlessly for the terrible crash which would tell them that a dozen men, perhaps, had been sent into eternity. They strained their ears to hear—would the dreadful welcome sound never come to tell them of their own, of their comrades safety? A clanking noise behind them, then a crackling of the brush at the roadside—the bar had been lifted by the cow-catcher and thrown aside into the bushes. The three men on the foremost engine looked at each other, then each hastily turned their eyes away again—there was too terrible a meaning written in the faces of the others for any of them to read, and not give way.

"It wouldn't have been so bad," mused the officer, half aloud, "to have been shot like soldiers, as we passed the batteries; but to be picked off now like——"

"Sometimes something soft will stop an engine quicker than a bar," interrupted the hoarse voice of the engineer; "there's my heavy overcoat, Captain; suppose you try that."

The overcoat was dropped upon the track, and once again they breathlessly awaited the result.

"If it only gets wedged into the piston bar, they may work all night before they can get it out," he said, as the officer returned to the cab.

"A single half hour will serve our turn, though; we must be very near our lines."

"Not so very near, sir; though a half-hour gained would—she's caught, she's caught!" he broke off, as his trained ear caught the heavy jolting sound and then the noise of the escaping steam.

Again they looked at each other, but this time with intense relief expressed in their faces. The fireman, pale and worn with the pain of the wound, was the first to lose the look that the engineer's words had called up, and resume the old expression of

anxiety. His position enabled his ear to catch every vibration.

"It hasn't caught the piston," he groaned; "she's after us yet."

It was but too true, as the thunder of the approaching engine assured them. She was rapidly gaining on them. There was no hope left, no possibility of escape. A few moments more and the men crowded into that cab would take aim, as would their comrades in the car behind them. The pursuers were steadily, rapidly gaining on the pursued, and the distance would soon be so short that aim would be sure. Almost in sight of safety, they were to meet death and failure, as the vessel founders on the reef that lies just outside the harbor. Before them lay a heavy grade—they would lose more time than ever. There was silence in the cab, broken only by the throbbings of the engine's mighty heart. The wounded man was the first to speak.

"William, there's one thing we haven't tried."

The two others turned eagerly towards him, their faces mutely asking the question which their dry lips could not utter.

"Have you forgotten the extra tallow you brought along?"

"The tallow? John, you've saved us. Captain, the dispatches are all right. But how——" he broke off suddenly, and looked perplexed.

"I can steady her awhile, William," the wounded man said, in answer to that look, "if the captain and you can pour it on the rails."

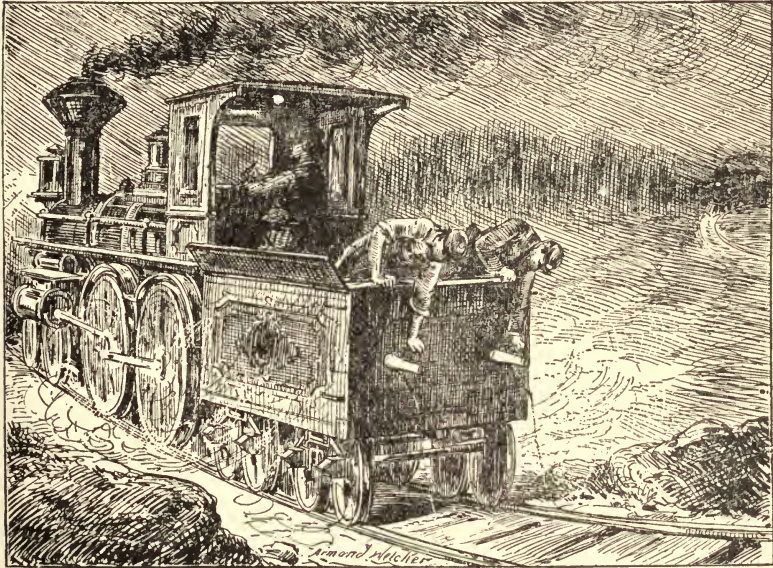
He arose and stood before them, pale and weak with pain and loss of blood, but with the same steady determination in his face which had been there when they set out; and his comrades felt that he would do as he had said, though he should die when it was done. The officer saw that the plan was a good one, for the others, both practical engineers, approved of it; but he had not the slightest idea what was to be done, or how anything was to be accomplished by means of two cans of tallow. There was no time to question, however, and when the engineer placed one can in his hand and bade him climb out once more on the tender, he obeyed as if he had been the private and the other his officer.

"Lean over and pour your tallow on the rail. Don't waste a drop, and don't let a foot go unoiled."

Still in the dark as to what was to be accomplished, the officer did as he was bid, while the engineer did the same at the other side of the track. The viscid fluid ran slowly from the long

curved spouts of the cans, and hardened as it fell on the rails; for the night was, for the season, cool and damp. At last every drop had been expended, and the two men crawled back to the cab.

The pursuers were still gaining upon them, and were already beginning to take aim. There had been no time for explanation, and now all three were eagerly waiting to see the result; the captain all the more anxiously, that he could not imagine what it would be. Onward came the pursuing engine, seeming to gain



*Oiling the Track.*

upon them at every yard; she has reached the oiled portion of the track, and still bounds forward as before. But it is only the momentum that has carried her so far. Her speed slackens; the great driving wheels still turn as rapidly as ever, urged by the pressure of the steam; but on the oiled track they can make no progress. Faster and faster they turn, the friction that retarded them being removed, until with a whirling noise they whiz around so fast as to become almost invisible; and the steam escapes with a shrill scream, like that of a disappointed child.

The forward engine dashes on. The sounds that are heard behind them are sweeter than music in the ears of the three Federals—that noise tells them that they are safe. Still onward, on-

ward, until a shot is fired warningly from in front of them.

"Don't fire," shouts the officer, as the engineer stops their advance; "we are Federals with dispatches from Gen. Thomas."

"Dismount; one, advance and give the countersign," answered the picket, not to be deterred from using the regulation formula by the irregular nature of their approach. His demands were complied with, so far as the dismounting and advancing were concerned; but of course they could not give the countersign. To the officer in command of the detachment, however, they explained the circumstances, and were by him conducted to headquarters.

A force of sufficient strength was sent out, and the Confederates on the locomotive were captured; but this was, of course, only incidental. The real result of importance was the march of this division to the relief of Gen. Thomas' army. But to the three men who took the perilous journey, it appeared no trifle that speedy promotion followed as a recognition of the daring service they had performed.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

### A CRIPPLED MESSENGER.

The Siege of Vicksburg—Caps and Dispatches to be Carried in—Departure—A Pleasing Sight—Past the Pickets—Loss of Crutch and Horse—A Canoe—On the River among the Enemy's Gunboats—A Lazy Fisherman—Passing the Federal Guns—Failing Strength—In Vicksburg—Return—Finds a Horse—A Forager—An Unreliable Guide—A Cautious Enemy—A Lucky Find—Delivers his Dispatches.

THE highest authority on human character tells us that the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. Many are the proofs of the truth of this saying, to be found in the records of any war; and they are far from being scanty in the history of the great struggle between the North and the South. How much of the success achieved by the armies on either side was due to women, will never be known until all accounts of our mortality are finally settled. Many a man, too, sick or wounded, did the duty assigned him, and, perhaps, died in its performance. Not such was the fate of him whose exploit is our present subject; though he might well have been excused from duty by reason of disability.

It was when the deadly coils of the Federal army had begun to wind, serpent-like, about the fair city of Vicksburg, and Gen. Johnston, outside of the fortifications, more than suspected that there was but a scanty supply of caps within. Besides, it was necessary to send a dispatch to Gen. Pemberton, in command of the beleaguered city. Not an available man could be detailed for the important service; those who could be intrusted, were either otherwise employed or were unfit for duty, by reason of wounds. In this emergency, Lamar Fontaine, a young officer frequently employed in such hazardous enterprises, but now unable, by reason of a recently broken leg, to walk without

crutches, volunteered to undertake the perilous journey. Such was the state of the wounded limb, that in mounting he had to lift it over the saddle with his right hand.

As the messenger was personally known to the besieged general and many members of his staff, Gen. Johnston decided to send only a verbal dispatch; which, if the young man chanced to be captured, would neither add to his danger nor afford information to the enemy. The caps might be a source of danger, as their weight of forty pounds would considerably retard the speed of his horse, and, if taken, he would be marked as a messenger between the two armies. But though he had no intention of denying his identity or mission in such a case, being captured was equally far from his expectations.

"Better take this sabre," said his father, "for its scabbard, being wooden, will not rattle; and this revolver has never yet missed fire for me."

With a prayer for the success and the safety of his son, and a strict injunction to him to kill any one of the "jackals"—so he termed them—that crossed his path or attempted to bar his progress, the father sent the young man on his way. For a time all went well. Crossing Big Black River before night had set in, he reached a point by the next day between the Federal lines and the division of the army which was at Mechanicsburg. Here it was unsafe to proceed any farther until the darkness should again shelter his movements, and concealing his horse in a friendly ravine, he hid himself in the thick branches of a fallen tree near by, his precious burden of caps beside him, his pistol at his side, and crutches and sabre within easy reach.

The day was not without its diversion, for the trees overlooked the road, along which were passing columns of Federal troops; not with the steady and deliberate tread, and orderly appearance which betokened an advance or strategic movement, but with the haste and confusion which accompany a retreat. He could only guess what had happened, for the news of the engagement had not yet reached his ears; but this was indubitable proof of its result.

But at last the columns of Federals had disappeared; the clouds of dust had settled again to the earth; the last tinge of red in the western sky had faded to the dull, deep gray which was beginning to envelop all things; and emerging from his leafy hiding-place, he hobbled to the ravine where he had left

his horse, and remounting, was soon on his way again. Though he was fully aware that the utmost caution would be necessary, and he used every endeavor to avoid an encounter, the Federal pickets were so closely posted as to make it impossible for him entirely to evade them. As he turned into the road from Yazoo City to Vicksburg, he saw the ominous gleam of their arms in the fire-light, and heard the command ring out on the still night air:

“Halt! Who comes there?”

His noble horse had borne him through many perilous adven-



“Like a shot past the picket.”

tures, and knew every touch of his rider's hand; it did not need his one spur, then, to urge the animal onward. As he went past the picket post like a shot, they could only attempt to halt him by a volley from their muskets. The bullets whistled over him and around him, but not one reached the mark for which it was intended. The horseman rode on unscathed. But just as he felt himself comparatively safe, his evidently wounded horse reeled under him. A word of encouragement, a loving pat on the neck, and the steed with new spirit pressed forward. As he rode, one of his crutches was caught by the limb of a tree, and

as the pickets were still firing, he dared not stop to disentangle it. He must risk finding another, in some rude shape, or reaching Vicksburg without having use for it.

Vain hope was the latter alternative! The renewed strength of the horse he bestrode was but the last flaring of the flame, before it goes out forever. He bore his rider onward until the bank of the Yazoo River was reached; then, with one convulsive gasp and shudder, fell to the earth, dead. Thus deprived of both horse and crutch, it was no easy matter for the disabled man to make any headway, even if he had not been burdened by the percussion caps. Slowly and painfully, by the aid of the one crutch still remaining, he made his way down the stream, keeping a sharp lookout, as may well be believed, for anything that might assist him in getting over the ground.

What was his joy to find, when he had thus followed the course of the river, a small boat moored at the bank. It was but a log, hollowed out roughly, but it answered his purpose better, perhaps, than the most fancifully decorated skiff. Cutting the rope that tied it to a neighboring tree, he was soon on his way again, but traveling with much less difficulty than before.

He paddled quietly on, until he saw three Federal gunboats ascending the river, on their way to Yazoo City. Fortunately, there was a shelter at hand; some willow trees, but a short distance below, overhung the stream, the long boughs drooping down until the leaves at their tips were bathed in the water. Shooting obliquely across and down the river, he was soon within this leafy covert, where he lay quietly until the black monsters had passed; the men on board never once suspecting that there was an enemy any nearer than Vicksburg. These, however, were not the only vessels of the kind to be encountered.

As he approached Snyder's Bluff, he saw the light from the illumination there spreading far and wide, over land and water; while the sounds proceeding thence left no doubt that a grand ball was taking place there. The river below was crowded with their transports, gunboats and barges. Lying flat in the bottom of his rude boat, he disposed his blanket so as to cover him completely, except his head; that no gleam from arms or buttons might attract the attention of the enemy. Thus covered, the dark hue of the blanket so nearly approached that of the canoe that it looked like a piece of innocent driftwood floating past the Federal vessels.



As soon as he was safely out of sight of the Yankees at Snyder's Bluff, he began to row, and was soon in the maze of streams known as the backwater of the Mississippi. But the darkness which had hitherto befriended him was now anything but an aid; for he missed the passage from the Yazoo into the Mississippi, and instead, got into Old River. For some time he tried to find the way into the bosom of the Father of Waters, but finally, as day approached, was obliged to give up the effort, and conceal himself and his boat until night.

But the morning revealed to him, even in his hiding-place, the mistake that he had made; and when night once more came, he paddled into the Mississippi. Here again he must rest upon his oars, for he must pass forty or fifty transports. As he went by them, however, he did not attempt the more complete concealment which had succeeded so well at Snyder's Bluff, and it was perhaps well that he did not, for a keen-eyed Northern soldier spied him.

"Hello, you! Where'r you going?"

"Just down here a piece, to look after my fishin' lines," drawled the Confederate lazily.

"Why don't you row steadily? You'd get there a good deal sooner."

"What's the use? The river runs seven miles an hour. I'll row up stream."

The Federal turned to a companion with a contemptuous laugh at Southern indolence, and the "fisherman" passed on "to look after his lines," nor was he again challenged by the enemy. But of the two methods of passing the vessels he rather preferred the former; and accordingly, as he neared the mortar fleet in the bend above Vicksburg, he again covered himself with his blanket, and impersonated the drift-wood. The ruse met with its former success; and as shell after shell was hurled into the doomed city, the unsuspecting Federals took no note of the canoe, in which were the percussion caps of which the besieged had so much need. At last this fleet was, in its turn, safely passed. Only a little while, now, and he would have accomplished his mission! It was well that he was so near the end of his perilous journey, for he was nearly exhausted; besides the fatigue incident to such methods of traveling, there was the anxiety which he necessarily suffered in regard, not only to his own personal safety, for that was of comparatively small moment, but to the

fate of the caps and the message of which he was the bearer; and his strength was rapidly failing by reason of hunger, for he had not tasted food for nearly sixty hours.

But relief was soon to come. Just as the first beams of the morning sun changed the broad waters into a flood of molten brass, he neared the Confederate picket-boats. Tying his white handkerchief to a paddle, he with difficulty raised himself to his feet, and waving it over his head, cried:

“Hurrah for Jeff. Davis and the Southern Confederacy?”

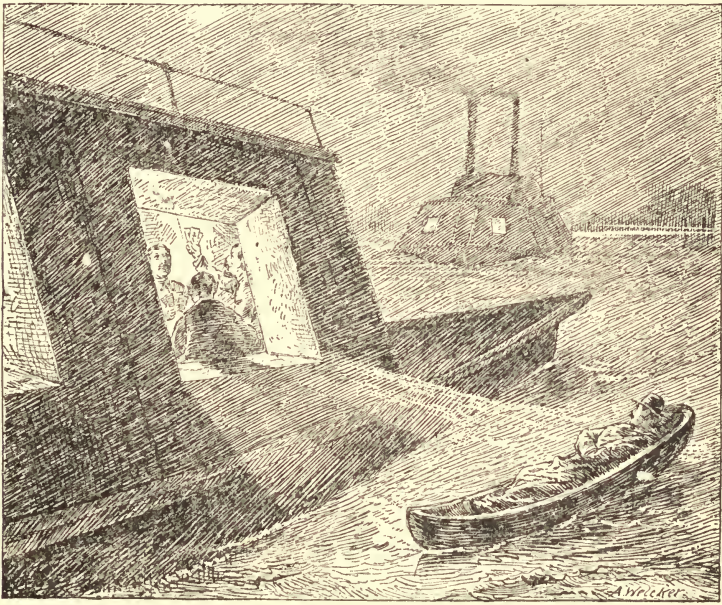
The cheer was answered from the boats and from the shore; and Capt. Fontaine, nearly fainting from exhaustion, was conducted to Gen. Pemberton's headquarters. His message was delivered, he was relieved of his burden of caps, and ordered to let a complete rest for the necessary length of time refresh him after his wearisome journey. A day and a night proved sufficient to recuperate him, and, charged with dispatches from Gen. Pemberton to Gen. Johnston, he again left the city.

Of course it was impossible to return by the same way as that by which he had come. Notwithstanding his assurance to the Federal, he had no mind to row up stream, for that might betray him; he could not row past three fleets as safely as he could float past them. He accordingly decided to descend the river still farther, and take to the shore at a point some distance below the city. Passing the Federal fleet south of the town as he had passed that north of it, he floated so close to their boats that he could see, through the open port-hole of one, the men playing cards; while divers phrases greeted his ears, such as “I'll see that and go ten better;” “I call;” “Three kings and a pair;” “Confound the luck!” (or something more forcible.)

But at last the ordeal by water was over, and he stepped upon the land at Diamond Place, some miles below Vicksburg, and on the same side of the river. Hobbling as best he might over the bottom lands, he reached the hills, and went to the residence of an acquaintance, from whom he hoped to obtain a horse. The Federals, however, had been there before him, and confiscated everything of the kind but a worn-out gelding and a colt only half-broken. Of these, he was offered his choice, the owner many times regretting that his better horses had been obliged to render their services to the United instead of the Confederate States. He chose the colt, trusting to his own horsemanship to complete the process of breaking him in. Fortunately, he had

gone but a short distance on this animal, when he came upon a fine horse, tied by a blind bridle. The animal was unsaddled; and as a basket and old bag was lying near by, Capt. Fontaine inferred that some negro, attached to a Yankee camp, had left them there. Exchanging bridles, and saddling the horse, he turned the colt loose to find his way back to the hills, and mounted the horse.

As the camp where this animal belonged could not be far distant, he knew he must exercise some caution, lest he come upon more Yankees than he cared to meet. Being well acquainted



*Passing the Port-holes.*

with the country, he had no trouble in deciding what was probably the location of the camp, and carefully rode around it. But he did not succeed in avoiding all the Federals. As he rode along, a blue-coat, hearing the sound of hoofs, and supposing it one of his own comrades, advanced from the shelter of the woods through which he had been making his way along a bridle-path. The new comer bore unquestionable marks that he had been foraging; the said marks consisting of a pair of fat chickens and a bucket of honey. Planting himself in the road before the horse, which seemed to recognize him, he began:

"Who are you, sir?"

"I have no business with you," replied the Confederate, endeavoring to urge the horse onward.

"Where are you going?"

"To attend to my own affairs. Stand aside and let me pass."

"Are you on military business?"

"Stand aside and let me pass."

"Are you a soldier?"

"Oh, go to the devil and ask your questions," exclaimed the Confederate, as he pulled the trigger of his revolver and sent a ball crashing through the brain of the inquisitive forager.

Some caution must be exercised in approaching the next settlement, but he reached it in safety. There he hired a guide who claimed to be familiar with the state of the country, to pilot him to Hankerson's Ferry on Big Black River; fifty dollars being paid for the service. But although the guide professed the utmost loyalty to the South, his words, somehow, did not have the genuine ring to them; perhaps he was too loud in his protestations of attachment to the Confederacy; at any rate, Capt. Fontaine deemed it best not to trust him too far. The man seemed to be well acquainted with the disposition of the main bodies of Federals; but of course there might be, at any prominent point like a ferry, a smaller body temporarily stationed. Accordingly, as they drew near the point at which his services were to cease, Capt. Fontaine sent him forward to ascertain whether there were any Yankees about. The guide was no sooner out of sight than the soldier concealed himself near the appointed rendezvous, fearing his return with a party of the enemy. He stayed away a long time—much longer than necessary for the reconnaissance—and finally came back, alone.

"I couldn't get back any sooner, Captain, for I wanted to take a good look, and be sure. There ain't any Yankees near the ferry—not a Fed been there for some time, I heard."

Capt. Fontaine paid the guide, dismissed him, and rode on, not having the slightest confidence in what had been told him. When, therefore, the man had disappeared, he turned his horse's head and went to the northeast, instead of directly to the east. The event proved that he had grounds for his mistrust of the guide. The man had occupied his time in hunting up a Federal officer who would send a guard to the ferry, and a long line of sentinels had been posted along the river road, to intercept the

Confederate ; while a considerable force (for the capture of one man) was at the ferry.

As well assured that this was the case as if it had been described to him in so many words, Capt. Fontaine thought, that by changing his course, he could flank the enemy, and cross the stream a little higher up. But he somewhat underrated the caution of the foe, in calculating the probable number of men that would be sent, and the length of the line of sentinels posted over the approaches of the river. As he turned into the river road, there suddenly arose from the bushes, not more than ten feet away, a blue-coated soldier.

“Halt!” was the order, as the Confederate came up; and the answer rang out loud and clear—a pistol-shot. The sentinel fell forward, dead ; and the officer spurred his horse onward up the river. But the men were closely posted, and a shower of balls fell around him, whistling by his ears, fanning his cheek and waving his hair, cutting their way through his clothes, perforating the wooden scabbard of his sabre, grazing the injured leg, two even wounding his right hand, but not so seriously as to prevent his using it. The horse was less fortunate ; seven bullets entered his body, and it was with glazing eyes and weakened limbs that he bore his rider on—on—until he had placed a mile between the pursuers and the pursued.

Being thus again left without a steed, he determined that it would be best to swim the river immediately, and trust to his good fortune to secure a horse on the other side. But for some distance he limped on with no other support than his crutches. Fortunately, he was seen by a lady full of enthusiasm for the South, and she offered him a steed.

“It seems as if it came for you or some one else of our army,” she said, “for it’s a stray that came here after the Feds had carried off every horse and mule on the place.”

The animal proved to be a good Confederate, for it bore him safely to Raymond, where he arrived at two o’clock in the morning. Changing horses here, he proceeded without loss of time to Jackson, and delivered his dispatches to Gen. Johnston early in the morning, five days after he had departed upon his perilous errand to the besieged city of Vicksburg.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### IN THE ENEMY'S CAMP.

The Scout's Fate—His Successor—The Errand Stated—Setting Out—Precautions—A Friendly Greeting—A Ready-made Disguise—A Guide Provided—The Countersign—The Sentry Disposed of—A Struggle—A Council of War—An Uninvited Member—A Wide-awake Sentry—Discovered—"No, You Don't!"—"Tallahassee, Tallahassee!"—The Chase—Escape—The Result.

"WHAT is it?" asked the general of the aid who had entered his tent, and who, having duly saluted his superior, stood with soldierly uprightness before him.

"Two of the squads of scouts that were sent out last night have returned, wounded—"

"Two? There were four sent out, I thought."

"There were four, sir, but the others were killed."

"Where?"

"At the lower ford; they were discovered and chased by a larger body of the enemy, and these two barely escaped with their lives."

"What has caused the delay? They should have been back long ago."

"They were obliged to ride several miles out of their way to elude the Rebels, who were better mounted; and one of them was hardly able to sit his horse. He fainted when the excitement of the chase was over, and it was some time before his comrade could revive him. The two happen to be brothers."

"Then Mackworth is not one of them?"

"Mackworth was killed, sir."

"That's bad; very bad," answered the general, with knitted eyebrows; "I don't know a man who can take his place."

He thought a moment, and then asked of the aid:

"Did they place the rockets where they were ordered?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did they bring any information in regard to the position or movements of the enemy?"

"They did not. It seems that Mackworth posted his men in the wood this side of the Confederate lines, and advanced alone and on foot. He had barely rejoined the squad and remounted when their presence was discovered, the Rebs gave chase, and in a few minutes he was killed."

"And his information died with him. Hum! Send Lieutenant Leighton, of the —th Michigan, to me immediately."

The aid saluted and left the tent to obey the order. In a few minutes there stood before him a magnificent specimen of manhood. The long limbs and well-shaped body showed no ounce of superfluous flesh; every muscle had been hardened into iron, while the flash of the dark eye bespoke an intelligence and courage which would not fail in time of need.

They were old acquaintances, and the formality of the camp was forgotten as the general rose to greet his subordinate, and the two soldiers stood side by side.

"Are you still desirous of leaving the artillery for a scout's life?"

"Just as much as ever."

"Well, I have a mission for you. You are thoroughly acquainted with the surrounding country, are you not?"

"I think I know every by-path," replied the would-be scout.

"I have relied mainly upon Maekworth for the specially hazardous and important scouting, but he was killed last night. I want you to take his place."

"Maekworth's?" asked the lieutenant in surprise.

"Yes. Do you know where the Sedley Mansion is?"

"The Sedley mansion? Yes. It's right in the heart of the enemy's camp."

"Well, I want you to go there."

There was a mingling of surprise and dismay upon the subaltern's face for a moment; and then he answered, calmly:

"Very well, sir," and stood waiting further orders.

"The attack is to begin, according to my plans, to-morrow morning at daybreak. I have reason to believe that the Rebels have heard of this by their spies, and will be prepared for it. They will mass either at the centre or on the left wing; it is very

essential that I should know which. That is what I want you to discover."

"Very well, sir," answered the scout again, as the general paused.

"You will go to the enemy's headquarters, ascertain his plans, and as you return set off rockets, which you will find in a hollow stump six paces beyond the second milestone from here. Mackworth placed them there yesterday. One rocket will mean that the enemy is massed at the center, two, that his forces are concentrated on his left wing. The headquarters are very near the Sedley Mansion."

"When am I to go, sir?"

"As soon as the night is sufficiently advanced to make it safe—say about ten. Report to me again at half-past nine."

The lieutenant, thus dismissed, saluted and left the tent. Bending his steps towards his own quarters, he there endeavored to put his affairs in such order as he could, in case he should meet with Mackworth's fate. Be it understood that he was not a coward; but fully realizing the dangers of the task he had undertaken, he was determined to go through with it, or perish in the attempt. A fool or a madman rushes into danger, shutting his eyes to the consequences; a brave man walks into it, no detail escaping eye or ear, and accomplishes the end proposed.

Prepared then for either fate, success or death, he presented himself, at the appointed hour, to Gen. Rosecrans, who, after giving additional instructions in regard to detail, provided him with a superb gray horse of excellent mettle. He dashed away gaily, and before many minutes had passed, saw the block of granite which he knew to be the second milestone. Dismounting, he sought out the stump designated, and found that the rockets were all right, ready for the use for which they were intended. Greater care would now be necessary, for he could not tell just where he might come upon the enemy's pickets. Shortening the chain of his sabre, he bound the scabbard to his knee, to prevent its clanking; and even wrapped the rowels of his spurs with strips torn from his handkerchief. It was desirable that he should keep the road as much as possible, for in that mountainous country a path which he would strike out for himself might prove impassable, and much time be lost thereby.

The new moon now began to shed a faint light over the landscape which had hitherto been wrapped in Egyptian darkness.



The faintly illumined sky was flecked with ragged clouds, which every now and then obscured the moon, which at best afforded but little light. Around him rose, grim with their dark coronets of pine trees and misty veils, the peaks of the Blue Ridge. Not a sound stirred the stillness of the night as the solitary scout rode on, bent low upon the neck of his horse as he crossed the open spaces, lest he fall by the bullet of some concealed foe; the very footfalls of his horse upon the thick green sward by the roadside, made no noise. Again and again his path lay through the woods, where every tree might be a shelter for an enemy; and as he glanced first to one side and then to the other, his finger was on the trigger, his weapon cocked for self-defense.

There is nothing to indicate to him the position of the enemy; not the glare of a picket-fire illuming the woodland shadows; not the faint gleam of moonlight reflected from the side of a tent. This, of course, materially increases his danger; for the enemy's pickets cannot be far off, and he must not come upon them unawares.

Thus cautiously feeling his way he came to the last of the natural terraces of the elevation on which the Federal troops were encamped, and began to descend the ravine-like valley: Dangers thickened around him. Not only was it so dark in this depression that he could not hope to distinguish any signs of the enemy's vicinity, but the surface was harder; his horse's hoofs clattered along the ground, and now and then struck fire from the pebbles with which it was strewn. At last the bottom of the ravine is reached, and he begins to ascend. Suddenly, as he emerges from the shadows of the trees which clothe the ravine, he sees outlined darkly against the sombre sky, a group of horsemen.

"Hurry up!" cried one of them impatiently, though in a low tone. "What makes you come back so slowly?"

"Did you meet Col. Craig?" inquired a second, without giving him time to answer the first query.

The truth flashed across him in an instant; they had mistaken him for a messenger of their own. His first impulse was to personate the man whom they expected, but this, of course, would involve him in great difficulties; so he decided to represent himself as Col. Craig's orderly. All this was decided instantaneously, so that the question had hardly died away before the answer was ready.

"Your messenger found Col. Craig and reported to him, sir.

The colonel sent him to scout a little way down the valley, and dispatched me, his orderly, to inform you that the enemy appeared to meditate a retreat."

"Was he certain of their movements?"

"Not quite; he bade me tell Gen. Forrest that he would give warning by rockets; one, if they retreated, two, if they remained stationary in their present position."

"All right. Do you know the way to headquarters?"

"I think so, I was only there once, and that in the daytime; but I reckon I can find it."

"Tom, you'd better go with him to the inner picket line," said the officer of the squad, addressing one of his men; then, turning to the self-styled orderly of Col. Craig, he added: "You'll have to leave your horse there, and climb the rest of the hill on foot. You'll see the Sedley mansion from the top. Just walk towards it, and when you have reached it, keep on in the same direction until you see the camp. You can't miss it, even if you've never been there."



*Giving the Countersign.*

Thanking the officer in courteous tones for his advice and the escort provided, our scout followed the Confederate trooper up the hill. It was fortunate, indeed, that the guide had been furnished him, for, of course, he did not know the countersign. In their eagerness to greet the messenger, as we have seen, the outer pickets had neglected to ask for it; but it was scarcely to be hoped that the others would be so careless in the performance of their duty. As it was, the Southern cavalryman preceded him, and, when challenged in due form, answered:

"Tally—"

The rest of the word was unintelligible to Leighton, though he had pressed eagerly forward for the express purpose of hear-

ing it. Every word of which he could think, commencing with the talismanic syllables, was summoned up in review as the picket stood with leveled carbine demanding the countersign, and was rejected. At last, after what seemed an age of anxious search, but was really but a moment, he hit upon:

“Tallahassee!”

It was indeed, the magic word, the “open, sesame,” to the charmed circle which the pickets formed.

His escort left him, and, alone and on foot, he clambered up the side of the mountain. Higher, higher still, until the clouds obscured the valleys below him. At last the landmark, the Sedley Mansion, was reached, and the camp in sight. Taking his way to the general's tent, which was at some distance from the others, he saw, about a hundred yards from it, a sentry pacing to and fro.

“Who goes there?” came the challenge, as he approached.

“A friend.”

“Advance and give the countersign.”

“Tallahassee,” confidently replied the scout.

“That's for the pickets, not for me,” answered the Confederate, sternly, as he brought his carbine into position and took aim.

But as quick as thought the Federal had sprung upon him, and clutched his throat with a grip of iron. The gun dropped from his hand, and he made an effort to get his bowie-knife. Leighton dared not use his revolver, dared not strike a blow, unless it were with a knife, for the slightest noise might alarm a comrade of the sentry. The knife at the Confederate's belt caught his eye as a gleam of moonlight fell upon the shining blade; his attention having been directed to it by the efforts which the other made to get hold of it. It was a struggle of a most desperate character. The slightest noise would have been fatal to the scout, but his grip on his antagonist's throat was such that the Confederate had not power to utter a sound. It was literally a man-to-man fight. So evenly were they matched that they struggled for some minutes before either could gain the slightest advantage. The Southerner, despairing of being able otherwise to unloose that deadly grasp, succeeded in getting a portion of his opponent's right arm between his teeth, and was causing such pain that the Federal knew he must soon relax his hold; but with a desperate effort he wrenched the bowie from its place, and drove it deep, deep, into the heart of the Confederate just as the latter's

teeth met in his arm with the grip of a dying bull-dog.

Repressing with some difficulty the exclamation of pain which rose to his lips, he tossed his cap away from him, and assumed the broad-brimmed, soft black felt hat which the sentry had worn, and arrayed himself in the Confederate's overcoat. Dragging the body into the deep shadows near by, he picked up the fallen musket, and began pacing to and fro, as wide-awake a sentry as officer of the guard could wish.

Every turn brought him a little nearer to the tent, until at last he could hear the voices within it. Then, creeping noiselessly to the canvas wall, he lifted the edge of the tent cautiously and peered beneath it. The whole interior was visible, lighted by the candles that stood on the rude table. Around this sat a number of Confederate officers, evidently forming a council of war. Some of them were bending over the map which lay upon the table, while others appeared to know the country perfectly without that aid. For nearly



*The Struggle with the Sentry.*

an hour he lay there, eagerly drinking in their words; until at last all their plans for the disposition of their forces were clear to him. The troops were to be massed on the left wing.

At last, the questions for the consideration of which the council had been summoned were all decided, and the officers prepared to disperse. Hastily dropping the edge of the canvas as they rose and looked around them, he grasped his musket and ran to the sentry's beat. When they emerged from the tent, he was pacing back and forth as leisurely and serenely as if he had never left his post; as if, indeed, it were the same sentry that had been posted there.

The officers went to their quarters, one of them passing within a yard of the dead soldier's body; but not one had the slight-

est suspicion that beneath the sentry's gray overcoat there was any but a gray uniform. The self-constituted guard continued to perform his victim's duty, until there was no longer any danger of immediate discovery if he deserted his post. It was now two o'clock; it would be five before he could reach the hollow stump and set off the rockets; no time was to be lost, then, if the attack was to begin at the break of day. Throwing aside his overcoat, and replacing the sombrero by his cap, he made for the point where he had left his horse, mounted, and passed the inner picket safely by the aid of the countersign.



*Peering into the Tent.*

Let us return to the anxious watchers for the messenger, who had so eagerly welcomed Col. Craig's orderly. The trooper who had acted as guide had not long rejoined his comrades, when a considerable body of men, evidently a reconnoitering party, approached the post.

"Why, Colonel," exclaimed the officer, "I didn't expect to see you back to-night."

"Did you think I was going to be killed or cap-

tured?" rejoined the new comer, good humoredly.

"O no, but I understood from your orderly that you had gone farther down the valley, and intended to watch the enemy all night."

"My orderly?" exclaimed the colonel in surprise.

"Yes, that you sent about a half-hour or so ago, with the message that the enemy were either stationary or retreating."

"I sent no such message—in fact, didn't send anybody at all."

"It's a d—d Yankee trick," exclaimed a soldier, of quicker perceptions than the others; who, thus assisted, saw through the whole ruse.

"Never mind, I'll fix him," said the picket-officer; "we'll get

him good; he thinks himself so mighty smart he'll be sure to come back this way to allay suspicions; d——n him, he's got the countersign, ain't he, Tom?"

"Reckon so—passed the inner picket. I don't think he heard me give it, though."

"Well, it don't make any difference how he got it, for he can't get past this post any more'n if he didn't have it."

Col. Craig and his men departed, and the pickets endeavored to possess their souls in patience until the return of the "orderly."

It was full three o'clock when they heard the sound of a horseman's approach and challenged him.

"Tallahassee," answered the Federal.

"No, you don't, you d——d Yank; there he goes, boys—fire!"

The word of command was unnecessary, for the men, angry at having been so deceived, were in haste to avenge themselves on the deceiver. Besides, who knew what information he was taking to the enemy's camp.

Perceiving that his true character was known, Leighton dashed down the slope, yelling, with an insane force, the countersign—"Tallahassee! Tallahassee!"



*Firing the Rockets.*

After him dashed the Confederates, speedily reinforced, for their shots and cries had alarmed the camp. He himself could not have told why he repeated, again and again, the word in which he had trusted, but the same mountain-side that echoed back the clatter of the horse's hoofs, the clanking of the sabres, the shots of the carbines, the yells of the pursuers, gave back the wild, unmeaning cry:

“Tallahassee! Tallahassee!”

At last, favored by his intimate knowledge of the country, he skillfully contrived to lose himself in the forest; and as they sought to regain the lost trail, he dashed onward to the stump. At last it is reached; the rockets are drawn forth; one ascends, long and bright, into the gloomy sky of that proverbial “darkest hour just before the dawn;” and even as its brilliancy fades into the night, another follows it.

Onward he galloped, but did not reach the camp. The column was moving forward, and, forgetful of his night's work, he fell into his accustomed place and returned toward the Confederate lines. Hurling his forces against the Southern centre, which had been weakened that the troops might be massed on the left, Gen. Rosecrans gained the victory of the next day; a success due mainly to the information furnished by Lieutenant Leighton, the scout.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### “KILDEE” AND HIS FRIEND.

The “Birds”—Within the Enemy’s Lines—An Unexpected Obstacle—Difficulties of the Case—An Inquiring Mind—Satisfied—A Mad Ride—The Chase—Captured — “Shall We Stretch Legs or Hemp?”—“Let Her Roll, Gallagher”—They Roll.

A HANDSOME bird is the joree, with the three black feathers showing distinctly on its tail ; other marks there are, but these are all that interest us at present, for it was these which caused some waggish comrade, seeing the three black stripes on the coat-tails of the Twiggs County (Georgia) Volunteers, to nickname them the *Jorees*. Like most apt sobriquets, it stuck ; nor were they at all averse to it. One of the “birds,” slender and agile, received a special name ; and it was as “Kildee,” rather than as John West, that he was best known.

His proficiency as a marksman caused him to be enrolled in a body of thirteen sharpshooters, commanded by one “General” Brown ; and so great were the services rendered by this handful of men, that Gen. Lee esteemed them as more useful to him than was any regiment in the army. Nor was their duty over when the battle ended. On more than one occasion the various members proved themselves as wary scouts and reliable in reconnaissance as any others. It was on such an expedition that the chief of the detachment and Kildee were bound when the incidents of the following story occurred.

They had penetrated far into the enemy’s country, and had ascertained much regarding the strength and disposition of his forces. They were too wary to carry plans or estimates, and trusted to their memories alone to reproduce the information of which they had thus become possessed. After several close



scrapes in slipping through the pickets of the opposing forces, their task was now completed, and it only remained for them to return to the Confederate camp and place the result of their errand before their superior officer.

An hour's ride, and they would be safe. But while thus apparently near to security, they came somewhat suddenly upon an unexpected obstacle. Along the road below their hilly route wound a long wagon-train, fully guarded by the enemy's soldiers. Brown and Kildee halted their horses a moment as they came upon this unexpected sight. Cross the road they must; but where should they find a break in the train?

"We have been in sight of some of them, and will be suspected and chased if we turn around," remarked Kildee, anxiously.

"Besides, we have no place of shelter if we do go back," replied Brown, thoughtfully; "that sentry we eluded last has of course given the alarm before now, that two of 'Sheridan's aides' (ha! ha!) passed his post last night; and they may be in pursuit now—may be on our very heels."

"The rear is of course guarded well," mused Kildee.

"It seems to me," said Brown, "that our only hope is to try and get ahead of the train—cross the road in advance of it. Maybe, by pure impudence, we can avert suspicion."

The two disguised Confederates accordingly rode onward after this brief council of war, in the hope that this plan would prove feasible. But the train, the van of which had not been in sight from the spot where they had halted, was longer and farther ahead of them than they had thought it was; the proposed plan was wholly impracticable.

The state of affairs was sufficiently thrilling to satisfy the most daring lover of adventure: before them was the wagon train, behind them were the enemy's camps, and they wore upon their backs blue coats, such as are the uniform of soldiers in the U. S. Army. What were they to do? A few words to Kildee, and the General, riding straight toward a driver, addressed him in such a tone of authority as became his apparent rank:

"Turn your wagon aside, and let us pass."

But the driver was on the alert. It was well along in the war, and men did not take things for granted as they had done at first.

"I must know by whose authority you give the order, sir."

"I act upon my own authority," responded the Confederate, with much dignity—and no less anxiety.

"I do not know you, sir," returned the driver, coolly.

"I am Colonel Coleman," replied Brown, haughtily.

But the Yankee was too sharp to be caught in any such way. Col. Coleman was the name of the officer in command of the train, as he knew; but he had his doubts as to the identity of the individual before him.

"I cannot turn out, sir, without the direct order of the officer in charge of this section; my orders are very strict, as I suppose Col. Coleman knows."



*"Anything but capture."*

His tone was civil enough, but very determined; the moments were precious; to yield the question, and allow him to pass on, while they tried the same plan with a following wagon, would be fatal, as it would strengthen the suspicions of this man. But one reply was possible; there was but one mode of gaining a moment's time; and Brown, drawing his revolver, sent that answer crashing through the brain of the wary driver. Wheeling their horses, as if by a common instinct, they dashed along the long line of wagons towards the rear, hoping to pass behind them. Perhaps, by some lucky chance, they might get between the end

of the train and the van of the guard. It was dangerous, of course, but was it any more so than their present situation?

The hoofs clatter along the road at full speed ; and the drivers turn to look after the two men riding to the rear at such a pace. The pistol-shot has scarcely been heard, or mistaken for an unusually loud crack of a whip. They reach the last wagon, and wheeling suddenly to the left, cross the road along which the train has come. But the ride at break-neck speed has not been unobserved by the company of cavalry guarding the rear ; and a shower of bullets follows the daring riders. Onward they dash, and the horses strain their muscles to take the stone wall which rises before them. There is a flying leap ; but just as Kildee's horse again touches the earth with his hoofs, a Federal bullet strikes the gallant steed behind the ear, and he falls to the ground, dead. It takes but a moment for his rider to extricate himself, and, gaining his feet, run at full speed after his comrade who is still mounted. Brown continues the race, unable to do more than save himself, if he can do that ; but he has not gone twenty paces before his steed meets the same fate as his friend's. Anything but capture ! And they madly dash forward on foot, as if their utmost fleetness could avail against that of the cavalry horses thundering behind them. But a score of Federals overtake and surround them, and they are carried back to the road which they had so hurriedly left, under a strong guard. Men so desperate as they were could not be sent back to the main camp without a stronger guard than the officer in command of the wagon-train could spare from his force ; so the two prisoners remained in charge of their captors, and continued the journey. The outlook was not a cheerful one. At noon of the next day, the train would arrive at its destination ; the prisoners would be at once handed over to the military authorities, tried, sentenced, and executed as spies. Their blue coats forbade the expectation of any other fate.

Night came on, and the detachment halted. A square, several yards in extent, was marked out as the place for the prisoners. On each side of this square a sentry was stationed, instructed to pace back and forth until duly relieved, keeping a strict watch upon the captives ; and the prisoners lay in the long grass in the centre, wondering what miracle could set them free.

Night wore on, and the stars shone clearly from the dark blue summer sky. The heat that had so oppressed them during the

day was forgotten in the comfort which the cool breezes brought alike to captors and captives. The air grew cooler, and by the time the guard was changed, was quite moist; clouds, too, covered the sky, and hid the stars from view. Silently Kildee thanked Heaven that it was so.

Not a sound broke the stillness of the night but the wind sighing in the leaves of the trees near by, and the tread of the sentinels on the long, soft grass. Noiselessly Kildee rolled over and touched his companion in misfortune. Brown was on the *qui vive* in an instant.

"I think I'll get out of this," remarked the sharpshooter, in a whisper, as coolly as if it rested entirely with himself.

Had the darkness been less intense, the expression on Brown's face would have been a more eloquent reply than words; as it was, he responded, "How are you going to do it?"

"I'd rather risk four bullets in the dark than twenty in daylight," was the answer; "and we are certain to be shot as spies if we do not get out of their clutches to-night."

"Yes," was the gloomy response, "shot or—"

The speaker did not name the alternative, though it was not absent from his thoughts, or his companion's. Then Kildee unfolded his plan, which only the intense darkness made feasible. The beat of each one of their guards was about eight yards. Was it possible to pass them? Failure could result in nothing worse than they were sure to experience if they made no effort.

"Except that an unsuccessful attempt will alarm them, and we will not have another opportunity, objected Brown.

"What do you think would be a better plan?" asked Kildee.

The argument was unanswerable, and Brown finally agreed to risk all that his comrade dared. To rise would of course expose them to the sight of the guard, for even through the darkness of the night they could see dimly the forms of the soldiers passing to and fro; they must not outline themselves against the sky, even though it be a dark one. Rolling, slowly and noiselessly, they advanced from the centre of the square assigned them, until they had almost reached its bounds. But now they must pause, for the sentinel has turned on his beat, and is advancing toward them. The slightest rustling in the grass may excite his suspicions, and so they lie still as death, scarcely daring even to breathe, lest he find how near they are to the bounds of their square. He paces onward, and as soon as his back is

turned, they are ready to roll farther from the centre. But they hardly deem it safe, before he halts, and leans forward, peering through the darkness. He turns, although he has scarcely reached the middle of his beat, and retraces his steps. They feel that he suspects them, and make no sign. At almost every step he halts, and it seems to them that they are discovered to a certainty. But he passes on; and this time he completes his beat before returning. Still they dare not move, but wait until his suspicions are allayed. He returns, and when, for the fourth time, he has passed so near them that their hands, outstretched, might have touched his feet, he walks with the sentinel's ordinary regular pace. They are safe from him, for the present.

At last they were without the square, and any slight rustling in the grass would not excite the alarm of the guards, as it would be sure to do if heard in the place where the prisoners were supposed to be lying. Still it was not safe to let themselves be seen by any chance gleam of starlight; and they rolled past the outer pickets in the same manner. When they were about fifty yards from the limits of the camp, they straightened up, and struck out for the mountains. They knew the fastnesses of the hills "as seamen know the sea," and well for them that they did. Clambering in the darkness to a place almost inaccessible save to those who were well acquainted with its situation, they lay still until morning, which was not then far off.

At the first gleam of light, the sentries discovered that their beats surrounded a vacant space; and the alarm was at once given. But, luckily for the fugitives, a heavy shower, coming up towards dawn, had quite obliterated all traces of their escape, and the guards could not tell in what direction they had gone. To explore the mountains would be an endless and dangerous task, requiring so many men that the train would have been left to the mercy of a mere handful of Confederates; and Col. Coleman (the real one) did not think that the case required such a risk. Thus our two scouts escaped, though it was not without some days' rough traveling, without food of any kind, that they reached the Confederate headquarters. Whether the information which they were able to furnish was any advantage to Gen. Lee a few days later at Cold Harbor, history does not relate; but Kildee did excellent service as a sharpshooter in that battle.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

### AN ESCAPE FROM LIBBY.

Defying Search—Resolution to Escape—Opinion of Others—A Companion—An Unsuccessful Plan—Another Mode Proposed—Mystifying their Comrades—Passing the Guards—At the Rendezvous—A Keen-eyed Stranger—The Source of Help—At the Picket Post.

**E**ARLY in October, 1863, a new batch of prisoners arrived in Richmond, having just come from the prison at Belle Isle, where they had been confined five days. They were sent to Libby Prison. It is with one of these men, Corporal Purdum, that our present narrative concerns itself.

Before the search of the prisoners took place, he had taken one of the buttons of his blouse apart, pressed a ten-dollar bill into it, and fastened it together in such a way that the keenest eye would not detect the difference. By means of this greenback he was enabled, during the earlier days of his captivity, to obtain rations which were, in quantity and quality, far beyond those given out by the prison officials. But time went on, and after a few days the money gave out. Haversack and pocket-knife were then traded for the much desired articles of food; but at last every resource was exhausted, and there were but two courses remaining. One of these was to stay in the prison and suffer, as he saw the men around him suffering; the other was to attempt to escape. To his comrades he mentioned the alternatives.

“There’s really no choice,” said one, “though you think there is. You could never get away—never.”

“One could at least die in the attempt,” he answered, doggedly, “and that would be better than to die by inches here, as we’re all sure to do if we don’t get away.”

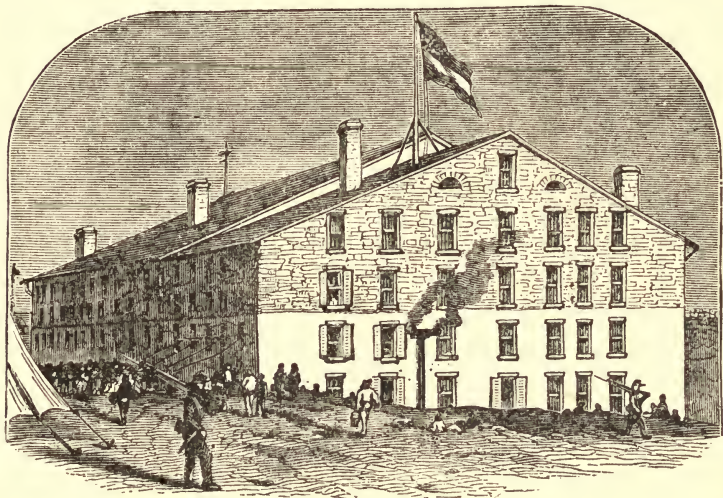
"It is simply suicide," said another, shaking his head; "as good a way as any would be to jump from one of the windows of the fourth story."

"Still, I think I shall make the effort," returned the corporal, unconvinced by all that might be said.

"Corporal, are you quite determined to go?" asked a young Pennsylvanian, who had been a silent auditor of the discussion.

"Quite," was the brief answer.

"Well, so am I. Suppose we try it together?"



*Libby Prison.*

The proposition was accepted, and the two set their wits to work to devise a plan. But it seemed to be in vain. From the windows of the upper floor they could get a good view of a considerable part of the city. But it seemed like the view which Moses had of the Promised Land; they could look upon it, but that was all. However, there was no harm in saying what they would do if they were fortunate enough to get away. There was no telling when they might be closely confined to one of the lower floors, so that they reconnoitered carefully from the fourth story windows, and marked out the route to be pursued, if ever opportunity should offer. Directly east for four or five miles, then slightly towards the south, and they would come out near the Federal lines at Williamsburg.

It was long before the days of that famous tunnel, which for

so many of the prisoners was the path to liberty, and for some to the grave. Tunneling, indeed, seems to have been unthought of, or dismissed as utterly impracticable. Their first attempt was an effort to make use of some planks that had been nailed up at the rear of the building. To get these up to a window, and lay them across to the fence, was the first thing to be done; they worked night after night, for of course they could do nothing during the day; but alas for their love of liberty! Their labors were discovered, and although they were not, as in many other prisons, punished for the attempt, they were of course obliged to lay some other plan. But what plan could possibly be executed?

"I just tell you what it is," said Purdum, as the two sat in council, "the building's so closely guarded that there's only one way to get out."

"What's that?" asked the other.

"Walk out of the door," replied the corporal. "You may not believe it, but I tell you it'll have to come to that, yet."

"But I don't see how it is to be done," persisted the Pennsylvanian.

"Hi, Purdum, you here yet?" called a waggish comrade, who chanced to come near them; "why, I thought you and B—— had escaped ages ago."

"We did come mighty near it," answered Purdum, good-naturedly, "but we slipped up somehow. As I tell you," this to B——, "we'll have to walk out. They're cleaning up the prison now, so it's a pretty good time. We'll have to get Rebel uniforms, of course."

"Well, if you think it can be done, all right. We'll try it. But don't say a word about it to the others—they chaff us unmercifully now," stipulated B——.

The Confederate uniforms were obtained, by what means does not appear. So many of the men who narrate their own adventures of this kind do not seem to realize that the main interest lies in the details, and not in the facts. The day that the second suit was procured was the one set for trying the plan.

At dusk they were ready, but it was agreed to wait until the relief guard came on duty at seven o'clock before the game was tried. In the meantime, they walked about the prison, clad in their gray uniforms, to see if their comrades would suspect them. All took them to be Confederates.



"Are you busy, sir?" asked a low voice in Purdum's ear.

"Well, no, not so very."

"Just step aside here, will you. I'd like to see you a moment."

The speaker was one of the prisoners. Greatly mystified, the corporal complied with the request.

"See here, I wish you'd try and get me out of prison, won't you? I don't belong here, really. I was conscripted; I didn't want to fight against the South; I've never been in a battle and never fired a gun at the Southern people. I'd give most anything to a man that would get me out of prison."

"Well, I'll see about it," replied Purdum, who found, by this means, that his disguise was perfect. They were solicited several times by other prisoners, who asked them to bring in bread; but they excused themselves from this favor by pleading that the guard would not permit trading. At length the appointed hour arrived, and Purdum presented himself at the door, it having been arranged that he was to make the first attempt. He passed unchallenged by the guard, who supposed he was simply one of the soldiers that had been superintending the cleaning of the building. Not so the sentinel at the outer line, on the street.

"Halt! Who goes there?"

"A friend," replied Purdum.

"Where do you come from?"

"I am Police Sergeant, and have been directing the cleaning of the prison."

"I have no orders to let you pass, sir," said the guard.

"Probably because it is a matter of course that I should be allowed to pass; or perhaps I am later than usual this evening, and they expected me to be out before you came on duty. I usually am through earlier. The guard has just been changed, hasn't it?"

"Yes, sir," very meekly.

"That explains it, then. But you are not going to keep me in, are you?"

"Oh no, certainly not, sir; pass on;" and the guard saluted as though to a superior officer.

B— was less fortunate. The first guard would not let him pass. He was therefore reduced to strategy, and, much to his disgust, was obliged to take some of his companions into the secret. These comrades made a demonstration at one of the win-

dows which attracted the attention of the guard, and while he was busily looking to find out what was the matter there, B—— slipped past him and escaped by crawling under some boards lying near by. He was not halted by the guard on the street, and



*Passing the Guard.*

soon arrived at the appointed rendezvous, a small hill some three squares from the prison. Here he found Purdam, who had been waiting for nearly an hour and a half, and was almost frozen with the long inaction in the chilling November air.

They dared not congratulate each other in words; only a si-

lent pressure of the hands, a glad look into each other's eyes; and they started on their perilous journey through the enemy's country, alone, without friends or money. Guided only by the stars, they pursued the route which they had planned before setting out. They crossed the woods and fields, traveling at a good round pace, until they came to the fortifications; these must be approached with more caution. But any fears which they might have entertained proved groundless, for the defenses were passed in safety. Once beyond the intrenchments, they thought they might venture to ask for guidance; but although they were careful to select a humble house, apparently tenanted by negroes, their knock at the door received no response. There was nothing to be done, then, but to make their way onward as best they might. Fortunately, the sky was cloudless, and these wanderers in an unknown country, without guide or compass, literally received aid from on high.

So they traveled on until about two o'clock. Weak and tired, they were obliged to rest; and stealing into an old stable, they went in and laid down. But thinly clad as they were, the biting air of the November night chilled them to the bone; and after a brief trial of the stable, they were only too glad to seek shelter in a neighboring house. Here they found a friend in its solitary occupant, an aged negress, who gave them not only shelter and warmth, but shared with them her scanty supply of food. At this place they learned that they had traveled ten miles in the direction which they wished to take. Early in the morning, they again set out; for their dress made it possible for them to travel by day without being suspected. Indeed they met many persons who would doubtless have returned them to Libby had not the Confederate uniform deceived them. At noon they were fed by a woman whose husband was in the Southern army; from her, too, they learned much about the roads.

They reached the Chickahominy river, twenty miles from Richmond. Oh for one of those long bridges which had been destroyed when McClellan advanced towards Richmond! But the wish was ungratified, and they set to work to find some other means of crossing the river. Two logs felled for some purpose and left to lie where they had fallen, served as rude rafts; a long stout limb of a tree enabled each to "pole" himself over. But one of their greatest perils was to be encountered after this difficulty had been surmounted. This was nothing else than the

meeting with a man whom at first they took for a Confederate soldier. They afterward found, however, that his gray suit was not a uniform, but simple citizen's homespun, dyed with spruce pine roots, and worn as a piece of necessary economy in those days of the blockade.

"Where do you belong?" was almost his first question.

"To the Nineteenth Virginia Battalion, guarding prisoners at Richmond," Purdum answered, gravely.

"Where are you going?"

"Home on furlough," was the reply which came promptly.

The stranger looked sharply at them for full a minute; but they returned his gaze with as much of honesty and frankness as they could summon to the support of falsehood.

"Oh, pshaw," he ejaculated, laughing; "you needn't try to fool me. You're escaped prisoners, trying to get to the Federal lines."

With an air that seemed to say, "You'd better not know so much than know so much that ain't so," Purdum gravely assured him that he misjudged them; but the assurance produced little or no effect.

"You'd better turn back to Richmond; you'll never get past the pickets," he said, shaking his head.

"We'll turn back when our furlough ends," said Purdum, "and not a day before."

"Well, good-bye and good luck to you," he said, "but I'm afraid you will never get to your friends."

Off rode the keen-eyed stranger, and the two Federals sped onward in the opposite direction, intent upon putting as many miles as possible between themselves and the man who had suspected their true character. They walked five miles at a rapid pace, without meeting any one, save here and there a party of children on their way to school. These they dared not question for fear that the circumstances be related at home, and the parents led to suspect the questioners. The only class of persons of whom they dared inquire was the negroes, and at last they met a colored man. He proved to be a valuable acquaintance, furnishing much information which was really necessary. He told them where the pickets were and how to evade them; and he told them where they would find another friend—a free negro. This man had been left in charge of a large house by the owner, and gladly sheltered the escaping Federals for the night, providing them with fire and food.

How soon their absence would be discovered, or whether they would be pursued, they of course did not know; but their anxiety to reach the Federals lines was doubled by the fear of being overtaken and conveyed back to Libby. Only a few hours, then, did they spend in the mansion whose owner would never have entertained such as they; and then they were on their way again at daylight.

Danger threatened again; for they were hardly out of sight



*In Hiding.*

before they saw a squad of cavalry approaching. But trusting that they themselves had not been seen or noticed, and guided by their black friend, they struck into the woods that bordered the road. The troopers rode on by their hiding-place, little dreaming what a prize was within their very grasp; the escaped prisoners made their best time for a full half mile, but finding that their first conjecture was right, and that they were not pursued, they slackened their pace to a rate that they could keep up under ordinary circumstances. Still, they dared not venture back to the road, for fear that others would be keener-eyed or less unsuspecting. Their colored host soon left them, but occasionally they still sought out a negro cabin that they might ask about the way; and by this means learned of many by-paths of

which only those well acquainted with the country could know.

The same friendly, dusky hands pointed the way to a shelter at night; and brought out a homely store of sweet potatoes and corn-dodgers for their refreshment and sustenance. Bright and early the next morning they were again on the way, although they were obliged to travel still in the woods and lost much time by mistaking their route. Being now in the space between the lines of the two armies, they were in danger of meeting with Confederate scouts, who would be likely to recapture them. They did indeed see several of such parties, but being on the alert, managed to evade them.

Over a rough road, through almost impenetrable forests and swamps, they toiled painfully on, fearing every moment that they might hear the ominous summons to halt from some enemy half-hidden among the thick trees. At last, however, they reached the place where they had been told that they would find shelter for the night. Would it be the last night? Their informants, kept ignorant through generations of servitude, and long ages of savagery preceding slavery, could not judge accurately of numbers or distances; could not tell how long it might be before they should reach that haven of safety, a Federal picket post. Their present host, however, was perhaps more intelligent, perhaps had more often been over the route; he assured them that they were seven miles from the Federal lines.

Their hearts leaped as they heard his words, and they felt almost that they must go on; but they were footsore and weary, almost fainting from lack of food and from their long journey. Then, too, they were almost as safe as if they were fairly within the lines; and they concluded to rest for the night. They were fed and lodged, then, by this kind friend, who went with them two miles on their journey the next morning, leaving them gratefully to trudge the rest of their way.

"Hey, Johnny," cried a picket, as they came in sight; "getting tired, 'cause we don't let you alone?"

"We're not deserters," replied Purdum, "but escaped prisoners from Libby."

Nor were they the less welcome because they were not deserters from the Confederate Army, as the pickets had at first supposed them to be. They were duly escorted to camp, and made much of; for every man that escaped from Libby in those days was, in the eyes of his friends, a hero, hardly second to the man who captured a battle-flag from the enemy.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### A DANGEROUS MISSION.

Necessity for Trusty Messenger—Col. Baker Volunteers—Dispatches Delivered—Danger Ahead—Worse and More of It—The Whole Confederate Army—A Break in the Column—Dashes Through—Pursued—Difficulties—Stratagem—Success—A Close Contest—Bull Run—The Stream is Crossed—Escape of Messenger.

CARRYING dispatches between the two parts of an army is one of the most perilous, as it is one of the most necessary branches of service, during time of war. The partisan has, usually, the advantage of a perfect knowledge of the country in which he is to operate, and can often elude his pursuers by means of some feature of it of which they are ignorant; but the bearer of dispatches must often trust to the information which others give him; his mission must be performed with speed; and if the enemy be made aware of, or even suspect his presence, the capture of his papers immediately becomes the thing most earnestly desired.

When Gen. Pope retreated before Lee's army in the fall of 1863, and Gen. Banks, without being aware of the extent of the disaster, had left the Shenandoah Valley in order to effect a junction with him, it became highly essential that the War Department at Washington should communicate to Banks information of the dangers that lay before him. Two messengers were successively dispatched; the first was captured; the second penetrated some distance into the enemy's country, but returned before he had accomplished his mission, saying it was a greater risk than he was prepared to take. The danger was becoming greater, the necessity more urgent, every hour. In this dilemma, Secretary Stanton sent for Col. Baker, the Chief of the Na-

tional Detective Service, and, when he arrived, asked him:

“Have you any reliable man who will undertake to carry dispatches to Gen. Banks?”

The chief thought rapidly over the men in the service—nearly or quite four hundred in number; but no one seemed available. Hardly a moment had elapsed before he was ready to answer:

“If you will get the dispatches ready sir I will see that an attempt is made to deliver them.”

More, of course, he could not positively promise, but the Secretary knew his man, and was satisfied. A time was set when the papers should be prepared, and the subordinate retired to fit himself out for the journey. Of course, the most important thing was a fleet horse; and once provided with this, his preparations were soon completed. Concealing the dispatches next his skin, he set out on his lonely journey. Leaving the capital at six in the evening, he reached Gen. McDowell's headquarters after a few hours' ride; but such was the confusion into which everything had been thrown, that the horse he desired could not be furnished him, and he was obliged to make the whole journey on the now wearied animal with which he had been furnished at Washington. Through a driving rain, which was welcome because it afforded a promise of greater security, he rode on, reaching Gen. Banks' headquarters at about dawn.

The dispatches were delivered to the officer, who was as anxious to receive them as the Secretary had been to send them; and the messenger was given fresh dispatches to deliver to the Department. Disregarding the fact that he had been in the saddle all night, accomplishing during that space a distance of sixty miles, he determined to lose no time in returning. Being now sure of the location of the point which he desired to reach, he determined to make no circuit, but to ride directly for the Confederate lines. He had not gone far before a dark line on the horizon revealed the presence of danger; approaching cautiously, yet rapidly, he found it was the enemy's entire force, marching in an easterly direction towards the famous battle-ground of Bull Run. Detachments of infantry, cavalry and artillery occupied the whole country ahead of him; almost the only means of reaching his destination was to ride rapidly through one of the spaces between two of these squads.

Of course this was dangerous in the extreme, and no one realized that it was so, better than the man who was to make the



effort. By making a wide circuit, he might have been able to ride around them in safety; but this would take longer than he desired to be on the journey; he preferred to encounter the danger, rather than to lose the time. For nearly an hour, from a position not more than three hundred yards from the main column, he watched for a favorable opportunity to accomplish his daring project. At last it presented itself. With his revolver firmly grasped in his right hand, but held in such a way as nearly to conceal it, and guiding his horse with his left hand, he galloped at full speed towards a break in the column. At first, the Confederates were uncertain as to who he might be, or what might be his errand; possibly he was one of their own men, sent on some mission, and now desirous of gaining his command; an aid with orders from the general; a messenger from Jackson or some other officer. But when, after reaching the opening, he galloped straight onward past the column, his movements became suspicious, and a dozen voices commanded him to halt. The summons was of course unheeded; it thus became certain that he was an enemy, and many of the soldiers fired after him. This was no more than he expected, and he was prepared for it. Bending low upon the neck of his horse, he urged the tired animal onward while the bullets whistled above his head. Thus protected by his position, the only evil that could befall him was an injury to his horse; but fortunately this was escaped.

He was not out of sight before a cavalry squad of forty came up with the body of infantry whose shots he had escaped, and was ordered in pursuit. Matters had now become serious, for his horse was jaded with the long night ride, while theirs were probably comparatively fresh; then, too, the immense disproportion of numbers would make it next to impossible for him to baffle pursuit. The Confederates, however, were not aware that he had on his person dispatches from Gen. Banks to the Secretary of War; and when the chase had continued for about a mile, and appeared more unavailing than ever, they began to be discouraged. One after another they departed, discharging a farewell shot as they went, until only six or eight were left.

The few remaining pursuers were all well mounted, and rode on as if they enjoyed the chase. They were too far in the rear to fire with any certainty of hitting the mark, and not wishing to cause further delay by stopping to load, held their fire until some better opportunity should offer. It was as exciting a race

as the patrons of the turf ever witnessed ; now they rode neck and neck ; now one gained on the others—one length, two, half-a-dozen, only to be in turn distanced. Far before them was the prize—they knew not what ; but the pleasure of the chase was sufficient to recompense them if it proved valueless, and meanwhile they escaped the necessity of marching soberly along with the column.

The tired horse in the van seemed to understand the necessity of making the best possible time, and put forth his utmost speed. There was no time for choice of roads ; the Federal lines must be reached as soon as possible ; the only guide which the rider has is the sun overhead ; he must keep in the direction whence that is coming, turning a little to the north. His haste led him into a thicket which proved nearly impassable for his horse ; and while he was endeavoring to disentangle himself from this difficulty, his foremost pursuer gained rapidly upon him. Only twenty paces separate them as the Confederate, rising in his stirrups and bending forward, fires ; but the shot misses him, as the others have done ; and having now passed the obstructed part of the road, he flies onward, consoling himself with the reflection that his pursuers will be delayed as long as he has been.

Regardless of everything but the necessity of putting as great a distance as possible between himself and the Southerners, he dashes on at his utmost speed, only to find himself, in a few moments, floundering in a mud-hole in the midst of the road. It seemed that the rain which had sheltered him from observation during his night's ride was to lead to his capture in daytime. He was still laboring under this difficulty, unable to proceed at any other pace than a walk, when the Confederates, extricating themselves from the thicket through which he had led them, came dashing onward, uttering that shrill cry familiarly known as the "Rebel yell." Onward, onward, closer and closer, until they judge it a certain aim ; then the pistol shots ring out. But he again escapes unscathed, and once more, being safely over the deepest mud, rides up the slope, which is comparatively dry.

His chances grew better and better as time went on, for only four of the cavalrymen had continued the chase so far. The odds now were still great, but not so overwhelming as at first. Trusting to escape by sheer fleetness, he urged his horse to greater and greater speed, and for nine miles allowed no slackening. But he was sensible that he was fast approaching the

limit of equine endurance ; the dark coat of his horse was shining with perspiration, and flecked with foam. It was impossible, then, for him to get away from them but by stratagem. His thoughts were busy as he rode on, laying a plan by which to elude them.

His scheme perfected in his own mind, he soon found a place to put it in execution. Making one last, desperate effort, he reached the brow of a small hill far in advance of the others, and



*A Shot from the Thicket.*

arrived at the foot before they gained the summit. Hastily dismounting, he concealed himself and his horse in a dense thicket near the road.

He had hardly time to do so, before the foremost pursuer had gained the top of the hill. Suspecting no stratagem, the Confederate dashed onward at his former speed, closely followed by his comrades. Down the slope of the hill, past the group of young pines where the object of the chase was hidden, and out of sight. But he was not yet safe. A turn in the road, a swell of the ground, might have hidden him from their eyes for a few moments, but he must soon come in sight. They reached the

top of the hill beyond the hollow where he was concealed; there was a long stretch of level road from its foot, straight as if drawn by a ruler; on either side there was a grassy margin, brown with the approach of winter; the remains of a snake fence, separated the fields from the common road, except where long stretches of it had furnished material for camp fires; but saving the bushes that grew in the place of the fence, there was no sort of shelter for the fugitive, who could not have gained so much time as to be out of sight.

Three of the pursuers, not stopping to consider these facts, perhaps forgetful of everything but the temporary freedom from military restraint, dashed onward; the fourth, more cautious, saw that there was no use in seeking their chase before them; he must be behind them. Wheeling his horse, then, the Confederate rode slowly back, carefully examining every place that seemed at all promising.

Perplexed by the mysterious disappearance, he had searched so many coverts unsuccessfully that he was about to give it up in disgust. Just as he seemed most inclined to do so, however, a slight movement in a thicket about thirty yards off attracted his attention.

"There's a horse, there, sure as you're born," he muttered to himself; though he was a fool to hide so near the road, and"—

His hand dropped towards his carbine, when whistling through the boughs came a pistol-shot. His horse reared and plunged forward; the rider swayed a moment in his saddle, and then fell heavily to the ground.

Dropping his pistol to his side, Col. Baker sprang into his saddle. With evident effort the wounded man raised himself trying again to get his carbine into position, but sank again to the ground as a second bullet struck him. Of course his companions would return, on hearing the shots, to learn their meaning; there was no time to be lost. Dashing off at right angles to the road, Col. Baker endeavored to mislead his enemies; but they came back in less time than he had anticipated, and seeing him, again gave chase. The excitement of the race grew greater and greater. Despite the rest in the pine thicket, he feared that it would be simply a question of endurance, and his horse was nearly exhausted. Even now they were within range, as the bullet which whistled by him attested; even now, glancing back at them, he could see the grim determination in their faces and bearing.

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They had seen their companion slain by his hand; they would take him, dead or alive.

Every minute was valuable; every minute brought him nearer to safety; safety, not for himself only, but for the dispatches of which he was the bearer. At last that famous stream, which had seen and given name to two battles, Bull Run, was seen in the distance. The farther side, he knew, was the Federal picket line. Could he reach it? It was extremely doubtful, for the banks rose to some height above the little river, and while crossing it he would be exposed to the bullets of the three Confederates.

“One more effort, good horse, and you can rest.”

Obediently to his urging, the horse dashed onward more wildly than ever. Rapidly he gained upon them—can he reach the farther side before they reach this? The stream is gained; he plunges into the current; it is not far to swim, for the river is but eight or ten yards wide. Despite the swiftness of the current, the distance is soon accomplished, and horse and rider are on the level bank. But above this rises the hill on which the pickets are placed; its side is almost perpendicular, from the narrow strip of flat ground to the summit. Yet the top must be gained, and that before the pursuers have emerged from the woods just the other side of Bull Run.

The danger increases as time goes on, and the horse has made but ineffectual efforts to scale the height. He can hear the shouts of his pursuers as they encourage each other and urge their steeds onward. Nearer and nearer they come.

“Try it again, old boy; try it just once more,” he said to the noble animal that he bestrode, as he patted its neck encouragingly. Thus incited, the horse, with one desperate spring, gained the top of the bank, and planted his feet firmly on the turf. A shot whistled over the waters, and buried itself in the earth beneath them. They were safe at last, but not a moment too soon.

“What’s the matter?” cried the pickets, running forward; while the officer in command more decorously demanded an explanation.

“I have dispatches to the Secretary of War from Gen. Banks, and have been chased by the Rebels.”

Glancing at the stream, they saw a horse and rider struggling in the current, in a vain endeavor to reach the shore; instantly four or five carbines were raised, there was one report, and the

bullets were speeding towards the horseman. His struggles ceased; and horse and rider were borne onward by the swift current, leaving behind them a trail of blood.

His companions reached the edge of the wood just in time to see the scene as we have described it; the dead Confederate in the water, the group of soldiers in blue uniforms on the opposite bluff; and deeming, in such circumstances, that discretion was the better part of valor, wheeled and disappeared in the woods.

Mounting his horse once more, Col. Baker rode towards Washington at a somewhat more leisurely pace than that lately used, which might have been termed breakneck speed. Arriving there at 3 P. M., he delivered the dispatches, having been in the saddle twenty-one hours, during which time he had accomplished a distance of no less than one hundred and twenty-four miles. Utterly prostrated by the long journey, rider and horse required a long period of rest and careful treatment.



## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### A BREAK FOR LIBERTY.

The Old Prison—Efforts to Escape—Col. Rose's Tunnel—A False Alarm—Horrors of the "Dead Cellar"—Capt. Moran Finds the Passage—The Entrance to the Tunnel—Comrades—Into the Upper Air Again—Out of the City—Pursued—Separation—The Swamp—Surrounded—A Dash for Liberty—Into the Enemy's Arms—Back to Libby.

ON one of the back streets of the city of Richmond, Va., there stands a huge, time-worn brick building, originally intended for a tobacco warehouse, and fulfilling that purpose for a number of years; now used as a fertilizing manufactory. Not a promising structure for the pen of historian or novelist, you will say; but there is another part to its history; and if those old brick walls had tongues as well as ears, what stories they could tell! Even as it is, they bear mute testimony that they are not like others of their kind. In this contracted space about the building, the stones are worn by the feet of sleepless sentinels pacing to and fro, keeping guard over the men who peered wistfully from the windows above, whence the iron bars have never been removed. Beneath that frowning portal passed many a man in the full pride of health and youth; the doors clanged shut, the key turned grating in the lock, the bolts were drawn; and he never again beheld the unobstructed light of day.

Men have passed days, months, even years, here, with nothing to do but to wait. Dream after dream of home has mocked both sleeping and waking hours, till hope of either peace or exchange has seemed a delusive and perpetual mirage. How weary a task it was, no tongue, not even their own, could tell. Look at the floor from which that heap of fertilizer has been but

this moment removed; there is a slight memento of those long days—a checkerboard drawn with ink upon the wood; but the buttons and beans with which they played have vanished, like that dreadful time, twenty years ago.

Nor was theirs a passive endurance of their fate; many of them escaped; from that window half a dozen of them swung to the ground, and, with the guard, who had aided them, succeeded in reaching their friends. Even that simple iron ring in the ceiling has its story; for when another party resolved upon a similar effort, and found they had been betrayed to the guards by one of their own comrades, it was to this ring that the baffled and infuriated men hanged the traitor. Many a story could the grim walls tell, of hope, and patience, and despair; for this was Libby Prison.

It is not our purpose to enter into a minute description of prison life at any of the places used for the purpose of securing their prisoners of war by the military authorities, Federal or Confederate, during the "late onpleasantness." For while, in either case, the picture would to some appear grossly overdrawn, to others it would seem that only the rudest outline had been sketched. We prefer, then, to leave such subjects to the pens of those who wish to write about them, and confine ourselves to the indisputable fact that, however perfect places of residence the various military prisons may have been, those confined in them were always anxious to escape whenever opportunity offered.

In the basement of the building there may still be seen traces of the tunnel by which sixty-one prisoners on one night regained freedom; and it is of an episode of this, one of the most notable and extensive escapades of the whole war, that we will now give the particulars.

After many fruitless attempts by the prisoners to excavate a tunnel, through which to effect their escape, a working party of fourteen, who were to relieve each other regularly, was organized under Col. Rose. Having lifted the bottom of the fireplace in the cook room and removed the bricks from the back of the flue, they penetrated between the floor joists under the end room, used as a hospital, into the cellar. An opening about two feet by eighteen inches was commenced in the wall near the northeast corner of the cellar. With no tools but their pocket knives, they cut through the piles on which the building was supported.



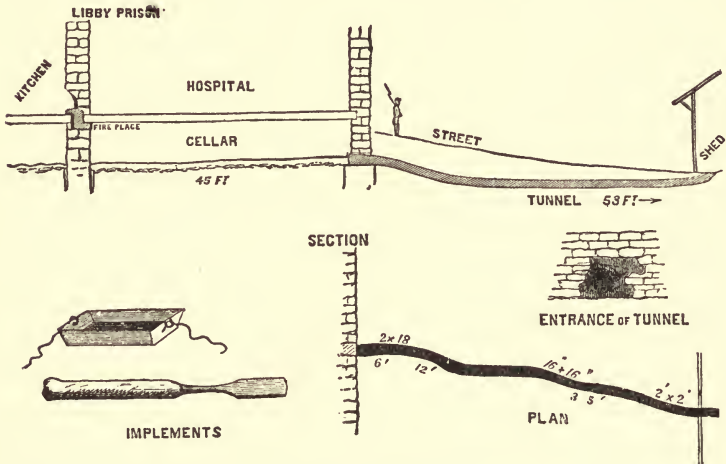


Having penetrated into the earth, they experienced great difficulty from their candles, which would not burn for want of air in the tunnel, compelling one of the party to stand at the opening and fan with his hat. The tunnel slanted downward for a distance of about twelve feet, then upward for about the same distance, and was nearly level the remaining distance. It was so narrow in some places that to pass through it was necessary to lie flat on one's face and be propelled by the hands and feet. A slight error was made in the computation of the distance, and thinking they had reached the inclosure, they dug up to the surface; but soon discovered that they had come out in the street, within but a few yards of the sentinels. Quickly filling up the hole with a pair of old pants and some straw, they continued their digging a few feet further to the desired spot under a shed in the yard of the warehouse. They then dug to the surface and drew an empty hogshead over the opening to conceal it in the day time. The only implements used in this arduous work were a large chisel and a wooden spit-box from one of the rooms above, to convey earth in; cords were attached to this box by which it was drawn out by the assistants when filled; the earth and gravel were then carefully concealed under some straw and rubbish. It was the night of Feb. 8th, 1864, that the tunnel was completed. The men crawled into it, and many had emerged at the other end, when the alarm was given that the guards were coming. Hastily, the hundreds who had crowded about the mouth of the tunnel rushed back to their cells, there to assume such an air of innocence as would prevent their being punished for complicity in the escape of their comrades. Sixty-one had entered the long, dark passage, and finally worked their way to liberty; many of them being sheltered close by the city, by a lady whose loyalty to the Confederacy had never been questioned; hidden in her house and grounds until it was safe for them to continue their flight.

But the cry of "guards" was a false alarm, and before long several of those who had been so hastily scattered had again bent their steps towards the tunnel. Among those who had not reached this point at the time that the stampede took place was Captain Frank E. Moran, of the 73rd New York. The news of the completion of the tunnel, once divulged to any of those who had not been directly concerned in it, had spread like wildfire, and when the alarm was given it had found men at various dis-

tances from the same goal. The tidings, with a few brief directions how to proceed, had but just reached Capt. Moran when the hasty retreat commenced. He, then, had really lost but little time, and as soon as all was again quiet he proceeded on his way.

The first point to be made was the fireplace. Beyond the jagged edge of the opening there was nothing to be seen but darkness—rayless, impenetrable, slimy to the touch as the skin of a snake. But he was not a man to fear darkness, or the Powers of Darkness, when escape from prison was to be accomplish-



*Diagram of Tunnel.*

ed, and without a moment's hesitation he squeezed himself through the aperture. Once past the portion that could be seen from the room, he found himself in a slightly larger passage, which slanted downward from the back of the fireplace, through the chimney to the cellar.

He arrived at the end of the incline, and found, at first, nothing—absolutely nothing but the thick darkness. After a moment's groping for something which would enable him to continue the descent—for he was fast losing his hold on the slight projections of rock in the passage—he grasped a strip of one of the rough army blankets. That, he knew, was the means of farther descent; and soon his whole weight hung on it. As his arms stretched upward, his shoulders, which he had severely bruised in squeezing into the narrow opening of the fireplace,

gave him exquisite pain; but, disregarding this, he let himself cautiously down to the end of the blanket rope, and stretched his feet downward to feel for the floor.

But though he held to the very end of the rope and stretched every muscle in the effort to touch the ground, it was still beneath his reach. A moment he hung there, uncertain how far he must fall, or on what kind of a surface; dreading lest he should come down with a noise that would alarm the guard; sure of nothing but that he could not go back, and could not long hang there. It was but a moment, and yet many thoughts passed through his brain—to fall and dislocate his ankle or break his leg, as he might do; to lie there, helpless and alone, in the darkness and dampness of that fetid cellar; to die there of hunger and thirst, and to be lost forever from the records of mankind—! Still, having come this far, there was nothing to do but to drop, and drop he did.

Everything had been carefully arranged by the daring spirits that had planned the escape; and although the blanket rope was so short that a man, holding to the end of it, could not touch the floor, the latter had been thickly strewn with straw. Capt. Moran's melancholy anticipations, then, were quickly dispelled as he alighted on the soft bed that broke his fall. Yet so great was the height from which he had dropped, that he rolled over and over, still upon the straw, before he could regain his feet. As he fell, he became acquainted with the fact that the cellar was not uninhabited. A hundred rats, it seemed, ran squealing from him; and, as he rolled over, it appeared as if the cellar was literally alive with them. As he rose, they scampered about him; and he could hardly set his foot down without causing a commotion among them.

This, of course, was a small affair; but as it flashed across his mind that this was the "dead cellar" to which the bodies of those who died in the hospital directly over it were removed to await the rude burial, a feeling of unutterable loathing took possession of him. How many times had these vermin climbed over the coffins of his comrades, how many times had they with filthy, ghoulish instinct, striven to get at the horrible feast within the rough pine box?

He had been told that the opening to the tunnel was in the wall of this cellar, and now groped his way along until his hands came in contact with the masonry dripping as if with blood. The

eye, after a time, becomes accustomed to any ordinary obscurity, and we are able to discern objects with some degree of distinctness. But so intense, so perfect was this darkness, that the eye seemed to have lost the sense of sight; no length of time spent in it could dilate the pupil enough for it to receive a single ray of light. The soldier could only feel his way along the slimy wall, the very touch of which was enough to send a shudder through the stoutest frame.

In this way he reached the corner of the room, and feeling sure that he must have missed the entrance to the tunnel, paused



*In the Dead Cellar.*

a moment to listen, for he thought he might hear some signal from his comrades. Not a sound but the squealing of the rats and the rustling which they made in scampering over the straw. He felt his way back, stopping at every step, lest he might miss some faint call. The thoughts that had come before were but the excited dreams of an organization almost worn out by close confinement and poor diet, and suddenly roused by the hope of escape; but his thoughts now were from a deeper source—the workings of a mind accustomed to recover its balance easily. Yet they were far more terrible than any of the nervous shudderings. Suppose he should not find the entrance to the passage-way. He must remain here, for there was no possibil-



ity of retreat ; he could not reach the rope, even if he could find the point in the floor exactly beneath it. Perhaps a numbness would creep over him, and, while still conscious of the horror of his fate, he would be unable to resist the thousands of vermin whose sharp teeth would tear the quivering flesh from his bones. But, whether a living man or a bleaching skeleton, he would inevitably be discovered when the corpse of the next victim of life in Libby should be borne thither to await its burial ; and that meant the discovery of the tunnel, the passage to freedom, for which his companions had worked so long, and which would be used by so many if not detected by the guards.

Should he be the cause of its detection? Surely, if he were, the blood of all who died in that loathsome place would be upon his head ; and mothers and wives in their far Northern homes would execrate the wretch whose blunders had prevented the escape of their beloved ones from Libby. The thought of such a fate as he had first conjured up had chilled the very blood in his veins, brave soldier as he was ; but now this idea sent it coursing back like fire to all parts of his body, inciting him to yet another effort to find the mouth of the tunnel.

Hours after hours passed away and he trod a limitless dungeon, whose wall, dripping and slimy, extended in one unbroken stretch for miles. His limbs grew weaker with the long journey, while the shrill treble of the harpies about him grew sharper and more triumphant. At last his hand came to a break in the wall, and he awoke from his horrible dream, awoke to know that he had walked but a few feet from the corner, and that it was scarcely ten minutes since he had loosed his hold on the blanket-rope.

He stooped and put his hand towards the aperture ; it came in contact with a pair of heels, which were suddenly drawn away at his touch.

“Who’s there?” asked a low voice, which came from the tunnel as deep and hollow as if from a grave.

“Moran, of the Gettysburg room. Who are you?”

“Morgan, from the Chickamauga room. Are the Rebs coming?”

“No. Go ahead, so there’ll be room for me.”

Morgan scrambled on, sending a shower of dirt into Moran’s eyes, and was closely followed by the new comer. The passage through which they were making their way was about two feet

in diameter, on an average, and was extremely irregular in its course. Now ascending, now descending, they crawled on along the cold and clammy sides of the tunnel, through air that was so heavy and foul as to almost suffocate them.

“O—oh!” groaned Morgan.

“What’s the matter?”

“Oh, my leg’s cramped fearfully. I’ll have to stop a minute.”

“Try to crawl on can’t you? We’ll smother if we stay here.”

“I cant—o—oh!”

“Will it help you to take your shoe off?”

“Maybe so, but I can’t get at it—o—oh!”

“Which leg is it?”

“The left.”

“All right; I’ll take the shoe off.”

“Bring it along, though; I can’t afford to lose it.”

This, of course, only added to Moran’s difficulties; though, in saying so, we have no wish to insinuate anything in regard to the size of Capt. Morgan’s foot; under such circumstances, the slightest thing was a drawback; and Moran, with his bruised shoulder, had much difficulty in working his way along what seemed to be an endless passage. The entrance and exit of the tunnel were about seventy feet apart; but as it had been necessary to change the level quite frequently, they really had to crawl a much greater distance.

At last, a ray of light, just bright enough to make the darkness yet more visible, diffused itself about them, and, as they crawled slowly on, it grew stronger and stronger. They were nearing the end of the tunnel. At last they had reached it. Morgan clambered out, and extended his hand to his companion; who, thus assisted, was soon once more in the open air. Words cannot tell the relief they felt on emerging from the stifling atmosphere and pitchy darkness of the tunnel, and again drew deep breaths of pure air. What had seemed such bright light when seen from the underground passage-way was now perceived to be nothing but the faint gleam of the stars, and the uncertain flickering of the lamps of the city and the prison. It was enough, however, to serve their purpose, and more would have been dangerous.

They were about seventy feet from the east wall of the prison, in a yard between two large buildings, one on the northern, one on the southern side. In the prison yard they could see the sen-

tinels pacing to and fro, and even, as they passed under the flaring lamps, distinguish their features. But there was no time to watch the guards. Moran looked suspiciously at a third man in this inclosure, but his doubts were dispelled when Morgan introduced the stranger as Lieut. Watson, of his own company and regiment, the Twenty-first Wisconsin. The three drew together into the shelter of a shadow, and held a whispered consultation as to what was to be done next.

The space in which they stood was inclosed on three sides, opening on the fourth to the street. The prison was on the west, the two other buildings on the north and south; they could only proceed, then, in an easterly direction. After a few moments' counsel together, the three Federals removed their shoes, in order that they might walk with less noise, and, if pursued, run faster. In accordance with their plans, Lieut. Watson was the first to emerge from the deep shadow in which they stood; and as he walked down the street he was followed, at an interval of about two minutes, by Morgan. Moran, standing in the shadow, watched the guards and the retreating forms of his comrades alternately. Once the two Confederates drew together, and, to the anxious eyes of the solitary Federal, seemed to have seen the two men walking down the street; but it was a false alarm, for they separated in a moment, and each went back to his own proper place.

At last Morgan had had the start upon which they had agreed, and Moran followed as swiftly and noiselessly as the others had gone. The rendezvous was at the second corner, and from this point they went on together for some distance, directing their steps, of course, towards the confines of the city. The huge grim warehouses that had at first surrounded them had been left far behind, and the cottages were far more thinly scattered than had been the houses which they first passed. Gradually, the streets lost the air of frequent use, and became mere country roads. Thus stealing along, from shadow to shadow, the three fugitives were beyond the limits of the Confederate capital.

It was nearly the end of the long winter night; indeed, for many men it was already the end, when a sound of fearful significance was heard—the measured tread of horses' feet. There was a moment's hasty consultation, and they agreed to separate; to conceal themselves until after the pursuers had passed, and then to follow in their wake towards a certain densely wooded

swamp, where they would again unite. Hardly had this been done than they scattered, in accordance with the agreement, each man to find a hiding-place for himself.

Everything worked well, and the Confederates soon rode by, little dreaming what prey was within a few steps of them. Once they were out of sight, the Federals crept cautiously out from their places of concealment and made their way, by three different routes, to the rendezvous in the swamp. It was by this time broad day, and no time was to be lost in gaining the friendly shelter of the forest. Moran followed directly on the trail of the Confederates, and soon came to the border of a field whence he could command a view to the north full half a mile in extent. The Confederates, whom he had been following closely, had disappeared, leaving no trace of their course. There was no place where they could have found shelter, except a small farm house, a thousand yards away, which they could not possibly have reached in that space of time.

The field rose like an island out of the densely wooded swamp through a portion of which he had already come, and much of which lay beyond the patch of dry ground. What could have become of the horsemen whom he had been following? They must have deployed along some cross-road whose existence was unknown to him, in order to surround the swamp, and thus effectually prevent the escape of the fugitives. In order to get away by the route that they would least suspect, Capt. Moran turned and ran back along the very path by which he had advanced; hoping, by avoiding the swamp altogether, to elude their grasp.

But he had not taken a dozen steps, when he found that his movements were watched by the concealed enemy. A long, clear whistle to his right was answered by a similar one from the opposite side. What was his horror to see that his two companions had mistaken these signals of the enemy for his own; and now, in answer to them, came running into the open space from the woods that had concealed them from his view!

But he had no time to lament that others had run into danger; his own peril was too pressing. The long, clear whistles were repeated all around him, as the sound of a bugle is sent back and forth a dozen times by the rocky cliffs that line the valley. He could hear the crash of the thick underbrush as the dismounted troopers forced their way through it as soon as they heard the

order to close up. He stood still a moment, like a stag at bay, while the "dogs of war" were ready to spring at his throat; then bounded off toward what seemed to be an avenue of escape.

No sound had as yet been heard from the east, the direction in which lay Richmond; and that was the way by which he hoped to escape. With desperate energy he summoned all his powers of speed, and dashed along towards the rising sun. The treacherous bog gave way beneath his weight, for he had no time to pick his steps or hunt a path. The earth clung to his shoes, and one was left in the mire. The other was hastily wrenched from his foot and cast aside, that there might be nothing to retard him. At last his way crossed a cow-path, trodden hard; and along this better road he made better time. One of the huge forest trees had been felled by the storms of that winter, and lay directly across his path; upon the great trunk he leaped, then down again to the ground on the other side.

His shoeless feet had fallen silently on the path as he advanced; when he bounded upon the tree, then, he startled the very Confederate who had been posted behind the trunk to keep a lookout for the prisoners; the Reb, a burly giant, jumped up, and, without pausing to see or question the new comer, took to his heels, leaving his carbine leaning against the tree. The Federal, not taking time to secure the weapon, which, indeed, would have only been an incumbrance, dashed on. The gray-jacket stumbled and fell flat; the blue-coat leaped across his prostrate body and plunged on, only to find three carbines presented at his breast, and to hear the ominous command to "halt!" in his ears.

"Surrender!" bellowed the fallen hero, as he picked himself up. But the three who had stood their ground greeted him with such a peal of mocking laughter that he retreated almost as suddenly as he had come. To the Federal, however, it was no laughing matter, for the three Confederates were sufficiently in earnest to secure their prisoner.

The party now drew together, and Moran found that his hopes of the escape of his comrades had been doomed to disappointment; for they had been taken while he was making the last desperate effort to regain his liberty. They could do nothing but condole with each other, and await the pleasure of their captors. As these were soldiers, and not prison guards, the retaken prisoners were kindly treated; Moran's shoes were hunted up for him, and all three were fed liberally from the haversacks of

their captors. But though they were half famished by the unwonted exertion, and the keen air of the winter morning was enough to whet the hunger of any others, the appetite of these were dulled by the thought that in a few hours more they would again be confined within the walls of Libby Prison.

The Confederates informed the prisoners that they had hardly hoped to find them in the swamp ; and that a start of one hour more would probably have insured their escape, as they were when retaken, outside of the Confederate lines, and almost within sight of the smoke from the Federal picket fires. But all this, of course, was slight consolation to the poor fellows who had tried so hard to escape.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

### ADVENTURES OF AN ARTFUL DODGER.

The Scout's Errand—His Force—Mode of Proceeding—A Bivouac in the Woods—Salt Mule and Sheet-iron Crackers—A Rude Awakening—"Let Me Dream Again"—Not So Fast Asleep as the Enemy Thought—Flight—Surrounded—Concealed—Discovered—The Difficulty of Riding a Mule—Where is He?—Nowhere—Safe.

**A**MONG the scouts attached to Gen. "Jeb" Stuart's division was one who shall be known to these pages by the romantic and uncommon name of Smith. Truth to tell, authorities differ much in regard to the spelling of his cognomen, so that the initial letter is the only one that appears to be undisputed. Now, the directories show that if a man's name begins with "S," the probabilities are in favor of Smith against any other one appellation; then the scout shall be known to these pages as Frank Smith.

But think not, because the mere form of his name has not been perpetuated, that it does not deserve to be remembered. The estimation in which he was held by the commanding officer is shown by the fact that, although he steadily refused a commission, as a partisan officer, lest his freedom of movement might be thereby curtailed, he was made the superior of a party of three, sent to reconnoiter the Federal camp and forces, then lying around Culpepper Court House and Mitchell's Station. Gen. Meade had, within the last few days, thrown forward a considerable body of troops to the latter point, and the duty of the scouts was mainly to find out the character, strength and destination of this force.

Leaving their horses at a safe distance from the camp, they made their way cautiously towards the Station, and by carefully

working around under shelter of every cover that was possibly available, they ascertained as much as a mere reconnoissance would permit. There was only one way in which to obtain more information, and that was by questioning prisoners. But in order to do this, they must have some prisoners to question. All three were skilled in their calling, and had often been on such expeditions before, and felt not the slightest doubt of their ability, singly or together, to acquire knowledge by this means. However,

“The best laid plans of mice and men  
Gang aft aglee.”

They lurked about the camp until night drew on; until all the duties of the day were done; until taps had sounded, and the soldiers, save those whom duty kept awake, were wrapped in slumber; but still there was no chance of taking a prisoner.

“Reckon we might as well bivouac, boys,” said Smith, as they met at the rendezvous previously appointed; “there don’t seem to be much chance of any fun yet awhile.”

“There was a party of foragers passed within ten feet of me,” sighed one of his companions, “but there were too many of them.”

“How many?” asked the second.

“Seven,” was the reply.

“’Tisn’t safe to tackle more than you can easily manage,” observed Smith. “At this little distance from the camp, you might have to shoot, and that would bring out a company.”

“Where shall we bivouac?”

“Somewhere in the woods. There’s a right good place just over there to the left; suppose we go there?”

“All right; let’s hurry; I’m tired. Is it a well-sheltered place? It looks mightily like rain.”

“Oh, yes; its right in a sort of a hollow, with the brush thick all around it.”

“How long shall we wait, Smith?”

“About an hour. The stragglers will be getting in about that time, and we’ll be more alert if we have a rest. Here’s the place; how do you like it?”

“First-rate. Don’t you think we could have a fire?”

“That was one thing that made me think of coming here; its so far away, and the brush is so thick that they’d never see it at the camp, even if it wasn’t in the hollow. We can keep it from



blazing too much, and shall be mighty comfortable, all things considered."

The keen air of the November night had benumbed their hands and chilled their limbs, and exercise had, of course, been impossible. Over the shaded blaze, then, they spread their cold fingers, even before they turned their attention to what the slang of the time termed salt mule and sheet-iron crackers; but which, however undervalued in times of peace and plenty, men found extremely palatable when nothing else was obtainable, and even these articles somewhat scarce. Our scouts, certainly, did not object to the bill of fare, nor did they complain because a blanket must be their only shelter from the chilly air, the ground their only bed. Huddling close together about the fire, they were soon fast asleep.

The hour set apart for rest passed away, but, worn out with the day's watching, they did not awake. It is not the least of the scout's hardships that there is a constant strain on the nervous system, even when he is apparently passively watchful; and for this reason, he is apt, when once he gives himself up to slumber, to sleep more soundly than a man engaged in manual labor. Hour after hour passed, and still they slept on, quietly as children. Not even the drizzling rain which began to fall as dawn approached could awaken them; had it been a harder shower, the discomfort would perhaps have roused them, but it was just enough to soak their clothes gradually.

It was barely daylight when a squad of Federal soldiers approached their camp.

"Hello! What's this?" exclaimed one of the blue-coats as they came in sight of the sleeping party.

"'Sh!" cautioned another, "Don't waken them till we find out."

They drew nearer silently, and perceived the gray uniforms. At a signal from the sergeant, every musket was pointed at Smith's breast.

"Hey, Johnnie Reb," he called, "hadn't you better wake up and get in out of the wet?"

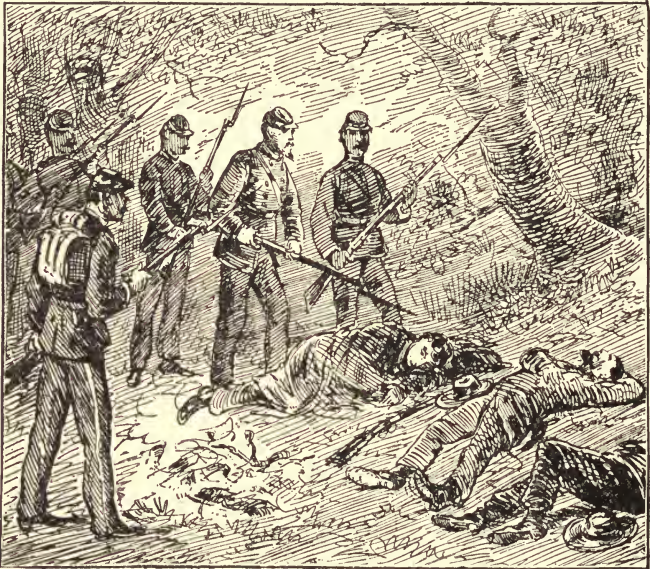
At the first sound that the soldiers had made in cocking their muskets, Smith had wakened; but he saw no chance of escape. Looking through his half-closed eyelids he perceived that any attempt to reach his pistols would mean six balls in his breast; and in order to give himself more time to think, wrapped himself

closer in his blanket, and turning over muttered sleepily:

“O go 'way and let me alone.”

“Pleasant dreams, Johnnie. Maybe you won't find the wake up part quite as pleasant.”

But the dreams were all waking ones, and in the brains of the Federals; for they were busily imagining his chagrin and mortification when he should find himself a prisoner; and he, though drawing deep and regular breaths as if in slumber, was cautious-



*A Rude Awakening.*

ly moving his hand down, under the blanket, to the pistol at his belt. Slowly he drew it from its place, and silently cocked it, just as the Federal sergeant said:

“Well, Johnnie, we've had our fun now, and I guess you'll have to get up, whether you like it or not.”

He stooped, as he spoke, and grasping a corner of the Confederate's blanket, was about to pull it from him, when the pistol was discharged, its muzzle touching the breast of his blouse; and without a groan, he fell forward on the Confederate, dead. Smith struggled to free himself from this incumbrance, but before he could regain his feet the five muskets were discharged at him. Fortunately, the sudden death of their comrade had so far unsteadied their nerves that their aim was uncertain, and the

balls buried themselves in the body of their own dead officer.

The noise of the shots had awakened the other sleepers; one, taking in the situation at a glance, and probably, thinking that in this case at least discretion was by far the better part of valor, took to his heels and departed, ignominiously, but in safety. The other, not that he loved life less, but honor more, made a stand against the assailants; but he had not been careful to place his pistols safe from the rain, and when he pulled the trigger, the cap snapped.

Meanwhile Smith had not been idle. As he rose he fired the five shots still remaining to him with great rapidity, but with as steady a hand as if the target were not a living one. Two of the five took effect, though not fatally; and the three who were still unhurt, having discharged their guns and not having time to reload, retreated rapidly towards camp, followed by their wounded comrades. Naturally Smith and his companion had no desire to pursue the fugitives; knowing that, in a few moments, the entire camp would be alarmed and a large detachment sent out to bring them in, they made the best of their time in getting away from the scene of the skirmish, separating in order that they might double the chances of escape.

Smith had put off his haversack and shoes when he lay down; his blanket, as a matter of course, must be abandoned. All superfluous baggage was thus of necessity left behind; though such articles have seldom been considered as such, even by Stonewall Jackson's "foot cavalry," famous for its rapid marches and its dependence upon the enemy's stores for subsistence.

But even thus unincumbered, even to the point of lacking necessaries, he felt that danger thickened around him. The Federals had found their comrades in camp, already on the *qui vive* to know the meaning of the shots which they had heard; and when their story was told, all were eager for revenge. A cavalry force was sent to block the way to the mountains; and in a few moments it seemed that every avenue of escape was closed by squads of infantry. He was not half a mile from the starting point when he saw that he was surrounded on every side.

It was, indeed, a dark outlook for the scout; he knew that, if captured, although he was in full Confederate uniform and wore side-arms, he would be treated as a guerilla, perhaps as a spy; yet escape seemed well-nigh impossible. With such a fate in prospect he could not surrender, even if he had not previ-

ously sworn that he would never be taken alive; there was but one course open if he failed to elude his hundreds of pursuers, and that was to sell his life as dearly as possible. Onward, then, he crept, now sheltering himself in the thick bushes, peering out to see if it were safe for him to dart across the comparatively open spaces; now stealing along where an audible footstep might be a signal to his enemies.

As the pursuers closed in upon him, he was driven to the more open parts of the forest, where not only were the trees more scattered, but there was little or no undergrowth. Hitherto, caution had been most necessary; now it was speed. He had turned and doubled upon his pursuers like a hare before the hounds, and now stood upon the border of a small field, where he must either risk taking the open space or returning upon his footsteps. The cries of his antagonists grew louder and clearer as they lessened the distance, showing that the second course was entirely impracticable. With the energy of desperation, then, he bounded across the field, towards a small group of pines that had been left in the centre of the clearing.

One of these had been felled but the day before, and its foliage was still abundant enough to afford a hiding-place. Into the midst of it he made his way, and for a few brief moments there was a breathing space for the hunted man. Crouching among the boughs, he made use of this golden opportunity to reload his revolver, for he knew not how soon again he would be engaged in a hand-to-hand encounter, as desperate as that at the bivouac. Nearer and nearer came the pursuers, their approach made known by their wild cries as well as the tramp of many feet upon the soft earth and the rustling of the branches which must often be put aside as they made their way through the forest. They reached the fence which divided the cleared field from the wood; hastily demolishing the frail structure of rails, they dashed along—four of them.

Closely they examined the field, going up to the clump of pine trees and peering curiously around them. The scout cowered down low in his hiding-place, and held his breath, lest even a sigh betray him.

“O, I guess he ain’t there, boys; there ain’t any place big enough for him to hide that I havn’t looked into. Come on; let’s go.”

They hurried off; and the scout, relieved, raised his head.

As he did so, the slight rustling thus occasioned caught the quick ear of one of the Federals, who, less easily satisfied than his comrades, had lagged a little behind them. As the Yankee turned his head quickly, his eye met the scout's.

"Here he is, boys," was the exclamation.

"Where, where?" cried many voices, as they gathered from all parts of the surrounding woods within earshot, and hurried to the spot whence the shout had come.

The scout sprang to his feet as soon as he saw that his presence was discovered; the three immediate companions of the keen-eyed Federal had rejoined him immediately, and for a moment the enemies stood glaring at each other. Not a movement was made, for secure in the knowledge of large and certain reinforcements, the assailants made no advance against the desperate man now surrounded; while he paused only as the tiger pauses before making its final leap upon its prey.

He had only the loads in two revolvers with which to defend himself; further flight was well-nigh impossible, for his unprotected feet were torn and bruised by their previous service; his pursuers were fresh.

"A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse!"

How soon the circle that was closing around him might number hundreds in place of a score or so, he could not tell; certainly it would not be many minutes. But with strength already severely taxed by the chase, how could he break through that ring and gain on them enough to enable him finally to escape their clutches.

It all flashed through his mind as a message flashes over the wires; and the charm that held them gazing at him as the snake's eyes are fixed upon its trembling, fluttering victim had not ceased when his blazing glance lighted on a venerable white mule, quietly grazing in the field, not twenty feet off. A leap, a bound, and he was past them; a moment more, and he was again striding a steed. He clutched the mane convulsively and dug his shoeless heels into the mule's sides. The ancient animal, much astonished at these proceedings, as well as by the shots that came whizzing past, set off at full speed; nothing better could have been desired by the scout. After him came the Federals in full chase, and he was just congratulating himself that the harmless shots they fired at him served in place of spur and whip, when, with all the perversity of his nature, the mule changed her mind,

and concluded she did not want a rider who goaded so sharply.

Trained to field sports from his boyhood, Smith kept his seat, though the animal seemed to wish to use her hind legs only; but the mule had been accustomed to be backed by good riders, and when she found that this one was not to be thus unseated, began to arch her back in that peculiarly aggravating manner known as "bucking." The combination, together with very vigorous kicking, was enough to unhorse the best of riders, and the scout



*The Mule Changes Her Mind.*

soon found himself sprawling upon the ground. His pursuers urged their lagging steps still faster as they saw their game falling so certainly within their clutches; but the fugitive had no mind to be thus taken. Gathering himself up almost as soon as he touched the earth, he darted into the woods, the border of which had been reached, followed by a storm of bullets, shouts and curses.

Feeling themselves still more certain of their prey than ever they had been before, since there is a limit to human endurance, the Federals pressed eagerly onward. The scout was desperate. His limbs were trembling, his feet were sore, his very veins

seemed filled with liquid fire. If he kept on, he could hardly fail to be overtaken; then would it not be as well to turn now, and with the ten loads of his revolvers, fight as long as possible, and, when they were gone, die? But first, he must have some water—it mattered little how short the span of life that remained to him, he must assuage the burning thirst that was tormenting him.

Kneeling a moment on the bank of a clear brook which crossed his path, he took one long draught of the sweet, cool water. Nearer and nearer came his enemies, and springing to his feet, he had barely time to make for the bushes that skirted the stream when they were in sight. They were at first disposed to make but a cursory examination, supposing that of course he had gone on farther; but one of them saw the print of his knee on the sandy bank of the stream.

“He stopped here to drink, so he can’t be far off; he hasn’t had time to get away.”

In an instant the field was surrounded and every preparation made for a diligent search. Not a mouse could have left that tract of land, save by an underground passage, unperceived by the cordon of soldiers that surrounded it; so thickly were they posted. Others were more directly occupied in the search. So closely did they examine the ground that they even put aside the bushes and peered into the depths of leafage.

The scout lay flat on his back in one of these coverts, a revolver, loaded and cocked, in each hand. His plan was simple: when they came to look into that bush as closely as into those near by, the first man would be his first victim. At such short range, his ten bullets would only fail to put as many enemies out of the world, if they took good aim before he could empty all the barrels. If they should not do so, and should fall back, or even waver an instant before a fire so murderous, he would again break through their masses and seek another shelter.

As he lay, calculating his chances, a small party approached the bush in which he was concealed. Branch after branch was pulled aside, but without success.

“D—n it, where in the devil can he be?” exclaimed one in tones more forcible than polite.

The rejoinder intimated that if he wasn’t in a very hot place, the name of which has since been changed, it was not because he did not deserve it.

"Well, he ain't here at any rate," replied the first, moving away.

"Don't know about that; I guess I'll take another look."

As he bends again over the bushes, and pulls away the branches, there is, not three feet away, a revolver pointed, with deadly aim, at his heart. Why cannot he see the eyes gleaming with a deadly light, just beneath his own? Has his good genius blinded him? It would indeed seem so, for he gave up the search after a few moments, with the words:

"I guess you were right about it, Jim; he don't seem to be there."

"Hang him, he don't seem to be anywhere."

"But how can we hang him when we haven't got him?" queried a wag with ghastly wit.

"Well, boys, no success yet?" asked an officer coming up.

"Not a bit, sir; I'd be willing to take my oath on it that he ain't anywhere in this field."

"He must be. Are you sure he isn't anywhere in this undergrowth?"

"We've pulled aside the branches of every bush in this clump and the next, and the one beyond that, sir. I don't think there's a square foot of the ground they cover that we haven't seen."

The voices died away as this by no means unwelcome assurance was conveyed to his ear; and the scout felt free to breathe again.

All day long he lay there, hearing the voices and the footsteps of his enemies, as they discussed the hunt; the difficulties with which they had already met, the chances of their final success. As the day passed away, and it seemed more and more impossible that he could be concealed within the limits of a space so narrow and so thoroughly searched, the number of guards was diminished. As night drew on, he gathered his strength for a final trial; creeping silently from his hiding-place he managed, under cover of the dense blackness of the night and the rain, to pass the sentinels stationed to guard the field. The same circumstances enabled him to elude the pickets. Once beyond the Federal lines, speed was of more importance than caution; and a valuable assistant in his flight was awaiting him at a well-known point—his horse. Making his way to the place where he had left the animal when he first approached the Federal camp, he was soon mounted and able to defy his pursuers.



By dint of consuming the rest of the night on the road, he reached the Confederate lines at daybreak the next morning, to find his two companions on the scout had escaped without difficulty. The fact that he had shot the sergeant that first awakened him, made the pursuers bend every effort to secure him, rather than his comrade. The information that he brought in regard to Gen. Meade's forces, had, of course, been already given to the commanding general by the other scouts, who had supposed Smith killed or captured.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

### CAPTURING A PARTISAN.

The Partisan's Record—Efforts to Take Him—A Discovery—Pursuit by Two Men—A Rough Road—A Cold Bath and Its Results—Dashing Onward—The Scent Lost—Another Finds It—The Capture—Return—Value of the Prisoners—The Captor's Surprise.

WHEREVER the numbers of Unionists and Secessionists were nearly equally balanced, the War raged with a fury unknown in those regions where one party maintained a decided majority. Private wrongs were avenged as the predominance of one party gave power to the injured man; and when the balance turned, and the section was filled with the soldiers of the other army, he was often made to pay dearly for his vengeance. Under such circumstances many a man "took to the brush," and all the horrors of partisan or guerilla warfare were added to those troubles which the whole country endured. Among the states in which such a condition of affairs prevailed was Tennessee, and we would now narrate the effort to capture a noted Confederate partisan of that state.

Col. Duncan Cooper had for a long time troubled the Federals there very much, and many scouting parties had been sent out after him, only to return empty-handed. After innumerable parties had tried to capture him, and as many failed, the project began to be looked upon as something nearly or quite impossible; and though many a venturesome body of scouts asked permission to undertake it, the request was always granted with the assurance, on the part of the commanding officer that they would return as they came.

Such was the state of affairs when, one afternoon in the latter part of February, 1864, a party of six or eight recruiting officers

were riding leisurely along, on the banks of Swan Creek, some twenty miles west of Columbia. They were somewhat in advance of the foraging detail, which was pursuing the same road. Suddenly the advance party discovered four guerillas, riding as carelessly as themselves, along a by-way to the right. Every man was instantly ready with his pistol, and the reports rang out simultaneously. The partisans, evidently surprised by this rude announcement that the enemy was in their neighborhood, looked back to see the strength of the attacking force; and perceiving that it was nearly double their own, galloped off without returning the fire.

Among the Federals was a private of the Fiftieth Illinois, Stovall by name. Without waiting for order or signal he obeyed the brave man's first impulse, and dashed after the retreating enemy. The others, more prudent, or mounted on less manageable steeds, remained behind; until, for very shame, one of them, Lieut. Nelson, found a way to make his horse follow Stovall's lead, though at the distance of twenty yards.

It was by no means easy to follow the course of the partisans, for they had chosen a path which led along a rough, stony creek. At times the low banks disappeared entirely, and only overhanging bluffs or ascents too steep for mounted men to ride across, bordered the stream. At such places, of course, their way must lie along the very bed of the creek. But while this seemed rather against the pursuers, whose horses had not been trained to the rough roads of that section, it turned out to be of advantage. The weather was bitterly cold, and many of the stones that bordered the creek were covered with ice; indeed, only the swift current of the creek prevented its being frozen solid. Any one who has ever attempted to walk down hill upon a boulder pavement just after a fall of sleet, will appreciate the difficulty which the horses had in keeping their feet, especially when descending to the bed of the stream.

While leaving the bank, the horse ridden by one of the Confederates slipped and fell, throwing his rider over his head into the icy water. The dismounted man rapidly scrambled out, for the pursuit was too hot to allow of much delay; but his haste was in vain. The horse had soon regained his footing, and frightened at the sudden change in the weight upon his back, and no longer restrained by a strong hand upon the rein, galloped madly up the steep ascent, riderless.

The dismounted man tried to mount behind one of his companions, but the horse was restive, and refused to carry double. Some time was lost in this way, and when the animal was finally halted and brought under control, the saddle turned as the unhorsed man gained the coveted seat, throwing both would-be riders into the creek. The delay had been fatal, for before they had recovered themselves, Stovall dashed up and, seeing their plight, called upon them to surrender. Unhorsed, the weight of



*A Cold Bath.*

their clothing increased greatly by the drenching they had received, their arms rendered unavailable by reason of the same misfortune, they sullenly admitted themselves his prisoners.

Although their firearms were rendered useless by the water, he took time to disarm them, for they carried swords and knives. This, however, occupied but a moment; and waving his pistol above his head with a shout of triumph, the Federal dashed on at the same speed as before after the other two who by this time were entirely out of sight. His rapid riding was somewhat of a disadvantage, for he did not pause to track the fugitives

carefully and pursued the same road when he should have turned aside at a certain point.

Let us now return to Lieut. Nelson. Riding after Stovall, he found the prisoners that the latter had disarmed, trying to wring the water out of their clothes and otherwise make themselves somewhat more comfortable. Learning that Stovall had not exacted a parole of them, but had contented himself with simply disarming them, the officer thought it best to remain in charge of them, at least until some one else should come up. He had seen the other Confederates turn from the road, being at the time on a higher portion of the rocky path, which commanded a wider view than his present position; and felt assured that Stovall had not perceived the change of course. It was with some impatience, then, that he remained with the prisoners and with great joy that he saw a third member of the recruiting party leisurely riding towards him. Calling to the new comer to hurry forward to the prisoners, he set spurs to his horse and galloped after the two who had eluded Stovall.

Having noticed the point at which they had left the road, he had at first but little difficulty in following them, for the tracks of their horses' feet were plainly visible in the light snow with which this sheltered road was covered. But as he rode out from among the trees, where the snow had melted in the sun, and the ground had frozen hard again at night, his task was more difficult. He rode hastily up the first road by which he could ascend the hill, and having gained the summit, looked down upon the country around him. He had taken the right path; there, in the hollow at the foot of the hill, the two Confederates had stopped to adjust their saddles. He felt a momentary doubt as to the result of the encounter alone with two of the enemy; but it was no time to retreat, save ingloriously, and that he would not do.

"Surrender, if you value your lives," he cried, riding down towards them as if he had a company at his back.

They sprang to their saddles, and were off like the wind. "I galloped, he galloped, we galloped all three." Shot after shot the Federal sent after the flying enemy, but so uneven was the ground and so devious was their course that not a bullet reached its mark. At last, however, there was one apparently, which whistled alarmingly near to their ears, and, that at least one might escape, they separated. The horses of the two who had been captured had followed these men, and now that they sep-

arated, continued with the one who took the path they knew best.

After this man, as the more valuable prize if taken, the Federal took his way. Closer and closer they drew together, pursuer and pursued; but the shots of the former were still as ineffective as ever. Nelson was now convinced that it must come to a personal struggle, for his revolvers were nearly empty, and he had no time to reload. He determined to spur up alongside the Confederate, and, with a blow from the butt of a pistol, knock him off his horse.

No sooner was the plan conceived than he proceeded to put it into execution. He had reached the desired position; the weapon was raised for the blow, when the Reb, seeing that it was inevitable, yielded himself a prisoner. Hastily disarming him, Lieut. Nelson directed him to catch the two loose horses; this was readily done, and the two rode back in more leisurely style over the path by which they had just advanced so hastily.

Thus they returned to the point where Nelson had left Stovall's prisoners in charge of the third Federal in the chase. This was Sergeant Craig, who was in command of the foraging party, and who belonged to a different regiment from either of the others, having been stationed in that section for a longer time and frequently employed in scouting. Stovall came up almost at the same time, tired and much chagrined at the loss of his game. But Craig had a consolation for him. Leaving the prisoners to the care of the rest of the party, for all had now come up, he drew the two pursuers slightly aside and asked:

"Do you know who you have taken?"

"Guerillas, ain't they?"

"I should say so. Why, that one"—and he designated the Confederate whose horse had slipped in descending the bank—"that one is Duncan Cooper, that we've been trying to catch for the last six or eight months."

Stovall gave a long whistle.

"Well," said he, "I don't feel quite so bad as I did. It did cut me up awfully to think I'd ridden so far and hadn't caught any game. I thought they'd all got away from us for good."

The three prisoners, with the three horses, were conveyed back to camp, where all were heartily welcomed, but one especially so, though the welcome was not a particularly loving one.

## CHAPTER XL.

### COL. MENEFEE'S RIDE FOR LIFE.

The Partisans and Their Outfit—A Skirmish in the Woods—Federal Reinforcements—Retreat of Confederates—Pursuit—The Mountain Side—For the Sake of One of His Men—A Steep Descent—A Dash Down It.

“A PROPHET is not without honor, save in his own country and among his own people;” but it is different in the case of the partisan. His services are much appreciated by those who are nearest to him; and while he is often forgotten by the grave historian, his name is remembered by the people long after his bones are dust. His is the wildly stirring life, spent in the saddle, in the mountain fastnesses, in the deep recesses of the woods; harassing the enemy as the gadfly the horse. Such was Col. N. Menefee, a gallant Kentuckian, who, at a comparatively early date in the war, received a commission in the Confederate army. He was favorably known far and wide for his daring courage, and many men from the eastern section of his native state flocked to his standard. They had not the latest and most approved pattern of arms, it is true; many of them were provided with only the old-fashioned flint-lock muskets, such as our great grandfathers, perhaps, shouldered when they marched against King George; but they were steady hands that aimed the ancient guns, and warm, brave hearts that beat with pleasure when the enemy was near. Such were the men that came to him, no unworthy leader.

There was a skirmish in the woods—of no importance, the historian, or even the newspaper would say. It was nothing but a chance meeting of a Federal scouting party with a body of Confederate partisans—that was all. There were a few volleys fired

on either side, but they were somewhat irregular ; for the ancient percussion caps and breech-loaders were by no means certain to go off, and it was not long before the better armed, but less determined force retreated in considerable disorder. Two of their number were left upon the field, while a Confederate made the third in this "bivouac of the dead." Four of the Federals, although wounded, were able to ride off to camp with their comrades.

But the Federals had had an object in view when they retreated—they gave the alarm in camp ; the long roll was sounded, but it was subsequently determined to send no more than three hundred men out, since it was certain that the enemy could not number a tenth as many. In reality, there were but thirteen of Menefee's men, but the excited imagination of the Federals, who were raw troops had trebled their strength. The Confederates, of course, could not make a stand against such a force, and the order was given to retreat. It came too late for them to make their way off in perfect safety, without a rear guard, and this duty the leader took upon himself. Mounted on a fine blooded mare which had carried him gallantly to the hunt and the battle, he felt confident that her speed could save him, come what might ; and while his men were climbing the mountain cliffs, he remained to watch the enemy.

For nearly an hour after his men had left him, he stayed there, while the enemy searched for the little party. At last, knowing that farther delay would be dangerous, he turned his horse's head up Elk Horn Creek. High crags and inaccessible bluffs rose on one side of him, while, on the other stretched upward the rugged slopes of Cumberland Mountain, three miles high. His path lay through this one narrow defile ; if the enemy appeared at one end of it, only the speed of his horse would enable him to escape ; for to climb that mass of bowlders and laurel thickets was well-nigh impossible for a man on foot ; and it had long been considered totally inaccessible to animals.

Onward he rode, supposing himself entirely safe, and his men escaped to the mountain fastnesses, whither the enemy could not follow them. The ravine through which the creek ran was several miles in length, and had but few openings. The Federals could only approach him from the rear ; excellently mounted, and thoroughly acquainted with the country, he could not fail to make his escape good.



But even as he thus congratulated himself on the certainty of security for himself and his command, his enemies were prosecuting the search. The scouting party had lost, in killed and wounded, a fourth of their numbers; and their comrades were eager to avenge the injuries received. The Confederate's mare, faithful as a watch-dog, gave a loud, shrill snort; and looking ahead, he saw a body of at least a hundred Federal troopers emerging from one of the few openings in the side of the ravine. He had calculated that they either would not suspect his course or would fail to find these cross valleys; but his calculations were at fault. There was not a moment to be lost, for they had already perceived him. The bluffs rose nearly perpendicularly, and would, even if he gained the summit, afford him no advantages, for he would be closely followed by the Federals; and the enemy might have additional forces within call. To ride forward was to rush into their very arms; to retreat was madness; to ascend the mountain side was, in the eyes of all the daring hunters of the section, impossible for a horseman.

Surrender he would not, and the only alternative was to climb those steep and rugged slopes. Hardly had the enemy been seen than his resolution was taken, and reining his mare to the bluffs, to give her a good start over the comparatively level ground, he urged her forward. The exultation which had gleamed in the eyes of the Federals as they looked upon their assured prey vanished as they saw that prey about to escape their clutches; and with a series of wild yells they rode after him. They knew it was impossible for them to ascend the mountain on horseback, and when they came to the ascent, they dismounted and prepared to continue the chase on foot.

The mountain consists of a series of terraces, locally known as "benches," from which the action of the wind and the waters has carried the softer materials, leaving a hard and rocky soil, where only the hardiest of plants will grow. The slopes between these benches are steep and rugged, but the more fertile soil is covered with a denser growth. Such was the slope up which he was to ride; and the Federals felt confident that in being on foot they had a great advantage. As he neared the top of the first bench, he was stopped by falling timber. The pause, however, was not unwelcome to the mare, whose every power had been strained to the utmost; and Col. Menefee was by no means averse to letting her get her breath.

But, to the Federals, the reason for the halt was not plain; they supposed that it indicated a surrender. They pressed on then, with exultant cries and angry oaths, whenever breath could be spared. The fugitive was hemmed in at last; he could not escape; he desired to surrender; there was no use of shooting at him; it would be a waste of powder, for they were certain to take him alive. But the fugitive himself thought differently



*Menefee's Ride.*

of these things; the breathless mare had pricked up her ears as she heard the noises of pursuit; and now, after the momentary rest, a touch of her rider's heel on her side was enough to urge her onward up the rough slope. An instant after she had leaped the barrier, and horse and rider were out of sight of the Federals, sheltered by friendly rocks and bluffs.

But he could not make his way much farther upward; and under this friendly cover he dismounted and prepared to defend himself as long as he could, and when the odds became too overwhelming, to die as became a soldier. But, as he drew his revolvers to examine them, and prepare himself, he caught

sight of one of his men approaching him in the distance. The poor fellow had become exhausted in his flight from the pursuing enemy and was almost fainting with fatigue. To attract the enemy's attention to this spot, was to sacrifice this faithful soldier for nothing, and although this was well calculated for defence, he decided to make another stand; to fasten the attention of the

enemy on himself alone, and thus enable the man to escape.

"Climb to the top of the bluff," he motioned to the soldier, for it was not safe to speak. The soldier obeyed hastily, and was soon out of sight in the brush that clothed the steep ascent. Meanwhile Col. Menefee had again sprung to the saddle. He watched the soldier disappear. It was necessary that the enemy should know the direction that the horseman had taken, if the man on foot was to escape. Rising in his stirrups, the gallant partisan uttered the war whoop of the Osage Indians. The blood-curdling sound echoed back and forth along the bluffs as, setting spurs to his horse, he dashed down a rugged ledge of rocks. After him came the pursuers at full speed; but what is the speed of a man when opposed to that of a race-horse? Down, down, the rough, rocky descent, almost as steep as an ordinary flight of stairs; now sliding, now leaping, now scrambling, now on the full run, a hundred yards, a quarter of a mile, a half mile, to the very bottom, and he is safe. Now the Federals have given up the chase, cursing the Government horses that could not do what this Rebel's has done. A few parting shots are fired after him, but not one reaches its mark; and that night Menefee is with his men at the rendezvous appointed in the morning.



*Gen. N. B. Forrest.*

## CHAPTER XLII.

### DAHLGREN'S RAID.

**The Object—Difference of Opinion—Organization of the Force—Dahlgren's Record—Departure—A Heavy Storm—Failure to Co-operate—Skirmish near Richmond—The Retreat—Crossing the Stream—Movements of the Confederates—The Ambush in the Woods—Death of Col. Dahlgren—Action of the Confederate Government.**

**I**N the month of February, 1864, there was planned a raid which, if it had been successfully carried out, would have been one of the most memorable of the war. As it is—but we anticipate the course of the story.

There is much dispute about one important point; namely, the object for which the expedition was sent out; and the name of the man who stands out most clearly in the story has been lauded to the skies and trampled in the dust. Fully aware of difficulties which await him in the effort to tell the story fairly, the writer will endeavor to avoid the fond praises of the mother of the dead soldier, as well as the execrations of the most violent of his enemies that ever handled a pen; conscious all the time that those who would wish to please both sides, frequently end by failing to please either.

It was with Gen. Kilpatrick that the idea of liberating the prisoners of war confined in Libby and Belleisle originated. The project met with the approval of President Lincoln and his Secretary of War, and the dashing cavalry leader was desired to organize the expedition. Once it became known that such a raid was contemplated, that there was a prospect of Federal troops penetrating to the very inner sanctuary of the Confederacy, the more venturesome spirits became wild with excitement. "On to Richmond!" had been their desire for three

years, and here, perhaps, was the opportunity to enter the capital of the Secessionists.

Among those who volunteered for the expedition was Col. Ulric Dahlgren, a son of the renowned admiral, and a young man of great promise as a soldier. He was barely twenty-one, and had already made himself an honorable record. But, though he was anxious to go, every one endeavored to dissuade him; for he had been wounded in the previous July, and had lost his leg in consequence; the amputated limb was not yet fully heal-

ed, nor did the general state of his health make it advisable for him to undertake a journey which promised so much hard riding and hard fighting. But his persistency defeated all the efforts of his friends, and, his services being accepted, he was given an important post.



*Gen. H. J. Kilpatrick.*

The entire command was divided into three parts, one of which was led by Gen. Kilpatrick in person, while the second was assigned to Gen. Custer, and the third, consisting of about seven hundred men,

to Col. Dahlgren. The second of these was merely intended to create a diversion by a feint upon Charlottesville; while the first and third were to remain united until they reached Beaver Dam, where they were to separate and attack Richmond, Kilpatrick from the north, and Dahlgren from the south.

Such was the plan of the raid, briefly sketched out. The object of it is stated by the Federal authorities to have been nothing more than the liberation of the prisoners of war in the hands of the Confederates, and the destruction of government stores; while many Southern writers maintain that the "Dahlgren papers" are authentic; if this be true, the raiders intended to burn the city and put the more prominent Confederate officials to the sword. That is not a matter to be discussed here, however, and the reader is invited to take that view which best accords with his general sentiments in regard to the War.

The whole force set out just at night-fall of Feb. 28th, 1864, Dahlgren's command being the advance-guard. Crossing the Rapidan at Ely's Ford, they found, as they had expected, a strong picket posted on the farther bank; but succeeded in capturing them without giving the alarm to a considerable body of the enemy that lay at no great distance. The nature of the expedition required that its end should be accomplished as speedily as possible, or the comparatively small body of raiders might find that they had drawn down a hornet's nest on their own devoted heads. There were none of the usual long halts, then, for food or rest. A hasty meal by the road-side, a short nap in the saddle—these were all that the troopers were to expect.

They rode onward, then, all night, and far into the next day, before any halt was ordered; and that was to accomplish a certain part of the task assigned rather than to refresh the "inner man" with food or rest.



*Crossing the Rapidan.*

It was between two and three o'clock on the afternoon of Feb. 29th, that they struck the Virginia Central Railroad, about a mile from Frederic's Hall Station. Riding along the road to the station, they captured a small party of Confederate officers that they found there; and, continuing along the same route for five miles farther, tore up a half mile of the rails and cut the telegraph wire in several places.

Having thus destroyed communication among the different portions of the enemy's force, the command divided, as had been arranged beforehand; Gen. Custer's force having left the main body soon after setting out. Col. Dahlgren, in accordance with the plan of the expedition, turned to the south, and crossed the South Anna about an hour before dark. As night came on, the sky, which had not been clear during the day, assumed a more

threatening appearance, and after a few scattering drops that gave warning of what was to come, the rain, about ten o'clock, began to fall in torrents. The men had been in the saddle nearly thirty hours; a thorough drenching was soon added to their other discomforts; and the darkness rendered it almost impossible for them to keep the road. Under such circumstances, it was deemed necessary to halt, and about midnight they drew rein before a small grocery store that stood by the road, for supper and rest.

Before daylight of March 1st, however, they were stirring; and it was about half-past six when they mounted and rode onward. It was still raining when they started, and the roads were in a terrible condition; but in about half an hour the rain ceased; and although the sky was still cloudy, a brisk breeze promised to dry the mud somewhat. It was one o'clock in the afternoon when they struck the plank road leading to Richmond; and approaching the capital by this route, fell in, two hours later, with the Confederate pickets. But the alarm of the approach of a Federal force had reached the Southern headquarters, and the pickets had been strengthened. It was only after sharp firing, continued for sometime, that these were driven in.

But the plank road was a somewhat roundabout way of reaching the city, and having driven in the pickets, they approached the objective point more directly. A little before dark, a halt was called, eight miles from Richmond; and the wearied troopers were permitted time to make such a meal as circumstances would allow.

Here it was expected that they would be joined by the main command, or at least receive some orders as to the next step. But this hope was doomed to disappointment. It mattered little, at that time, that Custer had been driven back from Charlottesville by a considerable force of Stuart's cavalry, stationed there; the thing of main importance, at this moment, was the position of Kilpatrick. But there was no visible trace of that officer; as was afterwards ascertained by Dahlgren's men, he had appeared near Richmond that morning and created considerable alarm and confusion; but had fallen back, taking up a line of march down the peninsula.

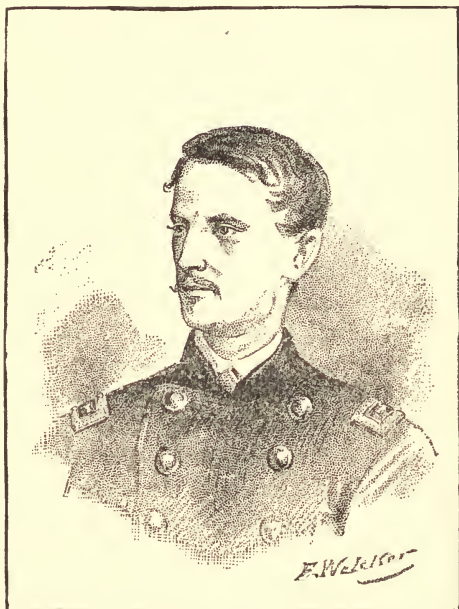
Dahlgren, considering himself in honor bound to ascertain the whereabouts of the main force, or at least to learn its fate, advanced a little farther. But his onward march was opposed by

a body of Confederate militia, hastily collected to assist in defending the capital. The cavalry dashed on in a wild charge, and the infantry retreated to the outer line of fortifications. Here, however, they rallied, and poured such a heavy fire into the columns of the Federals that the latter fell back. How great a force barred their way, the raiders could not tell. The rain had recommenced, and was falling in torrents; the night was pitch dark; the only sense that could guide the men on either side as to the position of the enemy was the sense of hearing. No news of Kilpatrick had reached this part of the force; and thus beset by uncertainty, the retreat was begun.

In an ordinary retreat, the rear is the post of danger, and therefore of honor; but in a case such as this, where a small body was retreating through the enemy's country, an attack might be looked for in the front or on the flank, as well as in the rear; it was, indeed, more probable that a force would meet them than pursue

them, for their rate of speed was such that, once given a slight start, they were not likely to be overtaken. Col. Dahlgren, then, took command of the advance guard, numbering about one hundred men; while the main body of his command followed at the usual distance.

As we have said, the night was a very dark one; there was no slight danger, then, that the main body would fail to follow the advance exactly; and to prevent such a misfortune, pickets on white horses were posted along the road to act as guides. But, in spite of this precaution, the command became divided; the main body falling so far behind the advance as to be cut off by



*Col. Ulric Dahlgren.*



the enemy and compelled to take another route. The advance held on their way, riding steadily onward, though the rain fell in torrents, and their cloaks were stiff with sleet. They reached the Pamunkey about daybreak, and proceeding along the south bank, came to the Mattaponi about noon. The ferry boat at this point had been removed by the enemy, and the stream, swollen with the recent rains, and fretting and dashing along its channels, must be crossed by aid of an old flat-boat, which the Confederates had thought unworthy of their attention. Of course, when such was the only means of transportation, the horses must swim; and they were soon struggling in the muddy, icy water.

The boat was so small and so hard to manage, the current so swift and strong, that much time was occupied in crossing. In the meantime, a party of Confederate Rangers, which had set out in pursuit of the enemy, rather to harrass the rear than to make any formal attack, had come up; and not venturing to show themselves, since they numbered only about twenty, stole into the bushes which overhung the banks of the stream. Every possible precaution had been taken by the Federals to prevent a sudden attack; and the dropping fire of the concealed men was answered readily by the videttes posted on the bank; while, occasionally, Col. Dahlgren, who had dismounted and now stood resting on his crutches, to watch the passage of his men across the river, turned and fired his revolver in the direction of the shots. At last, the rear-guard dashed down the bank and embarked, the commander followed his men on board the flat-boat, and all had safely crossed the Pamunkey.

It was now two o'clock in the afternoon. The command took what was known as the "river road," and continued the march until about ten o'clock. In the meantime, the Confederates having been reinforced by various small forces, until the whole command numbered between seventy and eighty, had determined to ambush the Federals. Scouts kept the pursuers informed as to the numbers and movements of the invading force; and the point of concealment was fixed about a mile and a half below Stevensville.

In the Confederate councils, there was a difference of opinion as to when Dahlgren would advance. They had already learned of the halt that had been called, and knowing that the men had been almost constantly in the saddle for two days and nights,

many supposed that they had bivouacked for the night; others, that they would move on when the moon rose, between two and three o'clock in the morning; while others still advanced the opinion that he would halt only long enough to feed the horses. The force was composed of several independent commands, and each officer proceeded to act on his own opinion. Many of the men were dispersed for a little rest, and ordered to be at the rendezvous in the woods by moonrise.

The halt had been for only an hour; and at eleven o'clock the Union troops moved onward through the woods, Col. Dahlgren at the head of the column. Though it was not raining, the night was dark; and even the naked branches and trunks of the trees around them increased the obscurity. It was with some difficulty, then, that, about midnight, the young officer discerned a small force of men in the road before him. He demanded their surrender; the answer was a volley from their carbines; and at the same moment the Confederates concealed in the woods fired. The Federals replied in the same manner, encouraged by the voice of their leader; but as he reeled and fell from his saddle, their courage and energy completely forsook them. The utmost confusion prevailed among them; some put spurs to their wearied horses and escaped by flight; others surrendered at discretion. There was not one to "fight as their leader fought, fall as their leader fell;" not one to avenge his death.

Two or three privates had been wounded, but only the commander had been killed. With him, however, died the expedition, which had thus proved such a disastrous failure. Even according to the account of a notoriously partial Southern writer, his is the central figure of the three officers in command; he, although the youngest and the lowest in rank, was the only one who in any degree approached the accomplishment of his object; and his failure was perhaps due to the sudden and unexpected retreat of Kilpatrick, without giving any kind of warning to the officer who was to act in co-operation with him.

The affair aroused the most violent discussion at the time, the subject of dispute being the object of the expedition. In the Richmond papers, there were published, a day or so after the death of the officer in command of the expedition, certain papers said to have been taken from the dead body of the Federal; one of these was an address to the officers and men composing the expedition, and mentioned the burning of the city and the kill-





Death of Dahlgren

ing of the Confederate President and his chief advisers as one of the ends to be attained. On the other hand, Lieut. Bartley, acting adjutant to Col. Dahlgren, and the only staff officer accompanying the command, avers positively that the only orders issued were in relation to the liberation of prisoners and the destruction of the Confederate States Government buildings and stores; with strict injunctions not to take life except in fair fight, and to treat prisoners with as much respect as was consistent with their safety. It is claimed that the papers were a forgery.

The approach of a Federal force to within such a short distance of Richmond excited considerable alarm in the capital, and the raiders were denounced as murderous and incendiary felons. Many urged the severest kind of retaliation, but no decisive steps were taken by the Government. The only act resulting from this attempt was the placing of several tons of powder under Libby Prison, a fact which was published far and wide, in order to show how worse than fruitless would be any other effort to liberate the prisoners there confined.

The body of Dahlgren was taken in charge by the Confederate Government, and secretly buried in an unmarked grave. But the spot was noted by some secret sympathizers with the Union cause, and after the War was over, the remains were exhumed and sent to Washington; there the body was delivered to his family, and replaced in a grave marked with his name.

## CHAPTER XLIII.

### ADVENTURE OF FORAGERS.

Relaxing Discipline—Three Foragers—A Promising Barn—Captured—A Council of War—Ten Minutes to Pray In—They Prefer to Pray Somewhere Else—A Race and an Interested Spectator—Who Soon has a Race of His Own—Escape—Revenge.

**E**ARLY in April, 1864, several regiments of the United States Army were temporarily encamped at Natchitoches, La. They formed a portion of the troops used by Gen. Banks for his unfortunate Red River expedition, disowned, after its disastrous failure, by the authorities at Washington. But it is not our purpose to give a history of this intended blow at the Southwest, or even to narrate one of the more important events. Let us concern ourselves only with the fortunes of a trio of foragers.

One of the regiments there encamped, the Forty-eighth Ohio Infantry, had been promised the name of "Veteran Volunteers" and a thirty day's furlough for all the men, if they would re-enlist in a body for three years longer; but the empty honor of the name was the only reward really given, after their acceptance, and they waited in vain for the much desired furlough. As the months went on, and they found that the promise was not likely to be fulfilled, it became exceedingly difficult to control them; and the officers wisely allowed the men many privileges not exactly consistent with the strictest discipline.

Of all the privileges which a soldier covets, there is not one that is dearer to his heart, when he is encamped in the enemy's country, than foraging. Often, distance from the Government supplies and the vicinity of the enemy prevent the army from obtaining the rations due to them; so that it becomes a matter of necessity that the men should obtain supplies in any way possible.

However it may have been, certain it is that while this command was encamped at Natchitoches, three privates, one from the Twenty-fourth Iowa, and two, Pavy and McCune, of the Ohio regiment mentioned, went out on such an expedition.

Affairs were progressing satisfactorily as far as they had gone, but they had not obtained a sufficient supply of substantials and delicacies to justify them, as they thought, in returning to camp. Just at this juncture, they spied a barn, the surroundings of which gave promise of plenty. Toward this they accordingly bent their steps, and were soon lost to view in the masses of hay with which the building, notwithstanding the season, was plentifully stocked. As they hunted through the heaps, yet fragrant from the mowing, they dreamed sweet dreams of meals where the rusty and strong bacon provided by the Government should be rendered temptingly palatable by fresh eggs.

But whether this was not their favorite resting-place, or the hens were possessed of more than the usual share of acuteness in concealing their treasures, certainly the eggs were not as abundant nor as easily found as they expected. At last, however, they emerged from the inner recesses of the building to compare notes and consolidate their findings. Just as they were about to transfer the spoil from their caps to a basket which they found near by, they were confronted by two Confederate soldiers, fully armed.

“Surrender, you d——d thieving Yankees, or——”

A glance at the revolver which the speaker held in his hand was more expressive than words could have been. As the foragers had laid aside their guns when they first entered the barn, they were entirely unarmed; and they, of course, could do nothing but comply with the demand. The Confederates had already possessed themselves of the three muskets, so that there was no occasion to disarm the prisoners, but in default of such a necessity, they were compelled to unload their spoils. As the prisoners numbered more than the captors, the former were secured by having their arms tied behind them, a single piece of rope serving for all. Thus guarded, they were ordered to march along an indicated road. At last they reached what the Confederates considered a safe distance from the Federal lines, which were not far from the barn; and the prisoners were seated on a log that lay near the roadside, while the captors withdrew a couple of paces to consult; still keeping, of course, a

sharp lookout upon the three blue-coats, lest they escape.

Though the conversation was conducted in as low a tone as possible, they were obliged, for safety's sake, to remain so near the prisoners that much of it was audible to the three men seated on a log. Murmurs from such a conversation as this reached their ears :

“Don't you think we could ?”

“Don't believe it would be safe. You see, there being three



*The Foragers Surprised.*

of them to two of us makes it risky.”

“But they are unarmed.”

“That's true ; but we have to tie them together, and we can't tell when they'll make a concerted movement to escape. They're going to try it, of course.”

“Our lines are a good ways off. If it wasn't so far, now—”

The speaker paused, and glanced anxiously at the prisoners.

“After all,” he continued, “I believe you're right about it. Will you tell them, or shall I ?”

“I will, if you don't want to.”



And advancing a step towards the log, he addressed the men sitting upon it, who were busily engaged in guessing, from the disconnected fragments that they had heard, the subject and the result of the consultation.

"We have decided not to take you to camp, for our lines are a good ways off. There's only one way to dispose of you. You can have ten minutes to say your prayers, after we get a little farther into the woods."

"Better tie them a little more securely, I reckon, suggested the other.

But when men are once condemned to death, they fear nothing, for nothing can be worse than the fate which certainly awaits them. As the Confederates, recognizing this, proceeded to bind the prisoners yet more securely before leading them to the spot where they were destined to die, the Iowan, with the strength born of desperation, started to run, drawing his two comrades, of course, with him. But if he had been quick in his movements, the captors proved equally so. One of them, raising his revolver, sent a ball crashing through the skull of the liberty-loving prisoner. He fell like a log, dragging down his companions on either side, nearly to the ground; for he fell so suddenly that they had no time to resist. But even as he fell, Pavy, inspired by his example and unwarned by his fate, summoned all his strength for one last effort.

With a sudden pull, to which despair gave force, he burst his bonds, and ran at his utmost speed towards the Federal lines, closely pursued by one of the Confederates. As McCune made a similar movement, the other Southerner, quicker to comprehend the case than his companion, struck the prisoner a blow on the head with the butt end of his musket, that, for a moment, knocked him senseless; then turned to watch the progress of the chase.

But experience had taught McCune that he had to deal with a foe that was quick to see and to act; that the only hope of escape lay in outwitting him. When, therefore, he returned to consciousness, as he did in a few minutes, he gave no sign that he was in possession of his senses. The Confederate still stood leaning on his musket, watching his companion and Pavy run; for they were yet far from being out of sight. McCune's first effort was to loosen the ropes, which not only prevented the free use of his arms, but encumbered him with the weight of the

Iowan's dead body. Any sudden movement on his part would undoubtedly recall the Confederate's attention from the race to his charge, and then a continuance of his efforts would result in death. Carefully, slowly, silently he worked at the knots, his progress being but slight in what seemed an age, because his hands were behind him. But it is really only a few minutes before he is free, and springing to his feet, he rushes past the astonished Confederate, after the others.

Meanwhile Pavy had fled almost on wings of the wind, followed by the Confederate, who was almost equally fleet of foot. But the Federal had this advantage, that any chance and unexpected encounter would in all likelihood be with a friend, and would mean safety; while the pursuer had to exercise every care to avoid falling into the hands of those who would befriend the fugitive. But at last the neighborhood became too dangerous for him; they were too near the Federal lines for the Confederate's liking; and he gave up the chase.

McCune followed the path which these two had taken, for some little time; closely pursued, in his turn, by the other guard, whose enjoyment of the race had been so rudely ended by the unexpected escape of his prisoner. But reflecting that the return of Pavy's pursuer, with or without having recaptured the fugitive, would probably be along the same path by which he had gone, he turned aside. Although his prime object was not to elude his own pursuer, he not only avoided the return of the first, but completely baffled the second by the numerous turns which he made. Gradually the sound of footsteps grew fainter and fainter; then as the Confederate saw that he was likely to lose his prey if it took him so long to track it, a bullet whistled by McCune's ears. Another and another came, until the Reb's revolver was emptied. To stop to reload, of course, would only increase the disadvantage at which he already stood, and the gray-coat sullenly gave up the chase and retraced his steps.

Trembling in every limb from the severe exertion required by the long run, and panting for breath, the two fugitives arrived in camp from different points at nearly the same time; each being ignorant of the fate of the other. Their story was listened to with eager ears and hearts desirous to avenge their fallen comrade. The officers, alarmed lest the presence of two Confederates so near the lines might indicate the approach of an army, resolved to guard against a surprise. A considerable force of

cavalry was detailed for the purpose of reconnoissance as well as revenge; and divided into small squads, each was assigned to scour a certain portion of the country around the Federal camp.

The column of flame and smoke rising into the sky soon apprised those who were forced to remain, inactive, in the camp, that the barn where the capture had taken place had been burned; while a similar one near it, a few moments afterwards, showed that the cavalry had found the owner of the house near by to have aided the Confederates, and had destroyed his residence.

The body of the soldier who had been killed was duly conveyed to camp, and buried with the usual solemnities. The two Southerners were captured, and, upon trial, were condemned to death; but as they were proved to be regularly enlisted soldiers in the Confederate States Army, at home on a furlough, and as retaliation, in case of their execution, was threatened, the sentence was set aside, and they were held as prisoners of war.

Pavy and McCune did not long enjoy the freedom gained by their swiftness of pace, for on the eighth of the same month a considerable part of the division to which they belonged was captured by the enemy, and sent to a military prison in Texas for the remainder of the war. As far as we can learn, Privates Pavy and McCune were two members of the 48th Ohio Veteran Volunteer Infantry, who shared this fate.

## CHAPTER XLIII.

### DOWN HILL.

Sheridan's Instructions—Why the Feds Withdrew—The Colonel's Horse—Hunting a Captor—Under the Tree—Willing to be Plucked—No Orderly There—The Colonel's Guard—The Adjutant—An Affecting Story—A Halt—In the Shadow—Obligingly Forgetful—Rolling Down the Hill—An Alarming Bugle—Doubt—Yankee Doodle—With Friends.

SHERIDAN had been sent to the valley of the Shenandoah with two words of instruction: "Go in." He obeyed, and in many a hot skirmish had given the enemy a terrible foretaste of Winchester and Cedar Creek. In one of these fierce brushes between portions of brigades, occurred a capture, with the consequences of which we have now to deal.

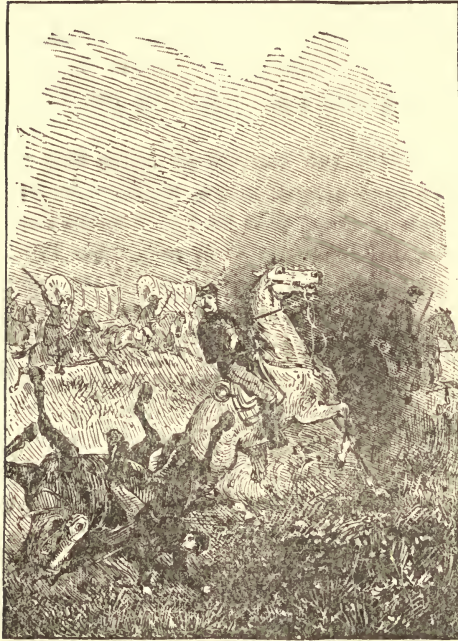
A regiment of cavalry belonging to Sheridan's command, had fallen upon a Confederate wagon-train, expecting, by one wild dash, to deprive the Johnnies of their scanty supplies for many a day to come. But

"The best laid plans of mice and men  
Gang aft aglee."

The train was well guarded, and the first charge met with a decided repulse. Col. W—— says that they withdrew only to acquire a greater impetus for a second charge; but if so, their motives were grievously misunderstood by the Rebs, who came hot-foot after them.

But we are narrating facts, not discussing motives. The Federal regiment did charge upon the Confederates, and the latter were not beaten back. As the bluecoats returned, with more or less rapidity of movement, to their original position, one of the bullets which were flying about them, struck Col. W——'s horse,

inflicting a mortal wound. The injured animal gave a leap forward, as if he would fain have carried his rider to a place of safety, then fell to the earth, carrying the officer with him. So rapid was the retreat, so hot the pursuit, that before the colonel could disengage his feet from the stirrups, he was completely



*A Bad Fall.*

surrounded by the enemy. Dragging himself from under the mass of flesh that had so lately borne him, he found that he was almost disabled by the fall. His faithful orderly, disdaining safety for himself, when his colonel was in danger, knelt beside him.

A moment more, and the enemy had passed, leaving the two Feds in the rear. A private, who was not so eager in the pursuit as he was curious as to the results, stopped a moment, and proceeded to investigate by poking the prostrate bluecoat in the ribs.

“Quit that, will you?” growled the orderly; “he ain’t dead.”  
 “Ain’t he? Then go to the rear, both of you,” returned the lordly captor.

The orderly had drawn his arm through his horse’s rein, and thus kept the animal by his side while attending to the officer; but of this care he was now relieved by their captor, who at once possessed himself of the charger. Repeating his command to go to the rear, the Reb rode gaily off, leaving them to do as they chose about obeying.

They had not much choice in the matter, however, for constraint was only a question of time. The enemy was between them and their friends; they could not hope to be left where they were, even if the graycoats “fell back to gain an impetus,” as their opponents in blue had done.

"Are you hurt badly, Colonel?" asked the orderly, in a commiserating tone.

"My leg seems to be stiff from the horse's weight on it, and I got a pretty heavy blow on my head that makes me dizzy, but there are no bones broken."

"Well, replied his companion, in a deliberate and business-like tone, "you'd better rest awhile, for we may have to march soon. Let me help you over to this tree; you can lean against it; and you'd better put your watch and money in your armpits."

Slowly and with some difficulty the change of place was accomplished, and there some slight attention was paid to the officer's injuries, while the fresh breeze, that had just sprung up, assisted the contents of his canteen in driving away his faintness. His superior attended to, the orderly proceeded to accouter himself for the fate which seemed inevitable. His preparations were brief: the removal of his money and a photograph from his pocket to his belt, which he buckled inside of his trousers—that was all.

"You'd better do it as early in the day as you can, orderly," remarked the colonel, who had been silently watching this proceeding; "you'll be between two fires, you know, and that won't give you a very good chance."

"This is as good a time as any, I guess," answered the satellite, who had not spoken a word since giving his advice as recorded; "or rather, it would be if it wasn't for your hurt. It's rather hard to leave you here, bound for Libby."

"Don't mind," began the officer—when the voice of remonstrance was drowned in a "Rebel yell."

"Hi! thar! Two Yanks settin' agin' a tree!"

"Thought they wuz off, I reckon," chuckled the companion to whom this choice speech, garnished as it was by oaths, was addressed; "git outer that, you!"

The prisoners proceeded to obey this last command by meekly arising and confronting their new captors.

"I'll take you to the general—that's what I'll do," announced the first: "now git, and be right smart about it, too."

Neither of them made any answer in words, but the orderly, who had reasons of his own for so doing, submissively handed over his revolver. The first Confederate took it without word or sign of acknowledgment. In the same dumb show the ser-

geant pulled his tobacco from his pocket, and proffered that; the Southerner gave a little nod of thanks as his hand closed over it. So willing a giver must be allowed to follow his bent to the utmost, if not compelled to do so; had he been unwilling, these valuables would have been taken by force.

"Take off your boots," demanded the captor.

The Fed drew them off without a word or gesture to show that he was in the least anxious to retain his foot coverings, and, as the word of command was given, cheerfully trudged along bare-footed. Col. W——, being an officer, was not despoiled; he was to be taken to the "gen'ral."

"Have you anything to eat about you, sir?" asked the orderly meekly, when they had gone some little distance.

Now, the Confederate belonged to that class which the negroes designate as "poor white trash." Because the captives did not belong to the same class, he was inclined to think they despised him. The sergeant's request, then, touched him in a soft spot, as it seemed to place them on a level.

"Dunno but whut I hev," he replied, rummaging in a haversack, which was the reverse of inviting in its appearance; "which'll ye take, pork or bacon?"

"I guess I'll take a bit of pork, if it's all the same to you," replied the sergeant, with polite hesitation.

("Provisions for the woods," thought the colonel, approvingly; "he's won that fellow's heart completely.")

"I'd just as lief you would," returned the provider of the feast, cordially; "fur I'd ruther hev the bacon myself."

The road was becoming filled with straggling groups of soldiers, who were now and then scattered to right and left by the thundering of six-horse wagons, sent to the rear for safety. Joyfully Col. W—— recognized such evidences of the defeat of his captors.

But our friend, the orderly, was not yet left in peace; his blouse and cap were demanded, so that only his light blue trousers remained to show that he had been clad in the United States uniform. His guard paid no attention to the fact that he was walking in the dustiest part of a dry, much traveled road, though Col. W—— perceived that at every step he took the dust rose knee-high and settled on his clothing, completely disguising the color of the one remaining article of his uniform. The officer's attention was attracted for a moment in another direction; when

he again looked toward his late attendant, the familiar face was not to be seen. Such was the manner of one man's escape from durance vile in Libby Prison.

Col. W—— dared not look too earnestly in the direction where he had previously seen the orderly, lest he attract the attention of the guards to the escape. For himself, he had decided to wait until after dark, as he thought the chances would be more favorable. Avoiding the town of Winchester by a slight detour, the guards conducted all shoulder-strapped prisoners to the office of the provost-marshal, a mile beyond that place. Here they were assigned to the care of a young officer, who, for two years, had been employed in the safe duty of conducting prisoners to Richmond. From this new representative of the Confederacy Col. W—— obtained the honor of a special guard, a sergeant having presented the officer with a new pair of gloves, of which a private had attempted to despoil him.

For some time the prisoner made no move toward conciliating the sergeant; perhaps he was overwhelmed by the honor; but we are inclined to think that he was profiting by the example of his orderly. At any rate he said nothing until they had been half an hour or so on the way.

"Pretty brisk rate we are marching at, isn't it, sergeant?" he asked at length.

"Right smart pace," was the brief reply.

"I am not familiar enough with the uniforms in your army to tell whether you belong to the infantry or cavalry," remarked the Fed.

Now this was a piece of the finest sarcasm, for at that stage of the war, the Confederate "uniform" was whatever the individual chanced to possess; and the sergeant's clothes were so torn and patched, that it would have puzzled a Philadelphia lawyer to have told the original texture and hue of his garments. But the sergeant swallowed it all.

"I belong to the infantry," he answered gravely; "Thirteenth Virginia; but I have a good deal of duty on horseback."

The Reb thus gave him to understand that any consideration due to either branch of the service was due to him as the representative of both, and Col. W—— so understood it.

"Will you, then, accept of my spurs? I don't suppose I shall have any use for them for many a long month."

"I'm detailed to the provost-marshal," he replied, accepting



the spurs graciously. "They don't treat a fellow very well down at Libby."

"Were you ever taken prisoner, sergeant?" asked the colonel, with elaborate care to give the title due to his guard's military rank.

"Onct," was the curt reply.

"Well, now, you can have your revenge, in treating me as you were treated, replied the officer, nonchalantly.

The Reb made no answer, but marched stolidly onward; and Col. W—— turned his head and looked about him with apparent carelessness. At his side walked another prisoner, the adjutant of his own regiment; but no sign of recognition had passed between them, for fear that they might be separated.

"Speak little, and to the point," muttered Col. W——, slowly, his face turned straight forward.

"Before dark, or after?" asked the adjutant, in the same tone.

"After," replied the colonel.

Then for a long time they had no more to say to each other. Perhaps an hour had passed, when Col. W—— again thought it safe to communicate with his friend.

"Got a compass?"

"No, I've been robbed of everything."

"Take mine, then, quick."

The adjutant shook his head, but the colonel extended the compass, and there was no choice but to take it. By thus assisting the friend who knew less about astronomy, our hero was left without a valuable guide through the wilderness of trees about him; but with no thought of that, he gave a few hasty words of advice as to the direction in which to travel, and said no more.

"But you—?" began the adjutant, a slight tremor in his voice.

Col. W—— turned toward his fellow-prisoner, and looked over his head into vacancy. The other, seeing that there was to be no further conversation, plunged deep into meditation as to the best manner of escape.

The road along which they were traveling was a deep cut between high yellow clay banks, above which rose the over-arching trees. Here was no chance to drop out of the ranks as the orderly had done, and Col. W—— had just settled his mind to the monotony of the tramp, when much to his surprise, the Confederate sergeant spoke:

"I was captured in Mar'land."

"Before Gettysburg?" asked the prisoner, with equal brevity. The man nodded.

"And how were you treated?" ventured the Federal.

"Mighty well, considerin'."

"I'm glad to hear it," rejoined the other.

"I laid two months in the hospital at Fred'rick. 'Twant when Uncle Bob Lee took that trip of his'n, but in '62, at Boonsboro. I was shot, an' a Yank war shot—me in the hip, an' him in the lungs. He spit blood when he called out for water, as he laid there by me."

"And you —?"

"I said: 'Here's water, Yank;' an' then I rolled over an' guv him my canteen to drink out of; there war jest a drop left in it. 'I'm a goin' to die.' says he; 'Yes,' says I; 'an' says he: 'I hope you'll live to get home; they'll take you to the hospital an' treat you well,' says he. 'Thank you,' says I; then he pulled out his terbacker an' a roll of money, an' guv it to me. An' then he died."

Col. W—— looked at the rough, uneducated fellow beside him who told with such rude pathos of that scene on the battlefield; and mutely wondered what was the sequel to it.

"Poor fellow!" he sighed, in audible reply at last; "there's many a thoughtful, generous heart stilled by a bullet."

"Ef it war only the good-fur-nothin' creeters that wuz killed, we might stand it," returned the sergeant, philosophically; "but it ain't. Now I want to give back some of that money to you."

Suiting the action to the word, he drew forth a small roll of bills—the dead "Yankee's" last month's pay.

"To me?" exclaimed the colonel, in surprise.

"Yes," replied the Reb, "'taint mine, you see; its his'n; an' he meant it for poor fellows in prison. You'll need it down there."

Gratefully Col. W—— accepted the offered money, and then and there registered an unspoken vow to return it at the earliest possible opportunity to some "poor fellow in prison," be he friend or foe."

"There's one thing, though," he said to the guard, "I wish you'd do for me. Won't you take my watch and keep it for me? It's sure to be taken away from me if you don't."

"Don't care if I do," answered the gray-jacket; and complied with the request.

About half-past six came the order to halt. They had now emerged from that narrow cut, though still in the woods. As they stood huddled together, the prisoners surrounded by a ring of soldiers, the wagons lumbering past them, a new hope arose in the heart of more than one captive. Surely, since the prisoners were halted to let the wagons pass, there must be a fast and furious pursuit. The Confederates could better afford to lose their prisoners than their stores; so they were putting in a place of safety that which they valued most.

Falling into line again after a number of teams had passed them, the party of which Col. W—— was one soon emerged from the woods, and marched between open meadows. Up a slight ascent they passed, halting a second time on the brow of a low ridge. With anxious eyes our hero peered through the gathering darkness, to see what chance awaited him. He had not seen the adjutant for some time, so that he felt assured of his escape. Now was the time to make good his own, for they would soon be so far within the Rebel lines as to make the attempt a hundred times more hazardous. The night was a cloudy one, and the warm, damp air had brought double weariness upon them.

The prisoners were some thirty yards from the roadside, the guards being posted here and there, so as to encircle them as nearly as the comparative numbers of captives and captors would permit. There were no fences; all fence-rails had long since fed camp-fires. Here and there a tree stood blackly outlined against the dark sky; and on the very summit of the slight elevation which they had ascended, was a thick, low clump of bushes, perhaps five feet high. Col. W—— was nearer to these bushes than any one else; his especial guard was within arm's length of him: there was no other Southerner less than twenty yards away.

Would the sergeant be watchful? That was the problem which time alone could solve. If he were, there was of course no chance; if he were not—oh, if only he would relax his vigilance!

With the wisdom of the serpent, whom he was soon to emulate in another particular. Col. W—— had spoken of extreme drowsiness. He had walked sleepily along, occasionally nodding as they made a momentary halt. What could be more natural, then, than that he should lie down on the long, dry grass on the top of the ridge, and take a nap? Certainly his guard did not raise any objections, but went off, seeing the prisoner safely asleep, to speak to some of his comrades. Before he was half-a-dozen yards

away the "sleeping" man had rolled, unconsciously of course, into the shadow of the bushes. The sergeant did his errand; and sauntered back with the air of a man who was "off duty;" and Col. W—— rolled a little farther into the shadows of the bushes.

"If I am found here," he reasoned, "it will not excite any especial remark. Did I not tell him I was sleepy? And is not a sleeping man apt to roll about? No, if I am found, it will not appear that I was trying to escape and thus the result will not be a diminution of favor."

The remainder of the wagons passed them while they were halted here on this ridge; and after a rest of about an hour, the command was given to move onward. Wearily they took up the march through the dark September night, guards and prisoners alike fatigued by the day's fight and the succeeding tramp. The sergeant who had been appointed as Col. W——'s keeper had his own proper duties to look after; the others were content to surround what prisoners they saw, since none could have escaped through the cordon of Confederates, down the slope of a hill barren of shelter.

The slumberer in the shadow of the bushes was not so fast asleep but that he heard the commands to proceed; nor was he deaf to the stir of departure. Almost breathlessly he lay there, fearful lest the breeze, rustling through the leaves, should sound to them like the movements of a concealed prisoner. At last they had set off; the sergeant had been obligingly forgetful; and the sound of their footsteps was lost in the multitudinous noises of the night.

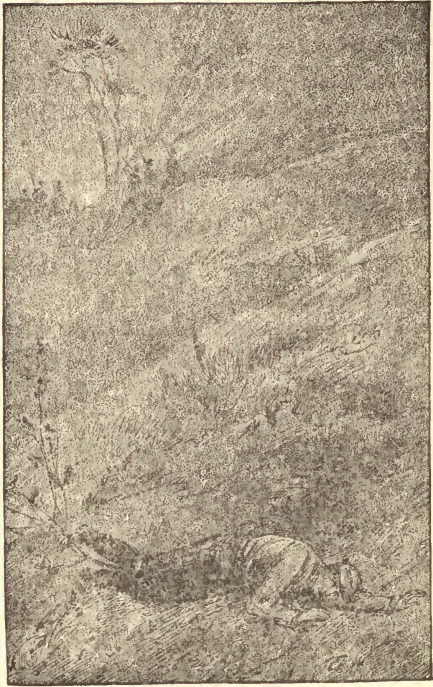
Troops were still traveling along the road, and even when the rear guard had passed, there would be plenty of stragglers. To make matters worse, the clouds were now passing away, and though there was no moon, any figure might be seen when outlined against the clear, dark sky. When he had once left the shelter of this clump of bushes, he would be seen as soon as he raised himself to his feet. Put the hill between himself and the road he dared not, for the country was wholly strange to him, and he could only hope to be assured of reaching his destination by retracing the steps he had taken during the day. The road must, at all hazards, be kept in view; but there was an equal necessity for concealing himself from those who were traveling along the road.

Removing jacket and cap, the Federal benevolently left them

for any one who might chance to find them. His money, including the sergeant's gift, was fastened securely in his waistband. His handkerchief was bound about his head. Then holding his arms straight at his side, and stretching himself at full length upon the grass, he began the descent.

"Rolling off a log," may be the easiest thing in the world, but our escaping prisoner found rolling down a hill neither easy nor pleasant. Straws and pebbles are trifles under ordinary circumstances, but ground into the flesh, or slipping between the clothing and the skin, they are not so. Another difficulty lay in the tendency of the head to revolve around the body, making it almost impossible for W—— to keep the even tenor of his way, parallel to the high road.

But even this plan, fraught as it was with difficulties and discomforts, was not feasible for the whole time. Although, as we have said, fences were in that section of the country a thing of the past, there were other methods of dividing from each other the various fields on that long slope. Here



*Rough Rolling.*

was a ditch, through which the waters of a little stream that once flowed along the tortuous course of yonder ravine, had been guided for a boundary line. That same ravine, with its dry and rocky bed, presented much the same difficulty. On reaching such an obstacle, he must, perforce, quit the sheltering arms of earth for a moment, and, gathering all his powers for the effort, leap to the other side.

The interposition of a hedge was even a greater discouragement; but though torn and bleeding from his encounter with it, he managed at last to pass it. He was soon obliged to give up, for

a time at least, his purpose of rolling, for his arms became so crushed as to make him doubt if he ever would regain the use of them. To escape from the danger of Libby was much, but to be thus maimed for life was no small thing. As a variety in the mode of proceeding, then, he lay flat on the ground, face downward, and by extending his arms and then contracting all his muscles, managed to hump himself along in a style certainly the reverse of graceful, and extremely suggestive of the most subtle of the beasts of the field.

At last, after weary hours of this toilsome journeying, the base of the long slope was reached. Here in the rich soil of the valley was a closer growth both of trees and underwood, and Col. W—— was at last able to assume an erect position. Having once more the use of his feet, he was able to make better time, and in little more than an hour had made more progress than in six times the period during the night.

The cool air grew gray with the approach of dawn. Still the road was near him, but on it he dared not yet venture. Suddenly through the stillness of the early morning broke a bugle-note, mellowed and softened by the distance. Who were the horsemen who were thus summoned? Were they long-delayed Confederates, or were they advancing Federals? Hardly the latter, for the road was not yet clear of stragglers; and still—why should any gray-jackets be so far in the rear of the retreating forces? Could it be that after all he had become confused in the darkness, and followed a branch of the road which should have been his guide—a branch that led into the enemy's certain grasp?

Worn out by the exertions of the night following those of the day, and faint for lack of food (he had not tasted any for seventeen hours) he was almost ready to believe in this last horrible conjecture. At any rate, he could not, by any certain recollection to the contrary, disprove his own fears.

When he had first heard the bugle, he had dropped instinctively behind the huge trunk of a fallen tree, which lay some thirty feet from the roadside. Here, applying his ear to the earth, he learned that a party of men had halted not far off, and were making a fire. This last he inferred, from the fact that he heard the chopping and breaking of branches. Again the bugle sounded, sharp and clear, but no horsemen appeared in answer to the summons. Cautiously Col. W—— left his hiding-place and crept in the direction of the noises. It had been raining for

the last few hours, and the earth was thoroughly soaked, the branches dripping. Slowly he made his way towards the fire, and succeeded in reaching, unobserved, a point which was near enough for him to see those around it. There were but two, the bugler and one other; but even the sight of these did not remove his doubts. Those felt hats were not distinctive, nor were the ponchos which covered them from the rain. A long time he waited for some clear view of their uniforms. At last, worn out by the trials of the night, and knowing that at any rate he must be discovered when the bugle-call was obeyed by the others of the party, he had almost made up his mind to surrender himself. His bruised and aching body, he felt assured, could not endure much more.

But no; there was yet a chance, even if these did prove to be Confederates; weary and sore as he was, he made shift to conceal himself in the upper branches of the tree behind which he had been standing. Here he might, at any rate, remain unobserved; and here he would stay through the day, if these were not—

Hark! the bugle-blast again! And following the call came a few notes, harsh and loud to other ears, but the sweetest music to our fugitive—the opening measures of Yankee Doodle. It was indeed a scouting party of Sheridan's that was to assemble here for a hasty breakfast. They had been riding all night, and their delay in obeying the summons was not due to any lack of appetite. But he who ate the coarse fare and drank the black coffee with most relish, was one who had not set out with them; an unexpected, but not an unwelcome guest; for in those days a man who escaped from Libby or Andersonville, or even the shadow of them, was welcomed as was the Prodigal Son, with the fat of the land.

## CHAPTER XLIV.

### A CAPTIVE "TIGER."

Situation of the Armies—Lee's Invasion of Pennsylvania—Battle of Gettysburg—The Tiger Caught—The Tiger Caged—Life at Fort Delaware—Two Souls With But a Single Thought—The Life Preservers—The Galvanized—Under the Carpenter-Shop—An Indulgent Sentry—The Iron-Clads Tested—Success.

A NEW constellation had arisen in the political sky—a group of eleven stars, each one symbolizing a sovereign State in arms for the defense of her sovereignty. It rose rapidly at first, then more slowly; until, in the first months of the year 1863, it seemed higher than that other constellation, which now numbers thirty-eight stars. In plain English, at this time it was thought probable that the Confederate States would secure the independence for which they were battling with all their might.

But now their fortunes began to decline; and the national anniversary of 1863, while it saw a thousand homes in mourning, saw also a double thanksgiving for victory. The lightning had flashed it over the country; Gettysburg and Vicksburg, North and South, both beheld the Stars and Stripes waving triumphantly; the stars and bars, shot-riddled and blood-stained as the rival banner, but furled in token of defeat.

Two years the result had trembled in the balance; for two years longer hope was to predominate over fear in the minds of those who watched, with anxious eyes, the wavering fortunes of the whole country. Here, at this turning-point, let us pause a moment, living over again those days of conflict in reading the story of one of the soldiers.

Early in May of this year, the Confederate generals had re-



solved upon carrying the war into the enemy's country. Virginia and other Southern States had long been devastated by the invading armies, and impoverished by the necessity of sustaining both forces. The Confederacy must be partly relieved of the burden thus laid upon her, and the Northern States made to bear it. Chancellorville was the first battle of the campaign begun with this end in view, but it had brought no decisive advantage to either side; for whatever the South might have gained, was lost when Stonewall Jackson died.

Lee moved cautiously and slowly northward, his army of one hundred thousand men proceeding by various routes toward the Potomac. The three divisions under Ewell, Longstreet and A. P. Hill united at Hagerstown, Md., and prepared to march upon Harrisburg. But every movement was closely watched by the enemy in whose country they were. The concentration of the Confederate forces rendered an attack an unwise move for the Federal generals until their own forces should be similarly united, and, for the time being, Gen. Meade contented himself with efforts to intercept the supplies of the invading forces and harass the rear.

To the Virginian general it was clear that he must dispose of Meade before the object of this campaign could be accomplished. He ordered a concentration of his forces, which had again separated after their meeting at Hagerstown, fixing the place for this near Gettysburg. Not until the Confederates were within six miles of the town did they discover that the enemy was in possession of it.

A mile or so to the south of the town is an eminence called Culp's Hill. Curving to the west, and then running south, is a continuation of this elevation, now famous as Cemetery Ridge; terminating in Little Round Top and Round Top. Rocky ledges and stone walls had here made a natural rampart, and the Federal forces added to these defenses such breastworks as might be hastily thrown up. On the ridge to the north-west, a mile and a half away, were the Confederates, sheltered by the trees which clothed the sides of the slope. Gold and green the grain fields and meadows lay between the opposing armies; the thirsty cattle waded knee-deep into the pasture-pools and streams, and stood placidly chewing their cud, and gazing with large calm eyes upon the surrounding verdure.

Such was the scene upon which the roar of the cannon, the

crack of musketry, and the thunder of hoofs broke that summer morning. All day long the battle raged; and at night the combatants slept on their arms. The next morning all were eager for the fray; the Confederates, to pursue the advantage which they had gained; the Federals to retrieve the loss of ground which they had suffered.

As the sailor sweeps the horizon with his glass, and finally fixes it upon some one point; so, having thus briefly viewed this great battle-field, we turn our attention to one portion of it, to one obscure actor in that mighty scene.

Among all the regiments that took part on either side, there was none in which the *esprit du corps* was more fully developed than in a certain Louisiana command which, by its readiness to fight on any and all occasions, had won for itself the honorable *soubriquet* of the "Tigers." And very proud they were of this nickname; so proud, that many accused them of choosing it for themselves.

Be that as it may, they well deserved it. Tigers in battle, untamably fierce when aroused by the sight of blood; when the fight was over, they were once more men, ready to succor, not only their comrades, but their wounded foes.

Our hero, whom we will call X—, was a private in this command. Charging with his comrades up the slopes of Cemetery Heights, he fell, wounded. The tide of battle had not yet turned against the Confederates; and while the Tigers dashed upward and onward toward the cannon-crowded summit, tender, yet strong hands bore the injured from the field. A rude apology for a hospital was situated at the rear of the Confederate position; provided, doubtless, with bedding from the stores of many a careful housewife who would far rather have given it to the other side. To this X— was borne; his wound was dressed, and for two days and nights he lay, helplessly wondering what was to come next.

On the 4th, the battle had been ended; the tide had turned, and the invasion was repelled. And now our wounded hero felt himself not too severely injured to join in the retreat. Hope of exchange there was none; if he were captured, he must not expect to rejoin his command. At his earnest entreaty, then, a comrade secured him a horse, and though scarcely able to keep his seat in the saddle, the dread of a military prison kept up his strength.

The spirit was willing, but the flesh was weak ; and when, at Waterloo, Maryland, his horse broke down, he gave up hope of reaching Virginia again. Fortunately for him, however, as he thought, the generosity of a messmate who had, like himself, been wounded in the battle, gave him a "lift," and riding double on the old cavalry hack with which the other was provided, and which was not quite so far gone as X——'s, they reached a haven of safety—the camp, for the night, of the wagon-train of the Confederates.

The guard had been on the march for many hours, and the men were thoroughly worn out. With all care, however, sentinels were posted, and the safety of the bivouac, apparently, secured. But the Yanks, though equally tired by marching and fighting, were chasing a retreating enemy ; their energy, then, was more unwearied than that of the dejected, defeated Confederates. Perhaps the sentinels slept ; perhaps they were seized and overpowered before they could give the alarm ; at any rate, in the "wee, sma' hours" of that midsummer morning, the blue-coats made a sudden dash upon the camp. The guard defended the wagons as well as they could ; the teamsters hastily made ready to continue the retreat. For some moments the fight was a sharp one ; then the Confederates were driven from their camp, and the victorious Federals remained in possession. They had captured fifty of the wagons, and taken many prisoners ; among the latter was our friend X——.

But the attacking party was in the midst of dangers too great for prudence to encounter ; what they feared most was the loss of their booty, so, releasing their prisoners on parole, they hastily returned to the main body. X—— crept to a little deserted school-house near the line of march, and lay there until morning, when his resting-place was discovered by another party of Federals. The officer in command laughed at his parole as useless, and sent him, with others in the same plight, to the care of a surgeon at Waynesborough, Pa. Here and at Harrisburg, to which city he was soon removed, he was treated with much kindness ; both by those in charge of the hospital and by the ladies who made a point of visiting the wounded, whether friend or foe.

But a removal to Fort Delaware, as soon as his wound was healed, brought him to prison life in earnest. How they shivered in the barracks where the wind whistled through the crevices as through the rigging of a ship, and the snow drifted in every-

where; how they longed that more than five gallons of beans might be allowed to one hundred and twenty gallons of water, in making the soup, of which each man received a cup daily; how they mourned when, by way of punishment for some general offense, the ration of fifteen ounces of bread was cut down one-half; how, the morning of that New-Year's day, which is proverbial throughout the country for the sudden severity of cold, they crowded about the stoves, three hundred men around each fire, with but a wheel-barrow-load of coal to last through the twenty-four hours; how they cursed the capriciousness of their captors, when an order that had allowed them to write to friends or relatives for money or clothing would be rescinded before an answer could be received, and the supplies thus sent would be confiscated on their arrival at the prison—on these things we will not dwell, lest our story be too long.

But all these things sank deep into our Tiger's heart, as he heard the vague rumors of battle that pierced even the prison walls; and he longed with all his heart to be once more with the army. As he slowly paced the scant limit of ground allowed for exercise, one bright day in early June, a companion in misery accosted him.

"You look like you've lost your best friend and could not go to the funeral, X—," he said. "What's the matter?"

"Matter enough," replied the Louisianian, gloomily, as his eyes rested upon the blue blouse of the guard; "to think of a year ago, and"—

"Be careful," interrupted the other, "if ever you mean to make your regrets bear fruit."

This was said with a warning glance at the sentry, who was looking in their direction as if interested in their conversation.

X— said nothing in reply, but having reached the limit of his walk, turned. A glance had assured his companion that there was more to be said on that subject. As they came to a bench, sufficiently far from the sentinel to be out of hearing, X— sank upon it, and motioned his companion to a seat beside him.

"What did you mean?" he asked eagerly; "what did you mean by regrets bearing fruit?"

His companion, whom we will call B—, looked nonchalantly about him, nodded to a comrade across the yard, and finally answered:

"Don't seem too much excited about it, or you will be sure to attract suspicion; but can't we contrive some plan to get out of this place?"

"What kind of a plan?" asked X——, helplessly, being half-bewildered by the business tone in which his companion spoke.

"D—n it, if I knew, I wouldn't be here," replied B——, with a short laugh. Then he turned to speak to a fellow-prisoner who chanced to be passing; and not another word would he speak on the subject that day.

X—— had not dared to express to any one his long cherished hope of effecting an escape, for it seemed so forlorn as to be worthy only of ridicule. Here was a comrade, however, to whom he need not fear to unfold his inmost heart, and with new zest he set to work to think out a path to freedom.

Various plans that he had canvassed in his own mind and rejected as impracticable were reconsidered, but not one of them seemed to suit the requirements. And B——'s avoidance of a private confab prevented any discussion. Not until the afternoon of the day after that on which the subject had been broached did they again have an opportunity.

"Have you thought of a plan?" asked B——, looking cautiously about him.

"Yes," answered X——, doubtfully; "but it's risky."

"Of course," assented B——, in an encouraging tone.

"I suppose the risk is a matter of course, but every way I can think of seems to have so many 'ifs' about it," rejoined X——; "now this one—you know that oil-cloth of mine—how thick it is?"

"Yes?" replied B——, inquiringly.

"We'll make that into two life-preservers, and swim out."

B—— looked at him, half smiling.

"If I thought you would not be offended by a candid expression of opinion," he said, "I should say that you were crazy."

"Why?" demanded X——.

"You speak of swimming out as if it would be the easiest thing in the world," rejoined the other; "don't you know—but of course you do—that every time we go in bathing there's a big squad stationed on the bank to keep us from going too far out?"

"Not then," returned X——, with some impatience; and proceeded to unfold his plan.

Perhaps it will be better if we follow the execution of the pro-

ject, rather than listen longer to the two friends; for there are many circumstances which, perfectly well known to them, require explanation when the story is told to others.

Procuring a supply of shoemaker's wax and thread, under the pretense that they were going to repair their own shoes, they cut the oil-cloth into four pieces, which were sewed together so as to make two bags. The seams were well waxed, so that the whole affair was impervious to water. The opening at the upper end was barely large enough to insert a spool, which was provided with an air-tight plug. Two sets of straps were fastened to each bag, one set near the top, the other lower down.

It was a novel kind of life-preserver, to which they intended to trust themselves (if they succeeded so far as to get a chance to do so) without the usual preliminaries of a thorough but safe test. The upper straps were to fasten the bag about the neck, the lower ones to hold it in position by being fastened around the waist. Bending the head a little, and placing the lips to the opening in the spool, the bag could soon be inflated, and was large enough to render material assistance in keeping afloat, if, indeed, it were not sufficiently buoyant to make such efforts unnecessary.

Ingenious as this arrangement was, its inventor made no effort to secure a patent from the United States Government; indeed, he guarded it most jealously from the eyes of those who represented Federal authority at Fort Delaware; and it is safe to say, that not one of the officials there knew that there was such an inventive genius under their charge.

Some of the prisoners had taken the oath of allegiance to the United States Government, but whether from a failure to observe some necessary form, or whether they had to pass through a period of probation, they had not yet been released. These "galvanized" men, as they were dubbed by their still rebellious brethren, were considered "trooly loil," and were allowed many privileges which were denied to the others. Among these, was the liberty of the island until nearly dark. If the "galvanized" chanced to be detailed for any particular work, he had, of course, even greater freedom.

Those who had remained faithful to their oaths as soldiers of the Confederacy, held these renegades in small esteem; but our Tiger and his friend were not at all particular as to the character which they should assume in order to escape. They were

lodged in the barracks next to those occupied by the "galvanized" men, and hoped, by passing through the cook-room, to obtain their liberty so far as the island itself was concerned.

Day after day they waited and watched for an opportunity, until the expression, "*happy as the day is long*," acquired new meaning for them. It was July 23d, 1864, before they judged that the time had come. A detail of the "galvanized" came into the prison-yard about the middle of the afternoon, to clear up the dirt and trash which had accumulated there.

"Now's our chance, B—," said the Tiger to his friend; "we need not risk going through the cook-room, where we might be found out and sent back. We can help these fellows load up, and the guards, seeing us busy with the cart, will let us pass without question."

"Don't be too sure of that," replied his more cautious comrade; "but maybe it is less uncertain than the other."

So they worked with a will, that hot afternoon. The July sun blazed down upon the treeless prison-yard, and the "galvanized" were only too glad to find such willing helpers. In fact, they were very unwilling to work at all, and did not care, so that only they escaped punishment for not having the yard clean at the designated time.

By some means or other the two friends had secured a couple of blue blouses, and with these disguises they were of course not as easily detected as if they had been in their ordinary clothing. No one knew of that highly original style of life-preserver concealed under the coarse army blue cloth.

At last the yard was clean, and the cart loaded with the rubbish which had been removed from it. Shouldering their tools, spades, mattocks and brooms, the detail followed it out of the prison-yard. One of the men gave a curious glance at the faces of the Confederates, but seeing their blue blouses, and knowing that they had really been at work with the others, looked away without saying anything to them. A half-smile played a moment on his lips as he turned his eyes from them, and his gaze was for a moment fixed upon vacancy; then he gave a light sigh, and that was all. Did he know them for prisoners trying to escape? Surely he must. Was his heart really with the struggling Confederacy, that he should thus, by his silence, assist in giving her two more soldiers? Or did he feel so deep a sympathy for the prisoners that he would not, for mere human-

ity's sake, betray their efforts to regain their freedom? Or was he so convinced of the uselessness of their endeavors that he felt they might as well hope a moment longer, since in a short time all hope must vanish. No man knows; we can only conjecture; let us give him credit for what we consider the best motive.

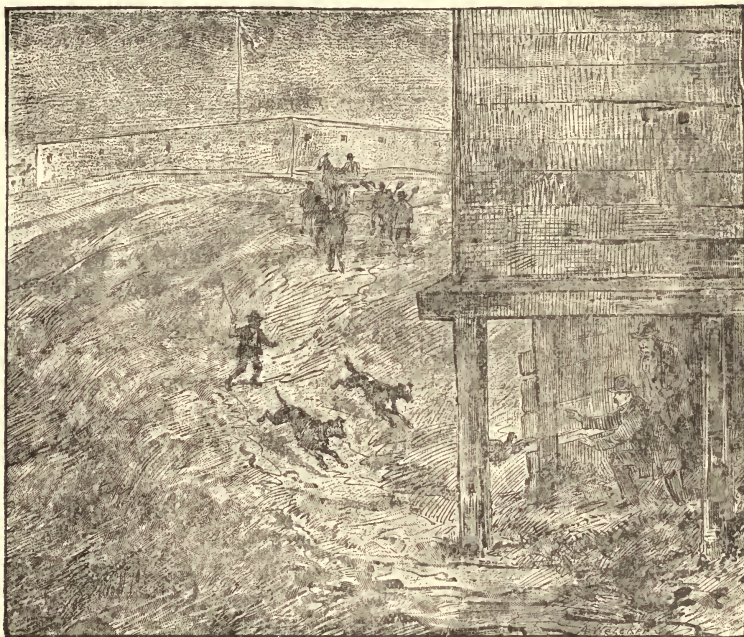
The volunteer assistants marched soberly towards the fort with the "galvanized" as if they had been real members of the detail. Only the man who had looked at them so curiously did not vouchsafe a second glance in their direction; his eyes were turned as resolutely to the front as the strictest martinet could desire. Had the Tiger and his friend evaded the guards thus far merely to escort the cart-load of trash to the dump? So it would have seemed, to one, who saw them returning as contentedly to the prison. But no; they were but watching their chance.

Beside the road stood a small framed building, used as a carpenter shop. It was within a pistol shot from the fort, and not a tree or shrub was near it; yet it was their only hiding-place. X——'s heart sank into his dilapidated boots, and would have gone out of the holes, if it had not been a little too large, when he saw that there was no other possible shelter. Hastily touching B——'s arm as they approached this building, he gave one expressive glance toward it. That was enough; B—— comprehended at once, and slackened his pace gradually. X—— did the same, so that by the time the detail had reached the building they were a few feet in the rear. Quick as thought the prisoners darted to the side of the shanty. Boarded up at the front and for about half of each side, the space between the floor and the ground was open at the rear and along the remainder of the sides. Here was as good a hiding-place as they could hope for. Crawling under the building, and crouching in one of the sheltered corners, they waited, with beating hearts, to see whether their absence would be discovered.

The detail passed slowly toward the fort. The blue-bloused volunteer assistants were not yet missed. But the fugitives could not yet venture forth. In daylight they were liable to be recognized or at least suspected and questioned; so they must wait until night should offer her friendly services. But they found that they were not out of danger, even though they had not yet been missed.



Along the road came a quartet that was to bring them into fear and trembling, lest they be discovered—a chicken, a diminutive darkey, and two dogs. The first, half running, half-flying, seemed to be like themselves, an escaping prisoner. In a cloud of dust came the breathless pursuers; under the carpenter shop, that tempting shelter, ran poor Biddy, and nestled at X——'s feet.



*A Critical Situation.*

"*Sacre!*" he exclaimed, under his breath, as he realized the danger which now menaced them. B—— said not a word, but grasped X——'s wrist tightly. The hint was enough. Even a sigh might betray them.

The dogs followed the fowl closely, and were soon under the building. B——, releasing his hold on his friend's wrist, laid his hand suddenly upon the the feathered back at his feet. In new terror the winged fugitive started up, cackling at the unexpected threat of capture. She flew again to the open air, and the dogs pursued her yet more hotly, encouraged by their small master; while the human game rejoiced that the scent had not yet been found.

As they waited for the day to pass, the summer sunshine, which had been but fitful all day long, became clouded yet more darkly. With much satisfaction they watched the lessening light, until, at sunset, the rain-clouds had wholly obscured the sky. Darker and darker it grew, as the night and the storm came on together. The wind blew a gale; and the very windows of heaven seemed opened as the rain came down in blinding sheets. To two pairs of ears, the falling of that summer rain was the sweetest of music.

It was more than an hour after sunset, however, when they left their hiding-place, and crept slowly down toward the river. Facing Delaware City, and some thirty or forty feet from the banks of the river, were the barracks, occupied by the regiment on duty on the island. This building was raised on piles like the carpenter-shop, but no portion of the space between floor and ground was enclosed. Under it they crawled to reconnoiter before going farther.

"There's one good thing," said X—, "we're so wet already that the river itself cannot make us any more uncomfortable."

"Just from Fort Delaware, and talking of being uncomfortable," exclaimed B—; discreetly keeping his voice inaudible to any one three feet away.

"It's because we are out of it that I am beginning to think of comfort," retorted X—, in the same low tone.

But they had no time for small talk. The rain had ceased by this time, and the wind was still. Their eyes, accustomed to the darkness of the summer night, saw distinctly the figures of two sentinels, whom they must pass before they could get to the river. It was not very encouraging, to say the least; but though the game seemed to be going against them, they were playing for such high stakes that they would not throw up their hands until the last moment. They must play it out to the end.

"Two o'clock, and all's well," sang out the nearest sentinel.

"Hope it may be all well at three," muttered X—.

"We must make it so," replied B—. "Are you ready?"

X— nodded.

"Now for it, then," rejoined his companion.

Crawling out from under the building, they started on a run. One of the sentries was stationed on the bridge leading to the sinks, and across this bridge they must go. Fortunately, there was no countersign on this part of the island, as there was in the

more immediate vicinity of the prison; so that if the sentry were ordinarily good-natured, he would be apt to let them pass, taking them for members of his own command.

To and fro he paced along the bridge, and soon espied the two figures running towards him. Soldierly in bearing they undoubtedly were, and their clothes, though limp and wet, seemed to be of the same cut as the uniform which he himself wore. Where they could be going, he did not know; doubtless on some innocent (?) lark; should he be the one to spoil their fun? Not he. Officers had many liberties; why should not privates be indulged occasionally? Thus he speculated as the two figures approached.

"You're in a devil of a hurry," he called out to them good-naturedly, as they came up.

Fearful of betraying themselves by a voice unfamiliar to the sentry, they darted past without answering. He looked after them.

"Might, at least, have given a fellow a civil answer," he muttered; "but that's the way. We never think what it is to stand sentry until we have to do it, and then we can grumble enough at the job.

With which sapient reflection he shouldered his musket again and resumed his solitary walk.

One more of the safeguards remained to be overcome by the prisoners—the outer sentry. But whether he was committing the unpardonable crime of sleeping at his post, or whether his eyesight was bad enough to have procured him a discharge, or whether he considered himself purely ornamental, he took no more notice of the fugitives than if they had been a couple of mosquitoes; and it may be believed that the Tigers thirsted for his blood far less than did the insects.

"That fellow on the bridge will begin to smell a mice if we are not back pretty soon; so we'd better get out of reach as soon as possible," remarked X—.

"Yes, he'll be looking for us," answered B—, with a subdued chuckle.

"He may look, he may sigh,  
With a cold, watery eye;  
He may look to the bottom  
Of the sea, sea, sea,"

said X—, in reply, under his breath; and they sprang, not into the sea, indeed, but into its tributary Delaware.

One danger that they feared did not threaten them. They thought that the sentries whom they had passed would soon give the alarm; but in this they were most fortunately mistaken. The guard was relieved in a very short time after our two heroes had escaped the military limits of the island, and the men who had been on duty, not wishing to betray the escapade of two whom they supposed their comrades, said nothing to those who relieved them.

Inflating their "iron-clads," as the oil-cloth life-preservers had been dubbed, the swimmers made their way to the very channel of the river. The tide was now going out, but in about an hour would turn. At last they got into slack water and then found their work comparatively easy.

At regular intervals the prison authorities cast the light from a huge reflector over the surrounding land and water, that the guards might be able to detect any unusual appearance. This, though perfectly well known to B—— and X——, had, strangely enough, been entirely forgotten, until they saw the blinding glare on the surface of the rippling water. But the inspection by this means had come to be a mere matter of form, and, like most such duties, was very negligently performed. The sentinel on duty glanced about him carelessly, and then turned away again, having made sure, as he thought, that no danger threatened the prison or prisoners from within or without.

When the Confederates found that no unusual tumult followed this slight inspection, they knew that they were safe, that there was no danger of pursuit. Many perils, however, remained to be encountered, even though there were none immediately from Fort Delaware. Any chance might betray them to the enemy in whose country they still were; and betrayal, of course, meant a return to the prison, with added severities of treatment as punishment for their daring attempt to escape.

The tide began to come in before they got across the river, and though they swam directly for the shore, they landed near the entrance of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, having been in the water two hours and a half. For half an hour longer they concealed themselves, the country being wholly unknown to them; then, as the eastern sky began to brighten and the gray light of dawn make their way clear before them, they left, and struck across the country to a small patch of woods some three miles away, and liberty.

## CHAPTER XLV.

### A CHAPLAIN'S EXPLOIT.

Left Behind—Sympathy for the Sick—Real Sympathy—A Mad Undertaking—Ridiculed by Comrades—Determined to Go—The Preparations of a Non-Combatant—Approaches the Enemy's Stronghold—"Who Goes There?"—An Unexpected Friend—Passing the Enemy's Pickets—Reaching the Hospital—The Deserted Mansion—The Sick Soldier—A Sad Sight—"I Have Come to Take You to Camp, Billy"—Challenged—A Close Shave—Through the Darkness—Safe at Last.

"WELL, I'm mighty sorry for poor Bill Lilly."

The speaker was a member of the First Texas Cavalry; the time was a night in the winter of 1864-5; the place was the temporary camp of the regiment, not far from Simmsport, Louisiana. Thirty-six hours before, the Texan troopers had been in possession, full and undisputed, of that town on the Atchafalaya, a strong military position, as an impassable morass and a network of bayous made it a natural fastness. But the Federals, three thousand strong, had approached by means of a pontoon bridge; the Confederates, sturdy fighters as they were, and not inclined to ask favors of any enemy, had found these odds against them too great for wise men to combat; and the order to retreat was given and obeyed. The battle of Yellow Bayou had encumbered their march with many wounded comrades; those who were able to sit a horse were provided with animals; and the more seriously injured were placed in ambulances; thus, as the colonel thought, all had escaped the terrors of captivity in the North. But some few of the troopers discovered, after they had bivouacked, that there was an exception.

"What about Bill Lilly?" asked the regimental chaplain,

drawing nearer to the group of which the speaker was a member.

"He was in the hospital, and was left behind," was the reply.

"Left behind?" echoed the chaplain; "why, how did that come? I thought all the sick and wounded had been brought off."

"I don't know how it is, sir," answered the trooper; "but it's so. Bill had the diphtheria, and maybe they didn't want him with the other boys in the ambulances; and in the hurry of the retreat they forgot to make special provision for him. It's mighty hard on him, falling into the hands of the Yankees when he's so sick."

"Can't we rescue him?" asked the chaplain, thoughtfully; all his sympathies aroused for the boy whom he knew so well.

The soldiers shook their heads with a smile; the very idea was almost preposterous. Go into the enemy's camp, an enemy too strong for the entire regiment to face, and attempt to carry off a man too sick to keep his place in the saddle? They were brave men, and had much sympathy and not a little affection for the boy of scarcely seventeen who was thus left in the enemy's hands, but they were not inclined to accept the chaplain's invitation to run their heads into the very jaws of the lion.

But the Rev. Mr. C—— had no idea of being laughed out of his benevolent purpose; if he could find no one to go with him, why, he would go alone; his duty was clear enough; so he expressed himself.

"But the dam—I mean the confounded Yanks will be mighty hard on any of us that fall into their hands," objected one, intending his remark to apply to C——'s case, if he should be captured.

"They've been burning houses right and left, and driving women and children from shelter," said a second.

"Bad as Beast Butler himself," growled a third, refilling his pipe.

"Our boys have been shooting some of their pickets," put in a fourth; "so they're not in any very good humor toward us."

"All these are first-rate reasons why Billy should not be left in their hands," returned the chaplain quietly.

"But how will you find out where he is?" queried one; "and how will you evade the guard?"

"Since he is the only one left in the hospital, their attention

would not be likely to be attracted to the building ; it's in an out-of-the-way place, you know, and they would be sure to hear that we had carried off our sick and wounded."

Still the soldiers shook their heads doubtfully ; the enterprise was too risky, without a fair chance of success, as they thought. The chaplain turned away, none the less determined to make the venture because he must go alone.

The hospital was a large building, the former residence of a well-to-do family, situated on the bank of Yellow Bayou, a half-mile above the bridge which formed the only means of access to the town. To cross this stream at any other point would have been simply impossible, as the banks were very abrupt and brushy, or else lined with briars through which no horse could force his way ; there was no ford, and the bottom was so boggy that it would nowhere sustain the weight of steed and rider. But, as the chaplain knew, the Federal camp could not be very far from this bridge, which was of course still farther guarded by pickets. To cross the bridge unobserved, escape the watchful eyes of the guard stationed at the one point most likely to be assailed, to ride past the camp unnoticed, and, reaching the hospital, carry off a man unable to ride alone, by the same perilous path along which he had already traveled—this was the task which the generous man had set himself. Perhaps, if the troopers had felt that there was a reasonable chance of success, they would not have refused to share the dangers ; but it was by no means certain that Lilly was not guarded by a sentinel appointed for that duty ; in such case, the would-be rescuer would have to return as he came, even if he were fortunate enough to escape the enemy himself.

The necessary leave was procured, not without a protest from the colonel, who expressed himself as certain of the failure of the effort as the troopers had been ; but the chaplain was no more to be moved by his remonstrances than he had been influenced by the reluctance of the others to share his enterprise. Even the thought of his wife and children, far away in Texas, failed to deter him ; this boy was as dear to his father as those children were to him.

Night came on, dark and foggy as even C—— could wish. Arming himself with a pair of revolvers and a rifle, and providing himself with a due amount of ammunition, he was ready to set out.

"You are the most unclerical looking chaplain I have seen for some time," remarked a brother officer, surveying the outfit quizzically; "indeed you are fit to succeed the Bishop-General Polk."

"I don't know as it is any worse to shoot than to be shot at," returned the preacher, stoutly; "and besides, if I should be captured, I should not wish to be so cowardly as to shirk the consequences of my own actions, as I should be doing if I took



*A Non-combatant's Equipment.*

refuge in the fact that I am a non-combatant. I am going to do a soldier's duty, and I have a right to a soldier's defenses—no more, no less."

"Don't be afraid; nobody would think you were a non-combatant."

But before he was ready to set out on his nocturnal ride, certain other preparations were necessary. The wounded boy had been without food since the retreat on the previous night; but it

was of course impossible for him to take solid nutriment. Something liquid—suitable for a sick man—must be obtained. Stopping at a farm-house which lay on his road, he readily enough obtained a bottle of sweet milk for the use of a sick soldier, his uniform being a guarantee that the invalid was a Confederate; here, too, he secured a candle and some matches, articles with which he had, for some reason (perhaps the best possible—the poverty of the Confederate commissariat), failed to provide himself at the camp. Thus he was ready to proceed on his errand of mercy.

Onward he rode through the darkness—blackness so intense that no form of house or tree could be discerned through it. Behind him lay his friends, few, weakened by frequent losses, discouraged by the capture of their stronghold, weary from the long day's march; before him were his foes, strong in numbers, triumphant, vigilant as all soldiers had learned to be during four



years of civil war. A sound is borne to his ears through the darkness; it is the Federal drums beating the tattoo. The notes echo and re-echo through the stillness; mournfully, as if a lament over those who fell on the battle-field where he is now riding; and his own thoughts are as sad as the sound.

But from this reverie he was aroused as he drew near to the bridge which was his only path of approach; the sound of a horse's hoofs, perhaps of more than one, fell upon his ear. Was it some escaping Confederate, or was it a Federal officer selecting a favorable spot for the location of a guard? Silently the Confederate checked his horse, trusting that, if it were an enemy, the intense darkness would enable him to escape without question. But, as the stranger came onward, and he became assured that there was but one, he saw that this direct approach would make a parley necessary. Determined to take the initiative, he waited until the new comer was within a few paces. His rifle was already cocked and pointed as well as the obscurity would enable him to take aim; and, in a low, firm voice, he commanded a halt. The command was obeyed without the least hesitation.

"Who goes there?" demanded the chaplain, secretly very anxious as to the result of the meeting.

"A—a friend," stammered the stranger.

The evident alarm of the other reassured our Texan, and it was with a lighter heart, though it could not be with a firmer voice, that he asked:

"A friend to whom?"

There was a momentary silence, as if the one addressed were debating within himself whether it would be well to avow himself at once; then came the reply—oh, how grateful to the lonely rider from the Southern camp!

"To the Confederacy!" and the speaker's voice sounded almost triumphant.

"All right," answered the chaplain, heartily; "where have you come from?"

The conversation was now carried on in a lower tone, almost a whisper, each being sufficiently reassured to approach near enough to the other for that purpose; and both were only too well aware of the danger which threatened them.

"I was caught in Simmsport," returned the stranger, "and have only just got away. Who are you?"

"Don't you know me?" asked C——, recognizing the voice of one of the "boys," a son of the man at whose house he had obtained the milk; "I am going to the hospital."

"To the hospital, Mr. C——?" repeated the other, in surprise; "what in the world are you going there for? Don't you know that you will have to pass the Yankee pickets, and their camp too?"

"I want to get Billy Lilly away," replied the chaplain; "by some oversight, he was left behind in the hospital, and I want to help him to get to camp. Do you know anything about it? Are the Feds at the hospital? Or have they carried him to some other place?"

"I really don't know, sir; of course, I was not exactly in their confidence, any more than they were in mine—" the soldier chuckled grimly—"and they may have captured the man you speak of. I don't know as I should know him if I saw him; so he might have been in the same prison that I was; but then, again, I hardly think they could have found the hospital already; they've all had a good deal to do to-day; and I heard something about our sick and wounded being carried off in the retreat."

"But I suppose you can tell me where the camp is?" asked C——; "and something of the location of the pickets?"

"Oh yes," answered the trooper, readily; "they have a post about a hundred yards from the bridge, over in that direction; and the camp is half a mile away, over yonder; you'll not find any trouble with either, I reckon, if you are careful; though it is possible that they may move the pickets; I don't know whether they are regularly posted there or not."

The soldier had indicated the position of these important points by means of local landmarks perfectly familiar to himself and his auditor, but unintelligible to any one not acquainted with the actual locality; let it be enough for our purpose, then, to state that the camp and hospital, each about half a mile from the end of the bridge, were in opposite directions, so that they were nearly a mile apart; and that the indicated picket-post must be passed very closely by any one who would reach the hospital; since the nature of the ground was such as to make any deviation from the road unsafe.

Thus informed of the position of the enemy, the chaplain bade the trooper good-bye, and rode on toward the bridge, which was scarcely a hundred yards away. Over this he went slowly and cautiously, dreading lest each footstep might be the means of

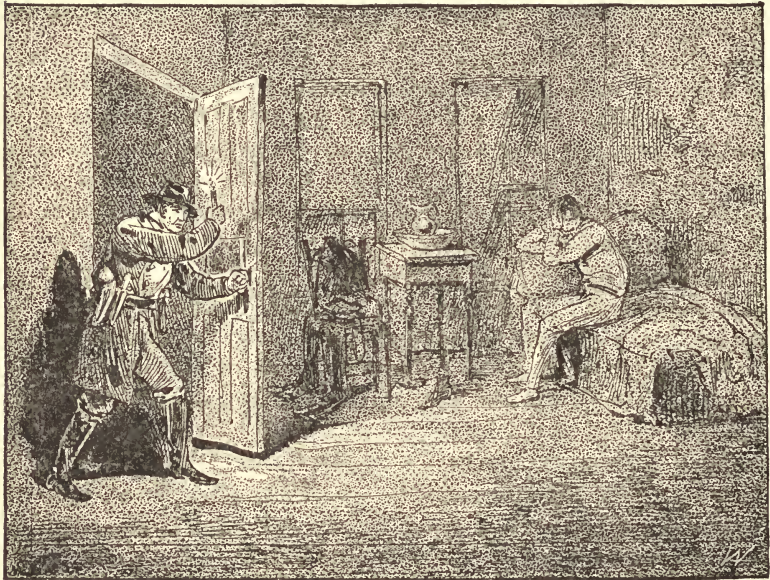
awaking the alarm of the guard to whom he was so close. The noble animal that he rode seemed to understand the necessity of silence, and set each foot down as softly as a reasoning being could have done under the same circumstances. Thus he crept onward: at a snail's pace, indeed, but without alarming the enemy so near to him.

As he gained the farther end of the bridge, a dull red gleam which had before been scarcely visible through the fog, now brightened into the semblance of a camp-fire; and moving to and fro in its glare, dimmed as the radiance was by the condition of the atmosphere, he saw plainly the forms of the pickets, rendered careless by security. For a moment the chaplain wished that he had a regiment at his back; for who could tell but that, by a sudden onslaught, the defeat so lately suffered might be retrieved, and the victors driven from the field? But there was no time for speculation of any kind; all his powers must be concentrated on the one question of how he was to elude their watch, which might be less careless than it seemed; and, finding the invalid, secure the safety of both.

Although so close, his horse's footfalls were unheard, or at least unheeded. At last he had reached a point at which he knew it would be safe to leave the main road, and striking off to the right, he rode away from the pickets, straight toward the hospital. So far, he had succeeded; but would he find the object of his quest still in the old mansion? That indeed was a question which gave him much uneasiness. At last he saw the square outlines dimly against the dark sky; the immense trees around it were gaunt and bare; not a sound betrayed the presence of man or beast; not a glimmer of light in the windows indicated that this building was tenanted. Was it deserted? Had they found the young Confederate, and taken him to more easily guarded quarters in town? Was the building still used as a hospital, and the lights extinguished by reason of the lateness of the hour? And as the chaplain rode slowly up the long avenue leading to the main entrance of the mansion, another question came into his mind. Was Death keeping solitary state in the deserted dwelling? Had he come to seek one who was beyond earthly captivity, since the great General had released him forever?

Securing his horse to a tree, he stole noiselessly to the front door, and laid his hand upon the knob. There was not a sound within;

nothing but the low sobbing of the wind through the branches of the surrounding trees. Stay!—there is not a breath of air stirring; is it the wind that now and then makes that faint and mournful sound? He enters the wide hall that runs through the middle of the house; the sobs which had now and then reached his ear as he stood without are heard more distinctly now; he can even tell the direction from which they come. Groping his way cautiously along, he finds the knob of one of the inner doors. The melancholy sounds come from this apartment. Turning the knob, he stands within the room, and in a moment more



*The Deserted Comrade.*

has struck a match; the candle is lighted, and by its flickering blaze he perceives the most mournful object his eyes, accustomed as they are to the sadder sights of war, have ever beheld. The sick soldier, deserted by his friends, and concealed from all others who might have brought him help, sits on the edge of his rudely extemporized bed, one arm resting upon his pillow, the other hand covering his face, but not concealing the large tears which drop slowly to the floor. His slight form, weakened by disease and the privations of the last twenty-eight hours (for during that space of time he has not had food or water), shakes

with the sobs which he cannot control. The gleam of light in the room did not at once arouse him from this luxury of grief; it could only be an enemy, come to carry him off to the hated custody of a blue-coated guard. A moment before, he had felt that the presence of any one would be welcome; but now all the soldier's loathing of imprisonment returned with full force. Yet, being in the presence of an enemy, he must show himself a man; and restraining his sobs with difficulty, he raised his head. All this had taken but a moment, though it seemed such an eternity to the soldier-boy; and the chaplain spoke just as he looked up:

“I have come to take you to camp, Billy.”

For a moment he sat and looked at the friend who had thus unexpectedly come to his relief; then dropping his head again, he burst into another fit of weeping, wilder and more uncontrollable than before. The chaplain at first made no effort to stay this evidence of the boy's grateful emotion, feeling that he would be the better for giving way to it; then, as the storm of sobs began to grow less violent, soothed him with kindly, cheering words. The bottle of milk was put into his hand, and he took as much of it as the diseased state of his throat would allow; the candle having been extinguished as soon as it had served its purpose of guiding the chaplain to his side. Then the generous friend led him away to the place where the horse had been left, the boy's slight form leaning, with almost its entire weight, upon the supporting arm of the man. Lifted like a child to a place behind the saddle, he clung closely to the chaplain, and they rode away through the darkness.

But our friend Mr. C—— had not yet fully accomplished his perilous undertaking. It is one thing to run into danger, another to get out of it. The pickets at the end of the bridge must be passed again; and as the night advanced, they might have become more vigilant. Perhaps his coming in had been detected, and their seeming carelessness was only a ruse; perhaps they were even now awaiting his return.

As they approached the bridge, he saw that the fire, around which they were gathered as he passed them on his way to the hospital, was now a mere handful of smouldering embers, as if it had not been replenished since it was first kindled; and not a soldier was to be seen as he peered through the darkness. Had the position of the pickets been unexpectedly changed? Why were they not visible?

With a whispered caution to Billy to hold fast and make no sound, he guides his horse into the short bit of road, passing the picket-post within a few yards, which is the only avenue to the bridge; over which, in its turn, lies the sole path to the world outside Simmsport. Not a sound disturbs the stillness of the winter night; it is so dark that a sentinel might be within a rod and yet not be seen through the dense gloom which enshrouds them; some strange presentiment chills the blood of the brave chaplain, as he holds himself in readiness to spur onward at full speed at the first breath of alarm; he, of all men, is least likely to be influenced by such superstition, but he cannot shake the feeling off. Do "coming events cast their shadows before?" So it proved in this case, at any rate, for as the horse's feet first struck the timbers of the bridge, a stern voice cried:

"Halt!"

The sound rang out clear and distinct upon the night air. Instantly the chaplain dug his spurs deep into the sides of his steed. The animal, whose every effort had been bent toward treading as quietly as possible, in obedience to what seemed to be the wish of his master, sprang suddenly forward, almost unseating his two riders; and dashed onward at his utmost speed, his previously almost silent hoofs now striking the bridge with thundering blows. The report of a rifle sounded behind them, and the shot whistled past their ears in somewhat alarming proximity; but the night was so dark that marksmanship was useless.

Onward and onward they rode, at the same break-neck speed; and soon they were out of the range of the Federal rifles, with no sounds of pursuers approaching to alarm them. With the grasp of almost a dying man the soldier clung to his deliverer, too weak to sit up, after the excitement of the night had passed away. At last they heard another challenge, the self-same word as before, but now how welcome to their ears! It was the voice of the Confederate picket, and they were safe.

The records of the war present few more daring deeds than this: the story of a man who went alone into the heart of the enemy's lines to rescue a sick comrade, and returned, successful, from a venture which the bravest men of the regiment looked upon as foolhardy and sure to fail. A man who is half a coward may, spurred on by passion or excitement, rush into danger; he who, for a noble purpose, deliberately faces it, and in the two-fold form of deadly bullet and contagious disease, is a hero.



*Dashing Past the Sentinel.*





## CHAPTER XLVI.

### LIEUT. BAILEY'S EXPERIENCE.

Siege of Atlanta—A Mission of Danger—A Determined Charge—A Firm Resistance—Captured—A Drunken Captor—"Fall in, Prisoners"—An Effort to Escape—Retaken—The Bivouac—Buried Alive—The Grave—Waiting—Resurrection—A Friend—More Friends—In the "Quarters"—Jim—Setting Out—A Young Scout—Who Proves Unreliable—"Tie-tickets" on the Railroad—Worn Out—Disappointment—Rest—A Sleepy Sentinel—Recaptured—Forebodings of Evil—Two *Tete-a-tetes*—A Plan—A Good Place to Die in—The Funeral Arranged—Two Minutes to Pray—A Leap for Life—The Pursuit—Wounded—A Friend in Need—Return Home.

IT was in the month of July, 1864; Sherman had led his victorious army from Nashville into Georgia; step by step he had driven the Confederates back; there had been daily fighting for three months, and for more than five weeks the Northern forces were to besiege Atlanta. On the 22d, the Federals pressed forward to occupy the works from which the Confederates had seemed to retreat, and the latter saw themselves "hoist with their own petard" by the reversal of these defences.

But the retreat had been only a ruse; the advance of the Federals was not to be unopposed. As their line was being gradually extended to encompass the doomed city, there came to the ears of Gen. Morgan L. Smith and his staff, first, a few scattering shots; then a heavier rattle of musketry; then a succession of volleys, followed by the deeper roar of artillery. As yet the attack thus indicated was on the extreme left, but it would soon be upon the whole line. The outposts were ordered in, and the pickets retreated hastily, followed closely by the advance of the enemy. Various were the reports which the frightened soldiers gave, but all agreed that the enemy was in full force. Hither and thither had the staff-officers been sent, on various duties,

and the general turned to the only one remaining at his side ; a young man of barely twenty-two years, who had but just returned from the perilous task of ordering in the outposts ; slim and slight, with a boyish, beardless face, and wearing on his shoulders the straps which indicated the rank of a first lieutenant on the division staff.

“Bailey, please take a position so you can see if they are massed, and where. Report to me as soon as you can find out.”

There was a slight elevation just to the rear of the position occupied by the boys in blue, and thither the young officer ran. But a report was soon rendered equally needless and impossible, for he had hardly gained the eminence when the Confederates emerged from the woods, and rushed upon the works. A flash of fire, a thunder of cannon, a roar of musketry ; the very earth quaked, as if for fear of her own children ; smoke and dust combined to conceal the retreat of the Confederates ; and they reformed under cover of the cloud. Again and again the charge was repeated ; again and again was it repulsed. Even when the efforts of the assailants were seconded by their batteries, and the screaming of shells supplemented the whistling of bullets, the Federals held their ground. At last, under cover of the smoke, a column of the Confederates formed, advanced, and pressing through the line of their enemies undiscovered at a weak point through a railroad cut, gained the rear. Before the fire from both front and rear no troops could stand ; the works were soon carried, and the stars and bars planted where lately the stars and stripes had floated.

Separated from the main body of the Federals by the Confederates who had attacked them in the rear, our hero's position was now dangerous indeed. Would he be able to rejoin his friends ? It was a difficult problem for him to solve, but he succeeded, by making a small circuit, in reaching a point where his horse had been left with an orderly. Here, he thought, he would be safe ; mounted and armed, it would be comparatively easy for him to escape. But he had reckoned without his host. Horse and orderly were gone. To all seeming, the sky, overcast as it was with the cloud of battle, had rained Rebels ; from every quarter they came ; and he had not had time to move farther before he saw the rifle of one pointed at him, and heard the command :

“Halt !”

The weapon trembled in the unsteady hands of the man who held it, and who was too drunk to take certain aim. Seeing himself surrounded, Lieut Bailey judged it better to comply with the demand, and was about to surrender his sword, when the soldier, with all a drunken man's devilish persistency, hic-coughed out:

"D——n you, I b'lieve I'll shoot you anyhow; haven't shot my Yankee yet!"

He could die game, or he could surrender when resistance became useless, but to give up his sword and die too was more than the young officer had bargained for. As the gray-coat plunged forward for a closer shot, Bailey grasped the barrel of his gun and held it pointed at such an angle that its discharge could hurt no one. His burly antagonist struggled to lower the weapon, but desperation gave strength to the boy's arm. How long the struggle might have continued, no man can tell; but just as the power of the drunken man began to fail, a voice from behind commanded:

"Let go of this sword!"

And the blade was wrenched from the hand of Bailey, whose whole muscular strength was concentrated in his grasp of the gun. Turning, he confronted a Confederate officer.

"He was about to shoot me after I had surrendered."

"He's drunk," answered the Reb, laconically. "John, take this officer to the rear and see that he's not hurt or robbed."

The fight went on, but with its further results we have nothing to do. It is sufficient for our narrative to say that the Northern troops rallied, and, surrounded as they were, finally repulsed the assailants and drove them back to Atlanta. But, defeated as they were in this attack, the Southerners kept possession of their prisoners; and eighty officers, with a proportionate number of privates of the Union army, were enrolled as prisoners of war. At twilight came the order:

"Fall in, prisoners!"

And the whole body was marched off, under proper escort, toward East Point. Night descended, but the captives were far from desiring rest. Liberty, liberty, coupled with any hardships, obtained at any price, was the one thing desired. Their escort of infantry had been replaced by cavalry, and this seemed to render feasible a plan of escape hastily conjured up by Lieut. Bailey and a fellow-prisoner. They were to slip just behind the

horse of one, and as far as possible from the next trooper ; perhaps, through the darkness of the night and the dimness of the woods through which they were passing, they might be able to reach the Union lines.

"Fortune favors the brave," and certainly in this case she seemed to smile upon the two prisoners. They safely passed the guard, and in a moment were lost in the deep shadows of the wood. But this same Dame Fortune is a fickle lady, and soon forsook them. Right in their path stood a horse, and beside him his rider, a gray-clad soldier. Snorting and plunging, the animal gave the alarm—strangers near—the cavalryman challenged them, and ended by conducting them back to the body from which all three were stragglers. Their ingenuity and daring procured them the honor of a special guard during the remainder of the march.

We pass by the weary days when almost famished and more than half-starved, they marched onward beneath the burning sun and through the suffocating dust. At last, after what seemed ages of suffering, came the news that they were bound for Andersonville. The very name struck terror to their hearts—these men who had not quailed before the guns of the enemy.

"I won't live a week at Andersonville, I know I won't," said our young lieutenant.

"Can't help it," was the reply of a companion ; "there seems to be no hope of anything else."

They knew that they could not be exchanged, for the United States authorities insisted that the colored troops should be recognized, and the Confederate States refused to do so ; thus the exchange of prisoners had been stopped. Escape or recapture were the only chances ; the latter could not be hoped for, and the former seemed almost impossible.

The order to halt for the night was given ; the prisoners were allowed the freedom of a good-sized pasture, where they were visited by some young ladies from the neighborhood. Tired and hungry as they were, the welcome gifts of fruit were not more appreciated by the prisoners than the humane sympathy of their fair enemies ; and many of them slept the sweeter for the thought of the kind Southern girls. But of these our young hero was not one ; his mental powers were busily employed ; he he must think over a method of escape from the horrors of Andersonville.

At last the plan was matured in his own brain, communicated to some trusty comrades, and put into operation. If we may believe the romancers, it is not a pleasant thing to be buried alive; still, Lieut. Bailey preferred it to a Southern prison-pen, and was determined to try it. The "grave" was therefore dug, due caution being exercised to avoid arousing suspicion; being "tried on" by the proposed occupant, it was pronounced a good fit, and he settled himself in it, two hours before daylight—

"No useless coffin inclosed his breast,  
Nor in sheet nor in shroud they wound him,  
But he lay like a warrior taking his rest,  
With no martial cloak around him."

A canteen served him for a pillow, boughs and grass for a coverlet; a tin cup, inverted over the nostrils and mouth and an improvised air-hole allowed him to breathe more freely than would otherwise have been possible; the earth which had been removed was replaced upon the branches, or distributed among the neighboring bushes; finally, stalks of blackberry were cut and stuck in the earth, which had previously been carefully covered with grass. Nothing had been forgotten; linen maps of the country and a pocket compass were in his covering; rations, scant, it is true, but the most plentiful to be obtained, were stowed away above his head, just beneath the surface; an ingeniously contrived opening permitted air to be renewed. Heavily, yet more heavily pressed the weight of the earth above him; numbed, almost paralyzed by the pressure, he dared not move a muscle, lest he disturb the surface of the ground so carefully arranged above him; and succeeding the burning heat of a Southern July came the chill almost of death.

Agonies upon agonies passed away, and into the grave of the living man came a few faint rays of daylight. But now came an even greater anxiety than before; had anything altered the appearance of this spot of ground since his friends arranged it, so as to suggest to the captors that something was wrong? At every sound above him he would have trembled, if motion had not been so dangerous; for discovery meant certain death.

Footsteps came near—whose were they? The friendly words soon reassured him:

"All right, lieutenant; lie low; good bye."

It was the last opportunity that his friends could have to bid him farewell; but for a long time yet he must indeed "lie low."

Backward and forward and all around, it seemed to him, were passing soldiers. Finally, the footsteps became regular; it was the measured tread of the column marching off; only a little while, now, and this terrible waiting would be over.

Slowly passed the seconds; each one longer than its predecessor, because nearer to the end. At last all is still. No, there is a movement of the earth above his head; then a crunching sound. A grunt of satisfaction betrays the marauding hog that

has devoured the rations hidden just under the surface. Cautiously raising his head, he finds that there are two white children, accompanied by a negro woman, in the past-



*The Burial.*

ure. Then a slight shower drives them to shelter, and he is about to emerge from his hiding-place when a loud clatter of

horse's hoofs along the neighboring road causes him to subside into mother earth again. Three cavalymen are riding hard to overtake the main column; why they should be behind does not bother him; they are not after him.

Let us follow the stragglers, and find out what the Rebs knew of the escape. After a half hour's march, the column was halted, and a roll-call of the prisoners ordered. "One officer missing" was the report; and a patrol was sent back to retake him. Anxiously the captives awaited the result; a shot, two shots, were heard from the vicinity of the road; a sigh was given to the memory of "poor Bailey," who had escaped Andersonville



*The Resurrection.*

by death in the forest; and they went on their way, to report him, when a special exchange freed them, as killed.

But, though buried, Lieut. Bailey was very much alive; the shots had been heard by him, and had caused some alarm; he did not know until afterward that they were fired in the air to frighten his late fellow-prisoners; but after the echoes had died away, and no new ones had been awakened, he determined to leave his place of concealment, now rendered untenable by the rain, which was falling in torrents. Springing from his burrow he made his way hastily to the neighboring woods. But here was a new cause of alarm—a human form near him. But he could hardly believe his eyes when he saw it was clothed in blue. The stranger proved to be one of the privates captured at the same time as Lieut. Bailey, who had fallen asleep in a brush pile, and had not awakened until the departure of the guard.

The plan of the two escaped prisoners was to keep to a general northeasterly course, skirting the Confederate right flank, and getting to the Federal left. Without food or arms, such an attempt may well seem impracticable; but it must be remembered that they hoped to avoid the Rebel scouts and foragers, and to fall in with similar parties of friends; for food, they trusted to the negroes, who were known to be well-disposed towards the blue-coats; the same dusky friends must furnish them with information as to roads, position of forces, etc.

As we have seen, neither of the fugitives had breakfasted; their dinner consisted of blackberries, of which they found a plentiful supply in the fields, and muddy water. As twilight fell, they began to think that supper must be a repetition of one of the other meals—blackberries or nothing; for it was dangerous to leave the shelter of the woods.

But necessity knows no law; their keen youthful appetites soon spurred them on, regardless of danger; and they approached the road. There was an alarm before they had well quitted their shelter; the clatter of hoofs on the rocky road drove them behind a large bush, whence they watched a squadron of Southern cavalry dash past.

Again emerging opposite a handsome mansion, they circled around the more pretentious dwelling, to reach the humble one in the rear—the one where they expected to be welcome. Nor were they mistaken. Cautiously making themselves known at the cabin, they were astonished at the heartiness of the welcome

they received—they found that “the half had not been told.”

“Nebber seed no Yankees before. Bress de Lord, we’s all jist waitin’ to do somefin’ for you all. You kin count on de darkeys, massa, ebery time.”

“But not on the whites?”

“Better not, massa. Dey’s all grand rascals. You all better jist ’pend on the darkeys; dey’ll help you ebery time.”

And the old “aunty” went diligently on with her work of stuffing their haversacks with the coarse, wholesome food which was all she had. Ascertaining from the negroes that they were about thirty miles almost directly south of Atlanta, they consulted their maps, and marked out their course; northeasterly to Covington or Lithonia, and thence westward to Atlanta; thus settling more definitely the plan of approach which they had at first adopted. Departing at midnight, followed by the most fervent blessings of their entertainers, they again took to the woods, guided through the darkness by the compass which had formed part of Lieut. Bailey’s outfit. The fire-flies turned traitors to the Southern cause, compelled by the force of circumstances to do so, and lighted the face of the compass when held near it sufficiently to show the position of the needle.

Chased by bloodhounds that had evidently mistaken the scent, their knowledge of woodcraft suggested that such pursuit might be baffled by wading down a stream; and such was the way in which they escaped. Traveling by night, they rested by day, one standing guard while the other slept. So several days passed, and although they had eked out supplies by blackberries and watermelons “confiscated” from the enemy, the food provided by the negroes was gone. Something must be done to obtain a fresh supply, and going to work as before, they were even more successful. Fearful of arousing suspicion in “the house” by too much excitement at “the quarters,” the negroes to whom they now applied conveyed them to the heart of an orchard. Welcomed and fed as in the first instance, their hearts were gladdened by the information that the Federal cavalry had burned a railroad station only ten miles away on the previous night, and were hourly expected to pass by on the road they had just left.

One of the negroes was appointed to guide them to a safe cover where they could rest for the night; and again, with well-filled haversacks, they set out upon their journey. But time would fail us to tell of the days and nights of danger and priva-



tion; when they unconsciously crept so close to a Rebel outpost that the cracking of a twig would have betrayed them; when the guns of Sherman, thundering around Atlanta, made music in their ears; when every moment's silence in that direction made their hearts sink, lest Sherman should have been driven back.

It was the night of August 1st when, for the third time, they sought help from the negroes; and well it was that they did so. Squads of cavalry were constantly scouring the country, and advance would have been almost certain recapture. Not only did the faithful creatures provide them with food, but they found shelter for the fugitives in the straw-house. Here they passed two nights; but not without danger; for they could not tell when the straw might be wanted by the Confederates. To remain here during the day was altogether out of the question; so a shelter was constructed in the woods—a hut that only close examination could tell from the neighboring brush-heap, whence had been drawn the building materials. But a storm demolished this, and they were obliged to brave greater danger by sleeping in the loft of one of the cabins.

This, then, was their life for more than two weeks; hiding in the woods by day, sleeping at night in the loft. Many were the alarms given, but all proved false, at least so far as our two fugitives were concerned. But the private soldier whom Lieut. Bailey had met in the woods was no favorite with the negroes. A mere boy of seventeen, he was careless in matters which involved the safety of all; and took no pains to retain the affection which his uniform had won for him. They refused, then, to give him shelter any longer, and had procured a strange negro to guide him to the Federal lines. Lieut. Bailey was prostrated by illness, and saw his companion depart, his only remaining hope being the advance of the Federals. They could not tell which would first fall into the hands of friends, and each charged the other with messages to be sent home.

"De Yankees is comin'," announced the negroes, one to the other, in feigned dismay, but real delight; and the boom of the guns only a few miles away confirmed the report. The "family," one member of which was a Confederate soldier, home on sick-leave, took refuge in the swamps; but the negroes, secure in having befriended a Federal officer, remained near their guest as long as they could find an excuse for doing so. At no time was he left entirely alone, for the negroes were continually going back

and forth. At last, to the great relief of the fugitive family, and the equal dismay of their servants' guest, the alarm was ascertained to be a false one. The Federal guns had indeed been heard at a distance of three miles, but it was only a comparatively small force of cavalry that had raided entirely around them, and returned to the main body.

It lacked but a day of being three weeks since he had committed himself to the care of these friends, when Lieut. Bailey heard some one approaching his home in the brush.

"Don't beskeered, massa," was the friendly reassurance, "it's jist me—Jim."

Jim was the one who had undertaken to conduct Bailey's companion to the Federal lines.

"Did you get through all right, Jim?" asked the officer eagerly, as soon as Jim was within whispering distance.

"Dunno, massa; 'spec's so," replied Jim, scratching his head.

"What do you mean? Didn't you keep together until you got to the lines?"

"No, sah; you see, massa, dat soldier I specs is mighty brave, but he ain't keerful; and I knowed we'd bofe git cotched if he wasn't. What you think he done? Stole watermelons outer Mas' Gleaton's patch in broad day, and he seed him and tole de Rebel cabalry. Couldn't do nuffin wid sich a pusson as dat, sah."

"Where did you leave him?" queried the soldier, aghast; "what has become of him?"

"Don't you be 'feared, massa; specs he's all right by dis time. I jist got some udder niggers to take keer of him. You see, sah, I run away from my massa, I did, and if dey was to cotch me it'd be a mighty sight wuss for me dan for anybody else that helped you all."

The officer mused a moment, and Jim looked on in fear and trembling; had he offended the "Yankee," for whom he would have done anything in his power?

"I kin take *you* froo to de lines, sah," he ventured at last; "'Caze you's keerful. Won't you let me, sah?"

"When can we start?"

"T'morrer, sah."

"I must see Mr. Smith first, and try and learn from him if there are many scouts around."

"Massa Smif's mighty strong Secesh, sah."

“Never mind that; I know how to overcome that by something stronger.”

Jim evidently could not comprehend anything stronger than Mr. Smith's Southern sympathies, but the event proved that there was. Cautiously leaving his retreat at dusk, Lieut. Bailey approached the house by the road, and as if he had but just arrived in the neighborhood, sent a note by one of the slaves to ask for information. To this note was appended the mystic sign of a bond that was and is stronger than political or sectional feeling. The answer came without delay; he would not betray even the enemy who came to him; and with a truly Arab hospitality the stranger was received.

Mr. Smith could afford no information as to the movements of either army, and the Federal left his house at daybreak to return to his brushwood dwelling. Now came the news that Atlanta was saved to the Confederates, that Sherman was falling back. The silence of the guns seemed to confirm this report, and it was with a heavy heart that the fugitive followed his guide towards the retreating Army of the Tennessee. Setting out at evening, they reached, about ten o'clock, a plantation where they expected to get valuable information from a negro who had recently been to Atlanta on an errand for his master.

But disappointment awaited them here; the slaves were not allowed to know too much, and there were many important points on which they could obtain no information. They could only press on to the house of a Mr. Freeman, whom the negroes knew as a Union man.

Here he met with as enthusiastic a welcome as in any of the “quarters” that he had visited, and learned that his late companion had departed for the Federal lines only a short time before. Not only was he welcomed here, but kept in safety until opportunity should offer for his final escape to the army.

At last they heard the true reason for the silence of Sherman's guns; he had executed the famous “flank movement” around the Confederate army, and had taken Atlanta. As yet they could not learn the particulars, only that the city had fallen at last. While this allayed Bailey's fears as to the distance which he would have to travel before reaching the lines, it rendered his present position somewhat precarious, for the retreating Confederates seemed to be everywhere. Most of the time was spent at Freeman's, in hiding or disguise; a little in the

woods, when there was danger of the house being searched, and some at the cabins of his dusky friends.

A couple of slaves who had run away from their master, and were trying to reach the Federal lines, had become possessed of a carbine which had once been the property of a Federal cavalryman. In endeavoring, with his comrades on the raid, to ford the river, he had become overpowered by the force of the current and drowned. The gun, at first considered a prize by its colored owner, became an elephant on his hands; it would be very dangerous for him to be caught with that in his possession; and he readily yielded it to Lieut. Bailey. Thus armed, he felt himself a match for a host, but his friends would not suffer him to leave them until the country was no longer overrun by the butternut-clothed stragglers.

At last the coast was considered clear; and a day, or rather an evening (Oct. 5) was fixed for his departure. But the assistance of Jim, as a guide, was absolutely necessary; and as Jim did not put in an appearance at the proper time, all kinds of guesses as to his safety and fidelity were hazarded. Late the next day he came, with many lame excuses, and despite the remonstrances of his friends, the officer set out with the guide.

Pressing onward, a friendly negro cautioned them that Texas Rangers scoured the country daily for deserters and runaway slaves, and strongly advised them to return. Of this, however, they had no notion. The little son of a lady, who had strong Northern sympathies, was sent on a reconnoissance to the town of Livonia, then three miles distant, and returned with the information that there were no soldiers to be seen.

Relying upon this intelligence, for they had received unmistakable proofs of the mother's sincerity, the two pressed onward, only to find Confederate pickets posted about the town; their scout had evidently been careless. Instead, then, of being able to rest here, they must hasten on to Decatur, fifteen miles farther. There, they learned, were the Federal outposts; reaching that point by daybreak, they were safe; but if they failed to penetrate to the lines, there was nothing to expect but a return to captivity.

Being so sure, from the boy's report, that there were no soldiers at Livonia, they had advanced somewhat incautiously, and were almost in the light of the camp-fire before they discovered all the truth; then, tired as they were, with fifteen miles yet to

go, they had to make a wide detour to avoid discovery. But at last the railroad was safely gained.

Now, a "tie-ticket" is by no means a passport to the most pleasant kind of traveling; but the firm bed of the road was better in that it permitted better progress than the ordinary country road; and as they went at full speed, Bailey felt his spirits rise. Not so his "companion, guide and friend."

"Don't b'lieve I kin git any farder, sah."

Oh, yes, Jim; we *must* go on. We must be at Decatur by day-break, or they'll catch us again."

"Can't help it, sah; can't go on."

But still he kept on, nerved to further endurance by the resolute will of the white man. Evading a picket that the enemy had posted to command the railroad, by creeping on all fours along the earthen embankment on which the camp-fire was built, they obtained absolute information that the Federal pickets were one mile from Decatur; this was ascertained by Lieut. Bailey marching boldly up to a house, almost within hearing of the soldiers at the fire, and representing himself as "Capt. Blake, 35th Georgia." Much cheered by this news, he rejoined his companion, and they crept back to the railroad. Onward they went at full speed, notwithstanding Jim's piteous lamentations, for which the soldier, suffering full as much as he, had no mercy. What were torn and bleeding feet when weighed in the scale with liberty?

The night grew darker around them, but the soldier comforted himself with this comparison. It did, indeed, seem the darkest hour through which he had yet passed; despite his cheering words to Jim, it sometimes seemed doubtful if he could sustain himself on his feet long enough to reach the goal; but, to use a proverb of his own native Missouri, "he was not born in the woods to be scared by an owl," and he was determined to reach the Federal lines. The darkness passed away, and soon the full beams of the sun were upon them. They had passed the point where, their last informant said, the pickets had been stationed. The breastworks are in sight; painfully they toil onward; strange that no voice challenges them as they advance! Farther still, but still there is none of the bustle of the camp which the soldier so longed to hear! At last the dreadful truth broke upon them—the friends to whom they had looked for succor, had

“Folded their tents like the Arabs,  
And silently stole away,”

leaving the enemy ignorant of their movements.

In their exhausted condition, literally footsore and weary, nothing was to be done but to rest. Selecting a retired spot, they made arrangements for passing the day there. Of course, it was dangerous to remain; but we must remember that it was impossible to go on.

“Jim, I’ll keep guard while you sleep, and then you can do the same while I sleep.”

“All right, massa; jus’ as you say, sah.”

Never was command more willingly obeyed, and Jim had hardly uttered the words before he was sound asleep. In too much pain to court the sweet restorer, even if prudence had not demanded that a guard be kept, Lieut. Bailey waited patiently until Jim should have had the repose so much needed.

As he sat bathing his lacerated feet in a stream that ran near “headquarters,” he saw a boy of thirteen, clad in a full Federal uniform, approach, and then hasten away. Limping after him, and questioning him, our hero learned that the Northern forces had left sometime during the night; that this boy had been employed by the quartermaster, and was friendly to the Federals. With many assurances of secrecy and fidelity, the youth engaged to ascertain if the Union forces had left Atlanta yet, and to inform the officer before dark.

The sun had marked high noon some time before Jim was awakened from his slumbers, and Lieut. Bailey lay down to rest. Many were the admonitions delivered to the sentinel.

“Now Jim, be sure and waken me—shake me well—if you hear the least sound that’s suspicious.”

“Sahtain to do it, sah,” protested Jim, showing a great amount of white in the eyes and mouth.

“Remember, the least thing. You mustn’t wait to see what it is.”

“I do jis’ as you tell me, sah.”

So Jim was left, carbine in hand, to stand guard over the soldier. It may be believed that that gentleman did not vainly court slumber. It came, but not to stay. Not long had he slept before he was awakened by a harsh:

“Hello, there!”

Almost in his ear, it seemed. He started up, to find a rifle

aimed at his breast by a "butternut." There was no time for investigation as to the way in which this had occurred; the aim of the gun was too certain for that.

"Surrender," summoned the stranger, moving the muzzle of his piece a hair's breadth, to "make assurance doubly sure."

Bailey gave a side glance and saw Jim also in custody, his guard being clad in a full *blue* uniform. The "butternut" began to grow impatient, and pressed his demand for a surrender.

"How am I to be treated?"

"As a prisoner of war, of course," was the unequivocal reply.

"Well, I guess I can't help it; I'm your prisoner, sir."

Yielding himself up thus, the soldier turned to Jim indignantly.

"Couldn't help it, sah," pleaded the darkey; "you might a knowed I'd fall asleep jis' as soon as I got in de hot sun."

It was no use to be angry at the poor fellow trudging along at his side, who would suffer as much in captivity as himself, if not more; so he controlled his disgust, and marched on with his captors. The blue uniform of one had at first puzzled him, but he soon learned that it was to have been used as a decoy, in case he had been awake. Such was the admission of the wearer himself.

Jim was closely questioned as to the circumstances under which he had joined his fortunes with the lieutenant's, and with a sublime disregard for the truth, averred that he had accompanied his master from St. Louis, and had been captured with him. This, of course, secured for him more lenient treatment than would have been his lot had they known he was a runaway slave.

Singleton, the man in the blue uniform, was placed on guard, while his companion, named Fowler, searched the prisoners. As most of Lieut. Bailey's possessions, aside from indispensables, had been bestowed upon the negroes who had befriended him, the search did not "pan out" well. His pocket-book was the only thing that suited the fastidious taste of his captor.

"I'll take this; you may keep the other things a while longer. Fix to go with us, now."

The permission to retain his property "a while longer" was ominous of evil; where was he to go with his captors? On that he could only cogitate as they marched along; Singleton in front, then Jim, then Bailey, while Fowler, armed with his own

and the Federal's rifle, brought up the rear. They had gone but a short distance when a halt was called.

"Reckon we'd better turn him over to the cavalry and get him off our hands before dark," suggested Fowler to his companion, with a significant look.

"Yes, I s'pose we had," replied the other, nodding in answer to the meaning in Fowler's look.

The prisoner ventured to ask where the cavalry post was, and was told that it was "at the Circle;" but of this latter term no explanation was given.

Many were the expressions which led the officer to the belief that Fowler did not intend to treat him as a prisoner of war.

"I can hardly limp along, sir," the captive complained; "can't you go a little more slowly? My feet are very painful."

"Never mind," was the not very consoling reply; "they won't hurt you much longer."

After such an answer, given with brutal indifference, there could no longer be any doubt of their intentions. Turning into the woods, ostensibly for a short cut to the road beyond, the two captors drew apart for consultation, and the prisoners seized their chance. To run was out of the question, for not only must they brave the shots of their guard, but the condition of their feet would not permit the necessary speed. But they were able to communicate privately with each other.

"Jim, they are going to shoot us."

"Is dey, lieutenant?" responded Jim, rolling up his eyes in terror, till no color was visible.

"I'm certain of it, for—how anxiously they are expecting us in St. Louis! We must write as soon as possible to let them know we are safe."

This sudden turn in the conversation was intended to deceive Fowler, who, suddenly ceasing his conference with Singleton, cautiously approached the prisoners to find out what they were saying. Several times the captors found it necessary to deliberate, and each time the captives seized the opportunity for private speech. The order of the line had so far been changed that Lieut. Bailey was second, and Jim third; but the guards still preserved their relative position. It was on this order of march that the officer relied in planning an escape.

"The first good chance I see," he said to Jim, during one of the short conferences, "I will spring on the man in front of me,



and if I don't get his gun, I'll hold on to it so that he can't shoot with it. The man behind you will shoot me then, unless you keep him from it. *Will you let him shoot me, Jim?"*

"Ob cose not, sah. When I see you catch hold ob dat front man's gun, I reckon I'd better git at dis yere one, hadn't I?"

"That's just what I want you to do, Jim. I'll let you know when I am going to try it. *Will you do it?"*

"Sahtain to do it sah, sahtain," answered Jim, emphatically.

But though the answer appeared reassuring enough, Lieut. Bailey did not feel as entirely confident of his companion as he might have done if he had not known so lately an instance of Jim's "sahtain to do it." A sentinel who slept on his post at a time of such danger could hardly be considered reliable.

Nevertheless, he felt that he had much to gain, little to lose; perhaps only a few moments of life; and he was determined to trust his last chance to Jim. He quickened his pace, limping so rapidly as to almost overtake Singleton, when the word came:

"Halt!"

Of course, the proposed action must be postponed, and forever. Disencumbering himself of one rifle, and carelessly playing with the other, Fowler addressed the officer:

"My friend, this is as good a place to die as any man could wish."

"Let me remind you, sir, of your promise to treat us as prisoners of war."

"Well, this is the way *we* treat prisoners of war."

Then followed a long harangue on the thieving propensities of the "d——d Yankees." It was in vain that the prisoner urged that the privates often committed outrages without the knowledge of the officers, who could not be responsible; that this was too great a punishment; that he would give Fowler papers that would insure protection, and so forth.

"D——n your papers," was the surly reply; "they don't protect nothing; Gen. Sherman's don't. There ain't no use arguing; you've got to die!"

An appeal to Singleton seemed to arouse his sympathy and sense of justice; but he was evidently only a subordinate, and dare not make any objection to the execution of the prisoners.

"Give me one of the carbines and one round of ammunition, and let me try for my life with the best marksman," suggested the

soldier, at last, as a forlorn expedient at a desperate moment.

"D——n his impudence," exclaimed Fowler; and replied, in a low tone, to Singleton, who had asked what disposition they should make of the body: "Bury it, of course."

"But we haven't got anything to dig with."

"O, there's lots of leaves, and then there's the hogs."

The prisoner overheard this cheering bit of the programme, and feeling that there was no more hope, tried to prepare himself for death. But there thronged into his mind visions of the battle-field, of the soldier's death amid the rattle of musketry and the roar of cannon. He could not die in this way; he must escape. Half unconsciously he turned his head, to see what chance might remain to him.

"He's getting ready to run."

"Let him, if he likes it better that way, answered Fowler; "he can't run far."

"Will you give me twenty paces?" asked the prisoner, forgetful of his torn and bleeding feet.

"No."

"Ten, then?"

"Not one. We'll just give you two minutes to pray, and then—"

The pause was more significant than words. The prisoner kneeled, but his thoughts had not left the earth so entirely that he did not see the two rifles immediately leveled at his breast. They intended to shoot him during the time that they had accorded him for prayer. He sprang to his feet in an instant.

"You promised me two minutes to pray in."

"Time's up. Kneel down there," was the savage answer.

Bending his knee again, as if to obey the command, he leaped backward, and, turning, ran unsteadily through the woods. Scarcely had he turned, before the report of Fowler's rifle was heard in his very ear, its hot breath felt upon his cheek; then, so closely following that it seemed the echo of the first, Singleton's weapon was discharged. He had taken a zigzag course, deeming it safer than one more direct; but it proved of no avail; as this second ball whistled on its short course of barely fifteen feet, he felt in his arm and through his body a sharp pang; then he had literally "bitten the dust." Not in its usual figurative sense, however, is the saying to be taken; he was not dead, although grievously wounded; for the ball, penetrating through

breast and right shoulder, had passed through the body and right lung. Springing up immediately, he rushed on, unmindful of the pain, unmindful of the blood gushing from the ragged wound, unmindful of everything but the hope of liberty and the fear of being recaptured. As he rises, a third shot carries his cap from his head. Now he considers himself safe from farther wounds, for they have not had time to reload; but still a fourth



*A Short Shrift.*

shot, harmless as the first, whistles by. Whence it comes, he cannot tell.

He knows that he cannot long endure; his lacerated feet are nothing in this race for life; he could disregard the pain,

could make them carry him towards liberty, but he knows that he will soon be faint from loss of blood. Yet his flying steps carry him onward, despair lending strength to the fainting body and increasing the distance. Hope rises in his heart. But terrible, then, is the sound of footsteps upon the dry leaves behind him. They are pursuing! How long can he hold out?

"O—lieutenant—won't you please—sah—wait fer me, sah?" calls a familiar voice in gasps.

He halts to wait for his fellow fugitive. The others are nowhere in sight.

"Reckon they concluded not to come; neber seen anyt'ing done so quick in all my bawn days, sah; you was done gone be-faw dey could say 'Jiff.'"

"Didn't they chase me?"

"No, sah; you was too quick for dat; you was done gone be-faw dey know'd what you was a gwine fer to do. Dey shot after you."

"I know that—they hit me."

"Did it hurt you, sah?"

"Yes, I'm afraid I'm very badly wounded, indeed. See here."

"Seed you fall, sah, but you was up so quick I thought you jist stumbled. O Lord, neber saw anyt'ing so quick in all my bawn days!"

It became necessary now to exercise caution in planning their route. Their late guard would naturally expect that they would press on towards Atlanta; hence, they had better take exactly the opposite direction. The friendly woods sheltered them until dusk, and afforded a much needed rest to the wounded man. Twilight came, and although he could hardly move, he knew that in the woods he could not survive until morning; so, supported by his faithful Jim, who had many times asked forgiveness for his one act of carelessness he bent his feeble steps towards a cottage near by.

"I am an enemy, badly wounded," he began.

"It don't make any difference who you are," was the reply of the lady who opened the door, as she perceived his condition; "Come right in, and let us help you."

His story was briefly told as the ladies dressed his wounds and made him as comfortable as possible. The news soon spread and Jim was dispatched by night to Atlanta for aid. On the day after his escape his eyes were gladdened by the sight of a body of Federal soldiers, escorting a surgeon and an ambulance. Three prisoners were in the train, and these were brought before the wounded officer.

"Do these look like the men that captured you, lieutenant?"

His eye passed from face to face, but all were unfamiliar. The prisoners were much relieved at his failure to recognize them.

"They didn't want to let us pass them, so we brought them along. Pickets, they say."

The party soon set out; but our hero had not yet seen the last of his captors. As they rode along, a single rifle-shot was heard. The commander of the guard, which was a hundred and fifty strong, immediately sent a detachment in search of the bushwhackers. They returned without prisoners, but described two men whom they had chased for some distance; Bailey recognized them as Fowler and Singleton.

Through the long months of convalescence we need not follow him. Safely in the hands of his friends at Atlanta, he was, as soon as the state of his wound would permit, removed to St. Louis, where, upon the recommendation of his colonel, he was

commissioned captain, although not physically fit for active service during the remainder of the war. Lieut. Bailey has graphically, and in more minute detail, given his experiences to the public in a neat little volume, entitled, "A Private Chapter of the War," in which he publishes the unlovely face of Fowler, and that of the kind lady who cared for him after being wounded, until the Federals came to his relief.

## CHAPTER XLVII.

### VISITING HOME UNDER DIFFICULTIES.

A Disappointment, to Begin With—Determined to Go—Reluctance of Officer—The Union Men of Tennessee—Tinker Dave Beatty—Tricking the Federals—Capt. Guild's Plan—A Friend—Dangers of the Attempt—"Our" Men—In Sight of Home—Reception—Departure—Fate of his Comrades—With Friends.

WHILE Gen. Sherman was besieging Atlanta, the Confederates of course endeavored to harass the Federal rear as much as possible; and many were the attacks upon small forces and train-guards. But in order to make any impression upon the besiegers, it was necessary, not only to destroy the stores which were already in their hands, but to prevent other supplies reaching them. In order to accomplish this much desired end, Gen. Wheeler made a raid northward into Tennessee, destroying the railroad track for miles, and driving before him small bodies of Federals that had been left to defend certain points. His force numbered five thousand men, and of these he judged it necessary to detach one regiment, the Fourth Tennessee Cavalry, to attack an unfinished fort at Tracy City, then in the hands of the Federals.

This order interfered seriously with the plans of some six or seven members of the regiment, who had hoped to be near enough to their homes in Tennessee to pay a flying visit to "the folks." Among these was one Captain George Guild, now of Nashville, but then of Gallatin, who was determined not to be foiled by any change in the plans of the commanding general. Accordingly, while the others were grumbling at the order which took them directly away from their homes, which were "so near, and yet so far," he went to Col. Anderson, who was in com-

mand of the regiment, to obtain the desired leave of absence.

"I can go into Gallatin at night, and leave it at night. And then, too, perhaps I can get hold of some information that may prove to be valuable."

"I don't know," said the colonel, doubtfully, shaking his head; "I'm afraid its pretty certain that you can't do it. You'll either be killed or captured."

"I'll risk it, Colonel, if you'll only give me leave from the regiment."

But the colonel held firmly to his own opinion of the hazard of the expedition; and it was only after a long argument that he could be brought to give a reluctant consent. Once having won it for himself, Capt. Guild lost no time in asking it for his companions; and as the size of the party would rather diminish the danger, Col. Anderson was readily prevailed upon to give the desired permission to the whole party. No time was lost in preparation; and that very night the little party set out on their march.

The command was in the Sequatchie Valley, whither it had been ordered almost immediately after the fight at Strawberry Plains; it was, therefore, necessary for them to cross a spur of the Cumberland Mountains. This they did, proceeding by way of Cookeville, to Crossville. Though Tennessee was nominally a Confederate state, there were many strong Union men within her borders; just as, in some of the states that did not secede, there were thousands of Secessionists. In such cases, those who differed in politics from the majority of their neighbors often suffered severely, not from the troops alone, but from the malice of those who had been esteemed as friends. To so great a length did this persecution sometimes go, that the victims of it were driven from house and home, to find a shelter in the brush that bordered the prairie-stream, or in the caves and fastnesses of the mountains. Of course, such men had no mercy for those whose partisans had driven them to this kind of life, and to the horrors incident to ordinary warfare was added another—guerilla life, bushwhacking, or, to give it the name claimed for it, partisan warfare.

Among the Union men of Tennessee who were thus driven from their homes, sworn to revenge their outrages upon any or all Confederates, there were many whose names acquired a national, though temporary fame. Among them was one whom

his enemies, and often his friends, too, knew as Tinker Dave Beatty, whose uncompromising loyalty to the United States and whose hatred of what he considered rank treason, often led him into excesses which made his name the terror and execration of the surrounding country. Frequently, as the little party of home-bound Confederates journeyed on, they would be warned that Tinker Dave had just gone that way with a body of his adherents; that the d——d Lincolnite Beatty was in the neighborhood; that the bushwhackers were specially violent of late; and so forth. Thanking these friends for the kindly warnings, the Rebs pushed on, utterly disregarding them, except so far as a strict watch was concerned.

But the warnings came faster and yet more impressive; and the Confederates, deeming discretion the better part of valor in this instance, lay by during the day and traveled only at night; thus avoiding the man who made it his boast that he took no prisoners. But though their route was thus beset with dangers, they were not without enjoyment. They knew that there were many Federal soldiers at home on furlough in that part of the country, and resolved to have some fun with them, even if it were attended by considerable risk. Ascertaining from Secessionist residents the names and abodes of these, they would, under cover of darkness, ride up to one of the houses thus indicated and knock loudly. Then some such conversation as this would occur:

“Does —— —— live here?”

“Yes, sir.”

“I’d like to see him a moment.”

“What do you want with me, sir?”

“You belong to Gen. Stokes’ command, I believe, sir.”

“Yes, I am home on furlough.”

“Sorry for you, but we have orders to scour the country and direct all members of the command, wherever we find them, to report to headquarters at Carthage at once.”

“Well, I heard the Rebels were coming, but I was in hopes it was a false alarm.” This dolefully.

“It’s only too true. There’s some of them right near here. Do you know of any other of your command at home around here?”

“Yes, there’s —— and —— and ——; they live—”

And the Federal would very obligingly direct them to the



houses of his comrades, where the same scene would be repeated. What the Feds said when they got to Carthage and found that a practical joke had robbed them of a goodly portion of their furlough, history does not relate in recording profanity.

But they had now reached a point where they would no longer be one party, for their homes lay scattered along the route. One of the soldiers, Capt. Grissim, urged that Capt. Guild should go home with him to spend a night before proceeding on his journey, but the latter, although still some distance from home, insisted upon pushing on without delay. Had he accepted the invitation so cordially given, we would have had no story to tell, for the next morning Capt. Grissim and his two brothers were shot down, in their father's door, in the presence of their mother, by men dressed in Confederate uniform; Guild would have made the fourth if he had allowed himself to be persuaded to accompany his friend.

Knowing that he would have to exercise extreme care in visiting his home, Capt. Guild decided to send his negro servant with another of the party, who lived in a less dangerous locality. Hitherto, all had made the journey on horseback, but, for the sake of greater security, Capt. Guild gave his horse in charge to his servant, and went forward on foot.

The difficulties of the march were much enhanced by the reticence and suspicion of the people. In a country where now one side, now the other, was dominant, they dared not help either, lest it come to the ears of the other; indeed, many of them were somewhat in the situation of the old farmer who lived in a portion of the country similarly overrun, and who exclaimed, as he surveyed his pillaged barn and empty smoke house: "Well, I haint took neither side, but I'll be darned if both sides haint took me." Under such circumstances, it was extremely difficult to find out what were the real sentiments of the people, but after a little skillful questioning he decided to pass as a deserter from the Federal army. All went well, until he told his story to a farmer named Walton, whom he hoped to prevail upon to set him across the river. This man was keener-eyed than his acquaintances, and showed, by his quizzical smile that he more than half disbelieved the story. Under the circumstances, feeling sure that he would not betray the trust reposed in him, Capt. Guild said:

"O, I reckon I might as well own up. I can confide in you,

I'm sure. You will protect a Southern man, I know."

"Well, I reckon so. You're a Reb, ain't you, sir?"

"Yes; I'm trying to make my way to Gallatin, to see my family."

"Come along home with me, and have supper and a good night's rest; you're right about it; you can trust me, sure's my name's Walton."

"I can't stay all night, thank you, but I'd be much obliged if you'd give me a lift that far."

"Well, get in."

The soldier got into the ox-cart, which formed the farmer's primitive vehicle, and after a due amount of shouting, the patient beasts landed them at the desired spot.

"Mother, this gentleman is a Confederate that wants to go to Gallatin to see his folks. What do you think of it?"

"Well I don't know; I'd hate to have anybody belonging to me try to do it, sir; that's all."

"But why; is there any special danger just now?"

"The place is heavily garrisoned, they say," answered the farmer, "and they're on the look out for an attack, so they've got every point guarded close—pickets everywhere, and scouts all over the country."

"And that ain't the worst of it, sir," chimed in the old lady; "there's that Nicklen that's in command there; they say he murders every Confederate soldier he can capture, and every one that shelters them. If he was to find out that you had been there, your family would pay mighty dear for your visit, even if you got away safe yourself."

This was unexpected to the soldier, who had looked for danger to himself, but not to others. However, so confident was he that he could elude the vigilance of the Federal pickets and garrison, that after a few moment's consideration, he decided to make the desperate attempt. Accordingly he signified this determination to the farmer, who shook his head gravely, but did all in his power to assist him on his journey. The two left the house a little before sundown, and proceeding to the river, the farmer rowed the soldier to the opposite side, landing him at a point some sixteen miles from Gallatin.

Capt. Guild was now in a country which he knew thoroughly, and where he was acquainted, either actually or by reputation, with every man of any standing in the community. Upon land-

ing then, he decided to go to the house of a man whom he knew to have been, in the the early days of the War, a strong sympathizer with the South; to obtain from him the necessary information as to the position of the pickets, etc. The acquaintance could not be denied by the man to whom he appealed for help; but the citizen felt less for the South than he did for himself, and evaded all the inquiries of the soldier. Thus repulsed in a quarter where he had not looked for such a reception, our hero decided that his assumed character would be more likely to be trusted, and that he would not again appear in *propria persona* until he should reach his journey's end. Accordingly he did not betray his real name even to the father of one of his comrades, at whose house he endeavored to obtain the necessary information.

"Good evening, sir. Can you tell me if there is any Federal command near here?"

"There are Federal troops at Gallatin. Are you a soldier?"

"Yes, I got captured by some of Wheeler's men, but got away from them; and now I'm anxious to reach our troops again. I was afraid I'd have to go farther than Gallatin."

"You will not, now, but I cannot tell you how long the United States troops will hold the place. They seem to be alarmed, themselves."

"Prospect of active work, or do they seem to be preparing to withdraw quietly?"

"Well, they're getting ready for an attack, I expect. They're strengthening the fortifications, and have drawn the pickets up close to the town, and won't let any one go in or out. But there were some scouts just left here—if you could overtake them, they could tell you a good deal more about it than I can."

"How long a start have they got?" inquired the soldier, with an interest that was not all pretended.

"About fifteen minutes. They're on the way from Carthage to Gallatin."

"It will hardly be possible for me to overtake mounted men; I wish I'd come up a little sooner. Can you tell me anything about where the pickets are."

The position of one post was described carefully

"One will do, thank you. You see, I just don't want to go prowling around between the posts so late at night. They might take me for a spy. But knowing exactly where one picket post

is, I can make directly for that, and give myself up without danger; and I'll be restored to my own command, providing it is still in Gallatin, as soon as the pickets are relieved.

"The scouts were not riding very fast. You may possibly overtake them."

"I wish I could. Well, I'll try my best, anyhow. Good evening."

"Good evening."

The soldier trudged on his way, but did not make any special effort to overtake the scouts. On the contrary, he left the pike at a point some five miles from his destination, and made his way through grove and field in a direction parallel to that of the road; his intimate knowledge of the country enabling him to do this, as he thought, with entire safety. But so great was the physical exhaustion resulting from six weeks spent almost continuously in the saddle, and the long tramp during the last few hours, that, strange as it may seem, he lost his way in a country with which he had been familiar since boyhood. Completely worn out, the mechanical exercise of walking was not sufficient to keep his senses on the alert; and three times he returned to consciousness, only to find that he had wandered far out of his way. As he made the circuit the last time, and returned to a point on the pike four miles from Gallatin, he saw, in the east, those faint gray streaks which foretell the approach of dawn.

It would be certain death he knew, if he were found so near the Federal camp. He was footsore and weary, but this thought spurred him onward. The dangers of the highway were not equal to those of the daylight, and fearful of again mistaking his way, he struck out boldly for Gallatin along the pike; and day had not yet broken when he came in sight of his father's house, some three-quarters of a mile inside of the corporate limits.

But danger was not yet over, though he had so nearly reached his destination. The elevation that rose between his present position and the town was crowned by a camp-fire. The soldierly bearing of the forms that moved to and fro, darkly outlined by the glare of the flame, showed that this was a picket-fire. Thoroughly acquainted with the nature of the ground, he knew that the vidette's stand must be near his father's gate, and fearing that he might yet be obliged to run for his life, concluded to lighten his load of weapons as much as was consistent

with safety. Hiding one of his heavy army pistols in the corner of the fence, he glided cautiously along the hedge to the farm-yard fence. Peeping over, he saw that he had not been mistaken in his judgment as to the placing of the videttes, for just at the farm gate were two horsemen.

Fortunately for the Confederate, their horses' heads were turned away from the direction in which he was approaching, and the men were lying upon their horses' necks, to all appear-



*Stealing by the Pickets.*

ance fast asleep. Stealing noiselessly across the pike, he slipped past them unobserved, and was safe in the garden. A light in the room of an invalid sister told him that some one was watching with her, and divesting himself of his boots he crept to a door sufficiently far away from the videttes, and knocked softly. Into the house we will not follow him, leaving the family reunion as a thing with which strangers have no business.

His brief stay at the house was not altogether tranquil. He must remain in hiding from the servants, for the negroes were notoriously friendly to the United States officials, and might betray him; he could catch but brief glances of his little child, for the two year old boy was old enough to talk, but too young to be discreet. At one time, he looked out of the window of the

secluded room in which his mother had locked him, and saw the yard beneath filled with blue-coated soldiery. Anxiously he examined the one pistol which he had retained, to make sure that all the chambers were loaded; expecting every moment to hear the noise they would make in searching the house for the Rebel whose presence there might have been made known to them. But the clatter of horses' hoofs along the hard road was soon heard, and as he saw the blue uniforms becoming less distinct in the darkness, he knew that his fears were, for this time at least, groundless. He was told as soon as things were quiet enough for any member of the family to venture near his room, that they were in pursuit of an unlucky citizen from Wilson county, who had gone into Gallatin upon some private business and did not relish being impressed to work on the forts.

Night came on and he was as yet safe; but his feet were so sore and swollen that he could not draw on his boots. Yet it was necessary that he should leave that very night, for every moment was one of danger both to him and to his family. By wearing a pair of soft shoes he was able to hobble slowly and painfully along. With these shoes in his hand, he stole noiselessly from the house under cover of darkness and safely reached the field where he had left his pistol. But the very obscurity which had enabled him to pass the videttes unobserved rendered it impossible for him to find the weapon which he had so carefully concealed among the high weeds in the fence corner. A long search proved fruitless, and he at last determined to remain where he was until the next night; as he did not wish to abandon his pistol, his exhaustion had not fully vanished, his feet were so sore that it would be impossible for him to travel rapidly; and above all, his presence here, if he were captured, could not endanger his family as his presence in the house would have done.

Here, then, in the high weeds and rank grass he lay all that last night of August, 1864; and the first September sun was high in the heavens when he awoke. All day long he lay there, listening as the enemy's wagons lumbered along the pike or even came for forage into the field where he had concealed himself. About two hundred yards away, as he learned after the War was over, there was a camp of refugee negroes, to the number of five or six hundred; and as these went back and forth, he could hear their voices all day long; and this at a time when every sound

was alarming, as the merest accident might reveal his presence.

His haversack had been well filled before he left home, and among other things, contained a bottle of wine. Between eating, drinking, and reading the newspapers which were also in it, the day passed, and having duly secured his pistol, he set out as soon as darkness rendered his journey in any way safe. Reaching the Hartsville pike, he determined not to leave the road for any reason whatever, fearing that he might again be lost. A friend ferried him over the river, setting him down at the house of the Mr. Walton who had rowed him across while on his way home. The friendly farmer had sent for the negro servant and horse which Capt. Guild had committed to the care of a comrade, and had hidden them near his house, that they might be in readiness for the soldier on his return.

"Did you hear of the Grissim boys' murder?" he asked.

"No," answered the soldier, aghast at the words; and inquired for the particulars.

They were feelingly given by the old man, with many a word of bitter denunciation for the men who had enlisted in the Confederate army, only to desert to the Federals; using their gray uniforms as a decoy to those who had been their comrades, and were now their victims. Nor was his picture of the general state of the surrounding country a reassuring one. All of the Confederates had left the neighborhood; not a man remained; while Yankee scouts were upon every road and by-path near. Not daunted by the picture of danger (and, indeed, he saw no way to avoid the perils thus indicated), the soldier, after resting at the house of this friend during the day, set out at night towards Lebanon, hoping there to find some friend who could inform him of the position of the Confederates.

His hopes were not to be disappointed, for he learned from Col. Anderson's sister that a portion of the Fourth Georgia had gone towards Nashville late that afternoon. He rode on, and in a short time reached Seawell Hill.

"Halt! Who goes there?" challenged the picket.

"A friend."

"Dismount, friend, advance and give the countersign."

"I haven't the countersign. My name is George Guild; I am captain of company C, Fourth Tennessee Cavalry; I have been home to Gallatin on a visit and am anxious to get back to my regiment. You belong to Gen. Wheeler's command, don't you?"

“You’l have to stay here until daylight Captain, anyhow.”

So the soldier and his servant slept on the vidette stand until morning, when Capt. Guild made his presence known to the colonel in command. But although he had thus safely reached a portion of the Confederate army, his adventures in returning from his brief visit home were not yet over. The Georgia regiment continued its march the next day, and being overtaken by Gen. Dibrell with some three or four hundred recruits, the entire force moved forward for some distance, and at night went into camp on the turnpike near Readyville.

But if, in their camp protected by all the safeguards which a general can employ, the tired soldiers slept soundly, they awoke

—“midst flame and smoke,  
And shout, and groan, and sabre stroke;”

for a force of some eleven hundred Yankees had literally caught them napping, and came charging down the turnpike in the gray of early morning, before the reveille had sounded in the Confederate camp. They dashed down the road, their sabres gleaming in the faint light as they cut down all who opposed them, and rode onward without staying to see what resistance the Rebs might offer. Capt. Guild and two companions, seeing that the green troops could not be depended upon, and feeling sure that no resistance would be made, quietly mounted and rode off in the direction of Sparta, at which point nearly all of the command reported the next day; very few having been killed or captured in that strange attack *en passant*. Our Tennessean was soon enabled to make the journey from Sparta to Atlanta, where the main army was then located, and thus ended a dangerous trip, undertaken solely for the purpose of resting for one day under his father’s roof, and seeing once again the faces of those dear to the soldier.



## CHAPTER XLVIII.

### CAPTURED BY MOSBY.

Congratulations—Spencer Rifles—Congratulations Postponed—Col. Mosby — The Auction—A Disgusted Darkey—Mosby's Defense of his Men — On to Richmond — The Bivouac — Plans for Escape — A Charming View — A Slim Chance—Scarce of Horses — A Successful Ruse—"Now's the Time, Boys"—A Sudden Melee—The Enemy Scattered—The Flight — Concealment—Why Wash Went for the Corn — Why He Hurried Back — "Looking out for Yanks"—Finding Them.

**I**N the autumn of 1864, Capt. W. W. Badger, Inspector General of Cavalry in the Army of the Shenandoah, was ordered to accompany in person a certain train, numbering about a thousand wagons, which was to convey supplies to Sheridan's army. Springing into the saddle just as the sun arose, he galloped away in the direction of the point where the train had been parked, nine miles away. It was a bright, crisp morning, and the keen air that blew over the icy Shenandoah was invigorating to both men and horses. Accompanied by his orderly and a colored servant, he made good time, and in an hour from the time of starting was in sight of the train, just leaving the little village of Newtown.

"You see, Wash," said he, turning to the darkey, who bore the name of the Father of his Country; "you see, the guerillas are not as thick as you thought they were. Mosby hasn't caught us, after all your fears of it."

"Dat am a fac', sah," gravely responded Wash; "Cunnel Mosby ain't cotedhed us yet."

"And he's not likely to, either," added the officer, with a laugh, as he slackened his horse's speed.

They had now reached the town, and riding leisurely through the streets, were struck by the number of women who seemed

to be looking out of the windows. As he passed, two or three waved their handkerchiefs at him, and gallantly making his best bow, with his sweetest smile, the handsome captain blushed with pleasure at the sensation he appeared to be making. Perhaps the keen air of the morning was becoming more genial with the rays of the sun; perhaps his trusty steed needed a little rest; certain it is that he did not ride very rapidly through the village. But every town is passed through if the cavalier does not stop, though he ride ever so leisurely; and at last they had reached a small grocery store just on the border of the village.

In this store were a few men, evidently a part of the rearguard, whose caps, embroidered with a Greek cross, proclaimed them to be members of the Sixth Corps. They wore no sabres, but were armed with revolvers and Spencer repeating rifles, then recently adopted by the United States, and not in use in the Confederate army. They were evidently in charge of a non-commissioned officer, and as he made his appearance, the stripes on the sleeve of his blue blouse showed him to be a sergeant. He respectfully saluted Capt. Badger, whom he evidently recognized.

"The train is some distance ahead of you, sergeant," said the latter, returning the salute; "you had better close up, for this is one of Mosby's favorite beats."

"All right, sir," answered the sergeant, with a slight smile.

Captain Badger rode on, and the sergeant, nodding to his men, who had heard the warning, sprang upon his horse, and, with his party, followed the officer's small party. There was, evidently, plenty of straggling from the rearguard of the train, for three other soldiers were riding just ahead of them.

Wash, who had been riding a respectful distance behind his master, happened to overhear something that had been said by one of the sergeant's squad, and urged his horse onward until he was at the officer's side.

"Marse Cap'n, dey's Secesh, shuah; run like a blacksnake war after you."

Turning his head, Captain Badger saw that the warning was only too true. The six Spencers that had, more than their blue uniforms, prevented his entertaining any suspicion, were leveled at him; they having seen that the negro had discovered their true character. The sergeant, with drawn revolver, spurred his

horse on, and called to the surprised Federal, authoritatively:  
 "Halt—surrender!"

There was no mistaking the meaning of the summons, and the odds would be too much against him in any attempt to escape. The wagon train could not be half a mile distant, he knew, but it was obscured from view by an intervening hill. In order to measure the chances of getting out of their clutches, he turned and took a rapid survey of the scene. High stone walls lined



"Halt—surrender!"

the road on either side; in front, lay a creek, bridged, to be sure, but that bridge was held by the three supposed stragglers that he had observed in front of him, and their rifles were leveled at him. His horse was an excellent one, but nine rifles and a revolver—

"Will you surrender?" came in a still sharper tone, and the very muzzle of the revolver was pressed against his temple.

"I am your prisoner, sir," he replied to this summons, having concluded to consider the chances of escape at some future time, when gunpowder should not make so large a factor. His sword and revolvers were taken in charge by the supposed sergeant, who now introduced himself as Lieut. Whiting, of the C. S. A.

"We closed up as ordered, Captain; I trust it was done properly. I suppose discipline must be unusually good on the favorite beats of Mosby."

"Well," was the reply, "you've sneaked on me like spies, in a uniform to which you have no right; but maybe my turn will come to-morrow."

"Your turn for what—to be hanged?" he asked, compressing his lips at the imputation of cowardice conveyed in the Federal's tone; then continued, good-naturedly, "you see, we lay in ambush watching for stragglers, and saw you coming up. You were nobler game, and we hurried to get from the woods to the grocery just in time to seem like what you took us for—stragglers from the rearguard."

"Do you belong to Mosby's men, or to some other command?"

"To Mosby's, sir. Just turn here; we'll go along this creek—there's a fair road all the way—to report to the colonel, who is about three miles away."

"I suppose there is no doubt about the treatment I shall receive at your commander's hand?"

"I suppose not, sir, though you hardly understand that as I do."

"What do you mean?"

"You see, some of our men were hanged as guerillas, at Front Royal, the other day, and Col. Mosby has threatened to retaliate upon the first officer that falls into his hands, and as you are the only one captured since, why—"

A significant pause followed, unbroken by either of the officers for the remainder of the little journey. The soldiers following seemed to be in high glee over their capture of the officer, evidently not in the least underrating his importance. Turning from the path after a few minutes, they found themselves in the presence of about a hundred men, clad indifferently in blue and butternut, but all, evidently, owing allegiance to one who stood a little apart from them. This was the famous John S. Mosby, the Virginian partisan.

The prisoner's papers had been taken from him, and were now handed to the officer in command. Looking up as a cursory examination revealed the identity of the owner, he said in a voice that expressed not a little satisfaction

"Ah, Captain Badger, Inspector General of Sheridan's Cavalry, I perceive. Good morning, sir; I am very glad to see you; in fact, there's only one man I'd rather see here, and that's your commander. I suppose you know that some of my men were hanged at Front Royal the other day."

"I knew of it, sir, and protested against the setting of such an

example — one so suggestive of retaliation by the enemy.”

“Hum! Were you present?”

“I was; and regretted very much that it was the men who were to be hanged, and not the commander.”

A grim smile curved the yellow-brown moustache of the Confederate, as he turned to Lieut. Whiting with the brief order:

“Search him.”

In accordance with the usual practice, his valuables, and even his boots, were divided among the men in a fixed proportion; the various articles being put up at auction to determine the value which should be set upon them



*Col. John S. Mosby.*

“Let’s raffle the nigger,” suggested one.

“All right,” responded a chorus of voices; “How much?”

“I reckon about two thousand,” answered another, scanning him critically.

Confederate money, which had then greatly depreciated, was of course the standard; and as the boots had sold for six hundred and fifty, and the watch for three thousand, this was an extremely low estimate. It caused great indignation in the breast of the person most nearly concerned.

“I’se none of yo’r good-fur-nuffin’ niggers, gemmen; I’se wuff a heap mo’ dan two thousand dollars in yo’ blue-back money; I’se wuff dat much in greenbacks or gold. I kin make de bes’ milk punch in de country, ef you all jest had de tings to make it out of, gemmen.”

There was a general laugh at his appreciation of their poverty; but a negro in attendance on Mosby grew as indignant at the insinuation as Wash had been at the low estimate of his value.

“You jest shet up, you fool nigger; we’s got lots of good liquor; jest take a drink now, and see ef it ain’t fust-class.”

“No, tank you, sah; I pefeh not to, sah,” answered Wash,

with dignity and courtesy happily blended in his manner.

"Why don't you drink with him?" inquired Captain Badger, in an undertone.

"I don' want to drink wid dat nigger, sah; too much freeder breeds despise, sah."

Taking his prisoner to one side, after these matters had been concluded, Col. Mosby handed back to him some articles presumably valuable from association, but not intrinsically so; among other things a small Masonic pin. With the mystic sign which revealed him to be a member of the brotherhood, he said quietly:

"You had better keep that; it may be of service to you among my men. You and your people are mistaken in thinking them guerillas. They are regularly enlisted men in the Confederate army, but selected from the various commands as peculiarly fitted for this kind of service. We plunder the enemy, of course; the rules of war allow it; but we do not go beyond the rules. If we hang prisoners, it is simply in retaliation for similar treatment of our men. I hanged eight men on the Valley Pike yesterday in retaliation for those of mine executed at Front Royal. I can hang two for one as long as you are disposed to keep up the game; but I have written to Gen. Sheridan, asking him to agree in stopping such barbarities. I can assure you, sir, it is no more agreeable to me than to any other soldier. I sincerely hope he will assent to it."

Captain Badger made a suitable answer to this speech, being quite won over to the belief by the quiet earnestness of the Confederate; and the partisan turned away to give orders regarding the march. It was "On to Richmond," and with the memory of all the traditions of Libby that he had ever heard repeating themselves in his ears, the prisoner fell into the place in the column which the captor designated. Nine other Federal soldiers, besides himself and his orderly, had been captured by various parties detailed from the main body of the command; and these eleven men were now to be dispatched to Richmond under a guard of fifteen. Lieut. Whiting was in command, and Mosby himself rode with the column for some distance.

Among the prisoners were two who from this time assume some importance in the story: McCauley, or "Mack," a smooth-faced boy of eighteen, whose features were of almost feminine delicacy, and Brown, one of Blaser's scouts. Capt. Badger endeavored

to gain the confidence of all the men, in order that by co-operation they might have a better chance of escape; and found that while all were generally reliable, these two, at least, could be depended upon in any emergency; they were ready to risk their lives if half a chance of liberty presented itself.

Marching rapidly onward, they bivouacked for the night in a deserted school-house, which had been prepared for the reception of such as they were. Three men were detailed as relief guard for the entry-at the door, all other openings having stout planks securely nailed over them; the remainder, having stood their carbines by a low school desk which ran along one wall, and laid their revolvers upon the same support, were placed side by side upon the floor, with their heads just beneath this desk; the prisoners were similarly ranged on the other side of the room, the feet of the two rows of sleepers nearly meeting on the central line of the floor. The room was dimly lighted by a fire before the door.

Captain Badger had taken care to place himself between Brown and Mack, and warned by him, they kept wide awake; indeed, with them as with the other prisoners, the dread of Libby was so great that it overpowered all desire for slumber. Not so with the guard. "Weariness can snore upon the flint," and they were veterans enough to find a pine floor a comfortable bed. They were soon snoring, while the sentinel dozed over his pipe.

"Are you awake, Mack?"

"Very much so, thank you, sir."

"And you, Brown?"

"Couldn't sleep if I tried."

"Have you thought of any plan of escape?"

"I think I know a good one, Captain," answered Mack, after a moment's hesitation; "see where their arms are? Now if we could all of us make one grand rush we'd get them, every carbine and pistol of 'em and then I guess we could stampede the guard and get away."

"It's pretty risky," murmured the captain, doubtfully.

"Any plan is bound to be risky, sir," urged the proposer of this.

"Well, pass the whisper along the line, and see if the men are willing to try it."

After a few minutes' delay, the two were ready to report

the result, which was not very encouraging to the daring spirits.

"There ain't but two men on this side," said Brown.

"And only one on this," added Mack, with as much disgust in his voice as its whispering tone would permit.

"Well, it's such a risky thing anyhow," decided the officer, "but if they don't come into it willingly we can't urge it on them."

Silence reigned once more supreme among the prisoners, and still the guard snored on.

"Tell you what, Captain, I know how to do it now," said Mack, excitedly, after a few moment's thought.

"Sh! Be careful," cautioned the officer; "they might hear us talking and suspect something. But what is the new plan?"

"Do you think the men would use the arms if they once had them?"

"O yes; I don't think they are fools or cowards either."

"Well, I'll creep over and get them every one."

"A single noise or a false step would betray you."

"I know it."

"The chances are a thousand to one against you."

"But there *is* one."

"I am not sure of that. The result of discovery would be instant death for you"—

"I know it."

"Perhaps for all of us. I don't believe it can be done. You must not risk it."

"I'd like the best in the world to go, Captain, and I believe I could do it, but"—

"You must not, my boy. It is impossible for man to accomplish such a thing. I should do very wrong to allow you to do it. Let us go to sleep now, so that if an opportunity for escape occurs to-morrow we may be fresh and well-prepared."

So at last they slept, and the long hours of the night passed slowly away. The next morning was wet and gloomy, and the column, setting out early on the march, presented anything but a cheerful appearance. Their road wound around the mountain side, and as they reached a point about one-third of the distance from the summit, Col. Mosby called Capt. Badger's attention to the view.

"You see it's as good as a map of the country," he said. "This is a favorite promenade of mine. I like to see the forces which



your people send out after me almost daily. There's one of them now."

"A part of my own regiment?" exclaimed his unwilling guest, as he recognized the familiar badges and the various particulars by which the accoutrements of different regiments are distinguished.

"Is it, indeed?" asked the Confederate, with a slight smile; "then let me advise you to take a good look at them, for they're the last of their kind you'll be likely to see for some time to come."

They paused for some time at this spot, Col. Mosby seeming to find great satisfaction in looking at the force of Federals which moved along beneath not more than half a mile away; moving onward, they reached the road running through Manassas Gap, a short time before noon, and here the colonel left them, saying, as he bade them good-bye:

"I reckon all your chances of escape or rescue are about gone, now, Captain; you're some distance inside of our lines."

Passing Chester Gap, descending into the valley and moving toward Sperryville, on the road to Richmond, their guard was reduced to three men, still commanded by Lieut. Whiting. But this diminution of the guard did not increase their chances of escape, for, as Mosby had told them, they were far within the Confederate lines; they had only a general knowledge of the country; they could not depend upon meeting any but enemies; and each man of the escort was provided with a double supply of arms, while they were entirely without weapons.

The eleven prisoners were now provided with seven horses, so that four of them must walk; and in order that each man might have his turn, there were frequent halts to enable them to dismount and change places. To the saddle of the pack-horse which carried their provisions and blankets, two extra carbines had been strapped, muzzle downward, and fastened to each were all the necessary accoutrements. To gain possession of these carbines might be a step towards liberty, and Capt. Badger racked his brains to think how it might be done. Could it be accomplished while they were changing horses? Hardly, for then, of course, the guards were always especially alert.

"Do you see those carbines, Mack?" he asked, as in the confusion of the men's changing places he found opportunity.

"On the pack-horse? Yes, sir," answered Mack, with a long-

ing gaze at them, and thinking again of Libby Prison.

There was one horse among the seven that was hardly worthy of the name, so thin and broken down was he; of course, no one wished to ride this, and when Mack chanced to be assigned to it there was no one to dispute possession. We say *chanced*, though in fact he had, by his apparent modesty in standing back until most of the others were mounted, endeavored to effect this very arrangement. They had proceeded but a little way when the animal was perceived to be lame. With many expressions of concern, Mack dismounted, and marching back through the rain which was now falling in torrents, asked the officer in command:

“May I ride the pack-horse, sir? The one that they gave me seems to be badly lamed.”

The lieutenant looked at the boy, but he appeared so innocent, and his tone was so frank and engaging, that suspicion never once entered his mind; and the desired permission was given. Captain Badger was so kind as to assist his fellow-prisoner in arranging the packs so as to allow room for a comfortable seat on the horse; a matter to which the guards paid little attention; their whole time being occupied in keeping themselves and the accoutrements as dry as the torrents of rain would permit. Mack was covered by a huge poncho, which, as he sat on the horse, covered the packs as well; completely concealing the carbines from view.

The prisoners formed the center of the column, the three Confederates riding in front and on their left, while Lieut. Whiting acted as rearguard. Usually, Capt. Badger rode beside the latter, but they were now so far within the Southern lines that discipline was considerably relaxed, and the prisoners were allowed much more liberty of action than would have been safe under other circumstances, even with a larger guard. It excited no wonder, then, when Capt. Badger rode across to Brown, and, dismounting, asked him to tighten the girth. Brown complied, and as he was at work, Capt. Badger said to him, in a tone too low to allow any one else to distinguish the words:

“Mack has possession of two carbines; get up by his side and communicate with him. I will give the signal—the words, ‘Now’s the time, boys’—then seize one of the carbines and do your duty as a soldier if you value your liberty. Tell him what the signal is to be.”

They rode quietly on for some time, the prisoners chatting

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*"Now's the time, boys!"*

with each other and with the guard ; but the general conversation came to an end when Capt. Badger began a spirited account of the charge of Sheridan's army at Winchester. Night was drawing on, and the shade of the willow trees which here overhung the road added an additional gloom to the thoughts of the men there present, now captives, but then animated by all the fury of the battle. Yet they almost forgot themselves and their present condition as they recalled that day of which the officer was now drawing a vivid picture in words.

"Just at that moment," he went on, "he waved his sword until it flashed like lightning in the sunshine, and with the shout, 'Now's the time, boys!'"—

The speaker threw himself upon the Confederate officer, and grasping him in a close embrace, endeavored to obtain his revolver. This once effected, the lieutenant might be compelled to act as guide for them until they were safely out of the Confederate lines. Mack had shot two of the guards, and now turned to see the desperate struggle going on between the two officers ; for a moment he hesitated, for there was considerable danger of hitting the wrong man if he fired ; but as they wrestled with each other, the face of the Southerner was turned toward him a moment, clearly seen over his antagonist's shoulder ; and raising the carbine for a third time, he took aim and fired. The bullet took effect between the eyes, and as it crashed through the skull into the brain, the Confederate fell heavily forward into the arms of whose embrace he had so desperately resisted—dead.

Brown had done less execution ; practiced scout as he was, and used to such emergencies, as might be supposed, this seemed to be a more startling one than he had ever experienced or was prepared for. He had indeed fired one shot, but being somewhat nervous, had only wounded the third guard, who rode off at full speed, firing his pistol as he went, to alarm the country. This, of course, made their situation doubly dangerous ; the country would be alarmed in an hour, and men perfectly acquainted with every feature of it dispatched in search of them ; they knew only the general outlines of the district in which they were ; the enemy's camps could not be far off, for they had already passed one line of pickets, and might, at any step in their course, be challenged by others. They were well armed with two carbines that had been on the pack-horse, and those belonging

to the Confederates that had been killed ; as well as with the revolvers of the three ; but their number had dwindled as soon as the first shot had been fired, and now there remained only Captain Badger, Mack, Brown, and one other soldier, and Wash ; the others had already scattered over the country, to escape to his friends, each man as he could.

Mounting the best horses, they immediately struck out for the mountain on their right ; but concluding that this would be the most dangerous, because the most natural course to take, they soon turned their horses' heads directly to the south, and rode straight into the heart of the enemy's country. The fear of recapture, which meant certain death, urged them on, and though it was already the middle of the afternoon when they regained their freedom, they accomplished a distance of thirty miles before the twilight had finally faded.

Turning sharply to the right as soon as darkness favored their flight, they urged their almost exhausted horses up the mountains ; but at last, wearied out by the long journey made at such a rapid pace, the poor beasts could no longer climb the steep hill. Abandoning them to the tender mercies of whoever should find them, the riders continued the ascent on foot, breaking twigs from the trees as they went, so that there would be no danger of returning by the same route. Just as daylight was breaking over the valley, they reached the top of the mountain, whence they could see the Confederate position, as the day before they had seen that of their friends.

Creeping into a friendly thicket, they endeavored to wait patiently until darkness should enable them to continue their flight. On a barren mountain in an enemy's country, without food or water, their minds filled with anxiety as to their impending fate, we cannot wonder that the day dragged wearily on. For days they remained in this hiding-place, for when darkness came it only made visible the innumerable camp-fires which dotted the sides of the mountain ; while daylight showed party after party of Confederate scouts seeking for the escaped prisoners.

Hungry men are not over dainty, and when two days had passed since they had tasted food, a little dog that had strayed into their hidden camp fell a victim to their necessity. But it was by no means enough to satisfy their appetites, and as time went on, and no other food was obtainable, they grew desper-

ate. Some one must venture out for food, or they must starve.

"There's a corn-field down the road," suggested one; "Wash, won't you go and get us some corn?"

"No, sah."

"I'd go myself, only it would be suicide. They'd not suspect you, Wash, as anything but one of their own servants."

But Wash remained obdurate; he had no notion of running such a risk alone; it would have been different if there had been



*"Did any of you ever eat any negro?"*

a soldier with him, but, as had been said, that would have meant the sacrifice of all their hopes. A pause followed the darkey's refusal, broken, after a lapse of some time, by Mack:

"Did any of you ever eat any negro?"

Wash's eyes were all whites.

"Don't know as I ever did," answered Brown, taking the cue; "is it good eating?"

"First-rate, if it's not too fat."

This with a significant glance at Wash, who was as lean as a herring.

"I'm awful hungry," announced Brown, as if it were news.

"So am I; in fact, I guess we all are. We can't get at that

corn, and I guess it'll have to end in our feeding on some"—

Mack bent over and whispered something to Brown, keeping his eyes fixed hungrily on Wash. The latter shifted his position several times, turning his eyes uneasily from one to the other; but all felt that it was necessary to compel him, by some means or other, to go to the corn-field, and they drew together, occasionally, with mysterious whispers and meaning looks. At last the poor fellow could stand it no longer, and out came the words,

"I reckon I kin git dat cawn, mebbe."

He started down the mountain-side, alone. No words can tell the terror which thrilled his every nerve as he groped his way through the darkness; but worse than being caught by the Confederates, worse than being pursued by the ghosts and witches which might reasonably be supposed to be abroad in that lonely place, at that hour of the night, was the dread of being killed and eaten—yes, cooked and eaten—by the hungry Federals above. At last the corn-field was reached; behind any of those tall stalks there might be a Confederate or a ghost—equally probable and equally terrible suppositions; any one of those broad yellow blades, rustling in the breeze, might be a sword; but the necessity of the case permitted no delay; hastily gathering an arm load of the ripened ears, he almost flew up the steep ascent.

"Why, Wash, you came back in a hurry."

"Knowed you all was hungry, Massa Cap'n."

The explanation was permitted to go unchallenged, as they revelled in the bliss of three ears of corn apiece.

But this state of affairs could not last long. Before their strength was exhausted, they must make a greater effort to gain the Federal lines; so, going still farther south, they finally abandoned the mountains altogether; and having flanked Early's army, they came upon the Shenandoah, twenty miles south of his position. Here, living in the woods upon such roots as they could find and the little game that could be trapped (for they dared not fire a shot), they built a rude raft, launched it, and in one night floated forty miles down the river. But this was too dangerous a mode of traveling for the daytime, so they took to the land again. Having provided themselves with horses from various sources, they passed themselves off, on more than one party of Confederates, as disguised scouts "looking out



for Yankees which were reported to be abroad in the country."

Their account of the occupation in which they were engaged was a most truthful one, although the interviewers did not see it in exactly the right light; believing rather in the "disguise" which was their proper dress. Hence they were permitted to go on their way unquestioned, and finally found the Yankees they were seeking; arriving safely, though footsore and hungry, at the Federal lines; the officer, at least, resolved never again to trust a blue uniform or a Spencer carbine unless he knew the owner by some other token.

## CHAPTER XLIX.

### ARRESTING A SMUGGLER.

Reasons for the Trade—The Efforts of the Police—The Military Authorities—Going it Alone—A Green Soldier—A Surly Sailor—A Fine Boat—The Arrest—A Combat of Will—He Concludes to Surrender—The Lumber Yard—Completely Vanquished.

“ALL’S fair in love and war” is an old saying, often quoted by those who adopted means generally considered extremely unfair. At no time is such a maxim repeated more frequently than during civil war, when many things combine to allow of much deception on either side. During our “late unpleasantness,” such battling of wits formed no trifling part of the contest. To say nothing of the exploits of scouts and spies, there were many instances. If the Southern ports were blockaded, adventurous spirits took delight in eluding the vigilance of the Northern vessels; and on land, many persons of fair standing in time of peace engaged in the work of smuggling medicines and other necessities for the use of the Confederate Army. Others again, went into the business simply for the sake of the enormous profits that were to be made in selling goods which were so hard to obtain.

Of course, since it was the policy of the United States, as of every belligerent power, to cut off the Confederacy from all such supplies from without, a strict watch was kept all along the border, to make sure that no such contraband trade was carried on. In states which remained in the Union, but which, like Maryland, Kentucky and Missouri, had many strong Secessionist people, there was of course greater danger than in those whose loyalty was unquestionable; and in the three mentioned, the Federal authorities never relaxed their vigilance.

Though, in spite of their untiring watchfulness, the work went on to no small extent, the offenders were often informed on by men whom they had trusted; and often, a piece of carelessness arising from long security would excite suspicion and lead to discovery. It was probably by the first means that the authorities of the city of Baltimore obtained information of a gang of smugglers that, in the fall of 1864, were engaged in conveying provisions and other supplies from that point to the South; as the chief was very minutely described to them. The municipal officials were further told that while this man was desperate in courage, his associates were by no means so determined; and that his capture would, in all probability, break up the gang as effectually as if all were taken.

Desiring to show the soldiers stationed in the city what the majesty of the law, unaided by the bayonet, could accomplish, the Chief of Police selected four of the best men on the force, and himself instructed them to look for the man answering to the description, and to capture him, dead or alive. Armed to the teeth, they set out; their revolvers were loaded when they went; and when they returned, not a chamber had been emptied; for the smuggler had been so long identified with the criminal classes that he probably knew the face of every man on the police force. Again and again the attempt was made, but with no better result than at first; and the Chief of Police concluded that the majesty of the law must content itself with punishing the prisoner after he had been caught.

The matter was accordingly handed over to the military authorities; and a certain young officer, whose daring courage had been often manifested, was summoned to the office of the provost-marshal.

"Sergeant F——, there have been extensive frauds practiced upon the Government by a gang of smugglers this fall; and the leader must be captured. This is the written description handed me by the civil authorities. Study it well to-night, and be ready to-morrow morning to start out to capture him. How many men do you want to help you?"

"I'll try it alone, sir, if you will allow it. When shall I report again?"

"Not until you have taken the smuggler, dead or alive," returned the superior, decisively. "Here are your written orders, with the description."

The sergeant returned to his quarters to perform the first part of the task assigned him; and having made himself well acquainted with the pen-picture of the man he was to look for, sallied out, early the next morning, on the quest. Though he was in uniform, and carried the usual side-arms, no one would have thought him bound on an important errand, so carelessly did he saunter along. He seemed to be perfectly unacquainted with the city, and not thoroughly used to the glory of a uniform; while frequently he viewed the yellow bars on his sleeve with no small satisfaction. All this was done to impress the men on the wharf with the idea that he was but a recent acquisition to the United States Army, and was not at all familiar with the city of Baltimore. Of course, the curiosity with which he scanned the vessels there moored was in strict keeping with the character which he had assumed, and no one imagined the real reason why he looked so closely at the boats.

He had gone so far along the wharf without seeing the object for which he was looking that he feared he must make up his mind to return a baffled report. The smuggler evidently was not in port that day, and he would have to wait at least twenty-four hours. But just as he arrived at this conclusion, he saw, a short distance from him, a small vessel, on board of which was a large, muscular looking man who answered exactly to his description. Strolling leisurely along, the soldier looked critically at the boat, as any man, interested in such things, might look at any vessel. So natural was his manner that the alarm of the smuggler was not aroused; although, from the nature of his business, he was always on the outlook for an enemy. The soldier, as he approached, gave a friendly nod as he caught the smuggler's eye, and called out to him:

"Fine morning, sir."

"Good enough," growled the sailor, so gruffly that the words hardly reached the soldier's ear.

"What did you say, sir?" asked the latter, stopping short, directly opposite the boat.

"I said it was good enough weather," returned the other, with no more good humor than before.

"Don't know as I ever saw finer fall weather," continued the soldier, looking around him, but mentally comparing the sailor with the description of the smuggler.

"Humph!" grunted the other.

"That's a fine boat, isn't she? she must be worth a pile."

"Yes," assented the sailor, frowning at the speaker. But the soldier's admiration of the boat was so genuine that any lurking suspicion was half disarmed. As Sergeant F—— examined the boat, the eyes under the darkly overhanging brows watched him closely; and though, when he stepped on board he was not ordered to stay on the wharf, they still followed every step. The soldier was by this time thoroughly convinced that the man before him was the one he had been commissioned to capture, and he was determined to execute his orders at once. But a personal struggle with that muscular frame would not be likely to result in any good to the soldier's slighter form; and he determined to try strategy where force was impossible.

"There's a sight of vessels out to-day, isn't there?"

"Don't know as there is."

"The wharf is black with wagons and men and horses. Ain't business any brisker than usual to-day?"

"No brisker nor no duller than usual," returned the man addressed, with a shade of contempt for the poor greenhorn who was so impressed by the usual amount of traffic.

"That's a queer looking craft yonder—that black one, that the tug has in tow."

As the sergeant expected, the smuggler, R——, turned his head in the direction in which F—— had pointed. Quick as lightning the soldier had drawn and aimed his pistol.

"That there's a coal"—

"You are my prisoner—surrender, or I fire."

R—— drew back, and, with an oath, reached for his own revolver.

"Don't you dare to draw, sir."

"Who in the devil are you, anyhow," demanded the smuggler, hoping to brazen it out.

"I am an agent of the United States Government, with written orders to take you, dead or alive. I intend to execute them."

"What are you to arrest me for?"

"You know very well."

The smuggler saw that his first plan had failed, and fell back on a sort of bravado.

"I'll not be taken alive," he hissed out from between his teeth, as, clenching his fists angrily, he made one step forward.

"Stand back—don't advance another step. Will you surrender

and come with me peaceably, or must I shoot you down?"

"No, I won't."

"All right, then. I've told you what my orders were."

The smuggler answered not a word, and the soldier waited a moment, trusting that he would decide to surrender. So they stood, the stronger man seemingly fascinated by the steady gaze of the other, as it is said a lion is controlled by the power of the



*"Don't you dare to draw, sir!"*

human eye. As the soldier saw that there was no sign of submission, he was about to pull the trigger when a large freight wagon rumbled by on the wharf.

"Hello, driver, back that wagon up here," he shouted.

"What for?"

"Do as I tell you, or you'll be the second. Now, are you going to surrender and go with me?" This last to the smuggler.

"What if I don't?"

"That wagon is ready to take your body to the provost-marshal's."

"Great Scott!" exclaimed the driver; "what are you going to shoot him, for?"

"Those are my orders. Once more, will you come?"

There was a warning click and a readjustment of aim which gave a dreadful emphasis to the question. Human flesh and

blood could stand it no longer — the strain was too great.

“Well, I guess I’ll have to ” came reluctantly from the smuggler.

“Hand over your arms.”

“D—n me for a fool, I ain’t got any about me. Do you think I’d a’ given up that way if I’d had my pistols here?”

It was a literal fact. Rendered careless by the perfect impunity with which, for months, he had pursued his contraband trade, he had left his pistol-belt, with the weapons, in the little cabin of the vessel. Having satisfied himself that this was so, Sergeant F— gave the order:

“You go ahead; I’ll follow.”

By this means he was able to see the slightest movement looking towards escape; while a word now and then directed the prisoner what course to take. But before they set out, the soldier, knowing the great strength of the man, had handcuffed him; and thus marked as a criminal, he could hardly hope to escape while passing through the streets. Still the soldier wished to shorten the way as much as possible, and for that purpose ordered the prisoner to cut across a large lumber yard; a route by which they could save nearly two blocks.

The lumber was in huge piles, separated by narrow alleys. It seems strange that the sergeant should not have preferred to make a circuit, rather than pass through this place, which, from its arrangement and seclusion, offered admirable opportunities for escape; but he trusted to his own vigilance and activity. The prisoner had been on the alert ever since his surrender, watching for a chance to give his captor the slip. The fact that the soldier had put up his revolver seemed encouraging; he could perhaps be out of sight before it could be drawn and aimed. The place through which they were now passing would enable him to twist and turn so that no aim could be taken. Stronger and stronger grew the wish for liberty; and at last, as they got to the middle of the yard, equally distant from the street on either front, he darted suddenly around the end of a large pile of boards, and into a narrow passage.

The movement was as quick as thought; and had the sergeant been a heavy man, he might have been unable to follow rapidly enough to do any good; as the hare, in doubling, gains on the hounds. But in this case, it was the hare in pursuit of the hounds, and the soldier followed close upon the heels of the

smuggler. His sabre flashed in the sunshine as he drew it from the scabbard and raised it for the blow. It descended heavily, suddenly, upon the smuggler's head; and stunned by the force of the blow, the prisoner fell to the ground.

Bending over him, the sergeant found that the cut, on the side of the head, was severe, but not dangerous. He bound it up carefully with his handkerchief, and helped the man to his feet. So they went on, though but slowly now, to the provost-marshal's office, the wounded man making no further attempt to escape. R— was duly delivered into the custody of the provost-marshal, thence to the civil authorities. Arraigned before the courts, he was tried for violation of the revenue laws, having extended his trips southward to the West Indies after having got his goods to a Southern port; and returned to the United States with a cargo of foreign goods on which he systematically evaded the duties. He was found guilty and sentenced to a term in the penitentiary. Of course, the offense of supplying goods to the Confederates could not be proven, as the witnesses were in the seceded States.



## CHAPTER I.

### TWO OF THE BLACK HORSE CAVALRY.

Organization of the Corps—Circumstances of One Adventure—The Price of Liquor—Honor Pledged—"As Easy as Lying"—A Part of the Price—The Rest of It—An Important Prisoner—Gen. Stuart's Gallantry Tested—He Sees the Joke—The Corps Disbanded.

WHEN the probability of a war between the states was still a point upon which men held different opinions, an officer of the United States Army organized a military body that was destined, in a few years, to become famous as the Black Horse Cavalry. For a time it seemed to be merely an organization designed to gratify the passion, then so common, for uniforms and military drill; and it was not until April, 1861, nearly two years from the time that they were first set in line, that they were employed in any work other than police duty in keeping order or preventing a popular riot.

But it is not our object to trace the history of this well-known corps. Composed of the flower of Virginian manhood, and numbering, in the names composing the roll, more than one since made eminent in literature or active life, they were possessed by an adventuresome daring that led them into danger where prudence would have kept them safe. It must be remembered, too, that the cavalry is the part of an army which meets with adventures; that the infantry and artillery do the heavier work of the pitched battles; while the cavalry is used in the numberless raids, reconnoissances, etc., the history of which possesses so much interest. Then, too, although the inequality did not long exist, the Southern cavalry, in the early days of the War, stood out pre-eminent; for the Federals were notably deficient in that arm of the service.

Let a single exploit of two members of this body serve as an example of their methods.

"Fighting Joe Hooker" had succeeded Burnside in the command of the Army of the Potomac; and the Confederate Gen. Fitzhugh Lee had, with a brigade of cavalry, crossed the Rappahannock and driven in the Federal pickets. As he returned with his prisoners to the left flank of the Confederate army, some of the members of the Black Horse became dissatisfied



*Black Horse Cavalryman.*

with the amount of adventure which had fallen to their share, and asked permission to follow up the enemy as he marched to Fredericksburg. Their plan was to pick up stragglers or horses, as opportunity should invite.

Ten or a dozen were given the desired permission, but the sport proved poor; and when they had gone some distance and failed to find the objects of their search, all but two concluded to return.

"Come on, Joe," cried one, familiarly known as Old Blaze, when he found that such was the purpose of his companions, "I don't believe you want to go back with them any

more'n I do."

"You can just bet your bottom dollar, I don't. Come on, boys, don't go back yet. There'll be some fun presently."

"Can't see it," replied one, with indifference.

"We'll leave all the fun to you and Boteler," said another, addressing "Old Blaze."

"All right, then; if you want to give it up so. Good bye."

"Good bye. Don't get captured yourselves by stragglers."

And with this friendly caution the less persevering rode away, while the two more venturesome kept on their course. They had not gone far before a most annoying deficiency in their supplies was discovered—there was not a drop of liquor in either canteen. This was a state of affairs not to be endured, but how was it to be remedied?

"I tell you what we can do," said Boteler; "Mrs. H. lives up

here near the Stafford line; let's go call on her. She'll fill our canteens for us, I know."

Away to the house of Mrs. H. they accordingly rode, to meet with the heartiest of receptions.

"You see, Mrs. H.," explained Mr. Boteler, "Mr. Blaisdell and myself are out on a little scout of our own. The rest of the boys have gone on with Gen. Lee's brigade, but we wanted to capture some Yankees."

"I'm sure I wish you all possible success," rejoined the old lady, politely.

"But there is one thing of which we are very much in need—which, in fact, we can't well do without," continued Boteler.

"Is it powder? I have plenty that the boys got the last time they went to the mill."

"No, ma'am; in fact, our canteens are empty, and if you have any liquor to spare we'd be very much obliged to you to fill them."

"You say you are alone, and trying to take prisoners."

"Yes; you see there are always a good many stragglers when an army is on the march, and we want to pick up a few. 'Tis as easy as lying," rejoined the soldier.

"Then, I think you're going into enough danger for sober men, and I'm not going to imperil you any farther by giving you liquor," said Mrs. H., with motherly firmness.

"Mrs. H., I pledge you my honor as a gentleman that I'll not let it 'steal my brains away,' and I think—I am sure Blaisdell will promise as much."

"I will, most readily."

"And we'll pay you well."

"Mr. Boteler," exclaimed the lady, indignantly, "you know I do not object because I wish to keep the liquor. I refuse you, purely for your own good."

"But you won't refuse the kind of pay we mean. How would two Yankees do for each canteenful? You'd take that sort of remuneration, wouldn't you?"

"We'll say three, Joe," chimed in Old Blaze; "that will just be half a dozen."

"Half a dozen Yankee prisoners for two canteens of brandy! I know you can't resist the offer."

"If you'll promise me"—began she, doubtfully.

"Can we do more than pledge our honor? We have already

done that," returned Boteler, as she paused, doubtingly.

So the canteens were filled with most excellent liquor, and the two soldiers rode away in high glee.

"There's no going back now," exclaimed Blaisdell, exultantly, as they left the road for the woods.

"Who wants to go back?" demanded Boteler, with some heat.

Riding through the woods, enabled by their exact knowledge of the country to dispense with such things as roads, they saw, through the trees, a small squad of Federal troops, less familiar with the lay of the land than they, and hence obliged to follow the highway. The plan of attack needed no discussion, nor was there time for it; for any moment they might themselves be seen and attacked. Fortunately, they were

"Two souls with but a single thought,  
Two hearts that beat as one,"

and putting spurs to their horses, they charged, yelling as they went, upon the Federals. The assailed party was taken entirely by surprise, and most of them did not stop to inquire how many were attacking. Two, either braver or worse mounted than their comrades, lingered somewhat behind, only for each to find a revolver at his temple, and a voice in his ear demanding his surrender. Yielding to the necessity of the case, and never once supposing anything but that they were attacked by a large force, they gave themselves up, handed over their arms and dismounted.

"You just wait here by the roadside until we get back," commanded Boteler. "It won't do to try to escape, because the woods are full of our cavalry, and you'd be certain to be caught if you tried it."

Which statement showed just what the young man meant when he told Mrs. H. that capturing stragglers was "as easy as lying." But the prisoners neither felt nor manifested the least doubt of his truthfulness, and with heavy hearts and long faces sat down by the roadside to await the return of their captors. The latter entrusted the arms and horses to the care of a citizen living near by, on whom they knew they could rely, and proceeded on their way. The liquor was not half paid for yet.

Through the woods they again took their course, keeping just near enough to the road to see without being seen. They had not gone far when they spied the rearguard of a cavalry force, leisurely wending its way along.

"They're going pretty slow, Blaze; suppose we hurry 'em up a little."

"All right. Get a little behind them, so they won't guess there are only two of us."

In an instant they had begun to put the plan into execution. With rapidly repeated yells, to give idea that there was a much larger force, they charged upon the rearguard, "hurrying them up a little." Two, however, fell into their hands, and were promptly disarmed. Fortune favored them, that day, for they had not gone far when they descried through the trees, another Federal soldier, riding slowly and alone along the roadside.

There was a hurried whispered consultation as to what had best be done, as a result of which Blaisdell was left in charge of the two prisoners, while Boteler rode alone towards the Federal, who evidently had no suspicion that an enemy was near. Pleasant thoughts of bygone and future times were perhaps soothing the brain under the blue cap, when suddenly came the words:

"Halt! Surrender, or you are a dead man."

He instinctively made a motion towards his holsters, but his hand was stopped as he heard the ominous click with which the Confederate warned him that he could not escape.

"Yez hev got the drop on me, sor," he said, with a rich brogue, as he handed over his arms and dismounted; "it never intered me head that any of yous might be near."

He was duly escorted to the point where Blaisdell was awaiting the return of his companion. Here a council of war took place.

"I reckon we'd better go back and get the others, don't you?"

"Oh, they're not there."

"What's the reason they're not?"

"They've been rescued, or else escaped. They didn't believe what you told them about the woods being full of our men."

"Didn't they though? What'll you bet?"

"Most anything. We might as well go back, though, for it's getting late, and we musn't get cut off."

Back they accordingly went, and much to Blaisdell's, and perhaps to Boteler's, surprise, found the first prisoners they had captured patiently awaiting their return. But, as the former had said, it was growing late, and they ought not to risk being cut off from their command; besides, they had as many prisoners as

they could attend to, perhaps more; there would be little chance of taking any more that night; so, all these considerations being duly weighed, they decided to return.

"Hello, Johnnie" called Blaisdell, as they met a small boy; "how are you?"

"First rate, sir; how are you?"

"Oh, prime. How's your uncle?"

"He was well, the last time we heard from him. He went to Richmond a week ago."

"Yes, I heard of it. All well down at the house?"

"Yes, sir; they're all right busy now, getting supper for some soldiers."

"Soldiers? What kind?"

"Oh, they are Fed's Cavalry, they are. There ain't any more of our men around now."

"How many are there?"

"How many at our house? Three."

"All mounted?"

"Yes, sir; all got good horses."

"All right; you wait here for us, won't you? and don't tell any one that you have seen us."

"All right, sir."

"We must have those horses, Joe."

"But what under the sun are we to do with these five men while we go and get them?"

"Couldn't we leave them at Mrs. ——'s until we get through?"

"Yes, I reckon that would be the best thing we can do."

Accordingly, riding up to the house of the lady mentioned, they asked her if she could accommodate them and their prisoners with supper.

"I shall be glad to do so, gentlemen, but you will have to keep a sharp lookout, I fear. Mr. A. and Mr. B. are here, and I've heard that they have taken the oath. I'm not sure how true the rumor is, but it is best to be on the safe side, so I thought I'd warn you in time."

"Thank you. And can you manage to delay supper a little while? We wan't to go up to Sam J——'s, and would like to have the prisoners kept until we return."

"Certainly I can delay serving supper as long as you wish; but there is no one here, you know, to act as guards."

"We'll make A. and B. do it, oath or no oath."

The prisoners were ordered to dismount and go into the house; and while Boteler hid the horses and the arms they could not otherwise dispose of, Blaisdell called the two men, suspected of loyalty, aside.

“Gentlemen, I can’t pretend to say how true it is, but we have heard that you have taken the oath of allegiance to the United States Government; now Mr. Boteler and I are obliged to go down the road a piece, and we cannot conveniently take our prisoners along. Here are two loaded carbines. You will stand guard over those five soldiers until we return; and if they escape, you will find yourselves lodged in Castle Thunder before you are many days older. I suppose we may rely on you?”

The two civilians, well knowing the character of the men with whom they had to deal, assented to their demands; and the two Confederates departed to capture, if not the three cavalymen, at least their horses.

Boteler entered at the front door of the house, and was greeted with the sight of the arms which the soldiers had left in a corner of the hall. Blaisdell, flanking the house, entered at the rear, and both opened different doors of the sitting-room at the same moment. As the Federals saw, standing directly opposite in the doorway, a man in full Confederate uniform, they started to their feet, and sprang towards the hall for their arms, only to find a similar apparition confronting them there.

“You’d better surrender without any fuss, gentlemen; you see for yourselves you are disarmed and surrounded.”

In fact there was nothing else to be done, for with strange carelessness, or a feeling of complete security, they had not even their pistols. One of them proved to be the best game they had yet brought down, for he was a courier with valuable dispatches. Hastily securing the men, arms and horses, the Confederates returned to relieve the two civilians whom they had posted as guards over the other prisoners; and found that, alarmed by the threat of Castle Thunder, they had not violated the promise that had been exacted of them. Then, with their prisoners, they set out for camp. Passing the house of Mrs. H., they stopped a few moments.

“Here are your prisoners, Mrs. H.; eight of them. Where shall we put them?”

“Eight? Why, that’s two more than you promised,” she answered, smiling. I haven’t room for so many, and besides, may-

be they'd get away. You'd better take them to camp, I reckon, and keep them for me. Will you be so kind?"

"O, certainly. At least, we'll turn them over to Gen. Stuart, who is always ready to do anything for a lady. We couldn't do it very well ourselves."

So they rode on to the Confederate camp; but finding themselves safely within the lines, and being very tired with the long day's ride, they stopped for the night, with their prisoners, at a house they knew to be occupied by Southern people.



*A Repast Disturbed.*

Early the next morning they were again on the road, and long before noon had reported to Capt. Randolph, in command of the Black Horse Cavalry.

"Take your prisoners to Gen. Stuart's headquarters," directed that officer.

Stuart listened attentively to their story, his blue eye sparkling with delight as they recounted the cavalier-like adventures; then, when they had concluded, he twirled his huge moustache a moment, and laughing heartily, said:

"Well, it's the first time I ever knew liquor entitled to be put on the credit side."



Such was one of the exploits of two members of the Black Horse Cavalry. Story after story might be told of them; but we have chosen this as showing the singular daring of the men, as well as the good fortune which so often attended their courage. The command did good service throughout the war; and when the surrender of Appomattox took place, they made every effort to reach Joe Johnston in North Carolina, but were stopped on the way by the intelligence that he, too, had surrendered his army. Then, the corps, which had been organized under the laws of the United States by an officer of the Federal Army, and which had, before he became a Confederate General, transferred its allegiance to the State of Virginia, disbanded, and the men returned quietly to their homes.



*Gen. J. E. B. Stuart.*

## CHAPTER LI.

### DESTRUCTION OF THE ALBEMARLE.

Torpedoes—The Albemarle—Lieut. Cushing's Plan—The Expedition—Precautions Adopted—The Journey—Defenses of the Ram—The Attack—Confusion—The Launch—Disabled—Federals Captured—Lieut. Cushing's Narrow Escape—Senseless on the Shore—Hears of His Own Death—Creeping Away—Difficulties—The Swamp Road—An Astonished Darkey—A Satisfactory Report—A Prize—Floating Down the Roanoke—Perplexed Marines—A Surprise—Honor Claimed by Another Man—The Claim Disproved.

WHEN, during the War of 1812, Fulton and some other Americans of kindred genius put forth certain inventions designed to disable the enemy's ships without directly giving battle, every one was horrified at the idea. To destroy the vessel, even of an enemy, in such an underhand manner, could surely be no better than assassination would be considered in time of peace. But times change, and the people with them. What was dubbed an infernal machine, a diabolical contrivance, in 1812, became, forty years later, in the hands of the Russians, a regularly recognized engine of war; and during the War between the States in our own country, the torpedo was considered as permissible as the musket of the sharpshooter.

There was indeed a necessity for something of the kind, the science of naval architecture having progressed so far. It was essential that the Confederate States should not receive supplies from abroad or send her own products to foreign markets. The Southern ports, then, were blockaded by Northern vessels; many fights took place between the blockaders and the Confederate men-of-war; gradually the vessel became better calculated at once to resist injury and to inflict it; and the waters were filled with iron-clads, rams and gunboats.

Among all the vessels belonging to the Confederacy, there

was, perhaps, no other whose name was so well known as the *Albemarle*. Stationed for some time in the North Carolina waters, she was lying in the Roanoke, opposite Plymouth, when, in the autumn of 1864, a young naval officer, Lieut. W. B. Cushing, studied out a plan for her destruction. Submitting it to the Rear Admiral and the Navy Department, the excellence of the device was at once recognized, and every effort ordered to be made for its execution. Lieut. Cushing had been, during the summer and earlier fall, in command of one of the sixteen vessels used to keep the ram blockaded in the Roanoke; but he was now detached from this service, and sent to New York, to procure whatever might be necessary for the success of his plan.

Before the application of steam as a motive power on water had become general, the picket duty of the fleet, in time of war, was performed by marines who rowed from one point to another, as their brethren on shore rode. This, of course, required considerable la-



*Lieut. W. B. Cushing.*

bor, which was, by Fulton's famous invention, rendered unnecessary; and the picket launch has almost universally superseded the older boat. Resembling in size the launch of a large man-of-war, it is provided with a compact engine, and by its size is admirably calculated to elude the vigilance of the enemy on such an occasion as that which we are about to describe.

Many men were anxious to take part in the expedition, and the volunteers for that purpose numbered several times as many as could be accepted. From among these, Lieut. Cushing selected six officers and seven seamen, who were all known to him as well qualified for the purpose. On the night of October 26th, 1864, they set out upon their perilous undertaking, only to give up the idea, for that night, in a very short time. The picket launch ran aground, and it was only after considerable delay

and with no small difficulty that she was again set afloat; it was then too late in the night to think of going onward, and they returned to the Monticello.

But though the first attempt had been thus foiled, they were by no means discouraged. At dusk on the following evening, the party was again ready to set out; but departure was delayed until complete darkness should conceal their movements.

His plan was to pass the enemy's pickets, come alongside the Albemarle, place the torpedo and explode it; then, to escape in the confusion and darkness. Everything was most carefully arranged to secure complete silence, as the slightest sound might betray them. The usual bell-signals to the engineer were to be replaced by pulls at a line, one end of which was fastened around his leg, while the other was in the hand of Lieut. Cushing, and the system of signals by this rude telegraph was carefully arranged. Another line would, when pulled, detach the torpedo from the launch; a third was to enable him to explode it at the proper time. The engine, of course, would make too much noise to enable them to pass the pickets in safety, so it was arranged that they should row until speed became more necessary than silence in their retreat.

As they descended into the little vessel the rain fell in torrents, while the wind mournfully spoke its prophecies of the coming winter. The night was pitch dark; glimmering faintly through the thick blackness, they could just discern the lights along the shore of the narrow stream, as, with muffled oars, they rowed towards Plymouth. It required careful steering to avoid being seen from the shore, for the river was well-guarded by the enemy; but, thanks to the Egyptian darkness which surrounded them, they eluded the observation of the numerous pickets stationed on both sides of the stream, and passed safely under the very walls of the forts that frowned above its current. They passed within twenty yards of a Confederate picket-launch, but so completely successful were their precautions, that their presence was not suspected.

They had hitherto kept near that bank of the river on which the town is situated; but having safely passed this marine picket-post, they changed their course and rowed directly across the river. They were now directly opposite Plymouth. Rowing still farther up the river, they recrossed and descended the stream, so as to come upon the ram from above the town. As they

swept towards it, they could see clearly the situation of the vessel and its defenses. The rain had stopped by this time, and although the sky was starless, the air was clearer; so that any artificial light was more distinctly seen. The huge camp-fire that blazed on the shore near the point where the *Albemarle* lay, showed that it was moored to a wharf, and surrounded by a boom of pine logs, about twenty feet from the vessel. The light of the blaze also made visible the presence of a large body of infantry, whose fire would perhaps be upon them.

The presence of the boom, although not entirely unforeseen, yet complicated matters considerably. Such a structure was intended especially to thwart such enterprises as the present, by preventing the approach of a torpedo unnoticed. In modern naval warfare such engines of destruction are often sent off from a considerable distance, and exploded by means of a wire communicating with an electric battery; so that a defense of some kind, usually a net-work of strong wire, is necessary.

They were close upon this outer defense of the ram when they were perceived by the watch on board.

“What boat is that?” came the challenge.

“The *Albemarle’s* boat,” was the answer, as the launch struck full against the logs, crushing them at least ten feet in.

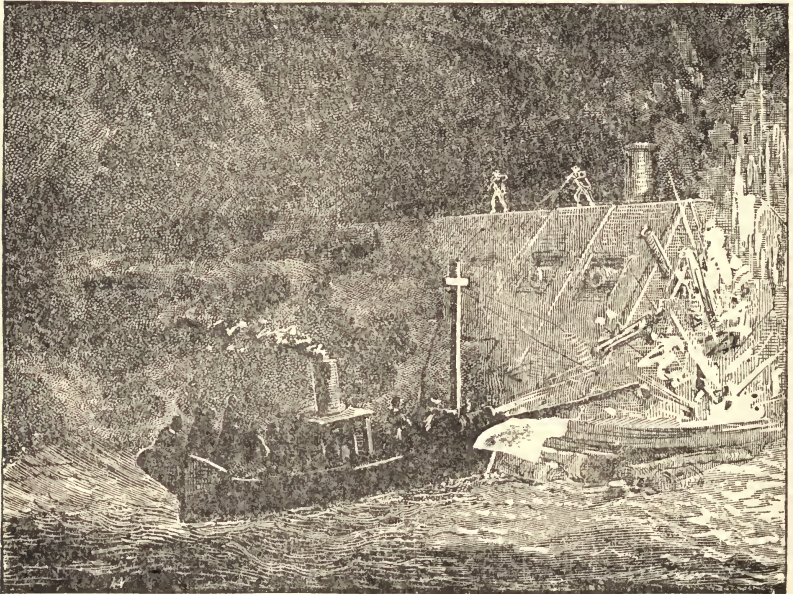
But the action was hardly suited to the word, and in an instant, as it seemed to them, there poured upon them, from the infantry on shore, a shower of bullets. Quick and sharp were the voices of the Confederate officers on board the *Albemarle*, as the orders issued from their lips. Each man sprang to his post, and in an instant the ports were opened, and a gun trained upon the mysterious assailant.

Hastily detaching the torpedo from the launch, Lieut. Cushing directed the course of the boom so that in a moment’s time it would be beneath the Confederate vessel, and as with one hand he touched off the howitzer, with the other he pulled the line which exploded the torpedo. But at the very instant that this was done, a musket-ball from the shore struck his right arm, and a shell from the doomed ram burst above the heads of the Federals and descended among them.

No words can do justice to the wild confusion of the scene; for words at best are but slow and poor describers of the actual. That which takes us several minutes in the telling, did not occupy as many seconds. The report of the howitzer on the Fed-

eral launch, the rattle of the musketry on shore, the boom of the Albemarle's gun, the shrieking of the shell, the hissing of the shot, the whistling of the bullets, the explosion of the torpedo—all these sounds came with such terrible rapidity that there was no succession of noises—it was one loud, discordant crash, one single salute to the terrible god of war.

As the glare of the exploding torpedo lit up the water with a ghastly glow, it showed the Federal launch shattered into a



*Destruction of the Albemarle.*

thousand fragments by the descent of the shell. The force of the explosion had rent asunder the pine logs composing the boom, and the handful of men that had formed the crew of the launch were struggling to escape from more than one danger. Threatened with death by the musket-balls from the shore, they must keep afloat in the icy water; weighed down by their heavy clothes, and with every limb benumbed by cold, they must avoid the masses of logs which, detached from their places in the circle of defense, are being borne onward by the swift current, and whirled around in the troubled waters where the launch has sunk.

Throwing off their coats and shoes when they saw that each must shift for himself, Cushing and his men had leaped into the

water just as the shell burst above their heads. They had some difficulty in escaping from the whirlpool made by the sinking of the heavier parts of the launch, but struck out for the opposite shore. Many of the Confederates were busy about the ram, assisting their comrades in saving as much as possible of her accoutrements. But there were others not so employed, and these took aim at the Federals in the water, struggling to escape so many dangers.

But humanity forbade this, and the fire from the shore soon ceased. Boats were sent out, and ten of the Federals, unable to surmount such a combination of difficulties, surrendered themselves. Two had already drowned or been shot; one swam the river, and after lying concealed in the neighboring marshes for two days, without food, shelter, or any means of drying his dripping clothes, succeeded in reaching a place of safety. It remains for us to detail the fate of the commander.

Leaping from the launch as soon as he had performed his self-imposed task, he struck out for the opposite bank. But their course was plainly seen by the riflemen on shore, and the plashing of bullets in the water around him warned him that this was an impracticable plan. Turning down stream, then, he made the best time possible under the circumstances; but it must be remembered that if the others had to contend with numbness of limbs in the icy stream, with the weight of their heavy uniforms, dripping with water, with the logs and fragments of the wreck that strewed the river far and wide, with the necessity of avoiding the Confederate bullets, he had all these obstacles to overcome with a single arm, his right wrist having been so badly wounded as to make it unfit to be used.

He swam down stream for nearly an hour. But though the will be strong, nature bends it to her necessities as she snaps the steel rail or fells the oak. In spite of his determination to escape, he became so exhausted that he could no longer keep afloat, and he struck out for the shore. So entirely had he been sustained by sheer resolution that the moment that his feet touched the solid ground once more, and he no longer felt that exertion was necessary to prevent immediate death, he fell senseless to the earth. Fortunately, he had landed where some low bushes clothed the edges of the stream, and his prostrate, unconscious form was thus shielded from the view of any enemy who might chance to pass.

How long he lay in this condition he never knew certainly, but the time of starting and that employed in the journey, consumed by the startling events of the night, and that which elapsed before dawn, showed that he must have been insensible for some time. Revived at last by the cold air of the October night, he heard the sound of far-off voices as he hovered just on the boundary between the swoon and the return of consciousness; gradually they drew nearer and nearer; and feeling rather than thinking that they might have been close by all the time, he roused himself with a powerful effort, just in time to distinguish the words:

“Who planned it?”

“Lieut. Cushing, who has been in command of the Monticello all the summer and fall.”

“And did he accompany them?”

“O, yes; he seems to have planned it and worked it out himself. His men, it appears, were not intrusted with anything he could do himself. They had one gun on board, and he touched that off, detached the torpedo and exploded it. So they say, at least.”

“Then he wasn’t captured?”

“No, he was one of the four that were killed. His men say a bullet struck him just before the shell exploded, and he must have been shot again or else that first wound made him too weak to swim. Anyhow, he was killed.”

“Couldn’t he have escaped?”

“O, no; in five minutes the river was covered with our boats. It was utterly impossible for any one, let alone a wounded man, to escape.”

This conversation was of course highly gratifying to the hearer for whose ears it was not intended, as proving to him that, unless he should betray himself, there was no pursuit to be feared. Sometimes, it is a fortunate thing for a man if he can make his enemies believe him dead. Listening a little longer, for he dared not move, for fear of attracting their attention, he found that one of the speakers was a sentry, while the other two were officers. Waiting until the latter had taken their departure, he edged himself slowly and silently towards the river again. But a glance revealed that it would be dangerous to try to escape by that road, as every one, wakened by the excitement from any temporary carelessness, was now on the alert.



He changed his course, then, though not his mode of proceeding. It was dangerous to raise himself, however slightly, above the surface; and the only way he had of getting over the ground was by working with his heels upon the earth, and thus dragging himself along on his back. In this manner he had approached the river from the bushes, and in this manner he retreated from the banks of the stream to a denser thicket, a little farther from the water's edge.

The place of concealment was not reached a moment too soon, for it was nearly dawn when he secreted himself in the bushes. All during the long, long hours of the day he lay there, scarcely daring to breathe deeply, lest he betray his presence to some one of the many who were continually passing. The hope of escape was food and drink and warmth to him as he waited impatiently for the ap-



*A Concealed Listener.*

proach of the friendly darkness. At last, the night came, and rising to his feet he gained a swamp near by the thicket.

His limbs were numbed by the cold, and cramped by lying so long in one position; his wrist was exceedingly painful, for the exposure to cold and the lack of attention had caused considerable inflammation; but exercise soon restored the circulation which had been partially stopped, and he felt that pain was nothing to imprisonment—that it were better to sacrifice his right arm than his liberty. The only passable ground in the swamp was an old road, which, to judge from the briars that flung their thorny arms from side to side, had not been used for many years; but in the time that it had been used, some one had strewn it with oyster-shells, as a sort of rude macadam. This

paving lacerated his shoeless feet, while his hands were torn by the briars that must be put aside before he could pass.

Many times he was obliged to rest an hour or so before he could proceed; and would sink down, exhausted, upon the road, only to rise with renewed energy as the report of a distant gun warned him that he was still in the enemy's country. He was in a pitiable condition when he emerged from the swamp on the following day; hatless, coatless, shoeless, with feet and hands torn and bleeding, suffering intense pain from his wounded arm, and having been without food for thirty-six hours. He had hardly gained *terra firma* once more before he met an old negro man.

"Good morning," he said, in as cheerful a tone as he could command.

"Good laws a' massy, sah, who is you?" asked the darkey starting back in affright.

"I am a Yankee soldier," was the reply, "and one of the men that blew up the Albemarle."

"O, my Lawd! Is you one ob de men what got killed? Dey done cotched all de rest."

"They thought I was killed, but I got away. Can I trust you to go to town and bring me back the news. See, I will pay you well."

"You kin jest trust dis nigger to fin' out eberyting what's goin' on, sah. What is it you pertikerlarly wants to know?"

"I want you to find out just what has become of the Albemarle"—

"Law Massa, she done blowed up clean, I heered."

"Find out exactly what has become of her; what the soldiers are doing, and whether they are going to leave the town."

"Is dat all?"

"Yes, that will be enough," replied the soldier, as he thought of the amount and importance of the information he had asked for.

The darkey departed on his errand, jubilant at the prospect of earning so much money so easily; and the officer, the better to provide for defense, secreted himself in the branches of a large tree not yet divested of its brown foliage, and opened his pocket-knife, the nearest approach to a weapon which he possessed. Here he waited for some time, peering anxiously through the rustling leaves in order to discern the approach of friend or

foe as soon as possible. At last he descried his sable messenger shambling along the road, and hastily descended from his perch.

“I done tol’ you, Massa, de Albemahl clean blowed up. Dah war a hole in her side big enough fo’ a hoss to walk through, and she jest settled down into de water right off. I seen de wha’f whar she used to be.”

“And the soldiers?”

“Didn’t see none, sah ; dey all skedaddled, I reckon—ki, hi—



*Meeting the Darkey.*

ebery one of dem, soon as dat ’ar ole ram got busted”

“Are you sure there were no soldiers in town?”

“Didn’t see none, sah ; and de Secesh people dey’s all packin’ up fas’ ’s dey kin.”

This was all the information that he could get out of the darkey, but it was sufficient, if reliable. The Albemarle had sunk ; the object of the expedition had been accomplished ; the town had been evacuated by the Confederates, when they no longer had the ram to defend them on the river side. But he knew that the Southern troops were still stationed on the other side of the river ; hence his movements must be extremely cautious.

Going further down the stream by a road that ran parallel to the bank, though at some distance from it, he saw on the opposite side a picket boat, moored to a stake. This was indeed a prize.

Plunging once more into the icy stream, he swam across, and finding no sentinel within hearing, cut, with his pocket-knife, the rope which tied the boat. But he dared not get into the little craft, for fear of attracting attention from the shore. Towing it well into the current, then, he simply allowed it to float down the stream, while he swam after it. At last, however, he thought he was fairly beyond the Confederate lines; and getting into the boat, paddled for eight hours.

It was a weary journey before the black hulls of the vessels composing the Federal squadron greeted his eyes, and his strength was nearly exhausted. Summoning up all his powers for one last effort—a tremendous one for his present weakened condition—he hailed his own vessel. The officer in command was somewhat distrustful, as were his subordinates; it was some daring Rebel trick, they could not tell exactly what; but before they had decided, the one man had fallen at full length in the bottom of his boat. Nothing could be feared from a fainting foe, unless this should be a part of the ruse; but at any rate, a boat was dispatched to bring him on board the *Monticello*. What was the surprise of the sailors who manned the launch to find it was their own commander! The iron will which had sustained him since his departure failed him, when no longer necessary, at his return; and completely worn out by the forty-eight hours' exposure to danger and to cold, by the suffering entailed by his wound and by the privations he had endured, he had fallen fainting at the very haven of safety.

His exploit opened the Roanoke to the Federal vessels, and all the waters of North Carolina were cleared of the Confederates. The fleet which had been detailed for the sole purpose of watching the *Albemarle* was now free for other duty, to which the vessels were speedily assigned. The whole expedition was planned by the one man, who took so large a share in carrying out his own idea.

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NOTE.—From a recent newspaper we clip the following, which goes to show how honors may be claimed by others when they have long been accredited to the proper wearers:

“WASHINGTON, Mar. 23d, 1883.

“Daniel G. George, having publicly advertised that he exploded the torpedo which sank the Confederate Ram *Albemarle*, the Navy Department, at the request of Paymaster Francis H. Swan, has given the official report of the late Commander Cush-

ing of the destruction of the Albemarle, and an extract from his sworn testimony given in Washington in 1873." [The preceding account is made up of the official reports and some Confederate and Northern contemporaneous accounts.] "Paymaster Swan indorses the above documents as containing a correct and admirable account of the destruction of the Albemarle, as does also Charles L. Steever, the surviving engineer of the picket launch."

## CHAPTER LII.

### CONFEDERATES IN SHERIDAN'S CAMP.

Necessity for Information — The Party — “One of Blazer’s Scouts” — A Sleepy Picket—The End Accomplished—Another Trip—Confederate Votes for Lincoln — Issuing Orders to a Federal Officer—Blazer’s Scouts in Reality—A Hot Pursuit — Taking the Fence — Back to His Men — A Desperate Skirmish—After Events.

**A** NOTED Confederate partisan officer was Col. Harry Gilmor, a Marylander; who, enlisting in Ashby’s command in September, 1861, rose from the ranks until he obtained the commission which gave him the title generally attached to his name. In the experiences of such a man, there must be many a tale of stirring adventure such as, safe by the fireside, the veteran loves to recount. Every month has its own record, and none is without interest. From the multitude of adventures we select the one which appears best adapted to make an interesting chapter.

About the middle of October, 1864, there was much uncertainty in the Confederate councils regarding the real strength of the forces under Gen. Sheridan; as it was confidently believed by many that that general had sent a large portion of his troops to the assistance of Gen. Grant. But this report would no sooner be confirmed by one of the most reliable scouts, than another, equally trustworthy, would flatly contradict it. At the earnest request of Gen. Early, then, who wished to have positive and exact information, Major Gilmor (as he was at that time) undertook to penetrate into Sheridan’s camp, and bring back the desired knowledge. The difficulty of the undertaking was much enhanced by the fact that he had, some time before, received a severe wound, from which he had not yet fully recovered.

He selected only one of his men to accompany him, but found five or six more at his first stopping place, where they had been stationed to annoy the enemy, by occasional dashes upon messengers and guards. These begged so hard to be allowed to accompany their leader, that he finally gave them the desired permission, and the seven men rode onward. Their progress was slow, for the officer's wound was troublesome; and it was not until the night of the second day that they crossed the Potomac, and took to the Valley Pike.

They were now so near the Federal lines that the whole country was filled with small scouting and foraging parties. Although the Confederates had come merely for the purpose of obtaining information, and it was highly essential that they should "depart in peace," they could not resist the temptation to have a little "fun," when such scouting parties did not number more than fifteen men. Major Gilmore and his men were all in full gray uniform, but as the weather was extremely wet, each wore a large oil-cloth poncho, which completely hid his Confederate insignia from sight.

As it chanced, they had not gone very far before they came in sight of a squad of cavalry, returning from a scout. Secure in the feeling that there were no Rebels near, there was no attempt made to protect the rear. The little group of Confederates saw this, and laid their plans carefully. In pursuance of the plot, they rode forward rapidly, yet so cautiously that they were not seen by the Federals, while one of the gray-coats, R——, pushed on until he was alongside the officer. Reeling slightly in his saddle, he produced his canteen and offered it with tipsy gravity:

"Have a drink, sir? First-class (hic) whisky."

"Go back to your place in the ranks at once," commanded the officer, sternly; somewhat angered by the impudence of the man.

"Beg pardon, sir, but (hic) I don't belong to this command. I'm (hic) one of Blazer's scouts, just returning from some (hic) first-rate fun with the Rebs. Take a drink, sir."

Thus assured that the half drunken fellow beside him was not one of his own men, the officer readily took a drink with him. It was most excellent whisky.

"Got a lot of it just back (hic) here, sir; just drop back and take all you like."

The temptation was too strong. The officer "dropped back;"

but, as he again elevated the proffered canteen, his new companion suddenly became sober, and the muzzle of a pistol was pushed in his face.

"Your life's not worth a red cent if you make any noise," was the warning given him, in a low, determined tone, that contrasted strangely with that same voice as he had heard it a few moments ago. Thus admonished, what could he do but surrender? But this Federal did not have an opportunity to get lonesome ;



*Beguiled by Whisky.*

for before many hours had passed, twelve others had been captured in a similar manner. The prisoners were then sent off to a place of security, in charge of the five men who had been added to the force after starting ; while Maj. Gilmor and his original companion, S—, concealed themselves in a thicket. This afforded them opportunity for sleeping, each for a time while the other kept guard ; here they could discuss the contents of their haversacks ; and from this point they could command a fair view of the enemy's camp.

But this was too far off for them to see as distinctly as they wished ; it was a case in which distance did not lend enchantment to the view ; and at sunrise the next morning, they put on the blue overcoats, which they had strapped to their saddles, and



prepared to descend from the eminence crowned by the thicket. They had not gone far before they were halted by a picket with the usual challenge.

"Friends without the countersign," was the reply; "we were captured last night, with some others; but we escaped and got hold of a couple of horses."

The picket was very sleepy; besides, they had on blue overcoats; they were undoubtedly officers, and their story must be true. So, smothering a yawn, out of respect for the presence of his superiors, he bade them pass on; and then roused himself far enough to look around him for signs that he would soon be relieved from duty. Meanwhile, the two Confederates were about to pass on, when he suddenly bethought himself that he was passing them too readily. They might cause him to be reprimanded for his carelessness.

"Hold on there a minute—I beg pardon, gentlemen, but what did you say your regiment was?"

"Twenty-first New York Cavalry," answered Major Gilmor, readily.

"All right, sir; pass on."

They passed the inside picket lines by the same story; and were then tolerably safe, unless recognized. But although both, especially the officer, were widely known throughout the valley, they were fortunate enough to escape betrayal by even a chance recognition. They walked leisurely about within a hundred yards of Gen. Sheridan's headquarters, and ascertained that not a man had been sent to Gen. Grant. Then, having accomplished the end for which they were sent, they were ready to return to the Confederate lines; or at least to the neutral ground of the mountains, where their five comrades were awaiting them, having disposed of the thirteen prisoners.

Here, the state of Major Gilmor's wound necessitated a farther rest of a day or two; and when that had been done, he determined to return and make another reconnoissance of the camp. For during the time that he had been engaged in this expedition, Gen. Early had fallen back so that it would be difficult to reach him; while Major Gilmor's knowledge of affairs in the Confederate camp was such that he felt assured that this movement of Early's was only the prelude to an advance; when recent information in regard to the enemy's camp would be of the greatest service. He accordingly determined to make another trip, in order to secure,

not only later, but additional information. Having rested a day or two, then, they again pushed on into the very heart of the enemy's country.

They had not gone far before they overtook four men, riding leisurely along. All were clad in blue overcoats, as were the men of Maj. Gilmor's command. A little conversation ensued, in which the parties mutually introduced themselves as some of Blazer's scouts and members of Torbert's cavalry.

"Out on a scout?" asked one of Gilmor's men.

"O, no," replied the Blazer, "we're just going to vote; going to vote for the next president, you can bet your bottom dollar."

"For the next president?" said Maj. Gilmor, "I suppose you don't want any change?"

"The man that's carried the country through so far is good enough to finish the job, sir."

"I suppose he will be elected by a large majority. He will have the votes of the soldiers, especially."

"Yes, he will; Little Mac used to be mighty popular when he first took command, but he ain't nowhere now; you see, people have come to realize that a Democrat ain't much better than a d——d Rebel."

The unsuspecting Lincolnites suddenly found themselves called upon to surrender; the muzzle of a revolver in each one's face, and the low, stern tones of "Torbert's men" in each one's ear. The four prisoners were sent to the rear by three of the men, while Major Gilmor, with the remaining three, took possession of their papers and election tickets, and rode boldly into Sheridan's camp. The votes of four sworn soldiers of the Confederacy went to swell Lincoln's popular majority of four hundred thousand. Of course, after having cast their votes for the Republican candidate, their politics were not questioned; and they went where they would in the camp, obtaining much invaluable information.

But they were not only to vote for the President of the United States—Major Gilmor was to issue orders, as a superior, to an officer in the United States Army. It happened in this wise: Riding into Shepherdstown, to investigate the rumors regarding some outrages committed by the "Jessie scouts," and to avenge them if any of that corps could be found, Major Gilmor found satisfactory evidence that the depredations had really been committed, but could not find any trace of the perpetrators. Thus

foiled in his object, he went to call on some lady friends living on one of the principal streets; for the Major's gallantry was like a good rule, it worked both ways. As he stood at the gate, talking to them, squads of Federal soldiers were constantly passing and repassing.

"Major, you'll be captured again, I'm sure," exclaimed one of the ladies, when, after several such groups had passed, she could no longer conceal her anxiety.

"O, there's not the slightest danger," he answered, with a laugh, "If there was, I wouldn't risk it, for I didn't find Fort McHenry so pleasant a place, though it is so near home."

"The idea of your not risking danger! After what we've heard of you, that sounds too ridiculous. Why do you carry your arm in a sling, if you go on that principle?"

"O, it's a plan that I've only recently adopted, you see. But just let me show you how groundless your fears are."

There was a small squad of Federals a few feet from him at the moment he spoke; and as they approached, he halted them. The officer, completely deceived by the blue overcoat and by the authoritative manner of the wearer, saluted Major Gilmor as a superior officer.

"Go to the guard-house," directed the disguised Confederate, "and tell the officer in charge there to send a squad of men to ——'s drinking saloon on —— St., to arrest some men who are creating a disturbance there."

The Federal, with due respect, undertook to execute the order. He delivered the message to the officer in charge at the guard-house, and the squad was sent to the place indicated; but, strange to say, the men to be arrested were not there, nor had there been any disturbance, if the proprietor and his employes might be believed. Setting down the disclaimers of these as the testimony of interested parties, but unable to trace the matter farther, the soldiers returned to the guard-house and duly reported the result of their errand. Such things were of course of almost daily occurrence, and no one thought of suspecting the officer who had sent the message.

But the Confederates could not always remain in Shepherds-town, and be entirely secure. Indeed, Major Gilmor's call on his fair friends had been simply for the purpose of taking leave; and had the Federals sought him as soon as it was discovered that there had been no such disturbance in the saloon mentioned,

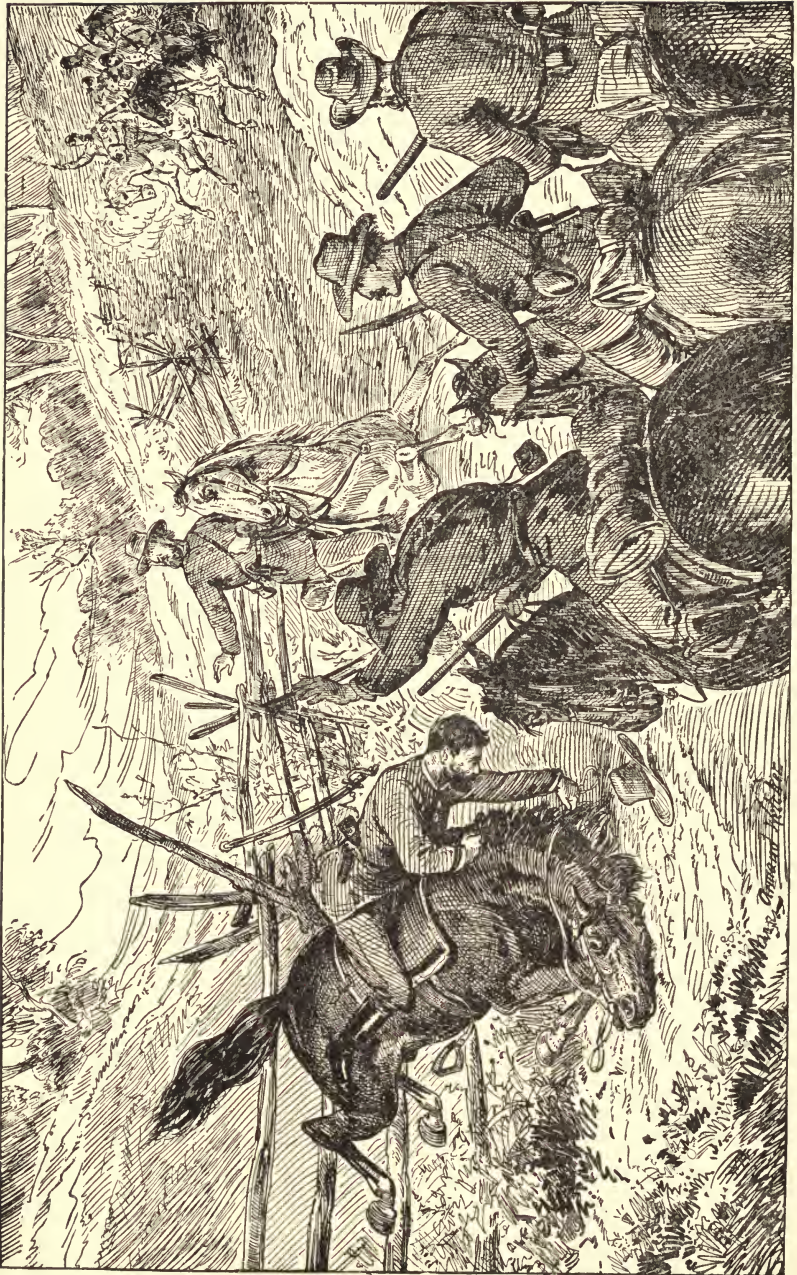
they would not have found him in town. Beating a retreat towards the Blue Ridge with his men, they were riding leisurely through a belt of woods, early on the morning of Nov. 11th, when they suddenly came upon the body of men famous as "Blazer's Scouts"—sixty soldiers, picked from many different regiments, and mounted on the fleetest and best of horses, expressly to waylay small bodies of Confederates. Gilmor's force numbered but five, so that it was useless to think of resistance; that might have been tried with any other men, but he knew these of old, and dared not risk it. Well it was that he so decided, for they had been lying in ambush for some of Mosby's men, whom they had nearly given up, and were just spoiling for a fight.

Setting spurs to their horses, then, as soon as they saw what a hornet's nest they had run into, the Confederates galloped away as fast as they could; knowing that if the speed of their horses could not save them, nothing else could. Fortunately, they were excellently mounted. They had fired one shot each before they beat such a rapid retreat, but only two had taken effect; there was no time, now, even to take aim. They first dashed into a dense thicket, hoping that they might be able to escape in that way; but the pursuers were after them so closely that they had no opportunity of doing so. Over the roughest country that they could think of as existing in the neighborhood, the Confederates led the way, hoping to wear out the animals on which the Federals were mounted. This plan was more successful than the preceding one, for one by one the scouts fell behind, until there were but five in close pursuit.

Knowing of a private ford of which he felt certain that his pursuers were ignorant, Major Gilmor led the way toward it. But their path was blocked by a high stake fence. If they could but jump it, they would be safe; but if they must stop to take it down, the whole command would be upon them before they got through. A good horse seems almost to know, by the touch of his rider's hand, what is passing in that rider's mind; and to this instinct was now added that emulation which possesses animals as it does men. Major Gilmor's horse was as anxious to leap that fence as his rider was to have him, and took it in fine style. Not so with those that his men bestrode; they obstinately refused to attempt it.

"Well, boys, if one of you that can use both hands better than

100



A Bad Jump.

Amesbury, N.H.

I can, will tear down the fence, I'll come back and help fight off those Feds. Come, Bill, try it again, old fellow."

The horse obeyed his master's words and hand, and made a second gallant effort to leap the fence. But either the run had not been long enough, or the long race had exhausted his strength; whichever it was, he failed to clear it as at first; just touching the top rail with his knee, he fell a dead weight to the earth, crushing his rider beneath him. The sight was maddening to the Confederates. The young officer, whose soldierly ability had raised him from the ranks, was all but idolized by his men; and believing he had been killed in the effort to rejoin them, when he might have escaped, they fought with terrible energy. Fortunately for them, the main body of Blazer's men had given up the pursuit, and were far in the rear—too far to give any assistance to the five who were now approaching the resolute Rebs.

Though the Federals were men selected, for their courage and dogged determination to fight, from nearly half a hundred regiments, they were confronted by men selected, in a similar manner, from the Confederate Army; the numbers of the two parties were exactly equal; there was but one thing to turn the fortunes of the day—the motive for fighting. In this, indeed, the Southerners had the advantage, and after a short fight, the blue-coats, seeing that nothing was to be gained, sullenly retreated to the main force. Thus left masters of the field, the Confederates got the seemingly lifeless body of their leader across his horse, which had not been injured by the fall; and thus conveyed him to a house near by, where they knew they could find the necessary assistance. There he became conscious again, and though unfit for service for sometime after, he was able to mount and ride towards Newtown when, the next day, it became certain that Early was advancing in that direction. Some difficulty was experienced in getting through the enemy's lines, but the task was at last successfully accomplished; and the Confederate general was put in possession of certain and trustworthy information regarding the Federal general's strength and intentions.

Major Gilmor was, shortly after this, given the command of Woodson's and McNeill's Rangers, in addition to his own battalion; and a commission as colonel. But he never went into active service with his new rank, as the weather was, for the great-

er part of the winter, too cold for the raids and scouting expeditions in which he delighted ; and he was captured early in the succeeding February. It was while he was a prisoner of war that a portion of his command, under Lieut. McNeill, performed the daring exploit elsewhere narrated. The fall from his horse, in this adventure, may perhaps be called the cause of his death ; for it re-opened the wound, a second re-opening of which resulted fatally as late as February, 1883.



## CHAPTER LIII.

### AN ESCAPE FROM A TRAIN.

The Road — Removal of Prisoners — Carelessness of Guards — Heavy Rain — Escape — Escape Discovered — Pursued — Baffling the Bloodhounds — The Swamp — A Great Loss — Helped by the Negroes — A Scare — An Unexpected Friend — Reinforcements — Hope Deferred — A Surprise — A Battle — Flight — Alone and Hopeless — Friends — Counting the Loss — Safe.

IT was an October night in the year 1864; the great clouds had gathered over the sky, completely hiding the feeble rays of the new moon; dark and vast stretched away the woods on either side of the railway track; who could tell what was hidden in those recesses shaded from even noonday light by the thick, glossy leaves that never fell, even in the winter-time? Yet even in the very midst of this Southern forest the story of progress had been written in lines of iron; and along those lines and above them, there now advanced a monster with a flaming eye and a thundering tread. Onward it came through the darkness, rolling nearer and nearer every moment to the great tank by the roadside. As it approached, it slackened speed, for the mighty creature was thirsty. In plain English, there was a train coming, and this was a wood and water station.

It was the road between Columbia and Charleston, S. C., of which we write; and the time was a night about the middle of October, 1864. The train was almost filled with prisoners of war and the necessary guards; for the advance of the Federal forces had obliged the Confederate Government to remove these prisoners to a more secure place of confinement. Traveling through the very heart of the Confederacy, it was not thought necessary to provide a very strong guard; indeed, not many men could be spared for the purpose, for the strength of the

South was failing fast. As it turned out, the guard was really too small for the purpose.

The train stopped at the water station, and the sleepy guards had wakened up and looked sharply about them. There were so few of them that all their vigilance was needed for the inside of the cars, and they had not seen, some time before this, that four of their prisoners had slipped out. Doing this at any time when the train was dashing along at full speed, would have been simply suicide. As the train slackened speed, however, these four men sprang from the platform to the ground; sinking almost knee-deep into the soft, damp earth, that deadened the sound which might otherwise have betrayed them. The rain fell in torrents; it was a night on which no man would willingly be abroad, save those in whom a desire for liberty was stronger than the love of comfort.

Not a word dared they utter, as they plunged into the heavy woods that skirted the road; although the darkness was so thick that each could hardly discern the forms of the others. At last, however, they got to cover, and having heard no signs of pursuit, they spoke in whispers to each other. As may be supposed, they were Federal soldiers, and had been in prison, members of one mess. Gen. J. Madison Drake was the officer of highest rank, the others being Major Davis and Captains Todd and Grant. Day after day they had studied over some plan for escape, and when they found that they were to be removed by rail to another prison, had determined to make this trial. Their plan had been favored by the weather, for on a clearer night they might have been seen by some one from the train.

But even as they were just whispering their congratulations and joy at success to one another, crouched on the soft oozy ground in the midst of a laurel thicket, a dreadful sound broke the silence of the night. As they listened, came that which they so much feared to hear—the voices of men, and worse still, the deep-mouthed bay of a bloodhound. It was evident that their escape had already been discovered, and that the baffled guards were on their track. But to move could do no good, for they might run into the very arms of their pursuers. They lay still in the laurels, then, trusting that the hounds would be puzzled by an artifice to which they had had recourse.

As we have intimated, the plan of escape had been settled as soon as they knew that they were to be removed; and every

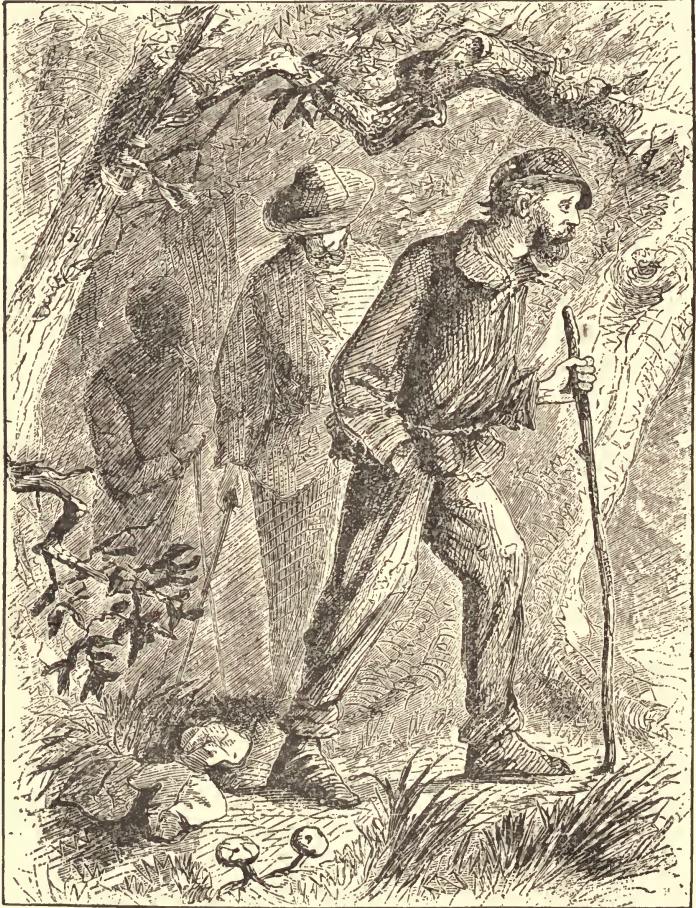
preparation had been made which the rules of the prison and the vigilance of their keepers would allow. Among other precautions, they had rubbed the soles of their shoes with onions, and laid slices of the odorous vegetable inside. The heat of the foot of course brought out the perfume in full force, and this was the scent that lay along the path over which they had fled. As they had hoped, the hounds were at fault, baffled by this peculiar scent, which their instinct did not prompt them to follow. The sound heard in the bushes was no longer the full yelp that shows they are in pursuit of an easily traced prey; it became, by degrees, the short snarl by which they indicate their disappointment and failure. Gradually the pursuers gave up the chase, and the pursued were left to the silence of the forest and the night.

When the sounds died away, and the stillness brought them a sense of security, they moved onward through the swampy woods. They sank knee deep, at every step, in water or slimy black mud, and walking was, of course, exceedingly tiresome. But they had not thought to escape without undergoing many hardships, and they pressed resolutely on. Halting at morning to rest during the day (for they thought it would be unsafe to move onward except under cover of darkness), they could actually find no place on which they could rest their wearied limbs. To sleep on the frozen ground, with a blanket for bed and covering, a knapsack for a pillow—that would have been solid comfort to the worn-out men who stood in the swamp, leaning against the bushes, and slept through the rainy hours of that October day.

One must of course stand guard while the others slept, lest the enemy come upon them unawares. But even when this was taken into account, they slept but a few hours. Their blood was so fevered with the desire of liberty that they could not rest until that end was attained. The latter part of the afternoon was occupied in fashioning rude clubs from the cypress of the swamp; for arms, of course, had been unobtainable; yet they must have weapons of some kind. Armed in this primitive fashion, then, they set out on their second night's journey; their way lighted, for several hours, by the faint and watery beams of the new moon.

Whether the Confederates suspected their purpose to lie by during the day and travel only by night, or had kept up the

hunt all day, they of course, had no means of knowing. But though the noises indicating pursuit had not been heard since they died away on the first night, they were now perceived again. It is well known that water hides the trail; and our fu-



*Homeward Bound.*

gitives sought out small streams, that, by wading, they might cause the hounds to lose the scent. This practice was successful; and when, at daylight, they halted for food and rest, the hounds had not been heard for hours. A march of twenty miles was accomplished that night.

Their haste was too great to allow of long halts, and being

now some distance from the point of escape, they judged that some part of the day might be used for their journey. Accordingly, they traveled through the thick cypress swamps during the day, and under cover of darkness crossed whatever open fields might lie in their way. The scanty supply of rations which they had been able to obtain and carry off unsuspected was carefully hoarded, for they did not know when or where they could get more. They dared not go near a house or a town, for fear of being recaptured.

But like all stores that are not magic, this at last gave out. It was just one week after their escape that they halted, early in the morning, to boil the last rations of parched rye which was the usual substitute in the South, during the war, for coffee. The scanty breakfast was quickly prepared, and consumed with equal rapidity; for their appetites were keen, and there was but little food to satisfy them. The last morsel had disappeared, and each man was anxiously wondering when, where and how they could get any more, when a party of armed men were seen running towards them. Thus menaced, they forgot their unsatisfied hunger and their anxiety about food for the future; and beat a retreat that was more remarkable for speed than for good order. They distanced their pursuers, but in their haste they had left behind them all their few cooking utensils, the tin cups from which they drank, the knives and forks which they had managed to procure, a towel (their only one) and a box of matches. When we consider that they had nothing more to cook, the loss of their utensils and drinking cups does not seem such a hardship; but they seem to have felt it keenly; perhaps because they hoped to find something. By this loss, and the giving out of their rations, they were reduced to the necessity of wandering about the woods and fields, looking for edible roots, corn and berries.

But though reduced to such straits, they still pressed resolutely onward; until at last, about the first of November, they were two hundred and fifty miles from the coast. Hunger makes the wild animals bold, and it was not without its effect on these poor fugitives, flying from the horrors of a military prison. Stealthily, by night, they approached a group of humble cabins which, standing within a stone's throw of a comfortable mansion house, indicated clearly the race by which they were occupied. The negroes in them were still held to servitude, though many, hear-

ing vague echoes of the "Battle-cry of Freedom," had escaped from the house of bondage. But all were ready and willing to aid those who were fighting for them; and though the Federal army had not yet penetrated to this point, they could show their good-will by ministering to these four soldiers. Cornbread, salt, meal, a little bacon, and such other coarse food as was provided for them, were drawn freely from their scanty store and bestowed upon the escaped prisoners. They went on before daybreak, for to have remained would not only have imperiled their own safety, but would have exposed their kind entertainers to severe punishment.

They were near Dallas, North Carolina, when, on emerging from a sheltered path, they came full upon a white man. So suddenly did the meeting occur, that they absolutely had no means of avoiding it; and they wisely concluded to make the best of an unfortunate circumstance. A guarded conversation began, in which each endeavored to find out about the other before revealing himself. After much beating about the bush, they were driven by desperation to tell who they were, and to throw themselves upon the mercy of the stranger.

"Well, I kind of thought you were Union soldiers, but I didn't like to ask you outright. I'm a Union man myself, and have to be mighty careful what I do and say, for my neighbors are all red hot Rebels, and won't stand any nonsense."

"A Union man!" they exclaimed, in joyful surprise. It was more than they had hoped for. The utmost that they had expected was that he would be moved to pity by their defenseless condition, and would not inform the Confederate authorities in Dallas of their whereabouts. As it was, he insisted that they should permit him to entertain them, and conducted them, by a circuitous route that skirted the town, to his residence, two miles away. He could not keep them long, for his loyalty to the United States was suspected by his Secessionist neighbors; nor could he fit them out as completely as he wished, for supplies of all kinds were hard to obtain; but he gave them what he had, and directed them to the houses of others whom he knew to be Union men, so that they no longer felt that they were as friendless as the Ishmaelites.

They crossed the Catawba near Lovelady Ford, being set over the river by one of the men to whom their Dallas friend had recommended them; and once across this stream, their party

began to increase. There were, in this section of the country, many men who, having been drafted into the Confederate army, and having become disgusted very soon with the scant rations and plentiful work, had deserted on the first occasion that offered. There were others who had never made any secret of their anti-secession opinions, and who had, by reason of their Unionism, been forced to leave home, in order to escape the persecution of their Secessionist neighbors. Others still had a natural leaning towards an adventurous and lawless life. Men of these three classes made up an extensive body, not only in that section, but in all parts of the border between the North and the South, generally known as the "lyers out." As the presence of four Union soldiers, escaped from a Southern prison, became known, these men flocked from all directions to see and talk with the fugitives. Outlawed in their own section by popular opinion, these men had nothing but disgrace and perhaps death to expect from the Confederate Government; they dared not visit their homes; what property they had had was wasted by the Southern army, as that of an enemy; and they were easily induced to accompany the escaped prisoners to the Federal lines, there to enlist in the United States Army.

The party of four was by this means increased to nearly a hundred; and although the danger of recapture was materially lessened, the new recruits were so poorly provided, not only with military supplies, but even with the necessities of life, that the hardships that they must endure were much increased. They were far from having a sufficiency of food, and at times were nearly perishing for the lack of it. Occasionally, Major Davis, who was an experienced hunter, would shoot a bear or a wild hog; but game was scarce, and the carcass of one animal was consumed long before another could be killed.

Hope sustained them, however, through many hardships; but it was a hope not destined to be realized at any early day. Like the will-o'-the-wisp that lures the traveler onward step by step, so the expectation of reaching the Federal lines at no distant period encouraged them in their long and painful march over the Blue Ridge; until it seemed that, like the will-o'-the-wisp, the hope was to fail them at last. As they advanced, they learned that the Federal forces were at Bull Gap; and they pushed rapidly forward from Crab Orchard, East Tennessee, toward that point. But as they were descending Big Butt Mountain,

they heard, in the valley of the Cumberland, the thunder of distant cannon. Far off, almost on the horizon, they could see the smoke of battle. Anxiously, from their perch on the mountain side, did they watch the progress of the conflict. The dim cloud that meant so much moved away, and they knew that Gillem had been defeated by Breckinridge, and was retreating to Knoxville.

It was the last straw, and it broke the camel's back. As that dim cloud of battle-smoke faded away, their hopes faded with it. With a sullen patience that was born of despair, they made the usual preparations for encamping for the night. They gathered around the camp-fire, closely, for the night was cold, and their clothes were worn and thin, many of them ragged and tattered. As a matter of habit, they wrapped themselves in whatever approach to a blanket each might possess, and lay down. Happily for them, as one man thought, all but himself could, in sleep, forget the "cares which infest the day." That one man was Gen. Drake, whose anxiety was such that he could not sleep. All through the long night he sat beside the fire on a log, turning over in his mind the situation in which they were placed, and the probabilities of getting out of it.

The hours passed slowly on, and towards morning, worn out by the fatigues through which he had passed, the officer fell into a light doze. Everything was quiet in that camp on the side of the mountain; not even the sentinel's tread to and fro disturbed the silence; for the men had all been worn out by the day's journey, and no part of the Confederate army was in the neighborhood. Only the gleam of the fire-light, as the blaze rose and fell, indicated that was a living picture.

Suddenly the silence was broken by a wild, irregular yell, from more than a hundred rough and hairy throats, and the crack of as many carbines; while the hoofs of horses clattered over the frozen ground into the very midst of the sleeping men. It was an element on which they had not reckoned this night, though often before evading this very force of guerillas. As it was, the surprise was complete. No resistance could be offered, and fortunate indeed were they who could escape from the glare of the camp fire to the intense darkness which was everywhere outside that circle of light.

Among those who escaped thus from the guerillas was Gen. Drake himself. Awakened by the first sound, the assailants were



already in the midst of the camp, so sudden was the attack. Barefooted and bareheaded, he sprang away, and managed to escape to the outer darkness. The ground was white with frost, and the air as cold as mountain air in November can be. His feet were soon torn by the hard, frozen ground, and while thus softened, a large splinter of wood entered his heel. He sat down, in order to remove this; and once having given up flight, felt hopeless. He was but half-clad in bitterly cold weather; he was utterly alone in a hostile country; unarmed amid a host of foes;

*The Surprise.*

the darkness that surrounded him seemed to envelop, not only his whole future, but the fate of the friends who had been his companions during the perilous journey.

As he sat thus, in the silence, while the dim gray daylight was growing brighter and brighter around him, and he still mused despondently, voices were heard afar off, gradually coming nearer and nearer. He sat still, caring little if they were foes; for after the hard struggle to reach the Federal lines, he had at last despaired. The voices became more distinct, and at last the sound of their footsteps on the frozen ground became audible. In another moment the party came in sight of the lonely, despairing man, and rushed forward to greet him. It was a number of the

men who had followed him to enlist in the United States Army. Maj. Davis was at the head of this party, but the others who had escaped from the train, Captains Todd and Grant, were enrolled among the "missing."

The fact that they had passed through the morning's attack in safety seemed to inspire the survivors with new hope; or perhaps with a new dread of meeting the fate of their late comrades. At any rate, the sullen despair of the night before had vanished; and although they dropped a soldier's tear for those who had fallen before they could strike a blow for the Union, they determined to enter the ranks of the Federal Army or fall as these had done.

It was a long and tedious journey, lasting a full week, but at last the sadly diminished party arrived at Knoxville, and accomplished the object of its desires. The last Thursday in that month of November, 1864, was indeed a Thanksgiving Day to them, if to no one else, for on that day they enjoyed rest and freedom from want and suffering inexpressible.

## CHAPTER LIIV.

### A RAID FOR HORSES.

i Mount Wanted—A Chance to Get One—Bad Weather—“A Thrifle Nearer”—A Little too Near—Success—A Brick—A Charge and a Chase—A Fall on the Ice—Another Prisoner—Riding Double—An Affecting (?) Farewell—Bad Luck—A Call on the Ladies—War Toilets—The Dinner They Missed—The Dinner They Didn't Miss—A Good Time—A Rude Awakening—Captured—Well Guarded—“Good Night”—A Prearranged Signal—“He Hasn't Escaped, but He's Going to”—And He Does—Chasing a Riderless Horse—The Rider Escapes on Foot—Gen. Sherman's Opinion on Horses and a Soldier's Mode of Procuring Them.

“TELL you what, I'd like to have another horse.”  
“Why, what's the matter with the one you have? You used to brag a heap on him.”

“So I do still, only it isn't brag—not by a long shot. But I'm afraid he'll get killed, and then where'll I be?”

“Ye might be on yer fate and then agin ye moughtn't.”

“Why, where else should I be, O'Brien, if my horse was killed?”

“You might be killed, too, and it's meself wouldn't loike to be sayin' where ye would be thin. That's a matter for you to settle with yer own sowl.”

“Well, Lewis,” interposed the second speaker, “I don't know but I'd like to have a remount myself. Let's get one; what do you say?”

“But where? That's what is bothering me,” answered Lewis.

“There was a Federal raid towards Gordonsville—didn't you hear of it?” pursued the second, who may as well be here introduced as Private Channing Smith, of Col. Mosby's command.

“Yes—they started back to-day. But that was a big force.”

"Yes, too big for us to attack; but we might pick up some stragglers. When they've been on a raid they don't always keep strict line, you know. Discipline is apt to be lax."

"Think the colonel would let us go?" asked Lewis.

"The colonel likes fun too well himself to want to keep others from having it," put in O'Brien.

The Irishman was right about it; no difficulty was experienced in getting permission to go, and the three men set out on an expedition which seems, to us in these cool days of peace, absolutely foolhardy. As Lewis and Smith had both said, the force of Federal raiders was a large one; and they could not tell but what, on approaching the column, they might be captured; as vessels which venture too near a whirlpool are sucked into the vortex and lost in the waters. Nevertheless, they set out, riding through a yellow winter fog so dense they could hardly distinguish one object from another at a distance of fifty yards; and over ground covered with a coating of ice, as thick and smooth, almost, as a plate-glass mirror. The sleet which had thus covered the ground had indeed ceased to fall, but that was the only good thing to be said of the weather; and satisfaction on that head was much marred by thinking of the state of affairs underfoot.

But though they could not see the enemy at any considerable distance, they could hear the tread of the horses' hoofs from afar off, rattling on the ice-covered road. When such sounds gave warning, then, that they were nearing the highway along which the Federals would pass, the Warrenton and Bethel road, they halted until the main column should have gone by. Then, with the principal force out of hearing, they might fall upon the stragglers in the rear of the column. They were so near that they could hear the successful raiders laughing and talking as they rode onward.

"Och, we'll not be getting any of thim here," exclaimed O'Brien, in a tone of disgust. "Let's be getting a thrifle nearer."

Without waiting for a reply, he spurred his horse onward, while the others, nothing loth, followed suit. But their haste was ill-timed, for they were discovered by a considerable body of Federals, and saluted with a shower of random shots. The bullets passed harmlessly over their heads, and the Confederates, wheeling their horses, retreated with more haste than valor. Then ensued an exciting race, as eight or ten of the Fed-

erals, divining the true state of affairs, dashed after the flying gray-jackets. The fog was so thick and yellow that the fugitives could not be discerned; the clatter of the horses' hoofs over the ice-covered ground was the only guide that the pursuers had. As for the Confederates,

"They stayed not for brake, and they stopped not for stone."

And the Federals finally gave up the chase in despair.

Finding that they were no longer pursued, the three Rebs returned to the neighborhood of the road, hoping that by that time the main column would be well past, and that they might carry out their original plans without any such interruption as the recent race. They had not gone far down the road, when they met a party of five Yanks riding leisurely along, two of whom led each a second horse. This was the prize for which they had been looking. Charging suddenly from the undergrowth beside the road into the very heart of the squad, the Confederates gave that unearthly screech then famous as the "Rebel yell." The blue-coats, confused by the suddenness of the onslaught, were unable to defend themselves; indeed, they were not certain but that a whole company had charged upon them; and although their hands instinctively sought their revolvers, the weapons were drawn only to be given up to their captors.

"We'll have to give it up, now, I reckon, and take our prisoners in," said Private Lewis.

"It's an awful shame, too, for my horse is as fresh as a daisy, to say nothing of the rider," answered Private Smith.

"So is mine, for that matter," rejoined the first speaker, "and if you can suggest a better plan, I'll be only too glad to put it into execution."

"I was out on picket-duty last night," said Private O'Brien, "and I don't care for any more fun; so if you're wanting the prisoners tuk to the rear, I'm your man."

"O'Brien, you're a jewel of the first-water!" exclaimed Smith, his whole face expressing gratitude.

"A regular brick," added Lewis.

"It's the first time in me life I ever heard a brick was a jewel, but I'll take your word for it."

"Well, you see, I didn't want to call you an emerald, for fear the prisoners would think you were green."

"They'd soon find out the differ. But good-bye; and good luck to you!"

“Good-bye—and thank you for any luck we may have. You shall have your full share of the booty.”

“Yes, you can count on that.”

The two parties rode off in different directions; O'Brien, with the prisoners, to Mosby's main camp; the other two in search of farther adventures. It may as well be said here that the gallant Irishman reached his destination safely, with all the prisoners and horses committed to his charge; such a thing being made possible only by the most ceaseless vigilance on his part.

Feeling assured from what they had themselves seen that they would meet only with small parties of the enemy, they rode on boldly toward Warrenton. They were within three miles of that place when they saw, riding quietly along the road, without any appearance of haste, three blue-coated cavalymen. A little closer inspection showed that two of the three were white men, while the other was one of those proverbial during the war as having “fought nobly.” Dashing upon these as in the former case, their demand for a surrender met with no response in words; the actions expressed a most decided negative. There were some shots exchanged, but without injury on either side; and in a few moment's time, the Federals wheeled their horses and galloped away, closely followed by the Confederates.

For a mile they dashed onward, uphill and downhill, over plowed fields and through thickets; clearing the fences without a pause to think of the odds. But the horses of the Federals were fatigued by their recent trip, and the pursuers steadily gained upon the fugitives. In order to complicate the chase, the blue-coats scattered; and the gray-jackets, quick to perceive the intention, separated, Smith pursuing the negro, and Lewis the two whites. If the superior freshness of the horse he rode had given him the advantage before, it now enabled Smith to lessen the distance still more rapidly between himself and his game. Shot after shot was fired at the dodging fugitive, the last when he was not more than two yards away.

“Surrender!” cried Smith, his still smoking revolver aimed at the negro's head as he rode forward. But just as the Confederate reached out to catch the bridle-rein, his own horse slipped and fell on the icy road, carrying the rider heavily to the earth. The Federal's horse, startled by the sudden jerk of the rein, plunged wildly; and the negro, already mortally wounded and scarcely able to keep his seat, rolled helplessly from the saddle.

But Lewis had been less fortunate in his pursuit; his game had well-nigh escaped his clutches, when he saw the mishap of his friend. Fearing that the negro had obtained the mastery, he hastened back; though the fog had cleared away somewhat, it was still so dense that he did not see the true state of affairs until within a few yards of the scene; for Smith was so entangled in the stirrups that he would have fared badly in case his enemy had been less helpless. It was not until Lewis had almost reached him that he freed himself and sprang to his feet. Thus they failed to take alive any one of these three; the colored soldier having been killed, while the white men escaped.

Riding on, somewhat chagrined by the failure, it was fully half an hour before another opportunity offered itself. The enemy then was represented by two cavalrymen, from whom they were separated only by a fence and some twenty yards of field. The Federals had ridden up to the bars which separated the cultivated ground from the road, and were about to let them down; probably intending to look for a house at which they could get dinner; when the Confederates dashed at them, shouting a demand to surrender. The answer came readily enough—a pistol-shot; to which the attacking party replied without delay. In the brisk little battle which ensued, the horse of one of the Federals was shot. The rider sprang to the ground and was about to fight on foot, when his companion, thinking himself left alone to resist two, wheeled his horse and galloped off. Thus deserted, the dismounted trooper could only surrender; and the prisoner was carried off in triumph.

But they were not to proceed far with him. The firing had alarmed a considerable body of Federals that was coming down the road, and the trooper who had left them in such haste had hurried back to this force. His story was soon told; how much his excited imagination added to the truth is not certain; but no less than one hundred men were detailed to put the host of Confederates to flight. As the latter rode off with their prisoner, wondering how they could dispose of him in such a way as to permit "more fun," they heard the clatter of hoofs behind them. Nearer and nearer they came; the prisoner, who, by reason of lack of horses, had been obliged to ride double with Lewis, and had, therefore, no chance of escape, felt his heart-beat hard. He looked back. Behind Smith, who acted as rear-guard, was the bluish mass that told him his comrades were coming to his

rescue. Lewis and Smith looked back, too, but to them the prospect was less cheerful. There was a moment's consultation; then they stopped, and Lewis addressed the prisoner:

"I'm very sorry we can't have the pleasure of your company any longer, but my horse can't make good time when he carries double. There are your friends; you'd better wait until they come up; we can't very well do so. Good bye."

"Good bye," answered the late prisoner; "I can't say I'm sorry to leave you, but I wish you'd let me introduce you to my friends."

But the offer was declined with a laugh, as the two Confederates rode off at full speed, followed by the Federals for a short distance. But the latter soon gave up the chase, as they were somewhat disgusted as soon as they found how small a party they had been sent to pursue. Safely out of reach of the enemy, Lewis and Smith began to discuss their adventures.

"I never saw so much bad luck," grumbled Lewis; "three of us, and only five prisoners and seven horses to show for our leave of absence from camp. It's too bad."

"Yes," assented Smith; "and the worst of it is, we haven't accomplished a thing since O'Brien went back. There were at least five of them that we ought to have had; but the darkey got killed, and we had to leave one, and the others got away."

"I tell you," said Lewis, suddenly struck by a happy thought, "there won't be any more Feds along, I reckon; let's go home and see the folks at Cedar Hill."

"I don't look very nice"—began the other.

"O, a uniform is better than any other kind of cloths, in their eyes. Besides, the girls will be dressed in homespun; so they'll call it square. Bless you, my boy, they'll be so glad to see us they won't give a second thought to our appearance."

"It wasn't the clothing so much as a general untidiness. Let's stop and make our toilets at the spring in ——'s field."

The suggestion was adopted; the powder-stains were washed off, the worn gray uniforms brushed as well as circumstances would allow—they had neither bristle brush or whisk—and they rode on to the house. As Lewis had predicted, his mother and sisters looked not at the outer man, but welcomed the soldier son and his companion most heartily. The homespun dresses, dyed a dark brown with walnut-hulls, were freshened up with ribbons which in better days had been discarded; but which,



when new ones became unattainable, had been eagerly hunted up, and washed and ironed for future use. Their shoes had been fashioned from bits of cloth by their own nimble fingers; the soles of those bought "before the War" doing duty a second time, perhaps even oftener. They wore no jewelry, for not only would it have been most inappropriate to their present costumes, but they dared not display it, lest it be taken from them by the strong hand of the bushwhacker.



*The Toilet.*

"I declare, it's too bad," said Mrs. Lewis, after the first welcomes were over, being, like a good housewife, "on hospitable thoughts intent." "If you had come a day or so sooner I'd have had a real nice dinner for you; but there were fifteen Yankees here for dinner yesterday, and they ate up nearly everything on the place."

"Don't let that trouble you, ma'am," returned Smith. "We only intended to make a short call."

"Indeed, you shall not leave the house to-night. But I had such nice mince pies. Currants and raisins are not to be had, of course, but I used some cherries I dried last summer, and you'd have been surprised at the result. The Feds even made me cook my Christmas turkey, that I had hung out to freeze."

"Why, did they stop so long?" asked her son, in surprise.

"O, they sent word that they'd be here; and the two who

brought the message ordered the bill of fare. But I can give you some good coffee—not made out of rye—and I know that that will be a luxury.”

“I’ve most forgotten how the real article tastes, we’ve been drinking the rye so long.”

“Well, this isn’t really Rio or Java; it’s nothing more than sweet potatoes, cut up and browned, and then used just like coffee-grains; but you wouldn’t be able to tell the difference. Then it don’t need any sugar, either, and that’s an advantage nowadays.”

The table was soon spread with what seemed, to the half famished soldiers, a veritable feast; and not only did hunger make it seem better than it was, but the fact that it was not camp cooking rendered it more palatable. Adept as the ladies had become in the art of concealing portables, many things had escaped the sharp eyes of the Federals. One of the much-vaunted mince pies was produced from the recesses of a pile of milk-pans; the remains of the turkey, scant as they were, had been skillfully prepared for use; the corn-bread was yellow with the treasures of hidden nests that could not be found when their contents were required by the enemy; while broiled chicken and ham adorned the end of the board.

The evening passed merrily, for the soldiers did not need much pressing to be induced to remain. But song and story were ended at last, and at a late hour the party separated for the night; the two soldiers being lodged in one room. After their day’s hard riding, they slept well. The night wore on, and the “wee, sma’ hours” had come. The clock marked three in the morning when the tired slumberers were aroused by a tremendous knocking, seemingly at all the outer doors of the house.

“Open the doors, or we’ll batter them down!” cried a dozen stern voices; and, as if in fulfillment of the threat, the knocking, which had ceased for the moment, recommenced. Broad awake at once, as became soldiers, the two guests held a hurried council of war.

“The house is surrounded by Yankees.”

“What are we to do?”

“The roof of the porch is just under this window; we might get out on that.”

“Yes, the night is dark enough to shelter us; but what after we get on the porch? They seem to be in the yard all around

the house. There don't seem much chance of escape, I fear."

"We could lie close up to the wall—the roof is flat—and wait until they give up the search."

"All right, then. I reckon we'd better take one pistol apiece with us."

"Yes; we can throw the rest under the bed. Are you ready?"

"Yes; come on."

The window was cautiously opened, and shielded by the intense darkness of the night, they stepped out upon the roof.



*"Surrounded by Yankees!"*

There was an element, however, which had not entered into their calculations—the tin roof was covered with ice, and it was impossible for them to walk without noise. The sound of their footsteps was at once heard by the enemy in the yard below. Instantly there were thirty or forty shots fired at them, and as many voices called upon them to surrender.

"I reckon we'll have to," said Smith in a low tone to Lewis, who assented; the former then called:

"All right; here's my pistol; catch it somebody."

He tossed his pistol downward, not without a grim hope that it might fall on somebody's head; a hope, however, that was destined to disappointment. The doors of the house had by this time been opened, and an officer, followed by an orderly carrying

a light, had made his way to the bedroom lately occupied by the two Confederates. To him, accordingly, as the representative of a company of the Eighth Illinois Cavalry, they surrendered.

Upon the parting, so strangely contrasting with the innocent, light-hearted gayety of the evening, we need not dwell. There were enough tears lavished upon the son and brother, enough prayers sent after him, to serve the stranger too. But the leave-taking was cut short by the captors, who were not altogether cruel in doing so. To their great joy, the two prisoners found that their own horses had been saddled for them, though they gave no vent to their feelings, and forbore to boast that the animals were remarkable for speed and bottom. But the Federals arranged things so carefully that escape seemed impossible. There were several other companies at the barn, beside the one which had surrounded the house, and the prisoners were placed in the centre of the long column; a man on either side to prevent escape in that direction.

"Can't some of you give me a spur?" pleaded Smith; "I'm afraid I can't keep up, this old horse of mine is so nearly played out."

There was not a word vouchsafed in answer, and he went on:

"It's one of your own broken-down cavalry horses, so you may be sure he don't amount to much. Say, Mrs. Lewis haven't you got any stray spurs that you can let me have?"

"I'm afraid not, Mr. Smith; the house has been pretty well emptied of everything that could be useful to a soldier."

"Well, I suppose he'll go until he stops; then you'll have to give me another, or let me go."

Still there was no reply from the persons to whom the last remarks were addressed; and the column moved on. Be it understood that, in thus underrating his good steed, Smith was not insulting his captors' knowledge of horseflesh; it must be remembered that it was between three and four o'clock on the morning of Dec. 27th, and the weather was cloudy. They had not gone far when a long-armed Yankee, having seen by the lights at the house that Smith wore a really good hat, and knowing that his own had seen its best days, reached over, and suiting the action to the word, said:

"Hi, Johnny, let's swap hats."

"See here," retorted Smith, you've no business to do that, if I am a prisoner in the hands of your regiment."

"Business or no business," answered the captor, "how are you going to help yourself?"

"I'm going to get away, the first opportunity I see, or know the reason why," thought Smith; but he answered never a word, for to say so much aloud would, of course, have prevented the occurrence of any such opportunity. The Federals, doubtless, suspected that both their prisoners held such intentions, and maintained, for many miles, a ceaseless vigilance; but the Confederates, aware that they would be closely guarded at first, made no attempt to escape. When he saw, however, that the guard beside him, weary with the night ride, was almost nodding in his saddle, Smith swerved suddenly to the right, and dashing past the drowsy blue-coat, called, "Good-night," mockingly, and was off towards the mountains. Every man in the column was wide awake in an instant, and a shower of bullets sent after him, almost before the sound of his voice had reached their ears. But the horse which had lately figured as a broken-down nag, thrown aside as useless by the Federal cavalry, now developed a mettle most extraordinary for such an animal. Faster and faster he went, hardly needing the digging of his rider's boot-heels into his sides, as he heard the whistling of bullets, the reports of pistols, the shouting, the clatter of hoofs behind him. The fugitive gained rapidly on his pursuers, until a ditch was reached. The spirited horse gathered his strength for the leap, and plunged forward; but he slipped upon the icy ground, and rolled over. As the animal fell, Smith, more fortunate than when in pursuit of the negro, sprang from the saddle, and pursued his journey on foot.

The Eighth, or that portion of it which had joined in the pursuit, was nearly up when Smith's horse fell; but the obscurity of the night favored his concealment. They did not find, until they were nearly on the edge of the ditch, that he had been dismounted, and after searching several of the neighboring thickets, they returned to the main column. Meantime, Smith was making his way, by a roundabout road, back to Cedar hill; conjecturing that the house where he had been captured would be the safest place possible, as they would not think of looking for him there. By a strange coincidence, the talk the evening before had turned upon the danger of approaching the house without knowing that the house was clear; and Mrs. Lewis' motherly heart was filled with terror as she thought of the danger into

which her son and his friend would have run, had they come the day before.

"We ought to have some sort of a signal, by which you could call any one of us out to tell you," suggested one of the young ladies.

"'Whistle and I'll come to you, my lad,'" quoted another, by way of suggestion.

"All right," answered the brother, "let it be a whistle. But what tune? 'Dixie'?"

"No, that might be suspected if there was any one here. Let it be some old tune—'Bonnie Doon,' for instance—that's neutral."

So it was agreed upon that "Bonnie Doon," softly whistled at a certain point, should be the signal for one of them to go there. They little thought that the appointed sign of communication would be so soon found useful. It was about dawn on that winter morning, when the notes of the old song were heard. Distressed by the capture of their son and brother, the ladies had not attempted to sleep again, but had gathered cheerlessly in the sitting-room. The effect of the whistle was magical.

"Girls, girls," remonstrated the mother; "we mustn't all go. Let one go out and bring him in very quietly. We don't know how near the Feds may be."

They had all sprung from their seats by a common impulse, but now paused, a little impatiently, until she should select one for the pleasing duty. The chosen messenger lost no time on the way, it may well be believed; but her triumph on her return was less than it would have been had her companion been the other prisoner. But disappointed as they were, they bravely smothered all expression of it as they welcomed the fugitive.

"I expect Richard will be along here in a little while," the new comer announced, as soon as the excitement had somewhat subsided.

"O, will he? Did he escape, too?" queried all in chorus.

"N—no," he had to admit, "he hasn't escaped yet, but he's going to."

His tone was so confident that it reassured them, in spite of their anxiety; and they were soon eagerly questioning him as to the mode of his escape; keeping one ear open, meanwhile, to hear "Bonnie Doon" as soon as it should be again whistled. But while Mr. Smith relates how he got away, and calmed the fears

of the ladies, let us return to the beloved object of their anxiety.

"You'd better not make any movement that looks like trying to escape," said the soldier beside him to Lewis, as Smith dashed off; "just as soon as I see any sign of it, I'll blow your brains out."

"O, it's a hopeless case for me," returned Lewis, with a sigh, "crippled as I am. My knee-pan was shattered by a Minie-ball in the Wilderness, and it's all I can do to get around."

Thus reassured, the guard paid but little further attention to Lewis, being absorbed in the chase of the escaped prisoner. But



*The Signal—"Bonnie Doon."*

the officer in charge of the force was more attentive to his duty, and two men were posted, one on each side of the prisoner, each with a drawn pistol in his hand, having orders to fire in case of any suspicious movement. In vain did Lewis repeat his story of an injured knee; a ruse upon which he had decided as soon as he saw that he must be captured, and that he had been careful to act out. Whether they believed the story or not does not appear; but certainly they were not induced by it to relax their attentions to the remaining prisoner.

Smith had bolted just after the command had passed Little Georgetown. From that point they had ridden towards the plains, and having reached the line of the Manassas Railroad, had crossed Broad Run on railway bridge, and turned to the left towards Hopewell Gap. Every moment the chances were growing less and less, for every moment they were drawing nearer to the Federal camp. As they turned to the right, Lewis spurred suddenly to the left, and was fifty yards away before even his special guards took in the situation. The whole force dashed after him in the wildest disorder, for to have both the prisoners escape was a thing not to be quietly borne. Lewis' horse gave every promise of distancing the pursuers, when, in crossing a swampy place, he failed to find the solid road, and sank to the saddle girths. Seeming to understand the perilous situation of his rider, the animal floundered about in the mud, trying to free himself and to find a firmer foothold.

Every moment the host of pursuers was getting nearer and nearer; if, in a moment, the horse cannot extricate himself, the soldier knows he will be recaptured. Yet the horse, in spite of all his efforts, must fail; so Lewis quietly slips from the saddle, and crouches in a laurel thicket near by. The horse, relieved of his rider's weight, struggles to better advantage, and is free before the pursuers have approached close enough to see that the saddle is empty. Once out of the mudhole, the horse almost flew up the railroad, followed hotly by the whole body of Federals; his pace by no means the slower by reason of the bullets that whistled over his head, the bullets fired at the rider who was not in the saddle. At last, however, they were obliged to give up the chase, for their own animals had the disadvantage of being each burdened with a rider.

Meanwhile, Lewis lay in the laurels, anxiously waiting until the sound of hoofs should die away. As they grew fainter and fainter, he came out of his hiding-place and bent his steps towards Cedar Hill, where he arrived safely some two hours after Smith got there. Whether or not the Federals ever knew why that horse could run so fast, is a matter on which history is silent, nor is it recorded how long they continued the chase. Both horses made their way to a point on Pignut Mountain, at which their masters had often camped, and were found there a few hours later, none the worse for their early morning race.

Smith and Lewis left Cedar Hill for the second time that



morning, under less sorrowful auspices, and returned safely to camp, to divide the horses they had captured, and to recount to their comrades, beside the camp-fire, the adventures of the day and night.

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NOTE.—To those who are sticklers for the observance of law, the project of the three men whose adventures are above related may seem to be pure horse stealing; such as, in the opinion of our brethren of the Far West, is best rewarded by a hempen necktie fastened with a slip-knot. For the benefit of such persons as would make the soldier, in time of war, subject to the same code as the citizen in time of peace, we append the letter of the present General of the Army, written in reply to the complaint of a Confederate clergyman:

ATLANTA, GA., Sept. 16, 1864.

“Rev.—, Confederate Army:

“DEAR SIR: Your letter of Sept. 14th, is received. I approach a question involving the title of a horse with great diffidence; for the laws of war—that mysterious code of which we talk so much and know so little, are remarkably silent on the horse. He is a beast so tempting to the soldier, to him of wild cavalry, the fancy artillery, or the patient infantry, that I find more difficulty in recovering a worthless, spavined beast than in paying a million of greenbacks; so I fear I must reduce your claim to one of finance, and refer you to the Board of Claims in Washington. That may reach your case by the time that your grandchild becomes a great grandfather.

“Privately, I think it was a shabby thing in the scamp of the Thirty-first Missouri who took your horse, and the Colonel or his Brigadier should have returned him; but I cannot undertake to make good the sins of omission of my own Colonels or Brigadiers, much less of those of a former generation. ‘When this cruel war is over,’ and peace once more gives you a parish, I will promise, if near you, to procure out of one of Uncle Sam’s corrals a beast that will replace the one taken from you so wrongfully. But now ’tis impossible. We have a big journey before us, and will need all we have, and, I fear, more too; so look out when the Yankees are about and hide your beasts, for my experience is, that all soldiers are very careless in a search for title.

“I know General Hardee will confirm this my advice.

“With great respect, yours truly,

“WM. T. SHERMAN, *Major-General.*”

## CHAPTER LV.

### CAPTURE AND FLIGHT OF CORRESPONDENTS.

The Newspaper Man—Running the Confederate Batteries at Vicksburg—Captured—Libby—Plans to Escape—Castle Thunder—Salisbury—Hurry Up—Change in Management—A Forged Pass—Another Plan—An Apologetic Guard—Past the Outer Guards—Prudent Halt—The Gray Mare—Cold Weather—Sable Friends—Losing the Way—"The Old United States"—"Nobody Ever Gits Thar"—The March across the Mountains—Dan Ellis, the Famous Guide—Generous Enemies—Danger Threatens—A Pretty Guide—The Federal Pickets.

THE enterprise of the American newspaper man is passing into a proverb; he will have news at any price; and in times of great public excitement he is half-wild with anxiety lest a rival get later or more of the precious commodity than he and his assistants. The ambition extends down to the very newsboys—shall we wonder, then, to find it existing in the breasts of the War Correspondents of highly esteemed journals?

To the latter class belong the three gentlemen whose adventures are now to follow: Messrs. A. D. Richardson, J. H. Browne, and R. T. Colburn; the latter representing the *New York World*, and his companions, the *Tribune*. Arriving at Milliken's Bend, twenty-five miles above Vicksburg, they found that the memorable siege of that city had already begun. Gen. Grant's headquarters were at Grand Gulf, seventy miles below the point at which they had just arrived, and they determined to complete their journey without delay. The overland trip required three days; that by water eight hours. But the difference of time seems, at this distance, to have been more than counterbalanced by the difference in danger. The land route was infested by guerillas, as were all the roads of the seat of war; men were Northern or Southern in sentiment, according

as Northern or Southern soldiers offered themselves as prey; but the boats would be exposed to the fire from the batteries of the besieged city. But what of that? Time was precious. For some days Gen. Grant had been receiving his supplies by this short route, as it was called, and fully three-fourths of the boats had got through safely. A difference of more than sixty hours would be of great importance to the papers to which they transmitted news.

When, therefore, they learned that an expedition was to set out on the night of May 3d, they determined to join it. The previous trips had been made when the moon gave little or no light, but on this particular night it shone with full glory. Indeed, as they found after starting, the expedition seemed designed to tempt the Confederates. The hay lay loosely over the bales, over the deck, over everything; a spark from their own tug might ignite it; there were but two buckets for use in such a case; and if they failed to extinguish the hay before it had set fire to the barges, there was not a skiff in which the men on board might escape.

It was ten o'clock when the little tug steamed away from Miliken's Bend, a huge barge, loaded with forage and provisions, on either side; while thirty-five men formed the crew, defenders and passengers. Down the broad, turbid Mississippi, hugging the shore as closely as may be, not only to avoid the snags and sandbars which threaten them when out of the channel, which then lay near the shore, but that by keeping such a course they might screen themselves, partially, at least, by the dense overhanging foliage.

For three hours they steamed quietly along, and still the moonlight lay peacefully on the broad yellow waters. Suddenly a rocket shot up into the air—some Rebel, lurking in the forests that skirt the stream on both banks, took this means of signalling their presence to his comrades in the city. Scarcely ten minutes had passed before a shot plunged, hissing and steaming into the water just before them; and almost at the same instant a shell exploded upon one of the barges. Rapidly the deadly missiles followed; nor was there a chance of getting out of range; the Confederates were in excellent practice, and the river winds back and forth so persistently around Vicksburg that for nearly seven miles it would be impossible to get beyond range. All along the shore, it seemed, were huge dark caverns,

out of which flashed sheets of flame, wierdly illuming the night.

But as time went on, the idea of passing the batteries in safety was not so hopeless as it had at first seemed. More than two-thirds of the distance had been passed—two miles farther, and they would no longer be exposed to the guns. But they had hardly begun to congratulate themselves on being thus far safe, when a shell struck the tug, killing its captain and the man at the wheel; they heard the shriek of the two men as the fragments of shell descended; they heard a huge crash, followed by a wild yell from the shore. Peering through the shower of cinders and ashes that fell about them, they saw the whirling of the waters as the tug went down. Nor was this the worst. The shell which had struck the boiler and caused the explosion of that, had passed through it into the furnaces, and bursting there, scattered the fire over the barges. Of course, the loose hay was soon in a blaze, which it was impossible, despite all their efforts, to trample out.

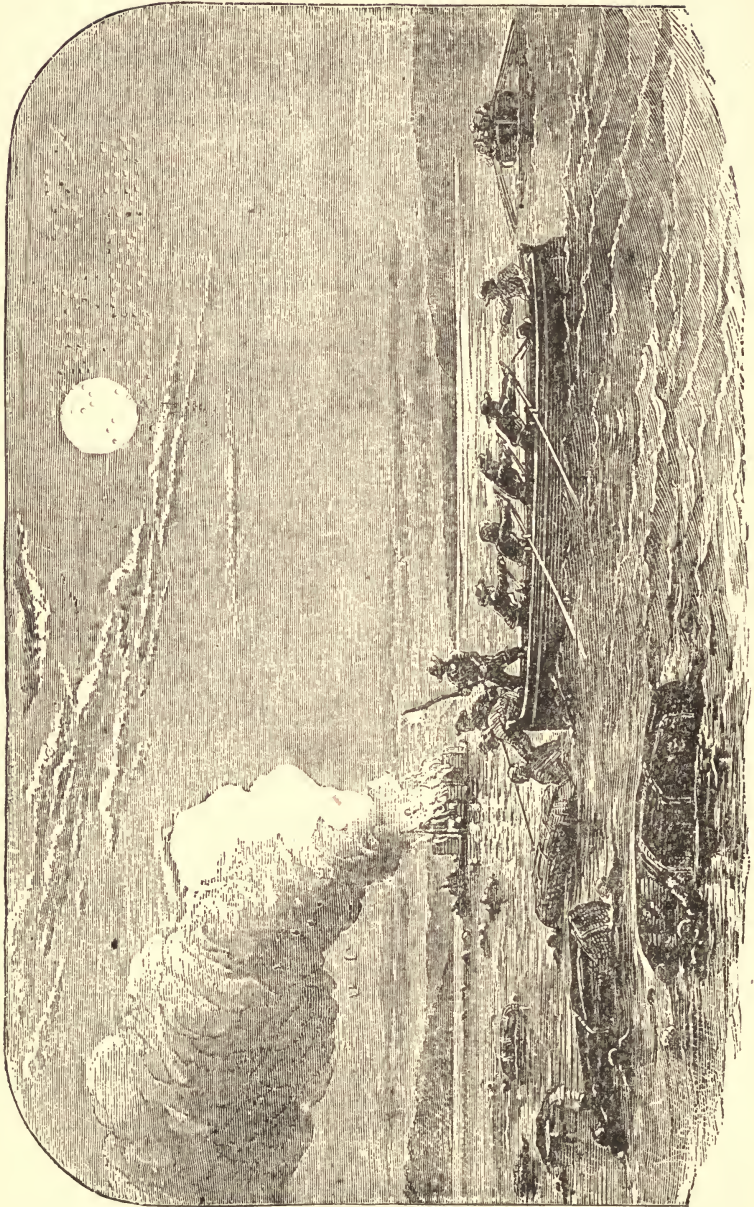
Military discipline was of course at an end; it was equally impossible and unnecessary; the only order to be given was, "*Sauve qui pent*"—in plain English, "Take care of yourself." Every one busied himself throwing bales of hay into the water for the assistance of those who could not swim; for the crew of the tug and many of the soldiers were in the water, clinging helplessly to the fragments of the wrecked tug.

From the stern of the barge rose a huge sheet of flame, whose red glare, mingled with the pale moonlight, gave a ghastly effect to the whole scene; and, what was far worse, enabled the gunners to take excellent aim. Between shot and fire, the barges were rapidly becoming untenable, and those still remaining upon them found themselves obliged to adopt the plan of the others, and try to navigate on bales of hay. Among these were the three newspaper men. But there was no chance of escape; both banks of the river were in the hands of the enemy; the Rebel pickets were posted for a distance of ten or twelve miles below—farther than they could hope to be carried by the current before daylight should expose them to musket-shot. There was absolutely no hope of escape.

"Hallo, there! Haven't you any boats?"

This came from the shore. The answer in the negative was followed by a pause in the firing, and the silence of the night was presently interrupted by the sound of oars. One after an-





*The Catastrophe.*

other the floaters were picked up and transferred to the yawl which the Confederates sent out. When landed, it was found that eight or ten were missing, sixteen alive and unhurt, and the remainder scalded or wounded. Many of them, to reduce their weight as much as possible for swimming, had cast off much of their clothing as an encumbrance, and now, in the march that followed, suffered for it. Especially was this the case with those who had divested themselves of their shoes, as many had done.

They had landed two miles below the city, to which the officer in command speedily conducted them. Their names registered there by the commander of the City Guard, they were taken just before daylight, to the city jail. They did not long remain here, however, being transferred to more pleasant quarters during the day, and on Tuesday, being duly paroled, they were put on board a train bound for Richmond, whence they were to be exchanged.

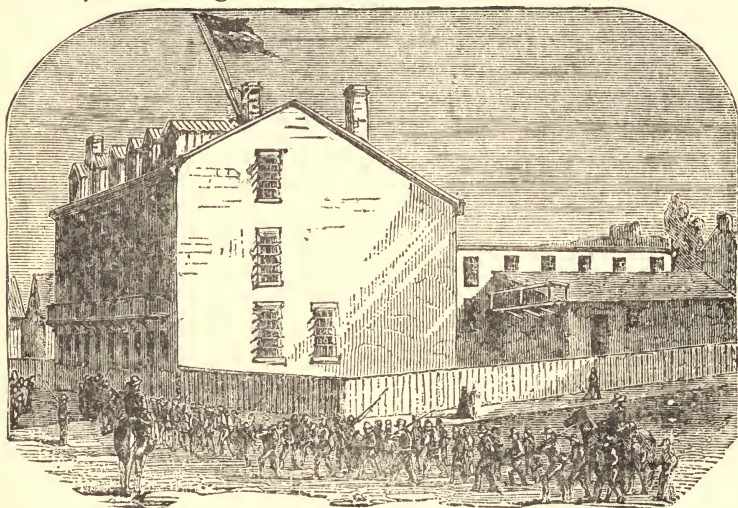
Traveling, though by rail and steamer, at a snail's pace, it was eleven days before they reached their destination. They were taken to Libby, that terror of the Northern soldier, there to remain, they could not tell how long. Colburn was almost immediately released, but the other two were regarded with peculiar disfavor as attaches of the *Tribune*, looked upon as an abolition sheet, and detained in prison; the authorities refusing to ratify the act of the agent who had paroled them and promised that they should be speedily exchanged.

Many were the devices employed here, as in all military prisons, to kill time; reading, studying, carving ornaments from bones and rubber buttons, playing cards, talking of home, mock trials, discussing political matters, and so forth; but chief in interest became planning an escape. Many were the ingenious devices hit upon by men whom long confinement rendered desperate; but over the many we have no time to linger; it must be enough to tell of one.

More than once the quick-witted Bohemians of the great metropolis had endeavored to escape, but their plans had been discovered too soon, and themselves placed in durance viler than ever for the attempt. Removed to Castle Thunder, the case seemed more hopeful than when they were at Libby; but month after month passed away, and still they were prisoners.

More than a year and half elapsed while they were thus discussing and trying various plans; meanwhile, as one of them

frankly admits, others who were less ingenious in devising and less critical in adopting a path to freedom had already escaped. Removed to Salisbury early in 1864, they did not discontinue their efforts; but as surely as a plan was adopted and put into execution, so surely was it frustrated. Tunnels were tried so often, and discovered when on the eve of completion, that Browne, never sanguine as to the chance of success, declared :



*Castle Thunder.*

“We’ll never get out that way unless we run a tunnel to Knoxville and come to light again inside our lines.”

As Knoxville was two hundred miles away, this was only another way of saying “impossible.”

At last a better plan was devised. Mr. Wm. E. Davis, of the *Cincinnati Gazette*, and Mr. Browne, had been allowed to assist in the prison hospital, being provided with passes that would permit them to pass the first line of guards. Theoretically, every one to whom this extent of liberty was accorded, gave his parole not to abuse it by attempting to escape; but several officers were charged with this duty, and, among them, in some way, our two correspondents were forgotten, and not required to give the necessary guaranty.

“Tell you what, we’d better hurry up,” was the remark of one, as he came in from hospital duty on Saturday morning, Dec. 17th.

“Why should we tear ourselves away?” was the reply of one.



“Gen. Johnson has arrived and is to supersede Major Gee Monday; he won’t stand any fooling about passes and paroles, I know.”

“Then we will have to get away”—

“To-morrow. Precisely.”

“But how is Richardson to get out without a pass?”

This was a poser. So many schemes had been tried in company, that they felt they could not leave one of their trio behind.

“I’ll make him one,” suggested Browne, at length.

So a good while had to be devoted to preparing the pass, so difficult is forgery to an unaccustomed hand. In the meantime another was added to their party: Captain Wolfe; but he was already provided with the assistant-commandant’s signature, being another of the hospital assistants.

Sunday morning dawned, cold and rainy.

“Junius,” said Mr. Richardson, “do you know I have my doubts about using that pass? Suppose the guard should take it into his head to send it up for examination?”

“Take mine, then; that’s genuine.”

“But what will you do?”

“O, they all know my face—or I can call some one who can identify me.”

Accordingly, about half an hour before dark, the three hospital attaches walked boldly past the sentinel. They were compelled to choose so early an hour, because after dark no one, be he who he may, could pass without the countersign. A few minutes later, another of the prisoners, accompanied by a boy, and carrying a long box of empty bottles, approached the gate.

“Now I’ll go and get the bottles filled, and you wait here until I come back; I won’t be gone more than fifteen minutes. I want you to distribute them among the wards of the hospital. Don’t go away, now.”

“I won’t, sir,” answered the boy, obediently.

Intending to rely, if possible, upon pure “cheek,” he attempted to walk boldly past the sentinel in whose hearing and at whom these words had been spoken; but was stopped with:

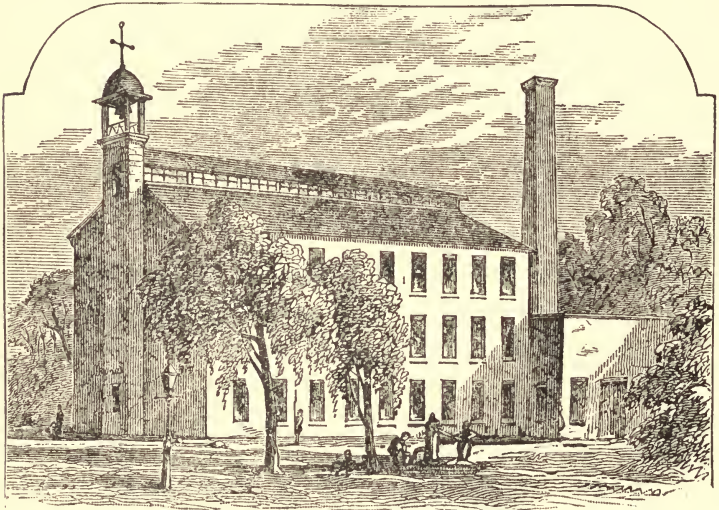
“Have you got a pass!”

“Certainly I have, sir; don’t you know who I am? You’ve seen the pass often enough.”

Somewhat awed by his tone, the soldier replied:

“I suppose I have, sir, but I didn’t recognize you at first. You see, they’re very strict since so many have escaped in that way.”

Fortunately for many, some at least of the soldiers in both armies were not first-rate scholars; while St. Louis was under martial law, a certain gentleman, who should have been in the guard-house, went about his daily avocations, protected by an old gas bill; and the present sentinel, though this pass bore the name of Junius H. Browne, whom he had seen go out a few minutes before, and with whose face he was perfectly familiar, handed it back with:



*Salisbury Prison.*

“It’s all right, sir; pass out. Excuse me for detaining you.”

He passed out to join his companions. It was necessary to wait until it became a little darker before it would be safe for them to proceed farther; so after meeting at the appointed rendezvous and appointing the next place of meeting, they separated to loiter singly about the hospital until it should be dark enough for their purpose.

Many were the risks which they had yet to run. They were not familiar with many persons outside of the prison, but a meeting with any one of them would be equivalent to a betrayal. Particularly was this the case with Mr. Richardson, as he was known to have no pass; but although he met three acquaintances, they did not have their wits about them sufficiently to

think that anything was wrong. At last the wished-for darkness arrived; and they marched boldly past the outer guards—unchallenged; for the sentinels supposed that of course they were surgeons or nurses who had a perfect right to pass in or out.

They walked onward as rapidly as they dared, until they reached a field about a mile away from the prison, where three lay down in a fence corner, in a bed of reeds, while Mr. Davis went to find a friend who had promised them shelter. Breathlessly they waited until the return of their companion.

“C me on,” said he; “it’s all right.”

They followed him, and soon found their friend awaiting them in a field near by.

“I’m sorry I can’t do as much for you,” he said, “as I promised; but my house is full of Rebels, and of course it would be too dangerous for you to be anywhere near. The best I can do is to take you to a tolerably safe place. I’ve got to leave on the train that starts in half an hour, but I’ll tell —— about you, and he will see you tomorrow.”

Conducting them to a barn, in full sight of the prison, he bade them climb into the haymow and hide themselves under the hay. Here they could hear the sentinels call: “All’s well!” but the sound only lulled them to rest. They could well afford to lose time; indeed, it was prudence which advised them to lie concealed in a short distance of the prison for some time; for they knew that the Confederates, as soon as they were cognizant of the escape, would patrol the country far and wide. Escaping prisoners, in their haste to get away, usually traveled with feverish speed as far as possible the first night, and, in their exhaustion, were easily overtaken. Against this our quartette resolved to guard, by remaining far within the line where the Confederates would look for them.

They relied for assistance upon three classes of persons—the negroes, always ready to help escaping prisoners of the Confederacy, citizens of secret or avowed Union sympathies, and some soldiers. It may be thought strange that they expected aid from the latter class, but it must be remembered that in any army recruited wholly or partly by conscription, there must be some who are secretly disaffected; and at this stage of the War there was considerable dissatisfaction with the Government at Richmond. Their present host, if so we may term him, was a

Confederate soldier, who would have helped them much but for a restraining domestic influence; his wife, like most housewives who had slaves to deal with, kept the keys; and she was too strongly Southern for him to dare to suggest to her that they should feed Northern prisoners.

Two days, then, passed, during which the only rations which their would-be friend could supply to them was water; at the end of that time, calculating that the Confederate scouts would have returned from their fruitless quest and report that the prisoners had made good their escape, they repaired to the rendezvous where they were to meet Lieut. Welborn, of the Confederate militia. He was accompanied by another escaped prisoner, a private soldier, who had become possessed of a Confederate uniform and had walked boldly past the guards. They would find friends, the officer said, in a settlement fifty miles away; and he gave them written directions how to reach this point.

Bidding this friend good-bye, they set out, through the almost bottomless mud, along the road indicated. Turning into the woods some three miles from their starting point, they traveled painfully onward until three A. M., when they endeavored to sleep upon the pine needles that formed a thick carpet over the ground; but the cold had become so intense, that, weakened as they were by sickness and long confinement, they could not make themselves comfortably warm while at rest. Added to the other discomforts they must endure, they were very insufficiently clad; for to have dressed too warmly would have excited the suspicions of the guard.

When daylight came, they found themselves so near a settlement that they dared not move on for fear of attracting attention; and were obliged to remain in the pine thicket until the darkness of a rainy night afforded them the concealment needed. They approached a large plantation, and Thurston, the soldier, volunteered to reconnoiter, since, in case of discovery, his uniform would protect him. Cautiously approaching the quarters, he found an old man and woman were the only occupants.

“You want ter see Massa, sah?”

Nothing was farther from his desires; he responded, with emphasis:

“No, I want to see you.”

“Lor, Massa, I—I—ain’t done nuffin’,” stammered the

frightened negro, as the soldier in gray confronted him.

"I am not a Rebel," the soldier went on, hurriedly, "though I have on a gray uniform. I am one of a party of prisoners—Yankees—that escaped from Salisbury Sunday. We have had nothing to eat since that time; can you give us something?"

"Dar's a big party up at de house, an'—"

"You jist shet up, ole man; I'll ten' to dat. You take dese



*Dusky Ministering Angels.*

gemmen to de barn and ax 'em up inter de loft; den you kin come back an' ten' to tings while I git dem some supper."

Poor old "aunty!" She had nothing but corn-bread and fresh pork to offer her guests; but it was given willingly, and they had brought that most excellent of sauces, hunger, with them. The food was speedily prepared, and was not long in disappearing from view, bountiful as it was. Their hunger appeased, they began to grow anxious to be again upon the road; but for the reason that the old man had given, he would not be at liberty to act as their guide until a later hour. It was midnight before he reappeared among them; the party at "the house" had dispersed, and by sacrificing some hours of his sorely needed

rest he could guide them on their way to a haven of safety.

There was a driving rain; their boots and clothes were soaked; the roads were almost impassable; and when finally they gained the railroad, the rain was freezing as it fell, rendering the road-bed a sheet of ice, yet not making any other path firm enough to bear a man's weight. Once on the railroad, their guide left them, telling them where they could find another of his race, whose cabin they would reach about dawn. So slippery had the ties become that it was impossible to walk safely, and many times they fell, Captain Wolfe spraining his ankle so severely that he required much assistance from the others. Wet to the skin, and nearly frozen, they stumbled on until they could reach the promised shelter.

"Dar's so many Secesh around, sahs, I reckon you all'd jist better go in dis barn and hide till night; and den you kin come ober to de cabin to supper. It'll be ready."

And the negro chuckled at the idea of helping these friends. The barn contained nothing but some damp shucks, which formed a very uncomfortable bed; and many were the lamentations after the pipes, which were irrecoverably lost in the fodder.

After a day's inaction, which did little to rest them for the night journey, they repaired to the negro cabin, and were regaled with fried chicken and hot corn-bread. Mr. Richardson had been saving tea, an almost unobtainable luxury in the South, for more than a year, and, before starting, had filled one of his pockets with the results of his economy. This provided another luxury, and did much to make up for the restless day.

The negroes directed them as to their next route, but, themselves perfectly familiar with the country, did not think to caution the strangers about two places which bore the same name. As ill-luck would have it, they reached the wrong one, and after a weary journey of fifteen miles through the night, a friend (colored) informed them that they were just half a mile nearer their destination. This informant sheltered them through the day in a barn belonging to his master, a rabid Secessionist, fed them, and at night guided them to the place to which they had been directed. Then, though their boots were as stiff as wooden shoes, their feet bleeding, their clothes hardly dry, their limbs aching, they hastened on. Only fifteen miles, and they would reach the settlement of which Lieut. Welborn had told them.

Once they were compelled to apply at a roadside cabin for in-

formation as to the route; and feared pursuit from the surly looking individual who responded to their call; but either they wronged him, or he lost the trail, for they were not pursued. Some few miles beyond his house they were more fortunate than they had yet been; for the proprietor of a small "wayside inn" proved to be a Unionist, and not only sheltered and fed them, but lent them two mules to enable Capt. Wolfe, who was still suffering from his sprain, and Mr. Browne, who was too sick to walk, to proceed on their journey. At last, the designated settlement was reached, and, for a time, "the weary were at rest."

Of course, they were not safe even yet; loyal as the majority of these people were to the Union, so that the neighborhood had been dubbed "The Old United States" by the Confederates, there were still many who, as the others phrased it, "were not of the right sort;" and it was necessary that the latter should not know of the presence of this party. Hiding alternately in the houses and the barns, they were cordially welcomed by their friends, and speedily rested and recovered so far as to be fit to proceed on their journey.

Their party received an accession of three just as they were about to start, and not judging it as safe to travel in one large as two small parties, Thurston joined the new comers, and they went on their way, separated by a distance representing twenty-four hours' travel.

On this, their second march, they had the advantage of starting under more favorable conditions than on the first occasion. Then, they had been worn by a long imprisonment, lack of exercise and scarcity of food; now, they had had a rest of five days, had been well fed during that time, and were provided with better clothing. But it was a far more formidable journey which they were to undertake. The rain had ceased, and had been succeeded by intense cold; the roads, nearly impassable at best, had been plowed into deep ruts during the muddy weather, and were now frozen hard in that delightful condition. Nor was this the worst. Applying for information to a man to whom they had been recommended, they were told:

"'Tain't no use tryin' to git to Knoxville; it's two hundred miles away; nobody ever gits thar; they all git murdered on the way. Besides, the mountains are kivered with snow, now, so they could track you easy."

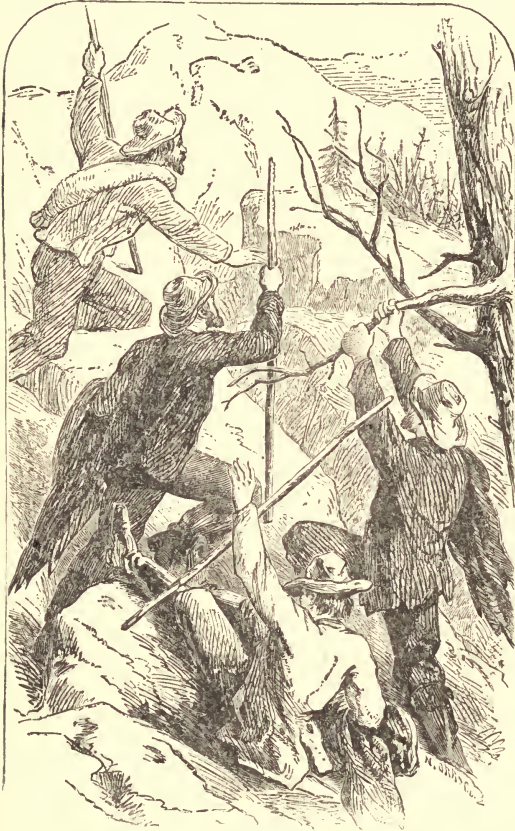
There was an earnest consultation among the fugitives.

"We were told that we were pretty well out of danger when we had crossed the Yadkin," ventured one.

"'Tain't so," was the curt response.

"I guess we'll take the risk anyhow; we must get on."

"We'll pay liberally for a guide across the mountains."



*Fugitives Crossing the Blue Ridge.*

So that night they started out to cross the Blue Ridge, undeterred by the statement that the passes were guarded. They traveled only seven miles, when they were obliged by the intense cold to seek shelter in an open corn-crib. Fortunately, it belonged to a Union man, who, discovering their presence, invited them into his storehouse, and provided them with food and bedding. At this point they again separated into two parties, having reunited a short time before; and four left on the last day of 1864, the others waiting until the first day of 1865.

The march across the mountains was one of almost incredible difficulty; through snow a foot deep, which covered an under

"If you'll wait till the snow's gone, I will take you across," answered one of the group of natives.

"But what will we do in the meantime?"

"O, you can live with us till then," replied another.

"Guess we'd better try it now."

So that night they started out to cross the Blue Ridge, undeterred by the statement that the passes were guarded. They traveled only seven miles, when they were obliged by the intense cold to seek shelter in an open corn-crib. Fortunately, it belonged to a Union



coating of ice; now where the ascent was almost impossible, now down a slope quite precipitous. At last they were cheered by the welcome intelligence that they were beyond the North Carolina line, that it was now safe for them to travel by daylight, and that their informant would himself conduct them to the house of a relative, on the banks of the Watauga. But perhaps the most encouragement was derived from the sight of several Federal soldiers who were at home on furlough, and who gave them valuable information as to the position of the troops.

"They say Dan Ellis is about to start out with a party; if you can strike him you're sure of getting through safe."

Such was the opinion universally expressed; and whatever may be the liability of popular opinion to error, a prophet who is honored in his own country must be indeed a great man. "Dan Ellis" bore so wide a reputation during the War that we cannot pass him by with a bare mention.

At the time of which we write, he was in the prime of life, and gifted with the keen senses, the temperate habits and the powers of endurance which we are accustomed to associate with the idea of a mountaineer. When the War broke out, a number of the Union men of this section met for the purpose of forming a military organization, similar to the "Home Guards," composed of Southern men. Dispersing to their homes, after preliminaries had been arranged, for the purpose of procuring horses, most of them were captured by the Confederates, Ellis among the number. He escaped by sheer fleetness of foot, and for some time formed one of a party that had encamped in a dense laurel thicket. From time to time he revisited his home, secretly, of course; for he was not safe if his Secession neighbors knew of his presence.

While on one of these stolen visits, in August, 1862, he learned that an acquaintance was to conduct a party of escaped prisoners across the mountains and into the Union lines, and he resolved to be one of the company. Returning to his home in Carter County, he was urged to pilot another party over the same route, and consented to do so. From that time onward, he made it the business of his life. More than five thousand refugees owed it to him that they reached the Federal lines in safety; and of all who tried to make the trip under his guidance, only one man was lost. The Confederate Government offered a reward of \$1,000 for his capture; he was hunted resolutely by

men who knew him well, who knew equally well every foot of the ground in that portion of the state; and yet he lived to organize and lead a company of cavalry in the volunteer army, to see the end of the War, to receive the thanks of Congress and a reward of \$3,000 for his services, to shake hands amicably with the Confederate officer who had oftenest led the chase when the "Red Fox," as they dubbed him, was the prey—a fitting end to the war record of both. And let it be remembered, that although Capt. Ellis was the first to offer his hand, Col. Symonds is his historian and panegyrist.



*Capt. Dan Ellis.*

Such was the man to whom they looked for safety; and as his rendezvous was known to their friends, they set out on the night of January 8th, to that place. Here they found fifteen or twenty more who were, like themselves, waiting for the main party. Two hours passed away, and the body of fifty men came in sight—deserters from the Southern army, conscripts who would not serve, citizens whose sympathies were with the North, Union soldiers who had visited their homes on furlough and wished to rejoin

their regiments. To this miscellaneous company, our little group of friends added the one element that was lacking—escaped prisoners.

Most of the party were well mounted, but the guide was on foot; and although they went at a round pace, he kept up without any appearance of exertion. With his rifle, repeating sixteen times, in his hand, he walked along easily by Mr. Richardson, to whom he had loaned his own mule, answering the questions of the latter about his own life. But much ground must be got over before dawn; twenty-seven miles were really accomplished; and in crossing the Nolechucky, several of the party and most of the mules that carried the rations had been lost. The men were found, but the food was not. This was a serious loss, as it might be impossible for them to stop on the way at any place where they could replenish their stores; but these

forebodings proved to be without foundation, for they scented no immediate danger until after this loss had been repaired.

But danger threatened. Hardly had the difficult march across the mountains been accomplished when the rumor was heard, growing into sure intelligence, that squads of Confederate cavalry were scouring the country in search of them. Encamped for the night on January 10th, Ellis received information that they were almost surrounded by the enemy. This made it necessary to insure the safety of a portion of the party at least, and those who were mounted were ordered to proceed immediately, and those who were on foot to follow at a safe distance. Of the former, Mr. Richardson was one, while Mr. Browne made one of the infantry.

The cavalry was not, as may be supposed, the less threatened of the two; unable to take the mountain roads which the enemy would find impassable for horses, they were, by the greater noise made in traveling and the more distinct traces, more easily followed. Had it not been for the heroism of a woman, a pretty girl of seventeen, who guided them through the rain and darkness, along a devious route which was not in possession of the Confederates, it is probable that neither party would have reached the lines.

The march had been an extremely rapid one, and under the new pressure of danger, many who were physically worn out, as well as suffering from nervous prostration from the effects of such exertions accompanied by so much anxiety and so many hardships, utterly broke down in strength or resolution, and turned back to the country they had desired to leave. Among these we may be sure that the escaped prisoners had no place. They could endure anything rather than return to Salisbury, and, though their clothes were in tatters, their boots almost falling from their feet, their bodies enfeebled by disease, their hearts sick with hope deferred, they pressed resolutely on until they saw the glare of the Union picket-fires reddening the horizon.

“Halt! Who goes there?” was the challenge of the sentinel on the night of January 13th.

“Friends without the countersign—escaped from Salisbury.”

Their welcome need not here be set down; their story spread, and gathered details as it went, until they scarcely would have recognized it themselves; but this narrative has been chiefly

drawn from sources which ought to be the fountain head. Much have we been compelled to omit; we could give but the bare skeleton of a history fascinating as a romance to the lover of adventure.

## CHAPTER LVI.

### THE INSANITY DODGE.

Necessary Precautions—Have You Seen a Horse—A Second Meeting—A Well Played Part—An Unsuccessful Search—Delivery of Dispatches.

WHEN the Twenty-sixth Indiana was stationed at Sedalia, Missouri, it became necessary to send dispatches to Independence, some ninety miles distant, near the western boundary of the state. Two privates, Marshall Storey and William Waters, were selected for the important duty. Their errand was by no means devoid of danger; for although the regular Confederate troops had been for some time withdrawn from that portion of the state, there were bands of soldiery, called by their enemies guerillas, and by themselves partisans, who, not strong enough to attack any considerable force, yet caused considerable annoyance to the Federals by cutting off such parties as this one.

In order to avoid such interference with their errand, the two soldiers had laid aside their uniforms, and assumed citizen's clothing. Their dispatches were carefully hidden inside the linings of their hats, and in the soles of their boots; the sole lining being carefully pasted down over the flat paper. Their horses were provided with saddles as unlike that furnished by the government as could be procured. Thus accoutered, they set out on their ride, looking for all the world like two well-to-do young farmers, bound on some distant errand.

They had traveled nearly seventy miles in a time that, to the dweller in the mountainous regions, would seem incredibly short; but

“The prairie stretched as smooth as a floor  
As far as the eye could see;”

there was nothing to impede their progress over that level and seemingly limitless plain. Indeed, it was a little easier than they could wish for, for they could be seen from a great distance, and discovery might lead to attack. However, they calmed all such vain imaginings, and rode on. At last, some twenty miles from Independence, they entered a grove which bordered the stream. The underbrush was so thick that they could hardly force their way through it, along the bridle-path, which, apparently, was but little used. As they pushed their way through, they were suddenly confronted by five of the enemy, each armed with a shot-gun.

"What's your business here?" demanded one who appeared to be the leader of the squad.

"We're out looking for a horse that was carried off by the Home Guards, sir. We heard that it had been brought along through this part of the country."

"Where do you live?"

"Six miles north of Boonville."

"Who are you for?" was the next demand; meaning, in the parlance of the time, "What are your political sentiments?"

"Well, sir," was the deliberate answer, "I don't know that you'll find anybody that's stronger Secesh than I am, and my friend here is of my way of thinking."

There was a short consultation among the partisans, a strict watch being meanwhile kept upon the two "farmers." Then the result of this council of war was communicated briefly to the latter; they might be good "Secesh," but then again they might not; and their captors thought it best to search them. Resistance was of course worse than useless, and the two messengers quietly submitted to the search; though protesting their strong Southern sympathies, their services already rendered to the Confederacy, and their intention to join Price as soon as it would be possible to get to him. All the time, they devoutly hoped that no evil genius would prompt the Rebs to explore the inmost recesses of hats and boots. At last, however, the search was concluded, and the dispatches were not found; their place of hiding had not even been suspected.

"Sorry to have searched you, gentlemen," apologized the leaders, "but the d—d Yankees are up to so many tricks that we can never tell when to believe what a man says."

The messengers gravely acknowledged the apology, and the

two parties separated. The Federals began to congratulate themselves upon their lucky escape, with the loss of nothing more valuable than a number of fish-hooks, which one of them had chanced to have in his pocket, and which the Butternuts had appropriated; they would probably reach Independence unmolested, they said one to the other; for they had already come five miles from the scene of the encounter with the guerillas, and had but fifteen more to go. But even while they were thus congratulating themselves, a new danger was approaching. Crossing a neck of woods, they had just emerged upon the open prairie again when they saw seven horsemen riding toward them, and heard the command to halt. The new comers were but fifty yards away.

"I'll play crazy," whispered Storey, hurriedly, to his companion; and you can be my brother taking me home from St. Louis."

Drawing one eye down in a manner peculiar to himself, his face assumed a comical expression; the saliva was allowed to flow down upon his dusty beard, while the ragged locks of hair that strayed down nearly into his eyes completed the picture. As they came nearer, he leaped from his horse and ran toward them.

"Don't mind him," called Waters, as some of the Butternuts drew their pistols; "he's crazy as a loon."

Storey bore out this description by his behavior; with the peculiarly gentle, pitiful smile of a half-witted person, he caressed their horses, fingered their weapons admiringly, and seemed to endeavor, in many ways, to win their good graces. The men looked on him with a sort of good-natured content; he was too evidently the genuine article for them to entertain any suspicions regarding him, atleast. On his companion, however, they looked with less confidence.

"Where did you come from, and where are you going?" demanded the leader.

"I've come from St. Louis just now, with my brother, here," replied Waters; "he's been in the Insane Asylum there, but there wasn't any use of keeping him shut up, and we hated to have him so far away in war times. There's no telling what may happen."

Storey had been busily caressing a beautiful black pony, ridden by one of the Rebs. He appeared to understand dimly that

he was the subject of which his brother was speaking, and looked around upon all present with a vacant smile on his face.

"Where do you live?"

"In Jackson county, just this side of the Kansas border."

But the more serious part of the proceedings was here stopped, to witness Storey's performances; after much petting of the pony, he suddenly left it and went up to his own poor old horse. The animal, almost broken down, was gravely led



*The Insane Dodge.*

up to the rider of the pony, whom the "crazy man" invited to exchange. The whole proceeding was watched with much interest on the part of the other six.

"D—d if I trade horses with you," exclaimed the rider of the pony.

"Just see what he'll do," said the captain to the other. The man somewhat reluctantly dismounted, and Storey, with many broken exclamations of delight, mounted the pony and was about to ride off. But the Butternut was not at all willing that the fun should go any farther at his expense, and running after Storey, pulled him roughly from the saddle. The better to act out his assumed character, the Federal turned furiously upon the other, and was about to fight him. The Confederate retreat-



ed at a somewhat rapid pace to his comrades. After him went the pretended simple fellow, who grasped a stick as he ran, and the owner of the pony came dangerously near being belabored.

In the meantime, the sport had palled somewhat, and they had turned to more serious business. Waters was subjected to what they called a thorough search, but which was not so thorough as they supposed, as the dispatches wholly escaped their observation. Of course it was useless to search a man just released from the Insane Asylum, and who appeared not to have sense enough to be intrusted with any secret or anything of importance. Having made sure that there was nothing contraband about Waters, they turned to watch, with an appreciative eye, the contest which Storey was still waging for the possession of the coveted pony; urging him on to fight very much as they might have incited a game-cock or a bull-dog.

"Don't provoke him, please," pleaded the brother; "it only makes him worse; and he may get so furious there'll be no doing anything with him. Come, Billy, get on your horse and let's go home. This is your horse, you know."

But Billy would not, and it was only by the assistance of one of the Butternuts that his brother was able to get him away from the pony, and on his own steed. The Confederates left them to take their way onward, and rode off in an easterly direction; frequently looking back to see if the "crazy fellow" had any notion of coming after the pony to which he had taken such a fancy. But with the fickleness of his kind, he seemed to have been pacified by some of the glowing promises of which his brother had, even in their presence, been lavish; at any rate, he seemed to have given up the idea of getting the animal. Had they known that when once the two were fairly out of sight, he would brush his hair from his forehead, and in all other ways lay aside his insanity, and gallop off at full speed, they might have been even more sure. But of course, they had no means of knowing this and the two messengers reached Independence in safety.

## CHAPTER LVII.

### WHEELER'S CAVALRY ESCAPADES.

Stage of the War—Gen. Wheeler's Determination—A Companion—Swimming the Peedee—An Uninvited Comrade—An Earnest Appeal—A Borrowed Name—"Sam. Johnson"—A Hearty Welcome—Sam's Bashfulness—A Sudden Alarm—Unfounded Anxiety—"Scare 'em out of their Boots"—Signs of the Enemy—The Bugler—Retreat of the Enemy—Incidents of the Pursuit—Advance of Gen. Hampton.

THE War was nearly at an end, though few men had the wisdom to see it; Southerners fought on with a dogged courage that would not acknowledge defeat, while the Northerners had so often had their hopes raised by false prophets that they would believe nothing until it was proven. Perhaps the only man who fully foresaw the end was the one whose name has come to be a synonym for silence which occasionally is broken by brief but significant speeches; we say perhaps, for it may be that the great general who was to be conquered saw it as clearly as the great general who was to be victor in the struggle.

But though they might not be able to predict the end exactly, there was not a man in the Confederate army who did not look forward with anxiety; knowing, as each one did, the extreme poverty of the South in men and in all kinds of supplies. Sherman had captured Atlanta after its long siege, and had made his famous "March to the Sea;" Fort McAlister had fallen, and the city which it defended, Savannah, was in his victorious hands. Matters had a serious look to the Confederates, then, when, one day in February, 1865, Gen. Wheeler and Gen. Hampton sat on their horses some little distance from their escorts, and discussed their plans for the future. The two generals had massed their forces near Arnold's Mill, on the bank of the Peedee; and

before any further move, advance or retrograde, could be made with safety, a careful reconnoissance was necessary. They talked with great earnestness, and for some time; at last, it seemed as if one were urging some plan which the other did not think prudent. Many minutes passed in argument, and at last Gen. Hampton assented to what Gen. Wheeler proposed. Thus ending the conference, the two generals rode towards their forces again, and Gen. Wheeler sent for Col. Anderson, of the Fourth Tennessee Cavalry.



*Gen. Wade Hampton.*

“Colonel, I want one of your best men to go across the river with me on a little scout.”

“Very well, sir,” replied the subordinate; and turning, he beckoned to his orderly, whom he directed to send James B. Nance, the bugler of the regiment, to him. The soldier soon made his appearance, and, saluting, stood waiting to hear the duty to which he was to be assigned.

“Nance, Gen. Wheeler wants a trusty man to cross the river with him; will you go?”

“I am ready for any orders, sir,” was the reply.

“Wait here a moment, then,” directed the general, “until I have put on a private’s coat. Gen. Hampton insists very strongly upon it, and I suppose he is right.”

Nance simply handed his bugle to a comrade and was ready; Gen. Wheeler was not much longer in making his preparations, and they mounted and set out. The river was swollen by the copious winter rains, and the current was swift and strong; but they plunged boldly in. Two hundred yards from the shore was an island, and to this they directed their course, in order that their horses might have as much rest as possible. Meanwhile, in some inexplicable way, the purpose of their expedition had become generally known in the army, and as they swam through the deep water, their progress was intently watched by thousands of eager eyes; they gained the island, their horses struggled to land, and cheer after cheer was heard from the shore.

“I can’t stand it any longer,” exclaimed one soldier, whose

name has not come down to us; "discipline or no discipline, I am going to make one of them."

And he spurred his horse into the stream, determined to join the scouts. His determination was not seen by the latter as they rested a few moments on the island; and regardless of the reinforcement that was coming up, they again plunged into the water, steering towards a second island, two or three hundred yards further on. But they were now in the very channel of the stream, where the water was the deepest, and the current swiftest and strongest. So irresistible was it, that Nance was swept from the saddle, and could only save himself from drowning by catching hold of his horse's tail. The animal, nothing disturbed by this unusual mode of guidance, swam as straight for the island as if his rider had still held the reins. He scrambled upon the shore, and pulled his rider once more to dry land.

As they paused here for a brief breathing spell, they saw, for the first time, the soldier who was so resolved to join them, and halted longer than they intended in order to allow him to come up with them. His horse "breasted the current like a tug," says Mr. Nance, from whose account our facts are chiefly derived, and it was not long before he had overtaken the two whom he wished to join.

"I couldn't help it, General, I had to come. Of course, if you say so, I'll go back, but I *do* want to go with you, sir."

The officer smiled at the earnestness of the appeal as he answered:

"Oh, no, I wouldn't have you go back for the world; come right on, and we'll make the scout with three instead of two."

"I know two are company"—began the new comer again.

"But three don't make a crowd. Is your horse rested? If it is, we'll make for the third island over there."

"Oh, he's all right; ready for anything, General," answered the trooper, patting the horse's neck affectionately.

"I don't know; he looks tired," said Nance; "anyhow, General, I wish, before we go in again, you would tell us what to do in case of capture."

"Get away again, I reckon, would be the best thing under such circumstances. That's general, however; what was it particularly that you wanted to know?"

"In case we were to be captured, if they knew you to be Gen. Wheeler, they'd watch us so close we wouldn't have any chance

to get away. You've put on a private's coat so as not to attract their attention; why not assume another name?"

"That's well thought of, Nance; can you suggest a good name? One that would not sound as if it were assumed."

"Well, I suppose a real name would sound the most real. Sam Johnson's a good fellow; suppose you borrow his."

"All right. Sam Johnson—that certainly sounds like the real thing. I suppose he would have no objections to lending his name."



Gen. Joseph Wheeler.

"I know he wouldn't, General, when you want to borrow."

"All right, then, Sam Johnson I'll be for the present. Now, we'd better go on to the third island."

As he rode into the water the other two followed closely behind him. The third island was reached, and after another short halt, they started upon the home stretch, and finally stood upon the farther shore of the Peedee.

Plunging into the deep woods which here skirted the stream, they went on for some distance before reaching the road; but fortunately had not far to go before coming to a house.

"Ill stand picket in the road, boys," said Gen. Wheeler, "while you go to the house and get some dry clothes; and then you can do the same for me."

"O, no, General, you must go first, and then we can go."

But to this the officer would not listen, and the men were finally obliged to consent to his plans. No difficulty was experienced, as the people living in the house were strong Secessionists; the three scouts were accorded as hearty a welcome as could have been given to Gen. Wheeler or any other officer *in propria persona*, and they were regaled with an excellent supper. After leaving the table, the young ladies, of whom there were several in the house (as often happened in those days, there were none but ladies and children at home) urged the guests to sing—

anything so it was Southern, for they were ardent Rebels. With characteristic gallantry, the soldiers urged the ladies to sing first, and several ballads of the time were given by them in fine style—from “Dixie” to the “Homespun Dress.”

“Now you must sing,” the ladies urged; “we’ve done our part, and you promised, you know.”

Accordingly, Nance sat down to the piano, and thrumming an accompaniment, gave them the song, especially popular with this command, and called “Wheeler’s Cavalry.”

“O, that’s splendid,” they exclaimed, with one voice; “now won’t you *please* sing us another?”

“Well, the fact is, ladies, I only sang to redeem my promise. I was almost ashamed to utter a note in the presence of the best singer in the army.”

“The best singer in the army!” they cried excitedly; “which is it?”

“My friend, Mr. Johnson, has that reputation. Come, Sam, don’t be so modest. You know you are called so, and there’s reason for the name.”

But “Sam Johnson” blushed like a girl, and earnestly denied the soft impeachment; the ladies of course set all his denials down to the account of modesty, or rather, bashfulness, and only urged him the more; while Nance now and then threw in a few words that encouraged them the more. For some time this went on, the two soldiers greatly enjoying the fun; until Nance, seeing that it had gone far enough, turned to the piano with a sigh:

“I’m sorry he won’t sing, ladies, but he always is bashful about it. If you’ll accept of a very poor substitute, I’ll do the best in my power.”

The ladies hastened to assure him that while they would like very much to hear the best singer in the army, they did not consider him a bad substitute. Thus reassured, he began the “Bonnie Blue Flag”; but suddenly stopped, as, in the pauses of the music, his quick ear caught the sounds of horses’ feet. His two companions heard it at the same moment, and hastily putting an end to the music and conversation, they sprang to the door. Listening attentively for a few minutes, in order to ascertain in what direction the horsemen were going, and finding that they seemed to be approaching the house, Nance said, hurriedly:

“Stay here, Sam, and I’ll go down to the road and hail them. I’ll talk loud enough for you to hear, and if they’re Yanks,

you'll soon know it. Be ready for action, whoever they are."

"Without waiting for a reply, he bounded down the steps and to the fence which separated the garden from the road."

"Hallo! What command is that?" he called, as they rode up.

"Wheeler's Scouts," was the reply.

"Who is in command?"

"Captain Shannon," answered that officer, whom Nance at once recognized.



"The best singer in the army."

"Ride up a little nearer the fence, won't you, Captain?"

"Is it Mr. Nance of the Fourth Tennessee Cavalry?"

"Yes, sir; are you on urgent business to-night?"

"Yes; you see, Gen. Wheeler came over to this side of the river on a scout to-day, and as he had no escort, Gen. Hampton became anxious as to his safety and dispatched me with eight men to ascertain his whereabouts."

"Well, there's no need for Gen. Hampton's anxiety; for our general is in the house here."

"In the house? You don't say so!" And in an instant every one of the scouts was off his horse and making a bee-line for the house-door. As they entered, and saw that their command-

er, of whose safety they had entertained such doubts, was really before them, military discipline and etiquette were thrown to the four winds of heaven.

“Glad to see you, General!”

“How are you, General?”

“’Rah for the General!”

Meanwhile the ladies stared in wonder, to hear that the “bashful Mr. Johnson” was a real live general; and their wonder was only increased by learning that it was the dashing cavalry officer with whose name they were so familiar. The scouts, thus increased in number to twelve, were hospitably entertained for the night, and bidden God-speed on their departure in the morning. One of the new comers was provided with a bugle, which, at Gen. Wheeler’s desire, he gave up to the bugler of the Fourth Tennessee.

“Take it, Nance, and when we come upon the enemy sound it long and loud, so as to scare ’em out of their boots with the noise.”

“All right, sir; I’ll do my best with it.”

Gen. Wheeler and Captain Shannon rode in front, a few paces before the main body of the little force. Orders had been given that, as soon as they came in sight of the enemy, the scouts were to charge and rout them—the latter part of the order being given with as much earnestness as the former, as if the routing were a matter entirely under the control of the assaulting party. They rode on for about five miles without seeing any sign of the enemy’s presence save the devastation of the country which always accompanies war. The scouts, indeed, were beginning to be impatient, for they had expected to get a sight of the blue-coats before that. At last, however, the general halted as he came to a point where the road forked, and turning in his saddle, beckoned to his men. With joyful haste they put spurs to their horses and rode forward.

The sight which they saw was one to strike terror even to a brave heart. Drawn up in line of battle in the road before them, was a force of Yankees far outnumbering their own little party—the dark blue of the blouses lightened by the gleam of the guns. But even if they had been disposed to draw back, their leader left them no alternative. He signaled to Nance to sound the charge; the notes of the bugle rang out, sharp and clear, upon the wintry morning; the Federals had no intimation that an en-



emy was near, and when the handful of scouts charged upon them, they were taken entirely by surprise. The Confederates, bent upon making their numbers seem as great as possible, rode onward with the true Rebel yell, repeated as many times as human lungs would allow. The Federal officers, rapidly comprehending the fact that they were beset by the enemy in unknown strength, gave the order to fire; but though the men were armed with seven-shooting carbines, the bullets flew over the heads of the rapidly advancing cavalry. Onward, onward, came the



*Following the Bugle.*

Rebs, and at the shock of the onset the blue line wavered, broke, and was soon in full retreat.

“Blow like the devil, Nance!” shouted the Confederate officer, above the din of the charge. And as he sounded the charge again and again, the Yanks, fully convinced that their assailants far outnumbered them, moved onward all the faster to some haven of safety. So the chase went on, until the Southerners found themselves in a slight hollow, whence they could not see the retreating column of the enemy. Here they scattered, each man to pursue the scattered fugitives as well as possible, leaving the main column to its chances of safety, as it was too strong for them to attack in earnest. Here and there, a Confederate would over-

take a blue-coat, evidently utterly demoralized by the suddenness of the late attack. Such, at least, was the experience of our doughty bugler, who, having fully tested the powers of sound, was now anxious to strike some blows for the cause in which he was engaged.

Exploring a small passage around the hill, communicating with the hollow in which they then were, he came, somewhat suddenly, upon two Yanks, one of whom was riding a mule.

"Halt! Surrender!"

The summons met with no response from those addressed; and the Reb, resolved that they should not thus escape him, emptied a barrel of his revolver at them. The mounted man rolled from his saddle with a bullet through his brain, while the other, to whose fears this lent new wings, ran on with redoubled speed. Knowing that the first was safe, Nance pursued the other at full speed. His horse struggled bravely up the hill, and at last he was in the little grove that crowned its summit. Unwilling to pause, even to give the noble animal the moment's rest which was so much needed, he had struck his spurs afresh into the quivering flanks, when he saw, on the summit of the next hill, within easy range, the whole Federal line drawn up anew, as they had been across the road. He had been so keen in his pursuit of the fugitive that he had not, until that moment, perceived the hornet's nest into which he had rushed; but fortunately, he was quick in conception as in action; a touch upon the rein, and he had wheeled his horse, the spurs only serving to urge him in the contrary direction from that in which the rider had intended to go. Riding back to Gen. Wheeler, he reported his adventure, and the success with which he had met.

"Did you get the gun of the Yankee you shot?"

"No, sir, I had no need for it, and could not well carry it."

"I wish you would get it for me, will you?"

"Certainly."

He returned in a few minutes with the gun, and, by Gen. Wheeler's order, the whole little force set out for the Peedee again, for there was of course imminent danger of capture. The Federals, perceiving no signs that the attack was to be renewed, took fresh courage, and sent forward a few men to ascertain the intentions of the enemy. Having thus learned something of the strength of the assaulting party, and that it was in full retreat, they hastily advanced in the direction advised by those officers

who had made the reconnoissance. The Confederates, though unaware that such a movement had actually taken place, were yet alarmed lest the enemy might determine upon it, and retreated at full speed to the river. But they were not destined to swim the swift waters as they had done on the previous day, for Gen. Hampton, in the absence of the information which Gen. Wheeler had wished to procure, and fearing that the latter officer might have been captured, had put his corps in motion and crossed the river early that morning. The little body of scouts had ridden scarcely two miles before they met the advance-guard, and, hurrying rearward, each man was soon in his place.

Although there was but little, if any, information or advantage gained by this scout, it had this one point in its favor: there was nothing lost. In spite of their furious charge upon the superior force of Federals, there was not one of their number hurt by the bullets, that, for a few minutes, rained about them. When, therefore, we admire and wonder at the daring of an officer who, with so small an escort, penetrated even so short a distance into the enemy's country, our ardor is not damped by the reflection that he sacrificed human life to his audacity.

## CHAPTER LVIII.

### DESTROYING THE ENEMY'S STORES.

The Deserter's Information—Wouldn't be Outdone—The Invitation Accepted—The Departure from Camp—Pompey's Distrust—At the Point Threatened—Access to the House—Enemies Near—Caution—The Powder Securely Disposed of—A Sudden Attack—A Desperate Struggle—Victory—Rapid Retreat—Pompey's Dismay.

“I SAY, L—,” said a Fire Zouave in the Army of the Potomac, as he looked cautiously about him to see that there were no eaves-droppers near. “let's go on a little private raid. What do you say?”

“Well, I don't know,” was the reply, in a doubtful tone; “what kind of a raid? Where to?”

“Well, there was a deserter brought in last night—not one of our men, but from over there”—and he jerked his thumb in the direction of the Confederate lines. “He said as how there was a right smart sight of ammunition where it wouldn't be so orful hard to get.”

“Whereabouts?” demanded the other, his interest now fully aroused.

“Do you want to go?” the first replied, Yankee fashion.

“Well, if it ain't too much pork for a shilling, I guess I'll go. But are you sure the ammunition is really there? Who did he tell?”

“Me. I treated him. Had some of that whisky left we got when we raided that Rebel house over in —— county. Tell you what, that ex-Reb knows a thing or two about liquor, he does that.”

“They all do, hang 'em, and they all get it, too, by some hook or crook. But are you sure he ain't a foolin' you, now?”

"He swore it was so, anyhow, and he's on his good behavior now, you know—just converted. Talking about conversion, did you hear what Col. C—— said the other day?"

"That profane old fellow, that cusses oftener than he breathes? No."

"Well, you know how Chaplain M—— is always talking pious; so the other day he goes to Col. C——'s tent, and begins to talk to him about the wonderful piety of the ——th Massachusetts—ten men had been baptized, and so on. Well, the old fellow got disgusted at that, and ripped out an oath that made the chaplain's hair stand on end. Then he turned around to his orderly and told him to have fifteen men detailed for baptism right away—he wasn't going to be outdone by any d——d Massachusetts regiment in the army. The orderly told me that."

"Is that the way your ex-Reb was converted?"

"No, I guess not. He was a loyal man living within the Rebel lines, and got conscripted; so he deserted just as soon as he got a chance. I guess he's all right. But if you ain't willing to risk it, I can get some one else to go with me," replied the Zouave, turning away.

"Hold on; I didn't say that I wouldn't go, did I?"

"N—no, not exactly."

"I'll go, of course, and thank you for the invitation. But can't you tell a fellow some particulars?"

"It's ball-cartridges, and there's several thousand of them. They're in a room in the second story of that big house the other side of the woods—you know the one I mean?"

"Yes, the old fellow's Secesh—some of the boys say he's a spy."

"That's the one. Now, we'll get hold of a horse and wagon, and we'll put it safely away till sunset. Then we'll go and get it without letting the other fellows know what we are about, or they'll all want to go along, and that would spoil the fun. We'll drive up pretty near the house, and hide the wagon until we get it filled."

"But where is the wagon?"

"Trust me to attend to that," answered the Zouave with a mysterious wink, and a knowing look.

"And, granting that you get the wagon and we get there all right, how are you going to get the bags in the wagon without being seen?"

"Don't you want to go?"

"Oh, yes, of course."

"Well, then"—and here followed a succession of nods and winks and gestures which were very expressive, but which can hardly be put on paper. In a few more words, the rendezvous was appointed, and with a caution to his companion "not to let the other fellows get wind of it," the Zouave strolled away.

So careless was the demeanor of both during the afternoon that there was no suspicion aroused in the minds of "the other fellows," and the Zouave sauntered carelessly out of camp towards a hill that reared its tree-crowned summit at a short distance. A short time afterward, and just as the sun was setting, L— followed him to the same point by a slightly different route; for just beyond this hill was the rendezvous. The Zouave had arrived at the given point some time before L— came up, and was actually in possession of the horse and wagon. Perched on the seat, with the lines in his hand, he was emitting clouds of smoke from his short clay pipe, and holding converse with a negro who stood near. The latter's dusky face expressed considerable anxiety.

"Now, mind, Pompey, you must come back here to this very spot at this time to-morrow night, to get your horse and wagon and the money we're going to pay you for the use of it."

"Will de waggin be hyar, sah?"

"Will the wagon be here? Why, of course it will, or I wouldn't tell you to come after it."

"An' de hoss too, sah?"

"Of course. What do you mean?"

"Nuffin, sah; but if hit's all de same, couldn't you pay me now?"

"Pompey, you insult me"—very indignantly—"do you mean that you think I don't intend to pay you? Tell me quick." (A severe frown.)

"Oh, no, sah, no sah"—hastily—"I jist—well, now, you know, sah, sometimes de sogers dey go out all gay and smilin' like de flower ob de field and dey come back like de grass dat's cut down and cast into de oben. Now ef you was to do like dat, sah, and not come back nebber no more, I wouldn't hab de waggin, and I wouldn't hab de hoss, and I wouldn't git de money."

"But we ain't that kind, Pompey; we never turn up missing; why, we've both been soldiers a long time now, and we never

got killed yet. It seems to me you are unnecessarily anxious."

Pompey looked doubtful, as if he did not more than half believe the speaker; and the soldier went on:

"Now see here; we came down here to fight for your freedom, and it's a darned shame if you can't trust us one day and night with your old horse and wagon. I could pay you now just as easy as not, and I would if you hadn't behaved so awful mean about it; but now, I won't. And if you follow us one single step, I'll hang you high as Haman—hang you up by your wool,



*Pompey's Anxiety.*

and let you hang there until it's so straight it will never be kinky again."

The words were uttered with most impressive earnestness, as the speaker glanced at a coil of rope that lay at his feet, as if the instrument of torture were all ready for the proposed use. The darkey felt the threatened wool tenderly, and then concluded to scratch his head. Apparently, that operation exerted a quieting influence, for he replied:

"Berry well, boss; jist as you say, sah. I'll be hyar."

They drove rapidly away, and before very long, were within a short distance of the house where the ammunition was stored. The stroll from the camp to the rendezvous had taken considerable time, as both were desirous of appearing to have no object

in view ; and to preserve this appearance, they were obliged to turn aside several times from the more direct course. Some few minutes had been consumed in convincing Pompey that it was all right, and some in the drive ; so that, although they set out at sunset, it was pitch dark when they arrived at the clump of trees in which the horse and wagon were to be hidden.

"We're about two hundred yards from the house. See that light? That's in the room just under the one where the ammunition is," whispered the Zouave.

They stole cautiously towards the house, keeping the light steadily in view ; for it was their only guide through the intense darkness. Not a sound was made by them, save when a twig cracked under the foot, and the soldier muttered a curse upon his own awkwardness. At last the distance was traversed, and they were directly under the window from which the light was visible. The sill was about five feet from the ground, so that they must crouch down in order to avoid being seen from the inside. There they lay, the darkness around them so intense that neither could see the other, but each could only assure himself of his comrade's presence by touch. Here they must remain until it was safe to try for the upper part of the house.

Suddenly there was a commotion within the room ; the tread of heavy boots was heard, and deep, strong voices spoke ; then there was the clang of metal, and the soldiers without knew that those within had laid aside their arms. Confederate soldiers, evidently, as their host was a strong Secessionist. The window above the heads of the two Federals was half open, and every sound inside could be plainly heard outside, and vice versa. With sharpened ears the two concealed men waited to hear what was said within, but soon found that the visitors were not come on any particular business, but appeared to be relatives and friends of the family.

"Better go now, I guess," whispered the Zouave to his companion.

But as they were about to rise, L——, whose limbs were cramped by remaining so long in one uncomfortable position, felt his foot slip aside ; he fell heavily upon his comrade, his shoe making a loud crunching noise on the gravel. The men within were instantly alarmed by the sound, and hastily rushed to the window. The sash was thrown up as far as it would go, and several of them, leaning far out, peered into the darkness.



The Federals could see the gleam of their long knife-blades, as they held the bowies, the only weapon they had not laid aside, ready for use. But the two blue-coats crouched lower and nearer to the wall, and were not discerned in the darkness. The Confederates finally concluded that the noise resulted from some innocent cause, and drew in their heads; half closing the window as before. The Federals once more breathed easily, and replaced their revolvers, which they had held cocked and aimed at two of the Confederates above them.

This unfortunate occurrence, of course, obliged them to lie still for some time longer, as the slightest noise would again arouse the suspicions of the Southerners; and the Yankees knew that if they were caught, they would be hanged as spies. But as they heard the conversation in the room above them turned to other subjects than the noise, the Zouave grasped his comrade's arm, and, in a whisper, desired him to follow him closely. Still crouching so that their heads were scarcely four feet above the ground, they crept slowly and cautiously to the angle of the house. On this side, even more care must be observed, for the door must be found without making the least noise with the latch. With many careful gropings the Zouave at last found the entrance, which was provided with one of the old-fashioned latches now used only for stores and outbuildings.

"Take off your shoes and carry them," he whispered, "for if we leave them here some one might find them."

In a few moments they were both shoeless, and then he carefully lifted the latch, and guiding his comrade into the passage, they stole up stairs, groping their way as they went. The Zouave had assured L—— that he was familiar with the arrangement of the house, and his conduct now justified the assertion; for not a misstep did he make, and although their advance must be slow, he went straight to the door of the room in which the ammunition was said to be stored.

"It's locked!" whispered the Zouave, with an oath, as he tried the door. "Unless we can get into that room we'll have had the whole trip for nothing."

"But how can we get in?"

"Let's try this window. The piazza runs clear around the house, and is covered all the way; so that there must be a window in that room opening on the roof."

"Suppose it should be fastened?"

"Suppose it shouldn't," was the reply, as savagely as caution would permit. "I guess we can try it, anyhow."

Fortunately, the heat had been so great that most of the windows in the house had been left open. Climbing out that which opened from the hallway, they walked carefully along the roof of the piazza, keeping as near the house as possible, and crouching so that it would be difficult to see them, even in less intense darkness, from below. So the next window was reached, the one which opened into the room they so much wished to enter. Fortunately, it was raised; and after pausing a moment to listen, lest there should be danger approaching, they clambered in. The interior of the room, like the halls and the outer air, was pitch dark; and they dared not even strike a match, lest the glimmer of the flame should betray them. Unacquainted with the appearance of the room, they did not even know if there was any furniture in it; much less what articles there might be, or where they might be placed. Every foot of the floor must be carefully felt, until they should find the canvas bags; and that without alarming the enemies in the room beneath them.

Creeping slowly and silently over the floor, they came at last upon the heap; and the bags were removed, two at a time, to the roof of the piazza just below the window where they had entered. Then, retiring some distance from this point, they held a whispered consultation:

"What do you think about it, L——?" asked the Zouave, somewhat anxiously. "Do you think we can get the bags down to the wagon?"

"No, I don't; we'll be caught just as sure as we make so many trips. We might carry some off."

"But we want to get all."

"Yes, but we can't."

"The next best thing to carrying them all off would be to keep the enemy from using the stuff; don't you think so?"

"Oh, yes, of course."

"Well, then, listen. There's a deep well right down at this corner of the piazza. If you can lower those bags to me, I'll drop them in."

"All right. How will you get down?" was the response.

"This way;" and the Zouave, who had worn around his neck that very coil of rope with which he had so terribly threatened the darkey, took off the necktie, and fastened one end of it to the



*Putting the Enemy in the Well.*

piazza. With an injunction to his comrade to haul up the loose end as soon as he should be down, and to lower the bags by means of the rope, he rapidly descended. In a moment's time he was down, and the rope was drawn up. The bags were lowered cautiously, and dropped into the well one by one. They had thought that perhaps the splashing with which the heavy weights fell into the water would attract the attention of the enemy; but it appeared that the latter were too far off to hear the noise.

The last bag was lowered, and as the Zouave dropped it into the well, both he and his companion felt fervently grateful that they had not been discovered. L—— was about to descend, when, without a moment's warning, he found himself in the grasp of a powerful antagonist, who had approached him unheard while he bent all his attention to lowering the bags. Instinctively he clutched at his enemy's throat, and the two grappled in a mortal contest.

They swayed back and forth, now one triumphant, now the other. But the Confederate gained the use of his right hand, which clutched a bowie; he was about to drive it to the Federal's heart when a sudden wrench of his arm sent the weapon flying over his head. There was nothing left, then, but a combat in which pure muscular power must determine the victory, the Reb thought; and he knew that he was far stronger than the slender form in his grasp. But a man who fights for his life does not readily give up; this one knew that if he were defeated, he would be hanged as a spy; for there was no summons to surrender. So they strove for the mastery. The Federal felt his strength gradually failing him; a moment more, and that iron hand would close upon his throat in a deadly grasp. Suddenly relaxing his own hold upon his opponent, he seized his revolver. They closed again; but in an instant afterward, the muzzle of the weapon was pressed against the Confederate's forehead; there was a sharp report; and the dead man fell heavily to the roof, thence to the ground.

His opponent followed him, but voluntarily, wishing to rejoin his comrade. That comrade had had no idle moments in the meantime. The Confederates must have reconnoitered carefully, and found just how many men were engaged and what they were doing; for at the same instant that the one above stairs had sprung upon L——, the Zouave found himself in the grasp of two ene-

mies. Each was at least equal in strength to himself, and it was only by desperate exertions that he could prolong the unequal contest for a moment's time. As he found opportunity, he made a dive for his revolver—it was gone! Lost in the struggle, doubtless. The Confederates seemed anxious to secure their prize alive, for they used no weapons, trusting to their united strength to overcome him.

Foiled in his first attempt to defeat them by the use of arms, he was more successful in the second; and his bowie was sheathed in the side of one of his antagonists. The man sank to the ground without a moan, the warm blood gushing from a ghastly wound in the left side, just under the fifth rib. The struggle was now more nearly equal, although it was the stronger of the two Confederates that was left alive.

Such was the state of affairs below when L—— fired, and having thus rid himself of his own antagonist, leaped to the ground to find his comrade. The soft earth gave way beneath his feet, and he fell forward; as he scrambled to an erect position, his hand came in contact with rough cloth—could it be the clothing of the dead Zouave? He felt farther along the mass of lifeless clay, and his hands were bathed in the warm blood. Determined, at any risk, to find if this were the body of his comrade, or if the Zouave was still alive, he called:

“Where are you, H——?”

“Here I am,” came the reply, from a point but a few yards off; “come and help me, for mercy's sake.”

He sprang to the assistance of his companion; and the burly Rebel, unable to resist their united powers, was dragged to the curb of the well. He struggled desperately, but it was of no avail. A moment he hung suspended over the dark abyss, blacker even than the darkness that surrounded them; then, their grasp relaxed; his arms clutched convulsively, but they clutched only the air; and as his fingers closed in, he fell down—down—to the dark waters thirty feet below, to the rocky bottom as far below the surface of the water.

There was no time for delay; the Federals did not know how many more enemies there might be; and without waiting to hear the splash of the foeman's body in the water, they plunged into the shrubbery that surrounded the house, and made for the horse and wagon. It may well be believed that no time was lost in getting away from that locality, although, as they were

not pursued, their haste was needless. They reached camp in safety, rejoicing over the idea that if they had not carried off any of the stores of the enemy, they had at least destroyed some of importance.

Pompey received his horse and wagon with considerable surprise; and when asked if he had any doubts about the Zouave's intention to return them, answered in some confusion:

"Oh no, sah; no, sah; but—I'se—I'se mighty feared you was a gwine ter git killed, boss."

"Much obliged to you for the use of them, Pompey," returned the Zouave.

"Didn't you forget somefin,' boss?" asked the darkey, anxiously.

"Oh, the money? Well, Pomp, you just make out the bill and send it to the Board of Claims, in Washington. I haven't a cent to spare."

## CHAPTER LIX.

### CAPTURING TWO GENERALS.

An Attractive Idea—Cumberland—How They Got the Countersign—Gathering in the Reserves—"Scouts from New Creek"—No Time for Ceremony—A Faithful Servant—"Sent Out to Reconnoiter"—Necessity for Haste—Pursued—Escape With Prisoners—Recognition of Services.

NEW CREEK, Virginia, had been surprised and captured by Gen. Rosser of the Confederate Army, and in accordance with the policy of the Federal Government at that time, the officer in command of the department in which that station was situated, Maj.-Gen. Kelley, had been removed to make room for another of less unfortunate antecedents, Maj.-Gen. Crook. Though no longer in command, Gen. Kelley, having as yet received no orders to proceed elsewhere, was still at his old headquarters, one of the principal hotels in the city of Cumberland; while Gen. Crook had established himself at the other house of similar standing.

The idea of two Federals of the rank of Major-General, in one town, and probably feeling entirely secure as to their own persons, was an attractive one to a certain young Confederate. He ranked only as a lieutenant, but the death of his father, the gallant old Captain McNeill, of the McNeill Rangers, left him practically in command of that body of daring men, as no successor had yet been commissioned. The thought grew more and more pleasing as it became more familiar; and having thoroughly investigated the state of affairs in and around Cumberland, he came to the conclusion that he would, at any rate, make the attempt to capture the two generals.

It must be remembered that Cumberland was, at that time, a city of eight or nine thousand inhabitants. There was, accord-



ing to the most reliable information that Lieut. McNeill could obtain, nearly that number of Federals encamped there; he would be obliged, of course, to penetrate the two lines of pickets, and without arousing the main body of soldiery, enter the town, obtain access to the two headquarters, and carrying off the officers of highest rank, evade pursuit. For this work he had but sixty effective men; for in the skirmish in which his father had been killed, many of his Rangers had fallen; others were wounded; others absent on necessary duty. Nothing could be hoped, then, if they were discovered. The whole plan must be wrought out in one night, and with the greatest caution.

Carefully arranging all the details of route and duties, the sixty men set out on their perilous adventure. The path was well known to the Rangers, and they were accustomed to silent movements through the darkness; it was without adventure, then, that they crossed Knobby Mountain and reached the bank of the North Branch of the Potomac. They crossed the stream, and halted near the picket post which was nearest the course they had marked out. It was only a momentary halt, however, and they rode on to the picket.

"What is your countersign?" demanded Lieut. McNeill, sternly, as he boldly rode up to the picket. The Federal, a huge, thick-headed, slow-witted German, was so surprised by the sudden apparition that he failed to collect his sluggish thoughts, and stammered out:

"Bool's Kap." (Bull's Gap.)

"All right," answered the Confederate, nonchalantly; and he and his men rode past, leaving the picket wondering "who in ter teufel it could be dat demanded de countersign in dat style. It must be a sheneral at least; maybe der Bresitent Lincoln."

They rode five miles further on down the county road, and then struck into the pike. Presently came the expected challenge:

"Halt! Who comes there?"

"Friends, with the countersign."

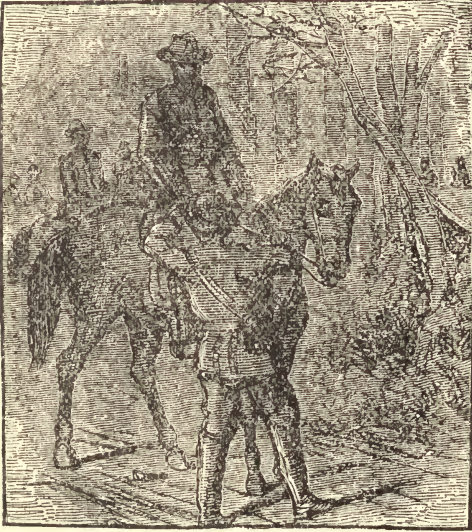
"Dismount and advance, one, and give the countersign."

Lieut. McNeill's ankle had been badly crushed a short time before, so that it was impossible for him to comply with the first part of the order; he was about to give the countersign from his saddle, having urged his horse forward for the purpose, when

he heard, to his surprise and even disgust at the timid sentinel:  
 "Don't shoot; I surrender."

Alarmed by the advance of a mounted man, the luckless soldier took this course to save his own life. On they went gathering in the reserves. The first captured were cavalry. These were taken with them. The next were infantry. Disarming them and destroying their guns, the Rangers paroled these, the condition being that they should remain where they were until morning.

"The town is surrounded, and there isn't any possibility of escape, so you needn't try," the Rangers gravely assured the pris-



*Getting the Countersign.*

oners, who, to use a modern slang expression, "took it all in," and obeyed orders. Their best plan, as they knew, was to act boldly, as if they were a Federal force. Entering the town on the west side, then, and crossing Will's Creek, which flows through it, they rode deliberately up one of the principal thoroughfares, Baltimore St., laughing, talking, and whistling, as they might have passed through Richmond, or as the Union scouts which they pretended to be might have done in Cumberland.

Guards paced the streets, and from these came friendly salutations and challenges, such as:

"Hello, boys, who might you be?"

"Scouts from New Creek," replied the Confederates.

It was two or three o'clock in the morning before they had reached the city and penetrated to its heart. Moving without orders, like the dancers in a quadrille, the party divided as it reached a given point, one detachment proceeding to the St. Nicholas, the other, under the command of Lieut. Welton, to the Revere

House. As Lieut. McNeill's ankle disabled him, he was obliged to remain in the saddle, and leave the actual work of the first party to be performed by Jas. W. Kuykendall. Let us first follow the Confederates in this party to the St. Nicholas.

Those who had been previously appointed for the purpose, dismounted as soon as they halted, and entered the hotel. Passing the guards by means of the countersign, they procure a light and ascertain the position of Gen. Kelley's room; leaving the sentries to be surprised and silently secured by the comrades whom they had left outside. In order to enter Gen. Kelley's apartment, it was necessary to pass through that occupied by his Adjutant-General, Major Melvin; securing this officer, which required but a moment, and taking hasty note of the fact that they had captured four headquarters colors, they knocked at Gen. Kelley's door.

Thus aroused from sleep, the general raised himself on his elbow and looked inquiringly at the intruder, not knowing but that some message of importance might have brought him. But before he had time to put the inquiry into words, the Confederate said to him:

"I suppose you know me, General."

"Yes," answered Kelley, with a puzzled expression, as he recognized the face and voice, "you are Mr. Kuykendall."

"I was your prisoner once, but I have the honor to have captured you now. You are my prisoner, sir."

"But to whom am I to surrender?" demanded the officer, reluctant to own himself the prisoner of a soldier ranking so far below himself.

"To me, sir; there is no time for ceremony, and you will find it wisest not to insist on it. Please to dress at once."

There was nothing to do but to obey the order, and the party speedily repaired to the rendezvous previously appointed. In the meantime, the other portion of the force had gone to the Revere House. Halted in front of the main entrance by the sentinel on duty there, they replied to the usual question:

"Friends, with the countersign, bearing important dispatches for Gen. Crook."

Five men had dismounted as soon as the party had drawn rein, Jos. L. Vandiver being the leader of the squad. Advancing as if to give the countersign, one of them, by a dexterous movement wrested the sentinel's gun from his hand, while two were

detailed to guard him. The outer door of the apartments occupied by Gen. Crook was reached, and a knock evidently aroused some one within.

"Who's dar?"

"Open the door. I want to see the general right away."

"De general's asleep."

"Let me in, anyhow; I must see him. Hurry up. It's very important."

With much caution the door is opened, and a diminutive dark-ey blocks the way.

"Which is Gen. Crook's door?"

"I'se feered to tell. He's asleep."

"Which is Gen. Crook's door?" repeated the Confederate, threateningly.

"Specs you mought fin' him in dar, sah, but I ain't gwine to tell, kase—"

But the reason was lost to the listener, for at the first indication which the cautious darkey gave he had turned to the door to which he had nodded, and now knocked.

"Come in," calls the general, awaking with true soldierly instinct at the first call of duty or danger.

In acceptance of the invitation, Vandiver, with a light in his left hand and a pistol half concealed in his right, enters.

"This is Gen. Crook, I presume?"

"I am, sir."

"I am Gen. Rosser, sir; you are my prisoner. You will please dress immediately and accompany me."

Gen. Crook stared a moment at the new comer, as if he would doubt the evidence of his own senses, but was speedily aroused to the reality of the circumstances by Vandiver's impatient.

"Here are your clothes, General; you had better put them on unless you prefer to go as you are."

The officer, thoroughly awakened by such a decided command, dressed himself rapidly, and in a few moments followed his captor down stairs. The rendezvous was speedily reached, and the force, once more reunited, rode out of town. More than once they are stopped by the pickets.

"Halt! Who goes there?"

"Friends, with the countersign."

"Dismount, one; advance, and give the countersign."

"No time to dismount; enemy reported near by," Lieut. Me-

Neill would answer, as he rode up to the picket and gave the password.

“Sent out on a reconnoissance?”

“Yes, Gen. Crook wants their movements carefully watched.”

“Go in and win; give ’em pepper, or anything else that’s hot.”

“O, you may bet your bottom dollar we’re the boys for that.”

“Cold night, though.”

“We’ll make it hot for the enemy.”

So they filed past the pickets in the outer line. But of course they were by no means safe, even after they had crossed the Potomac; for they would certainly be pursued as soon as the capture of the two generals should be discovered; and they could not hope that it would remain a secret after morning had dawned, even if it should not be betrayed before. They rode rapidly, the rearguard being specially cautioned as to the necessity for the greatest vigilance. They reached Romney about eight in the morning, and had not left it far behind them when the rearguard reported a force of Federal cavalry, about equal to their own numbers, in pursuit. Several shots were exchanged between the two detachments, but the Feds were not anxious to bring on an engagement with a force of unknown strength and daring courage that was only too well known, while the Rebs were only too anxious to escape with their prisoners to their own lines.

When they passed Moorefield, about two o’clock in the afternoon, the rearguard again gave the alarm; but the Yankees appeared to have procured reinforcements, as they numbered about two hundred. But, far as their force exceeded that of the retreating party, they were not equal to an attack, as they had galloped their horses thirty-five miles, starting when the alarm was first given, and being fired with zeal to recapture their commander.

As Lieut. McNeill afterwards learned, several large forces, numbering nearly ten times as many men as his own, were sent out in different directions to intercept him; but he escaped without the loss of a man, and carried his prisoners safely to the Confederate lines, where they were delivered up to the proper authorities. Gen. Early, on hearing of the capture, decided that the man who could plan and execute such a daring expedition was fit to lead the men who had followed him on that occasion; and Lieut. McNeill was accordingly commissioned captain of

the company of Rangers which his father had raised, and which, in accordance with the custom of the times, bore his name. Thus the son worthily perpetuated the fame of the sire by a gallant exploit hardly excelled in bold conception and skillful execution by any during the whole war.

## CHAPTER LX.

### A NARROW ESCAPE.

A Couple of Deserters—The Court-Martial's Finding—Preparations for the Execution—An Impressive Scene—"Shoulder Arms!"—Baltimore Telegraph Office—A Delayed Dispatch—"For Mr. Lincoln's Sake"—By Way of New York and Chicago—To Harper's Ferry—Just in Time—Pardoned.

THE present story so far differs from the majority of those which compose this volume, that the men who, as the title indicates, narrowly escaped an imminent danger, had no part in the efforts which were made to save them. Their own hands spun that thread of fate which forms the sombre woof of the tale; while the brighter warp came from another source.

And since it is so, we shall have to change the scene rapidly; the curtain rises, falls, and rises again; now the stage represents one place, now another; the actors changing too. The first act is but dim and shadowy, as if the gas burned but weakly in the immense theater; for no minute written record of it exists. Let us briefly sketch its outlines, as the few words of real history present them. A man of forty or more years, who had entered the Federal army, tired of the strictness of discipline, or perhaps resenting the petty tyranny of a subordinate officer, resolves that he will stand it no longer. A youth of twenty, who has enlisted with high hopes of winning honor and preferment—was not Custer a general at twenty-three?—found that "Custer's Luck" was not an invariable attendant upon youthful soldiers, and grew weary of privation and suffering. These two deserted. They were recaptured and court-martialed. The military tribunal found them guilty, and imposed the usual sentence, which was approved by Gen. Sheridan. They were "to be shot to death

with musketry" at noon, on the twenty-fourth day of February, 1865.

The news was sent to their relatives, who at once went to work in their behalf. What arguments were used, we know not; but the President was not induced to consider the case until so late a date that he would not have had sufficient time before the execution, for the examination of evidence. The condemned men waited for the news to come; the elder with a sullen, dogged look on his face; the younger seeming scarcely to realize the gravity of his present situation. Hour after hour of the precious time had passed, and the morning of the twenty-fourth dawned, gray and dreary. High above the town and camp at Harper's Ferry towered the hills which had been so long familiar to them, on one of which they two were to die that day, unless the Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States should interfere in the case of two privates of the artillery.

Their guard answered by a mute gesture the unspoken question of the elder man; no message had been received. The youth was dazed; he could not comprehend that he was to die at the hands of his comrades, with whom he had never been unpopular; that this sentence was imposed by officers who knew nothing of him. The hour appointed for the execution approached. Upon Bolivar Heights there were two open graves, each with a rude pine coffin beside it; and the tenants for whom these narrow houses had been prepared were still living. Toward them there marched, through the raw, cloudy day, a procession whose whole appearance indicated the solemnity of the occasion. The band led the way, playing a slow march; then followed Gen. Job Stevenson, the commandant of the post, surrounded by his staff, the gorgeous effect of their uniforms and trappings strangely at variance with the slow and stately manner of their advance; next came the guard surrounding an ambulance; and last of all came an entire regiment, marching by platoons, with reversed arms.

The stern solemnity of the military procession was less indicative of human interest than the sympathizing faces of the neighborhood crowd that followed it. A casual observer would have supposed that every man, woman and child in Harper's Ferry had turned out to view the sad ceremony of the day; and there was not a face which did not express, in some degree, the prevailing sentiment of the day.



Over all hung heavy threatening clouds; under foot was a light snow, which melted beneath the tread of so many feet, and left the bare, half-frozen earth visible in unsightly patches. A mile upward on that slope of Bolivar Heights which is nearest the town wound the long dark column; then, obedient to the word of command, they halt. Here is a level space, backed by a ridge of ground, in which stray bullets may bury themselves. Just in front of this boundary to the miniature plateau are the graves of which we have spoken. The troops form in two hollow squares, one within the other, the opening of both being toward the elevation. The condemned men are taken from the ambulance, and each is seated upon his coffin. Beside them stands the chaplain of their regiment who has been with them during their terrible ride, endeavoring to prepare them for the approach of death.

The voice of the adjutant breaks a solemn stillness as he reads the formal recital of the court-martial's proceedings, detailing the nature of their offense against military law, the evidence upon which they were convicted, and the sentence which was now to be executed. Then he reads the order of Gen. Sheridan, approving this decision of the tribunal, and fixing this as the day and hour when it should be carried into effect. The crowd outside the outer square of soldiers looked anxiously upward, as if to question the arrival of the time; but so thick were the clouds that not even a luminous blur showed the position of the sun. The soldiers, officers and men, as in duty bound, stared straight forward as if gazing upon vacancy.

The chaplain knelt beside the doomed men, praying earnestly for them; for the sullen, rugged nature of the man who would give no sign lest he be betrayed into an unmanly weakness; for the pitiful calmness of the boy who seemed scarcely to realize what was to be the result of all these preparations. At last the good man arose, and grasping the hand of each uttered a last word of encouragement. The lieutenant in charge of the firing party, which was about a score of paces in front of the other troops, looked at Gen. Stevenson; that officer looked anxiously down the road; there was nothing to be seen; then he drew his watch out and consulted it; it was one minute past twelve. There was no longer any hope of a pardon, or even of a reprieve; and the commander, by an almost imperceptible nod, gave the signal of despair to his subordinate. Instantly two

soldiers, appointed for that duty, stepped out of the ranks to bandage the eyes of the condemned. Hardly a breath stirs the vast concourse of soldiers and civilians, gathered there on the hillside; after what seems an interminable length of time, the painful intensity of the silence is broken by the low, clear voice of the officer in command of the firing party:

“Attention! Shoulder arms!”

A moment more and that fatal command will be given; those two blindfolded men will fall, in the agonies of death, from the coffins on which they are now seated; to be laid with pitying hands in those rude boxes, and lowered into the graves that now yawn before them. Then the troops will form once more in a column, not with arms reversed as when they came, and return to the camp, keeping step to the lively march which the band will play. Will the moment by which such changes shall be wrought ever come? Or will a merciful Providence send in its stead another, with a different kind of work to do?

Strangely enough, the solution to these questions is being worked out in great cities, far from that snow-covered hillside; and not in camp or council of war, but in that most prosaically modern of all places—the telegraph office. Leaving these actors in the drama here, let us seek elsewhere for the other *dramatis personae*, as the modern playwright claims it is his privilege to do.

The time of this second act (if simultaneous occurrences can be so called) is the twenty-fourth of February, as it is in the first; about the moment that the imposing cortege of the first began to form. The curtain rises upon a telegraph office in Baltimore. An operator sits at his table, busy with a dispatch which has just been handed him. It has been sent, and now he turns to take up another, when he hears the familiar call “C—A—L,” repeated several times. It is the signal that the War Department has a message to send; and his orders are imperative. Every telegraph operator in the country knows that when he is thus summoned, he must drop all other business, and attend to that which may be, in days of Civil War, of vital importance to the country.

This was the message which he was called upon to receive:

WASHINGTON, D. C., Feb. 23, 1864.

GEN. JOB STEVENSON, Harper's Ferry:

Deserters reprieved till further orders. Stop the execution.

A LINCOLN.

Quickly following this formal dispatch, came the "talk" of the Washington operator over the wire:

"These men will be shot at noon to-day unless Gen. Stevenson receives the President's message. Don't know what was the reason, but it was sent from the War Department yesterday, and has just reached this office. Send it on at once. It is a case of life and death. Would not have known about it, but the President sent an officer to see if it had been sent, and the thing was investigated. Get it through at once to Harper's Ferry, and let me know, as the officer is waiting to report to Mr. Lincoln."

Quickly back over the wires flashed the answer:

"Can't do it; the line from here to Harper's Ferry is down. Nothing has passed since midnight. Wish I could do it, but can't."

With which emphatic statement of his inability, the Baltimore operator thought he had washed his hands of the matter. Scarcely had he ticked off the last letters of the concluding word, than the reply came, evidently sent in much haste.

"Do it, somehow, for Mr. Lincoln's sake; he is very anxious about it—has just sent a second messenger to enquire if the message has been received by Gen. Stevenson." The heart of the operator was touched as he thought of the man so high in office and in the esteem of his countrymen, so busied with all the manifold cares for the welfare of the nation, yet anxious about the fate of two deserters from the ranks.

"A private or so, now and then, will not count in the news of the battle;" but the first citizen of the Republic, the Commander of her armies as well as the guardian of her laws, thought even of the privates.

Fired with new energy at the thought of this, the operator rapidly turned over in his mind various means of getting the dispatch through; but of himself he could do nothing. Calling the office superintendent to his table, he briefly recounted the nature of the messages, and urged from his own heart the necessity of getting the dispatch through.

"Send it to New York," the official directed, "and tell them they must get it through to Wheeling, and the Wheeling people can get it to Harper's Ferry by way of Cumberland and Martinsburg. Of course, under the circumstances, you must give all your time to it until you get it through."

The operator glanced at the clock; it was ten minutes past

eleven ; scarcely half an hour remained, for time must be allowed for the messenger to reach the place of execution. He hastily ticked off the message to New York, with a brief explanation of the peculiar circumstances. Back came the reply :

“The case is hopeless ; the wires are crowded ; much of the matter is, like this, from the War Department, and came before, so it has precedence of this message. Cannot do it now, but may do it late in the afternoon.”

“That will not do at all,” answered the man at the Baltimore end of the wire, “for the men are to be shot at noon to-day unless this reaches Gen. Stevenson in time. Get it through for Mr. Lincoln’s sake, as he is very anxious about it.”

That was the chorus of this song of the telegraph wires. The New Yorker saw at once that all questions of precedence must be disregarded, in this matter of life and death ; and telling the Baltimorean that he would do his utmost, proceeded to fulfill the promise. Resting in this assurance, he of the City of Monuments was about to turn his attention to those other matters which he had thrown aside when the War Department’s call came ; but he was again signaled by Washington.

“What about that dispatch to Harper’s Ferry ? Have you got it through yet ? Why don’t you let us know about it ?”

To which Baltimore replied :

“Had to send it around by way of New York ; they have promised to do their best, but I have not heard from them yet.”

“Let us know the instant you get an answer from New York,” came from Washington.

It was twenty minutes past eleven, and still another inquiry had come from the national capital. Baltimore answered: “Wait a minute,” and took the following from New York :

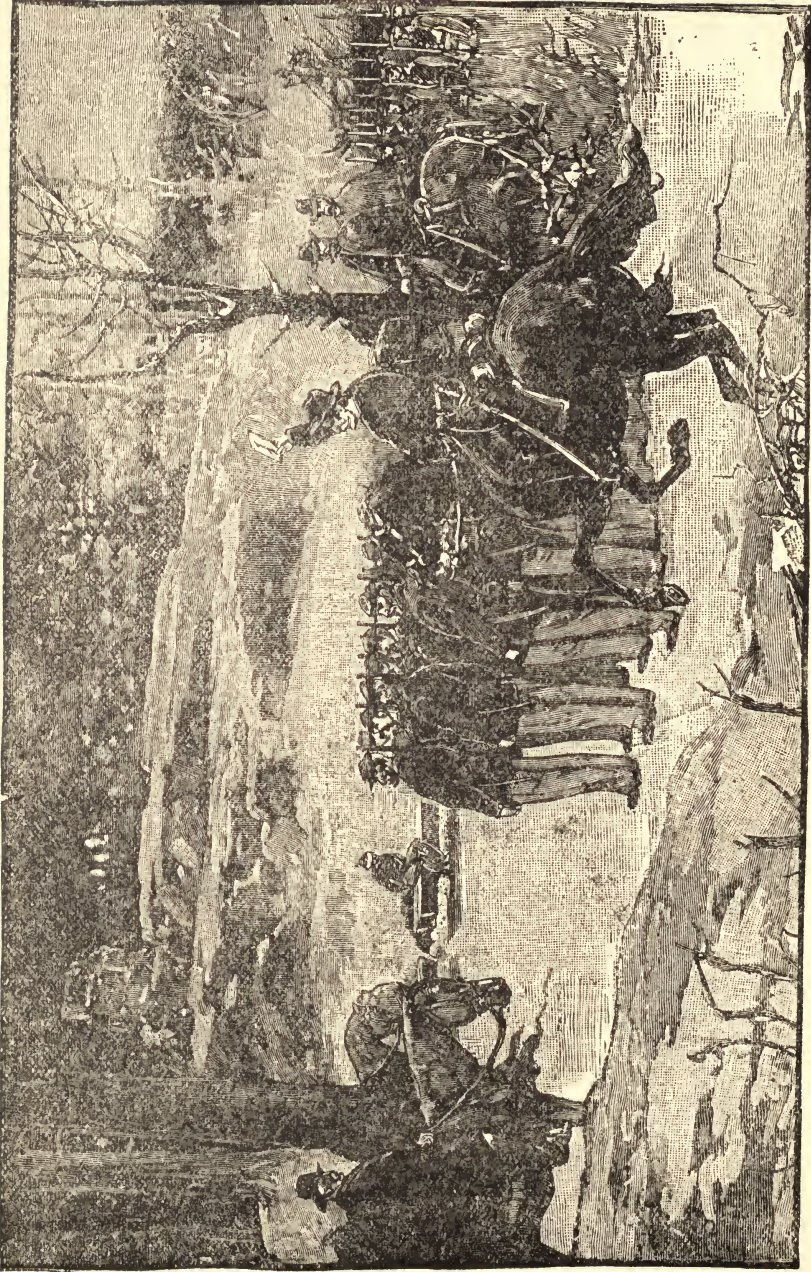
“Dispatch got to Buffalo, but Wheeling wire is down. It has gone on to Chicago.”

This was sent on to Washington, and another pause of ten minutes came.

“The dispatch is at Chicago ; they are doing their best to get it to Wheeling, but they’re afraid of failure ; can’t make the Wheeling man hear the call.”

A few anxious minutes passed ; the operator at Chicago at last succeeded in making Wheeling answer, and sent the message onward ; but those at New York, Baltimore and Washington were still in the dark as to the progress which was being made.





At last, after what seemed an hour of anxious waiting, but in reality was not ten full minutes since Baltimore had received and forwarded the news of Chicago's difficulty, the word flashed around that wide circuit.

"The dispatch has reached Wheeling, and the operator there says he can get it through to Harper's Ferry in time."

Then the messenger at the Washington office hurried off to reassure the President, and the operators, one and all, resumed the work which this effort had interrupted. While all this had been going on, and those solemn preparations on Bolivar Heights had been going forward, an orderly, booted and spurred, had been pacing the rude plank platform in front of the telegraph office at Harper's Ferry. Near him stood his horse, one of the best to be found in the number of Government animals at that place; for Gen. Stevenson had expected this reprieve, and fearful of a fatal delay, had sent this orderly, as a more expeditious messenger than those usually employed.

The soldier looked often and anxiously at the clock, and his face grew grave as the minute-hand traveled around the dial. It was ten minutes of twelve when the operator called out to him that he had better be ready. The telegrapher had heard the name of the commandant of the post ticked off. The orderly sprang into his saddle, the operator wrote out the message as rapidly as even the most expert of his calling could have done, and jumping from his seat, ran to the door and tossed the yellow envelope into the soldier's outstretched hand. Hardly has he grasped it, when a cut of his whip sends his horse bounding along the road to the hillside.

"At each bound he could feel the scabbard of steel  
Smiting his stallion's flanks."

Will he be in time? He hardly dares ask himself the question, lest, thinking for one instant of other things than the speed at which he is traveling, his horse be allowed to slacken his pace, though ever so little. As he rides up the slope, he rises in his stirrups and shouts at the top of his voice, waving the yellow envelope above his head. If he can but make them hear or see him, he will be in time, for he has not yet heard the crack of the carbines.

But the crowd around the place of execution is deaf and blind to all but that which is directly before them; they are waiting with that curious desire to witness the horrible, for the very

sound which the orderly dreads. The firing party have their arms ready, and await only the one word which their commanding officer is about to utter. Just at this moment Gen. Stevenson makes a warning gesture; the word, "Fire!" that else would have completed the lieutenant's orders, is never spoken; for the ranks part to admit the orderly, who, with a light heart, but with too much respect for military decorum to wear a smiling face, hands the yellow envelope to his commanding officer.

The news was told to the condemned men, and soldiers and civilians looked on with curious eyes. The elder man gave no sign, but rose with dogged sullenness, as if life or death were all the same to him; the youth looked around him for an instant as the bandage was removed from his eyes; then, burying his face in his hands, burst into uncontrollable tears.

Then the soldiers reformed in marching order, and returned to camp, the reprieved men still under guard. But before long, a second message to Gen. Stevenson, duly provided with the necessary amount of red tape and superfluous words, and sent by mail, informed him that the deserters sentenced to be shot on the twenty-fourth of February, but reprieved by the President, were granted a full and unconditional pardon, with restoration to their former company. They never deserted again.



## CHAPTER LXI.

### DETERMINED TO ESCAPE.

A Spirited Engagement—A Victory Barren of Trophies—Disposition of the Prisoners—Prison Pastimes—Base Ball—"Opinions of the Press"—Better Sport—Efforts to Escape—Tunneling—Failure—A Drunken Driver—Almost Free—Recaptured—A Daring Plan—Scaling the Parapet—He Escapes—Almost in Canada—Retaken by Farmers—Spirit Broken—Spirit Gets Mended—Busy at Work—A Wonderful Achievement—"An Escape Planned"—Guards Doubled—Strict Examination—Review of Inspecting Party—Discovery of Prisoner Among Them—A Sensible and Generous Officer—Remanded to Prison—How He Was Freed.

**A**FTER the battle of Gettysburg, the Confederate forces retreated to Virginia, closely pursued by the victorious Federals. Several months passed, and the great Virginian had so far retrieved his losses that, early in November, 1863, he was able to turn upon Gen. Meade, and drive him back across the Rapidan. But a portion of the Federal army was ordered to advance, as the main force halted; it did so, and attacked a Confederate brigade which had been stationed north of the Rappahannock. The assailing force numbered ten to one of those attacked; and though the gallant Louisianians fought with all the fury of their Southern blood, the odds were too great. Cut off from their own pontoon bridge, a few escaped by swimming the icy stream; others died in the attempt; many more fell on the field; and as night closed around them, the remnant of the brigade felt that the case was indeed a hopeless one.

They had fought bravely, and had not yielded until the last moment; yet, in giving up, each man was actuated by a grim resolve that the victory, dearly bought as it was, should afford but few trophies to the enemy. The color-bearer of one regiment tore the battle-flag from the staff and thrust it into the bosom of

his overshirt, then yielded up the bare staff. One young officer, on being summoned to surrender his sword, broke it across his knee and handed the hilt to his antagonist. What became of the broken blade is not recorded; but the battle-flag, hastily removed from its place of concealment, was, by the advice of several officers, committed to the camp-fire around which the prisoners were grouped; and was thus saved from falling into the hands of the enemy.

On the morning after their capture, the prisoners were trans-



*Old Capitol Prison.*

ferred from this camp to the Old Capitol Prison, where they remained three days; at the expiration of that time, the officers were sent to Johnson's Island and the privates to Point Lookout. It is at this stage of the proceedings that our story properly begins; the scene being laid in that famous military prison near Sandusky, Ohio; and the hero, the same young officer who had broken his sword before giving it up—Lieut. C. H. Pierce, of the Seventh Louisiana.

Arrived at Johnson's Island, they were all, of course, in the slough of despond for many days; but most of them were young, and of a fun-loving, make-the-best-of-it disposition, and they soon

engaged in various plans for killing time. Many and various were the means adopted; but none combined the advantages of vigorous out-door exercise and keen competition so well as base ball. What is now the "National Game" had come into prominence some twenty years before the time of which we write, but had sunk into insignificance besides that "iron game" which was being played between North and South. The playing of the prisoners, then, attracted much more attention from the people of Sandusky than it would have done had the game been more frequently seen; and when the final match between the "Confederates" and the "Southrons" was played, fully three thousand persons were present to behold the victory of the gallant "Southrons."

The prison authorities had feared that the zeal of the prisoners for the sport might be merely a blind, to enable them to escape; and whenever a game was played, extra guards were on duty. On this last occasion, the slides of the port-holes were drawn back, and the guns were made ready for instant use, in case the players should make a run for the "home base." But the precautions proved needless, for nothing of the kind was attempted. The commandant of the post, however, was severely censured by the more violent newspapers for allowing the prisoners so much liberty; the torrents of denunciation reached Washington, and he was removed, to make room for a more vigorous disciplinarian.

Even had it not been made thus impossible, base ball had lost its charms in the eyes of men who longed only for freedom, and who merely engaged in these pastimes to keep from feeling the pressure of their chains. All of the recreations possible to prisoners were tried, practiced for a time, and then thrown aside in disgust. Only one occupation retained, throughout, the charm which at first invested it, and that was the laying of plans to escape. Chief among those who indulged in this pastime was Lieut. Pierce, whose untiring efforts we would here relate.

The first mode of escape that suggests itself to men weary of prison life is a tunnel, extending from their cells to some point beyond the walls. It was this means, then, that Pierce and some of his companions in misfortune resolved to adopt. A tunnel was begun from a cell carefully selected as affording excellent opportunities for concealing the work; but the proposed route was found to be too long. The work was carefully un-

done, then, and another point selected as the the inner opening of the tunnel. But this second cell was lighter and more public than the first, which was so dark that nothing but a thorough search would have revealed the excavations. The project was suspected, and only a few hours before they were to attempt that for which they had worked so long, the whole affair was discovered. Thus ended their first attempt. The participators were of course punished by the withdrawal, for a time, of all the privileges allowed; the strength of the guard was increased; inspections were more frequent and thorough than ever; and the prisoners began to think that an opportunity for escape would never occur again.

Not so, however, with our hero. Failure was to him no more than a warning that he *must* succeed next time; and he occupied the long and weary days which he spent in the dungeon, not in repenting of his attempt, nor even in lamenting its failure, but in thinking out some other plan which, on his return to the ordinary cell, he might put into practice. But even his busy brain could suggest none that seemed likely to be any more successful than the last.

Some weeks passed on, and our friends of the tunnel affair were released from "durance vile" in the cells reserved for punishment of offenders, and restored to the privileges which their less venturesome companions enjoyed. The scare was over, and the prison officials had settled down to a course less laborious than the great vigilance at first exercised, but still by no means a careless way of attending to their duties. It was merely an accident, for which, of course, his superiors were in no way to blame, that the soldier who drove the offal cart was one morning so intoxicated that he could hardly keep his seat. Lieut. Pierce watched him as, with drunken gravity, he endeavored to sit very erect and drive very straight; and he at once saw that here was an opportunity for another attempt.

Fortunately for the Confederate's plans, the work of loading up the cart occupied some little time; and the driver, dismounting from his perch, was soon fast asleep on one of the wooden benches which adorned the prison-yard. If a drunken man once fall asleep, what can awaken him before that intolerable thirst begins? At any rate, it seemed as if nothing could rouse this one; for not even when Lieut. Pierce removed his overcoat did he stir. His cap had fallen from his head, and lay on the ground

beside him. Hastily donning both overcoat and cap, the Confederate mounted the cart, and took possession of the lines. His impromptu disguise deceived the sentinels stationed at the gate, and he drove onward with much outward unconcern and much inward rejoicing.

He had passed the parapet, and was beginning to think that he was to regain his freedom. But he had not been able to remove the traces of his escape. It required no great vigilance on



*Changing Clothes with the Drunken Soldier.*

the part of the guard to discover the drunken driver asleep on the settee; and the find immediately suggested the question: Who had taken his place and driven the cart out? It must be one of the prisoners, and the hue and cry was raised at once. A squad was sent in pursuit; the fugitive was recaptured, and taken back to the dungeon from which he had so recently been released; and thus ended the second attempt.

Hardly had his term of solitary confinement expired, than he began to think of some other plan; but it seemed as if the guards were more than doubly watchful of all the prisoners, and bestowed especial attention on him. Indeed, the fact that he had

planned two attempts to escape, both of which were so nearly successful, made every movement suspicious, and for a long time no opportunity presented itself.

Among the more daring and venturesome spirits confined on Johnson's Island were two young officers, Lieut. Wheeler, of Morgan's Cavalry, and Lieut. Bowles, a cousin of Lieut. Pierce and a member of the same regiment. In these two he found as ardent a desire to escape as that which animated him, and after much discussion of possibilities, they hit upon a plan. Their games of base ball in the preceding spring had revived and perfected their old boyish skill in throwing; and they now proposed to scale the parapet and attack the sentinels with stones, since they had no other weapons. Scaling ladders were accordingly made as speedily and secretly as possible; a single pistol was obtained by some mysterious means, and lots being drawn for its possession, it fell to Lieut. Wheeler.

Some twelve miles from Johnson's Island there is a strip of land, marshy and covered with a dense growth of trees, which extends to the Canada side. It was now midwinter, and the lake was frozen over hard enough for them to reach this strip of land, whence they could get to the Canadian woods. Once in the dominions of Queen Victoria, they hoped to find that shelter and protection which, it was said at the time, her subjects were always ready to give to Southerners.

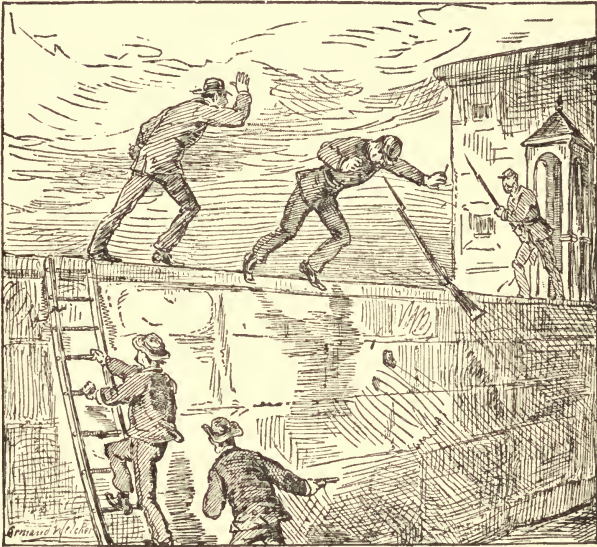
The ladders were made, and put in position. Pierce was the first to reach the top of the parapet, and a well-aimed stone from his hand laid the nearest sentinel senseless on the ground. But they were seen by more than one; and as Bowles' head was seen above the wall, another Federal took hasty but well-directed aim. He fell backward with a groan.

"I'm killed, Charley," he exclaimed, as Pierce turned to see why he had fallen; "but push on and leave me to my fate. God speed you."

The words, faintly spoken as they were, reached the man to whom they were addressed; and as the prayer was uttered, the speaker's life ebbed away. In the meantime, Pierce being sheltered by the wall as he leaned towards his cousin, Wheeler and the sentinel had exchanged shots; but neither took effect; and the Confederate, having expended his one load, was forced to retreat down his ladder to captivity again. Not so with his companion. Pierce dashed past the sentinel before he had time

to reload, and was soon far away upon the ice. The strip of land was gained, and, plunging into the woods, he directed his steps towards Canada.

In the meantime, the sentinel, thinking it would be useless to pursue such a fleet-footed fugitive, gave the alarm to the corporal of the guard, and efforts were at once made to recapture the escaped prisoner. Signal-guns, indicating to every one around the fort what was the state of affairs, were fired at certain inter-



*Stoning the Guard.*

vals; while they endeavored to break the ice by means of solid shot. Pierce heard the boom of the guns, and hastened onward. All night long he journeyed through the thick darkness of the forest, able to direct his course only by occasional glimpses of the stars. Soon the Canadian shore would be reached, and he would be safe.

A heavy reward was offered for the apprehension of any escaped prisoner; and whenever the signal-guns at the fort indicated that this reward was to be earned, the farmers in the neighborhood turned out in force. So they did on this occasion; and armed with muskets, scoured the woods far and near. Although physically they had much the advantage of the man who was worn down by more than a year of prison life, yet his desire for

freedom added so much to his natural speed and endurance, that, although they set out almost the instant the warning was given, they sought him in vain all night. Daylight came, and just as the prisoner began to think that by keeping up this rate of speed two or three hours longer, he would have so distanced his pursuers as to make it possible for him to rest, he found himself surrounded by the armed farmers.

Defenseless as he was, he could do nothing but surrender, though it was with a feeling of intense humiliation that he gave himself up to civilians; to have been recaptured by soldiers would not have been half so bad. But no matter by whom retaken, back to the island he must go; and thus ended attempt the third.

Three times he had been very near success, and had been recaptured. But, as we have seen, failure only inspired him to new and more ingenious efforts. This time, however, it seemed to his captors that his spirit was completely broken; he had no longer the energy to attempt such a thing again, even if the strict watch they kept upon him had permitted it. They thought that he had despaired of freedom until released by the ordinary course of events, in the case of prisoners of war, or until

"The terms of his cartel his God had arranged,  
And the victim of prisons at last been exchanged."

But if the prison officials felt any pity in their hard hearts for the daring youth who seemed to be so crushed by his repeated failures, it was wasted upon an unworthy object. His melancholy demeanor was assumed as a blind, and intended to deceive, not only the Federal authorities, but his own comrades; lest the interest of the latter in his work might arouse the suspicion of the guards. For when they thought that Lieut. Pierce was moping in his cell, he was busily at work on a certain article, the construction of which occupied every available moment for full five months.

Of course the secret could not be kept from all, and his more intimate friends, in the course of time, became aware of the plan which he had formed. Day after day they watched the progress of the work with the keenest interest; interest only increased by the necessity of concealing it from the guards, who were always ready to suspect Pierce, even though he appeared so despondent. Slowly, under the rude and clumsy tools so skillfully wielded by his patient hands, a piece of the rough wood that was so plentiful about the prison grew into the shape of a gunstock;



a piece of the handle of a camp-kettle was fashioned into a lock; the tin fruit cans, the contents of which had been used in the hospital, were made into the barrel and guard. A rusty bayonet was a prize of inestimable value that chanced to fall in his way; and diligent rubbing soon restored it to its original shining splendor.

How he stained the white wood so that it closely resembled the ordinary stock is still unknown; nor is it recorded how he obtained a complete uniform of blue cloth. But both ends were accomplished, and early in the spring of 1865 he was ready for the fourth attempt to escape "from his dire prison house, by Erie's bleak shore." One of his friends, Lieut. Michael Long, was to assist him. It was necessary that the guard should be changed at night, that in the confusion resulting from an unusual movement, he might be able to accomplish the first part of his plan unobserved. Accordingly, Lieut. Long "interviewed" the guard under whose special charge they were, and with many requests that the Federal would not let the prisoners suspect who had given the information, divulged the important secret that there was to be an attempt to escape made in Block Eight that night.

The informer was warmly thanked, and the corporal of the guard summoned. But he judged it a matter too important for him to assume responsibility, and submitted the case to the officer of the guard. Every precaution was at once taken to prevent the success of the attempt; a double guard was ordered out for the night, and just at sunset a party of inspection made the rounds. Every cell was closely scrutinized, but no evidence of a tunnel or other mode of escape was found. The inspecting party fell into line, and marched out of the prison yard.

They had seen no evidence of an attempt to escape; they did not dream that it was being made before their very eyes. As they reformed after the inspection, one of the blue-coated soldiers that fell into line had been better used to wearing a gray uniform; and his musket had been fabricated by his own cunning fingers. It was, in fact, no other than our friend Lieut. Pierce, and all this alarm about an escape to be attempted was a part of his plot to get away from Johnson's Island. Long's information was true, but the Federals did not understand it any better than he had intended that they should.

The inspecting party marched out of the prison yard, and at

the word of command, halted and faced about, to be themselves inspected. The lieutenant in command ran his keen eye over the line of men standing bolt upright before him.

"Where's your cartridge-box, sir?" he demanded of one, sternly.

"I—I—the fact is, sir, we fell in so suddenly, I forgot it," stammered the delinquent, with more real regret that he *had* forgotten it than ever was felt before by soldier who had offended in a similar manner.



*"Where's your cartridge box?"*

"A pretty soldier you are! Suppose the Rebels were to attack us now?" (Delinquent sincerely wished they would, but managed to look very much alarmed.) "Let me see your gun."

Pierce drew himself up to his full height, perhaps to counteract the sinking of his heart, and presented the weapon in due form. He knew that he had been detected, or, rather, would be as soon as the Federal had felt the weight of his gun; he knew too, that it was simply from having forgotten to make an article which presented not a tenth of the difficulties he had overcome in the case of the gun. He had surmounted the great obstacles,

but had stumbled and fallen over the very least that could have been presented.

The Federal lieutenant detected the true state of affairs as soon as he took the sham gun in his hands, for it was of course very much lighter than the regulation weapon. The prisoner was taken before Col. Charles W. Hill, of the 112th Ohio, and to that officer the particulars of the attempt were recounted. Fortunately for Lieut. Pierce, the colonel was a man whose good sense and native generosity had not been overcome by partisan feeling. He of course took possession of the blue uniform and the gun, for that was no more than his duty demanded; but he recognized the right of a prisoner to escape if he can elude or outwit his guards, and did not subject him to any of the punishments which in military prisons so often rewarded unsuccessful efforts to regain liberty. He even complimented the Confederate on the ingenuity of his plans and his patience and skill in carrying them out; but compliments, even from an enemy's lips, were but poor consolation for the failure of the plan for which he had worked so long and from which he had hoped so much.

So sure were his comrades that he would succeed, that they fixed his bunk to look as if he were covered up in it, and were ready to answer, at roll-call the next morning, that he was sick; this course being intended to conceal his escape long enough to give him a good start. But he was there to answer for himself; and thus ended the fourth attempt.

It was the last; for soon after came the news that Lee had surrendered; then, that his subordinates, in various parts of the South, had laid down their arms, and the Confederacy was dead. The men confined in the various military prisons were benumbed by the news. That which they had feared had come to pass, and even when liberated, they could do no more for the cause to which they had sworn allegiance. There was now no reason why any of them should attempt to escape; yet a little while longer, and they should be duly released. Even Lieut. Pierce made no further effort, but waited, with as much patience as he could command, until the order came for officers of his rank to be paroled and released.

The gun, which was so close an imitation of the real article, is still in existence, and is said, by those who have seen it, to be a marvel of workmanship, when the tools and materials are con-

sidered. Originally placed in the archives of the State of Ohio, it was subsequently claimed by the maker's relatives, and by them presented, if we mistake not, to the Southern Historical Society, in whose possession it still remains.

The story, as it reaches us, is told by other persons than the one directly concerned, and thus lacks many details which could be supplied by no one else; but his death occurred so soon after the War (1867) that the time had not come to tell the story; he judged that it was the duty of each soldier to return wholly to the pursuits of peace, leaving the memories of the War until they should be softened by time.







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