

Crisis, the — Volume 05 eBook

Crisis, the — Volume 05 by Winston Churchill

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THE GUNS OF SUMTER

Winter had vanished. Spring was come with a hush. Toward a little island set in the blue waters of Charleston harbor anxious eyes were strained.

Was the flag still there?

God alone may count the wives and mothers who listened in the still hours of the night for the guns of Sumter. One sultry night in April Stephen's mother awoke with fear in her heart, for she had heard them. Hark! that is the roar now, faint but sullen. That is the red flash far across the black Southern sky. For in our beds are the terrors and cruelties of life revealed to us. There is a demon to be faced, and nought alone.

Mrs. Brice was a brave woman. She walked that night with God.

Stephen, too, awoke. The lightning revealed her as she bent over him. On the wings of memory he flew back to his childhood in the great Boston house with the rounded front, and he saw the nursery with its high windows looking out across the Common. Often in the dark had she come to him thus, her gentle hand passing over him to feel if he were covered.

"What is it, mother?" he said.

She said: "Stephen, I am afraid that the war has come."

He sat up, blindly. Even he did not guess the agony in her heart.

"You will have to go, Stephen."

It was long before his answer came.

"You know that I cannot, mother. We have nothing left but the little I earn. And if I were —" He did not finish the sentence, for he felt her trembling. But she said again, with that courage which seems woman's alone:

"Remember Wilton Brice. Stephen—I can get along. I can sew."

It was the hour he had dreaded, stolen suddenly upon him out of the night. How many times had he rehearsed this scene to himself! He, Stephen Brice, who had preached and slaved and drilled for the Union, a renegade to be shunned by friend and foe alike! He had talked for his country, but he would not risk his life for it. He heard them repeating the charge. He saw them passing him silently on the street. Shamefully he remembered the time, five months ago, when he had worn the very uniform of his



Revolutionary ancestor. And high above the tier of his accusers he saw one face, and the look of it stung to the very quick of his soul.

Before the storm he had fallen asleep in sheer weariness of the struggle, that face shining through the black veil of the darkness. If he were to march away in the blue of his country (alas, not of hers!) she would respect him for risking life for conviction. If he stayed at home, she would not understand. It was his plain duty to his mother. And yet he knew that Virginia Carvel and the women like her were ready to follow with bare feet the march of the soldiers of the South.

The rain was come now, in a flood. Stephen's mother could not see in the blackness the bitterness on his face. Above the roar of the waters she listened for his voice.



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"I will not go, mother," he said. "If at length every man is needed, that will be different."

"It is for you to decide, my son," she answered. "There are many ways in which you can serve your country here. But remember that you may have to face hard things."

"I have had to do that before, mother," he replied calmly. "I cannot leave you dependent upon charity."

She went back into her room to pray, for she knew that he had laid his ambition at her feet.

It was not until a week later that the dreaded news came. All through the Friday shells had rained on the little fort while Charleston looked on. No surrender yet. Through a wide land was that numbness which precedes action. Force of habit sent men to their places of business, to sit idle. A prayerful Sunday intervened. Sumter had fallen. South Carolina had shot to bits the flag she had once revered.

On the Monday came the call of President Lincoln for volunteers. Missouri was asked for her quota. The outraged reply of her governor went back, —never would she furnish troops to invade her sister states. Little did Governor Jackson foresee that Missouri was to stand fifth of all the Union in the number of men she was to give. To her was credited in the end even more men than stanch Massachusetts.

The noise of preparation was in the city—in the land. On the Monday morning, when Stephen went wearily to the office, he was met by Richter at the top of the stairs, who seized his shoulders and looked into his face. The light of the zealot was on Richter's own.

"We shall drill every night now, my friend, until further orders. It is the Leader's word. Until we go to the front, Stephen, to put down rebellion." Stephen sank into a chair, and bowed his head. What would he think,—this man who had fought and suffered and renounced his native land for his convictions? Who in this nobler allegiance was ready to die for them? How was he to confess to Richter, of all men?

"Carl," he said at length, "I—I cannot go."

"You—you cannot go? You who have done so much already! And why?"

Stephen did not answer. But Richter, suddenly divining, laid his hands impulsively on Stephen's shoulders.

"Ach, I see," he said. "Stephen, I have saved some money. It shall be for your mother while you are away."



At first Stephen was too surprised for speech. Then, in spite of his feelings, he stared at the German with a new appreciation of his character. Then he could merely shake his head.

“Is it not for the Union?” implored Richter, “I would give a fortune, if I had it. Ah, my friend, that would please me so. And I do not need the money now. I 'have—nobody.”

Spring was in the air; the first faint smell of verdure wafted across the river on the wind. Stephen turned to the open window, tears of intense agony in his eyes. In that instant he saw the regiment marching, and the flag flying at its head.

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"It is my duty to stay here, Carl," he said brokenly.

Richter took an appealing step toward him and stopped. He realized that with this young New Englander a decision once made was unalterable. In all his knowledge of Stephen he never remembered him to change. With the demonstrative sympathy of his race, he yearned to comfort him, and knew not how. Two hundred years of Puritanism had reared barriers not to be broken down.

At the end of the office the stern figure of the Judge appeared.

"Mr. Brice!" he said sharply.

Stephen followed him into the littered room behind the ground glass door, scarce knowing what to expect,—and scarce caring, as on that first day he had gone in there. Mr. Whipple himself closed the door, and then the transom. Stephen felt those keen eyes searching him from their hiding-place.

"Mr. Brice," he said at last, "the President has called for seventy-five thousand volunteers to crush this rebellion. They will go, and be swallowed up, and more will go to fill their places. Mr. Brice, people will tell you that the war will be over in ninety days. But I tell you, sir, that it will not be over in seven times ninety days." He brought down his fist heavily upon the table. "This, sir, will be a war to the death. One side or the other will fight until their blood is all let, and until their homes are all ruins." He darted at Stephen one look from under those fierce eyebrows. "Do you intend to go sir?"

Stephen met the look squarely. "No, sir," he answered, steadily, "not now."

"Humph," said the Judge. Then he began what seemed a never-ending search among the papers on his desk. At length he drew out a letter, put on his spectacles and read it, and finally put it down again.

"Stephen," said Mr. Whipple, "you are doing a courageous thing. But if we elect to follow our conscience in this world, we must not expect to escape persecution, sir. Two weeks ago," he continued slowly, "two weeks ago I had a letter from Mr. Lincoln about matters here. He mentions you."

"He remembers me!" cried Stephen

The Judge smiled a little. "Mr. Lincoln never forgets any one," said he. "He wishes me to extend to you his thanks for your services to the Republican party, and sends you his kindest regards."

This was the first and only time that Mr. Whipple spoke to him of his labors. Stephen has often laughed at this since, and said that he would not have heard of them at all had

not the Judge's sense of duty compelled him to convey the message. And it was with a lighter heart than he had felt for many a day that he went out of the door.

Some weeks later, five regiments were mustered into the service of the United States. The Leader was in command of one. And in response to his appeals, despite the presence of officers of higher rank, the President had given Captain Nathaniel Lyon supreme command in Missouri.



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Stephen stood among the angry, jeering crowd that lined the streets as the regiments marched past. Here were the 'Black Jaegers.' No wonder the crowd laughed. Their step was not as steady, nor their files as straight as Company A. There was Richter, his head high, his blue eyes defiant. And there was little Tiefel marching in that place of second lieutenant that Stephen himself should have filled. Here was another company, and at the end of the first four, big Tom Catherwood. His father had disowned him the day before, His two brothers, George and little Spencer, were in a house not far away—a house from which a strange flag drooped.

Clouds were lowering over the city, and big drops falling, as Stephen threaded his way homeward, the damp anal gloom of the weather in his very soul. He went past the house where the strange flag hung against its staff In that big city it flaunted all unchallenged. The house was thrown wide open that day, and in its window lounged young men of honored families. And while they joked of German boorishness and Yankee cowardice they held rifles across their knees to avenge any insult to the strange banner that they had set up. In the hall, through the open doorway, the mouth of a shotted field gun could be seen. The guardians were the Minute Men, organized to maintain the honor and dignity of the state of Missouri.

Across the street from the house was gathered a knot of curious people, and among these Stephen paused. Two young men were standing on the steps, and one was Clarence Colfax. His hands were in his pockets, and a careless, scornful smile was on his face when he glanced down into the street. Stephen caught that smile. Anger swept over him in a hot flame, as at the slave auction years ago. That was the unquenchable fire of the war. The blood throbbed in his temples as his feet obeyed,—and yet he stopped.

What right had he to pull down that flag, to die on the pavement before that house?

CHAPTER XVII

CAMP JACKSON

What enthusiasm on that gusty Monday morning, the Sixth of May, 1861! Twelfth Street to the north of the Market House is full three hundred feet across, and the militia of the Sovereign State of Missouri is gathering there. Thence by order of her Governor they are to march to Camp Jackson for a week of drill and instruction.

Half a mile nearer the river, on the house of the Minute Men, the strange flag leaps wildly in the wind this day.

On Twelfth Street the sun is shining, drums are beating, and bands are playing, and bright aides dashing hither and thither on spirited chargers. One by one the companies



are marching up, and taking place in line; the city companies in natty gray fatigue, the country companies often in their Sunday clothes. But they walk with heads erect and chests out, and the ladies wave their gay parasols and cheer them. Here are the aristocratic St. Louis Grays, Company A; there come the Washington Guards and Washington Blues, and Laclede Guards and Missouri Guards and Davis Guards. Yes, this is Secession Day, this Monday. And the colors are the Stars and Stripes and the Arms of Missouri crossed.



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What are they waiting for? Why don't they move? Hark! A clatter and a cloud of dust by the market place, an ecstasy of cheers running in waves the length of the crowd. Make way for the dragoons! Here they come at last, four and four, the horses prancing and dancing and pointing quivering ears at the tossing sea of hats and parasols and ribbons. Maude Catherwood squeezes Virginia's arm. There, riding in front, erect and firm in the saddle, is Captain Clarence Colfax. Virginia is red and white, and red again, —true colors of the Confederacy. How proud she was of him now! How ashamed that she even doubted him! Oh, that was his true calling, a soldier's life. In that moment she saw him at the head of armies, from the South, driving the Yankee hordes northward and still northward until the roar of the lakes warns them of annihilation. She saw his chivalry sparing them. Yes, this is Secession Monday.

Down to a trot they slow, Clarence's black thorough-bred arching his long neck, proud as his master of the squadron which follows, four and four. The square young man of bone and sinew in the first four, whose horse is built like a Crusader's, is George Catherwood. And Eugenie gives a cry and points to the rear where Maurice is riding.

Whose will be the Arsenal now? Can the Yankee regiments with their slouchy Dutchmen hope to capture it! If there are any Yankees in Twelfth Street that day, they are silent. Yes, there are some. And there are some, even in the ranks of this Militia—who will fight for the Union. These are sad indeed.

There is another wait, the companies standing at ease. Some of the dragoons dismount, but not the handsome young captain, who rides straight to the bright group which has caught his eye, Colonel Carvel wrings his gauntleted hand.

"Clarence, we are proud of you, sir," he says.

And Virginia, repeats his words, her eyes sparkling, her fingers caressing the silken curve of Jefferson's neck.

"Clarence, you will drive Captain Lyon and his Hessians into the river."

"Hush, Jinny," he answered, "we are merely going into camp to learn to drill, that we may be ready to defend the state when the time comes."

Virginia laughed. "I had forgotten," she said.

"You will have your cousin court-martialed, my dear," said the Colonel.

Just then the call is sounded. But he must needs press Virginia's hand first, and allow admiring Maude and Eugenie to press his. Then he goes off at a slow canter to join his dragoons, waving his glove at them, and turning to give the sharp order, "Attention"! to his squadron.



Virginia is deliriously happy. Once more she has swept from her heart every vestige of doubt. Now is Clarence the man she can admire. Chosen unanimously captain of the Squadron but a few days since, Clarence had taken command like a veteran. George Catherwood and Maurice had told the story.



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And now at last the city is to shake off the dust of the North. "On to Camp Jackson!" was the cry. The bands are started, the general and staff begin to move, and the column swings into the Olive Street road, followed by a concourse of citizens awheel and afoot, the horse cars crowded. Virginia and Maude and the Colonel in the Carvel carriage, and behind Ned, on the box, is their luncheon in a hamper. Standing up, the girls can just see the nodding plumes of the dragoons far to the front.

Olive Street, now paved with hot granite and disfigured by trolley wires, was a country road then. Green trees took the place of crowded rows of houses and stores, and little "bob-tail" yellow cars were drawn by plodding mules to an inclosure in a timbered valley, surrounded by a board fence, known as Lindell Grove. It was then a resort, a picnic ground, what is now covered by close residences which have long shown the wear of time.

Into Lindell Grove flocked the crowd, the rich and the poor, the proprietor and the salesmen, to watch the soldiers pitch their tents under the spreading trees. The gallant dragoons were off to the west, across a little stream which trickled through the grounds. By the side of it Virginia and Maude, enchanted, beheld Captain Colfax shouting his orders while his troopers dragged the canvas from the wagons, and staggered under it to the line. Alas! that the girls were there! The Captain lost his temper, his troopers, perspiring over Gordian knots in the ropes, uttered strange soldier oaths, while the mad wind which blew that day played a hundred pranks.

To the discomfiture of the young ladies, Colonel Carvel pulled his goatee and guffawed. Virginia was for moving away.

"How mean, Pa," she said indignantly. "How car, you expect them to do it right the first day, and in this wind?"

"Oh! Jinny, look at Maurice!" exclaimed Maude, giggling. "He is pulled over on his head."

The Colonel roared. And the gentlemen and ladies who were standing by laughed, too. Virginia did not laugh. It was all too serious for her.

"You will see that they can fight," she said. "They can beat the Yankees and Dutch."

This speech made the Colonel glance around him: Then he smiled,—in response to other smiles.

"My dear," he said, "you must remember that this is a peaceable camp of instruction of the state militia. There fly the Stars and Stripes from the general's tent. Do you see that they are above the state flag? Jinny; you forget yourself."

Jinny stamped her foot



“Oh, I hate dissimulation,” she cried, “Why can’t we, say outright that we are going to run that detestable Captain Lyon and his Yankees and Hessians out of the Arsenal.”

“Why not, Colonel Carvel?” cried Maude. She had forgotten that one of her brothers was with the Yankees and Hessians.

“Why aren’t women made generals and governors?” said the Colonel.

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“If we were,” answered Virginia, “something might be accomplished.”

“Isn’t Clarence enough of a fire-eater to suit you?” asked her father.

But the tents were pitched, and at that moment the young Captain was seen to hand over his horse to an orderly, and to come toward them. He was followed by George Catherwood.

“Come, Jinny,” cried her cousin, “let us go over to the main camp.”

“And walk on Davis Avenue,” said Virginia, flushing with pride. “Isn’t there a Davis Avenue?”

“Yes, and a Lee Avenue, and a Beauregard Avenue,” said George, taking his sister’s arm.

“We shall walk in them all,” said Virginia.

What a scene of animation it was. The rustling trees and the young grass of early May, and the two hundred and forty tents in lines of military precision. Up and down the grassy streets flowed the promenade, proud fathers and mothers, and sweethearts and sisters and wives in gala dress. Wear your bright gowns now, you devoted women. The day is coming when you will make them over and over again, or tear them to lint, to stanch the blood of these young men who wear their new gray so well.

Every afternoon Virginia drove with her father and her aunt to Camp Jackson. All the fashion and beauty of the city were there. The bands played, the black coachmen flecked the backs of their shining horses, and walking in the avenues or seated under the trees were natty young gentlemen in white trousers and brass-buttoned jackets. All was not soldier fare at the regimental messes. Cakes and jellies and even ices and more substantial dainties were laid beneath those tents. Dress parade was one long sigh of delight: Better not to have been born than to have been a young man in St. Louis, early in Camp Jackson week, and not be a militiaman.

One young man whom we know, however, had little of pomp and vanity about him,—none other than the young manager (some whispered “silent partner”) of Carvel & Company. If Mr. Eliphalet had had political ambition, or political leanings, during the half-year which had just passed, he had not shown them. Mr. Cluyme (no mean business man himself) had pronounced Eliphalet a conservative young gentleman who attended to his own affairs and let the mad country take care of itself. This is precisely the wise course Mr. Hopper chose. Seeing a regiment of Missouri Volunteers slouching down Fifth street in citizens’ clothes he had been remarked to smile cynically. But he kept his opinions so close that he was supposed not to have any.

On Thursday of Camp Jackson week, an event occurred in Mr. Carvel's store which excited a buzz of comment. Mr. Hopper announced to Mr. Barbo, the book-keeper, that he should not be there after four o'clock. To be sure, times were more than dull. The Colonel that morning had read over some two dozen letters from Texas and the Southwest, telling of the impossibility of meeting certain obligations in the present state of the country. The Colonel had gone home to dinner with his brow furrowed. On the other hand, Mr. Hopper's equanimity was spoken of at the widow's table.

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At four o'clock, Mr. Hopper took an Olive Street car, tucking himself into the far corner where he would not be disturbed by any ladies who might enter. In the course of an hour or so, he alighted at the western gate of the camp on the Olive Street road. Refreshing himself with a little tobacco, he let himself be carried leisurely by the crowd between the rows of tents. A philosophy of his own (which many men before and since have adopted) permitted him to stare with a superior good nature at the open love-making around him. He imagined his own figure,—which was already growing a little stout,—in a light gray jacket and duck trousers, and laughed. Eliphalet was not burdened with illusions of that kind. These heroes might have their hero-worship. Life held something dearer for him.

As he was sauntering toward a deserted seat at the foot of a tree, it so chanced that he was overtaken by Mr. Cluyme and his daughter Belle. Only that morning, this gentleman, in glancing through the real estate column of his newspaper, had fallen upon a deed of sale which made him wink. He reminded his wife that Mr. Hopper had not been to supper of late. So now Mr. Cluyme held out his hand with more than common cordiality. When Mr. Hopper took it, the fingers did not close any too tightly over his own. But it may be well to remark that Mr. Hopper himself did not do any squeezing. He took off his hat grudgingly to Miss Belle. He had never liked the custom.

"I hope you will take pot luck with us soon again, Mr. Hopper," said the elder gentleman. "We only have plain and simple things, but they are wholesome, sir. Dainties are poor things to work on. I told that to his Royal Highness when he was here last fall. He was speaking to me on the merits of roast beef—"

"It's a fine day," said Mr. Hopper.

"So it is," Mr. Cluyme assented. Letting his gaze wander over the camp, he added casually, "I see that they have got a few mortars and howitzers since yesterday. I suppose that is the stuff we heard so much about, which came on the 'Swon' marked 'marble.' They say Jeff Davis sent the stuff to 'em from the Government arsenal the Secesh captured at Baton Rouge. They're pretty near ready to move on our arsenal now."

Mr. Hopper listened with composure. He was not greatly interested in this matter which had stirred the city to the quick. Neither had Mr. Cluyme spoken as one who was deeply moved. Just then, as if to spare the pains of a reply, a "Jenny Lind" passed them. Miss Belle recognized the carriage immediately as belonging to an elderly lady who was well known in St. Louis. Every day she drove out, dressed in black bombazine, and heavily veiled. But she was blind. As the mother-in-law of the stalwart Union leader of the city, Miss Belle's comment about her appearance in Camp Jackson was not out of place.

"Well!" she exclaimed, "I'd like to know what she's doing here!"

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Mr. Hopper's answer revealed a keenness which, in the course of a few days, engendered in Mr. Cluyme as lusty a respect as he was capable of.

"I don't know," said Eliphalet; "but I cal'late she's got stouter."

"What do you mean by that?" Miss Belle demanded.

"That Union principles must be healthy," said he, and laughed.

Miss Cluyme was prevented from following up this enigma. The appearance of two people on Davis Avenue drove the veiled lady from her mind. Eliphalet, too, had seen them. One was the tall young Captain of Dragoons, in cavalry boots, and the other a young lady with dark brown hair, in a lawn dress.

"Just look at them!" cried Miss Belle. "They think they are alone in the garden of Eden. Virginia didn't use to care for him. But since he's a captain, and has got a uniform, she's come round pretty quick. I'm thankful I never had any silly notions about uniforms."

She glanced at Eliphalet, to find that his eyes were fixed on the approaching couple.

"Clarence is handsome, but worthless," she continued in her sprightly way. "I believe Jinny will be fool enough to marry him. Do you think she's so very pretty, Mr. Hopper?"

Mr. Hopper lied.

"Neither do I," Miss Belle assented. And upon that, greatly to the astonishment of Eliphalet, she left him and ran towards them. "Virginia!" she cried; "Jinny, I have something so interesting to tell you!"

Virginia turned impatiently. The look she bestowed upon Miss Cluyme was not one of welcome, but Belle was not sensitive. Putting her arm through Virginia's, she sauntered off with the pair toward the parade grounds, Clarence maintaining now a distance of three feet, and not caring to hide his annoyance.

Eliphalet's eyes smouldered, following the three until they were lost in the crowd. That expression of Virginia's had reminded him of a time, years gone, when she had come into the store on her return from Kentucky, and had ordered him to tell her father of her arrival. He had smarted then. And Eliphalet was not the sort to get over smarts.

"A beautiful young lady," remarked Mr. Cluyme. "And a deserving one, Mr. Hopper. Now, she is my notion of quality. She has wealth, and manners, and looks. And her father is a good man. Too bad he holds such views on secession. I have always thought, sir, that you were singularly fortunate in your connection with him."

There was a point of light now in each of Mr. Hopper's green eyes. But Mr. Cluyme continued:

"What a pity, I say, that he should run the risk of crippling himself by his opinions. Times are getting hard."

"Yes," said Mr. Hopper.

"And southwestern notes are not worth the paper they are written on—"

But Mr. Cluyme has misjudged his man. If he had come to Eliphalet for information of Colonel Carvel's affairs, or of any one else's affairs, he was not likely to get it. It is not meet to repeat here the long business conversation which followed. Suffice it to say that Mr. Cluyme, who was in dry goods himself, was as ignorant when he left Eliphalet as when he met him. But he had a greater respect than ever for the shrewdness of the business manager of Carvel & Company.



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That same Thursday, when the first families of the city were whispering jubilantly in each other's ears of the safe arrival of the artillery and stands of arms at Camp Jackson, something of significance was happening within the green inclosure of the walls of the United States arsenal, far to the southward.

The days had become alike in sadness to Stephen. Richter gone, and the Judge often away in mysterious conference, he was left for hours at a spell the sole tenant of the office. Fortunately there was work of Richter's and of Mr. Whipple's left undone that kept him busy. This Thursday morning, however, he found the Judge getting into that best black coat which he wore on occasions. His manner had recently lost much of its gruffness.

"Stephen," said he, "they are serving out cartridges and uniforms to the regiments at the arsenal. Would you like to go down with me?"

"Does that mean Camp Jackson?" asked Stephen, when they had reached the street.

"Captain Lyon is not the man to sit still and let the Governor take the first trick, sir," said the Judge.

As they got on the Fifth Street car, Stephen's attention was at once attracted to a gentleman who sat in a corner, with his children about him. He was lean, and he had a face of great keenness and animation. He had no sooner spied Judge Whipple than he beckoned to him with a kind of military abruptness.

"That is Major William T. Sherman," said the Judge to Stephen. "He used to be in the army, and fought in the Mexican War. He came here two months ago to be the President of this Fifth Street car line."

They crossed over to him, the Judge introducing Stephen to Major Sherman, who looked at him very hard, and then decided to bestow on him a vigorous nod.

"Well, Whipple," he said, "this nation is going to the devil; eh?"

Stephen could not resist a smile. For it was a bold man who expressed radical opinions (provided they were not Southern opinions) in a St. Louis street car early in '61.

The Judge shook his head. "We may pull out," he said.

"Pull out!" exclaimed Mr. Sherman. "Who's man enough in Washington to shake his fist in a rebel's face? Our leniency—our timidity—has paralyzed us, sir."



By this time those in the car began to manifest considerable interest in the conversation. Major Sherman paid them no attention, and the Judge, once launched in an argument, forgot his surroundings.

“I have faith in Mr. Lincoln. He is calling out volunteers.”

“Seventy-five thousand for three months!” said the Major, vehemently, “a bucketful on a conflagration I tell you, Whipple, we’ll need all the water we’ve got in the North.”

The Judge expressed his belief in this, and also that Mr. Lincoln would draw all the water before he got through.

“Upon my soul,” said Mr. Sherman, “I’m disgusted. Now’s the time to stop ’em. The longer we let ’em rear and kick, the harder to break ’em. You don’t catch me going back to the army for three months. If they want me, they’ve got to guarantee me three years. That’s more like it.” Turning to Stephen, he added: “Don’t you sign any three months’ contract, young man.”



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Stephen grew red. By this time the car was full, and silent. No one had offered to quarrel with the Major. Nor did it seem likely that any one would.

"I'm afraid I can't go, sir."

"Why not?" demanded Mr. Sherman.

"Because, sir," said the Judge, bluntly, "his mother's a widow, and they have no money. He was a lieutenant in one of Blair's companies before the call came."

The Major looked at Stephen, and his expression changed.

"Find it pretty hard?" he asked.

Stephen's expression must have satisfied him, but he nodded again, more vigorously than before.

"Just you *wait*, Mr. Brice," he said. "It won't hurt you any."

Stephen was grateful. But he hoped to fall out of the talk. Much to his discomfiture, the Major gave him another of those queer looks. His whole manner, and even his appearance, reminded Stephen strangely of Captain Elijah Brent.

"Aren't you the young man who made the Union speech in Mercantile Library Hall?"

"Yes, sir," said the Judge. "He is."

At that the Major put out his hand impulsively, and gripped Stephen's.

"Well, sir," he said, "I have yet to read a more sensible speech, except some of Abraham Lincoln's. Brinsmade gave it to me to read. Whipple, that speech reminded me of Lincoln. It was his style. Where did you get it, Mr. Brice?" he demanded.

"I heard Mr. Lincoln's debate with Judge Douglas at 'Freeport,'" said Stephen; beginning to be amused.

The Major laughed.

"I admire your frankness, sir," he said. "I meant to say that its logic rather than its substance reminded one of Lincoln."

"I tried to learn what I could from him, Major Sherman."

At length the car stopped, and they passed into the Arsenal grounds. Drawn up in lines on the green grass were four regiments, all at last in the blue of their country's service. Old soldiers with baskets of cartridges were stepping from file to file, giving handfuls to



the recruits. Many of these thrust them in their pockets, for there were not enough belts to go around. The men were standing at ease, and as Stephen saw them laughing and joking lightheartedly his depression returned. It was driven away again by Major Sherman's vivacious comments. For suddenly Captain Lyon, the man of the hour, came into view.

"Look at him!" cried the Major, "he's a man after my own heart. Just look at him running about with his hair flying in the wind, and the papers bulging from his pockets. Not dignified, eh, Whipple? But this isn't the time to be dignified. If there were some like Lyon in Washington, our troops would be halfway to New Orleans by this time. Don't talk to me of Washington! Just look at him!"

The gallant Captain was a sight, indeed, and vividly described by Major Sherman's picturesque words as he raced from regiment to regiment, and from company to company, with his sandy hair awry, pointing, gesticulating, commanding. In him Stephen recognized the force that had swept aside stubborn army veterans of wavering faith, that snapped the tape with which they had tied him.

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Would he be duped by the Governor's ruse of establishing a State Camp at this time? Stephen, as he gazed at him, was sure that he would not. This man could see to the bottom, through every specious argument. Little matters of law and precedence did not trouble him. Nor did he believe elderly men in authority when they told gravely that the state troops were there for peace.

After the ranks were broken, Major Sherman and the Judge went to talk to Captain Lyon and the Union Leader, who was now a Colonel of one of the Volunteer regiments. Stephen sought Richter, who told him that the regiments were to assemble the morning of the morrow, prepared to march.

"To Camp Jackson?" asked Stephen.

Richter shrugged his shoulders.

"We are not consulted, my friend," he said. "Will you come into my quarters and have a bottle of beer with Tiefel?"

Stephen went. It was not their fault that his sense at their comradeship was gone. To him it was as if the ties that had bound him to them were asunder, and he was become an outcast.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE STONE THAT IS REJECTED

That Friday morning Stephen awoke betimes with a sense that something was to happen. For a few moments he lay still in the half comprehension which comes after sleep when suddenly he remembered yesterday's incidents at the Arsenal, and leaped out of bed.

"I think that Lyon is going to attack Camp Jackson to-day," he said to his mother after breakfast, when Hester had left the room.

Mrs. Brice dropped her knitting in her lap.

"Why, Stephen?"

"I went down to the Arsenal with the Judge yesterday and saw them finishing the equipment of the new regiments. Something was in the wind. Any one could see that from the way Lyon was flying about. I think he must have proof that the Camp Jackson people have received supplies from the South."



Mrs. Brice looked fixedly at her son, and then smiled in spite of the apprehension she felt.

“Is that why you were working over that map of the city last night?” she asked.

“I was trying to see how Lyon would dispose his troops. I meant to tell you about a gentleman we met in the street car, a Major Sherman who used to be in the army. Mr. Brinsmade knows him, and Judge Whipple, and many other prominent men here. He came to St. Louis some months ago to take the position of president of the Fifth Street Line. He is the keenest, the most original man I have ever met. As long as I live I shall never forget his description of Lyon.”

“Is the Major going back into the army?” said Mrs. Brice, Stephen did not remark the little falter in her voice. He laughed over the recollection of the conversation in the street car.

“Not unless matters in Washington change to suit him,” he said. “He thinks that things have been very badly managed, and does not scruple to say so anywhere. I could not have believed it possible that two men could have talked in public as he and Judge Whipple did yesterday and not be shot down. I thought that it was as much as a man’s life is worth to mention allegiance to the Union here in a crowd. And the way Mr. Sherman pitched into the Rebels in that car full of people was enough to make your hair stand on end.”



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“He must be a bold man,” murmured Mrs. Brice.

“Does he think that the—the Rebellion can be put down?”

“Not with seventy-five thousand men, nor with ten times that number.”

Mrs. Brice sighed, and furtively wiped her eyes with her handkerchief.

“I am afraid we shall see great misery, Stephen,” she said.

He was silent. From that peaceful little room war and its horrors seemed very far away. The morning sun poured in through the south windows and was scattered by the silver on the sideboard. From above, on the wall, Colonel Wilton Brice gazed soberly down. Stephen’s eyes lighted on the portrait, and his thoughts flew back to the boyhood days when he used to ply his father with questions about it. Then the picture had suggested only the glory and honor which illumines the page of history. Something worthy to look back upon, to keep one’s head high. The hatred and the suffering and the tears, the heartrending, tearing apart for all time of loving ones who have grown together,—these were not upon that canvas, Will war ever be painted with a wart?

The sound of feet was heard on the pavement. Stephen rose, glancing at his mother. Her face was still upon her knitting.

“I am going to the Arsenal,” he said. “I must see what is happening.”

To her, as has been said, was given wisdom beyond most women. She did not try to prevent him as he kissed her good-by. But when the door had shut behind him, a little cry escaped her, and she ran to the window to strain her eyes after him until he had turned the corner below.

His steps led him irresistibly past the house of the strange flag, ominously quiet at that early hour. At sight of it anger made him hot again. The car for South St. Louis stood at the end of the line, fast filling with curious people who had read in their papers that morning of the equipment of the new troops. There was little talk among them, and that little guarded.

It was a May morning to rouse a sluggard; the night air tingled into life at the touch of the sunshine, the trees in the flitting glory of their first green. Stephen found the shaded street in front of the Arsenal already filled with an expectant crowd. Sharp commands broke the silence, and he saw the blue regiments forming on the lawn inside the wall. Truly, events were in the air,—great events in which he had no part.

As he stood leaning against a tree-box by the curb, dragged down once more by that dreaded feeling of detachment, he heard familiar voices close beside him. Leaning



forward, he saw Eliphalet Hopper and Mr. Cluyme. It was Mr. Cluyme who was speaking.

“Well, Mr. Hopper,” he said, “in spite of what you say, I expect you are dust as eager as I am to see what is going on. You’ve taken an early start this morning for sightseeing.”

Eliphalet’s equanimity was far from shaken.

“I don’t cal’late to take a great deal of stock in the military,” he answered. “But business is business. And a man must keep an eye on what is moving.”

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Mr. Cluyme ran his hand through his chop whiskers, and lowered his voice.

“You’re right, Hopper,” he assented. “And if this city is going to be Union, we ought to know it right away.”

Stephen, listening with growing indignation to this talk, was unaware of a man who stood on the other side of the tree, and who now came forward before Mr. Hopper. He presented a somewhat uncompromising front. Mr. Cluyme instantly melted away.

“My friend,” said the stranger, quietly, “I think we have met before, when your actions were not greatly to your credit. I do not forget a face, even when I see it in the dark. Now I hear you utter words which are a disgrace to a citizen of the United States. I have some respect for a rebel. I have none for you, sir.”

As soon as Stephen recovered from the shock of his surprise, he saw that Eliphalet had changed countenance. The manner of an important man of affairs, which he had so assiduously cultivated, fell away from him. He took a step backward, and his eyes made an ugly shift. Stephen rejoiced to see the stranger turn his back on the manager of Carvel & Company before that dignitary had time to depart, and stand unconcernedly there as if nothing had occurred.

Then Stephen stared at him.

He was not a man you would look at twice, ordinarily, he was smoking a great El Sol cigar. He wore clothes that were anything but new, a slouch hat, and coarse grained, square-toed boots. His trousers were creased at the knees. His head fell forward a little from his square shoulders, and leaned a bit to one side, as if meditatively. He had a light brown beard that was reddish in the sun, and he was rather short than otherwise.

This was all that Stephen saw. And yet the very plainness of the man’s appearance only added to his curiosity. Who was this stranger? His words, his action, too, had been remarkable. The art of administering a rebuke like that was not given to many men. It was perfectly quiet, perfectly final. And then, when it was over, he had turned his back and dismissed it.

Next Stephen began to wonder what he could know about Hopper. Stephen had suspected Eliphalet of subordinating principles to business gain, and hence the conversation with Mr. Cluyme had given him no shock in the way of a revelation, But if Hopper were a rogue, ought not Colonel Carvel to hear it? Ought not he, Stephen Brice, to ask this man with the cigar what he knew, and tell Judge Whipple? The sudden rattle of drums gave him a start, and cruelly reminded him of the gulf of prejudice and hatred fast widening between the friends.

All this time the stranger stood impassively chewing his cigar, his hand against the tree-box. A regiment in column came out of the Arsenal gate, the Union leader in his colonel's uniform, on horseback at its head. He pulled up in the street opposite to Stephen, and sat in his saddle, chatting with other officers around him.



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Then the stranger stepped across the limestone gutter and walked up to the Colonel's horse, He was still smoking. This move, too, was surprising enough, It argued even more assurance. Stephen listened intently.

"Colonel Blair, my name is Grant," he said briefly.

The Colonel faced quickly about, and held out his gloved hand cordially, "Captain Ulysses Grant," said he; "of the old army?"

Mr. Grant nodded.

"I wanted to wish you luck," he said.

"Thank you, Grant," answered the Colonel. "But you? Where are you living now?"

"I moved to Illinois after I left here," replied Mr. Grant, as quietly as before, "and have been in Galena, in the Leather business there. I went down to Springfield with the company they organized in Galena, to be of any help I could. They made me a clerk in the adjutant general's office of the state I ruled blanks, and made out forms for a while." He paused, as if to let the humble character of this position sink into the Colonel's comprehension. "Then they found out that I'd been quartermaster and commissary, and knew something about military orders Now I'm a state mustering officer. I came down to Belleville to muster in a regiment, which wasn't ready. And so I ran over here to see what you fellows were doing."

If this humble account had been delivered volubly, and in another tone, it is probable that the citizen-colonel would not have listened, since the events of that day were to crown his work of a winter. But Mr. Grant possessed a manner of holding attention.. It was very evident, however; that Colonel Blair had other things to think of. Nevertheless he said kindly:

"Aren't you going in, Grant?"

"I can't afford to go in as a captain of volunteers," was the calm reply: "I served nine years in the regular army and I think I can command a regiment."

The Colonel, whose attention was called away at that moment, did not reply. Mr. Grant moved off up the street. Some of the younger officers who were there, laughed as they followed his retreating figure.

"Command a regiment!" cried one, a lieutenant whom Stephen recognized as having been a bookkeeper at Edwards, James, & Doddington's, and whose stiff blue uniform coat creased awkwardly. "I guess I'm about as fit to command a regiment as Grant is."



“That man’s forty years old, if he’s a day,” put in another. “I remember when he came here to St. Louis in ’54, played out. He’d resigned from the army on the Pacific Coast. He put up a log cabin down on the Gravois Road, and there he lived in the hardest luck of any man I ever saw until last year. You remember him, Joe.”

“Yep,” said Joe. “I spotted him by the El Sol cigar. He used to bring a load of wood to the city once in a while, and then he’d go over to the Planters’ House, or somewhere else, and smoke one of these long fellows, and sit against the wall as silent as a wooden Indian. After that he came up to the city without his family and went into real estate one winter. But he didn’t make it go. Curious, it is just a year ago this month than he went over to Illinois. He’s an honest fellow, and hard working enough, but he don’t know how. He’s just a dead failure.”

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“Command a regiment!” laughed the first, again, as of this in particular had struck his sense of humor. “I guess he won’t get a regiment in a hurry, There’s lots of those military carpet-baggers hanging around for good jobs now.”

“He might fool you fellows yet,” said the one caller, though his tone was not one of conviction. “I understand he had a first-rate record an the Mexican War.”

Just then an aide rode up, and the Colonel gave a sharp command which put an end to this desultory talk. As the First Regiment took up the march, the words “Camp Jackson” ran from mouth to mouth on the sidewalks. Catching fire, Stephen ran with the crowd, and leaping on passing street car, was borne cityward with the drums of the coming hosts beating in his ears.

In the city, shutters were going up on the stores. The streets were filled with, restless citizens seeking news, and drays were halted here and there on the corners, the white eyes and frenzied calls of the negro drivers betraying their excitement. While Stephen related to his mother the events of the morning, Hester burned the dinner. It lay; still untouched, on the table when the throbbing of drums sent them to the front steps. Sigel’s regiment had swung into the street, drawing in its wake a seething crowd.

Three persons came out of the big house next door. One was Anna Brinsmade; and there was her father, his white hairs uncovered. The third was Jack. His sister was cringing to him appealingly, and he struggling in her grasp. Out of his coat pocket hung the curved butt of a pepperbox revolver.

“Let me go, Anne!” he cried. “Do you think I can stay here while my people are shot down by a lot of damned Dutchman?”

“John,” said Mr. Brinsmade, sternly, “I cannot let you join a mob. I cannot let you shoot at men who carry the Union flag.”

“You cannot prevent me, sir,” shouted the young man, in a frenzy. “When foreigners take our flag for them own, it is time for us to shoot them down.”

Wrenching himself free, he ran down the steps and up the street ahead of the regiment. Then the soldiers and the noisy crowd were upon them and while these were passing the two stood there as in a dream. After that silence fell upon the street, and Mr. Brinsmade turned and went back into the house, his head bowed as in prayer. Stephen and his mother drew back, but Anne saw them.

“He is a rebel,” she faltered. “It will break my father’s heart.”

She looked at Stephen appealingly, unashamed of the tears in her eyes. Then she, too went in.



“I cannot stay here mother,” he said.

As he slammed the gate, Anne ran down the steps calling his name. He paused, and she caught his sleeve.

“I knew you would go,” she said, “I knew you would go. Oh, Stephen, you have a cool head. Try to keep Jack—out of mischief.”



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He left her standing on the pavement. But when he reached the corner and looked back he saw that she had gone in at his own little gate to meet his mother. Then he walked rapidly westward. Now and again he was stopped by feverish questions, but at length he reached the top of the second ridge from the river, along which crowded Eighteenth Street now runs. There stood the new double mansion Mr. Spencer Catherwood had built two years before on the outskirts of the town, with the wall at the side, and the brick stable and stable yard. As Stephen approached it, the thought came to him how little this world's goods avail in times of trouble. One of the big Catherwood boys was in the blue marching regiment that day, and had been told by his father never again to darken his doors. Another was in Clarence Colfax's company of dragoons, and still another had fled southward the night after Sumter.

Stephen stopped at the crest of the hill, in the white dust of the new-turned street, to gaze westward. Clouds were gathering in the sky, but the sun still shone brightly. Half way up the rise two blue lines had crawled, followed by black splotches, and at the southwest was the glint of the sun on rifle barrels. Directed by a genius in the art of war, the regiments were closing about Camp Jackson.

As he stood there meditating and paying no attention to those who hurried past, a few familiar notes were struck on a piano. They came through the wide-shuttered window above his head. Then a girl's voice rose above the notes, in tones that were exultant:

—

“Away down South in de fields of cotton,
Cinnamon seed and sandy bottom,
Look away, look away, Look away, look away.
Den I wish I was in Dixie's Land,
Oh, oh! oh, oh!
In Dixie's Land I'll take my stand,
And live and die in Dixie's Land.
Away, away, away.
Away down South in Dixie.”

The song ceased amid peals of girlish laughter. Stephen was rooted to the spot.

“Jinny! Jinny Carvel, how dare you!” came through the shutters. “We shall have a whole regiment of Hessians in here.”

Old Uncle Ben, the Catherwoods' coachman, came out of the stable yard. The whites of his eyes were rolling, half in amusement, half in terror. Seeing Stephen standing there, he exclaimed:

“Mistah Brice, if de Dutch take Camp Jackson, is we niggers gwinter be free?”



Stephen did not answer, for the piano had started again,

“If ever I consent to be married,
And who could refuse a good mate?
The man whom I give my hand to,
Must believe in the Rights of the State.”

More laughter. Then the blinds were flung aside, and a young lady in a dress of white trimmed with crimson stood in the window, smiling. Suddenly she perceived Stephen in the road. Her smile faded. For an instant she stared at him, and then turned to the girls crowding behind her. What she said, he did not wait to hear. He was striding down the hill.



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CHAPTER XIX.

THE TENTH OF MAC

Would the sons of the first families surrender, "Never!" cried a young lady who sat behind the blinds in Mrs. Catherwood's parlor. It seemed to her when she stopped to listen for the first guns of the coming battle that the tumult in her heart would drown their roar.

"But, Jinny," ventured that Miss Puss Russell who never feared to speak her mind, "it would be folly for them to fight. The Dutch and Yankees outnumber them ten to one, and they haven't any powder and bullets."

"And Camp Jackson is down in a hollow," said Maude Catherwood, dejectedly. And yet hopefully, too, for at the thought of bloodshed she was near to fainting.

"Oh," exclaimed Virginia, passionately, "I believe you want them to surrender. I should rather see Clarence dead than giving his sword to a Yankee."

At that the other two were silent again, and sat on through an endless afternoon of uncertainty and hope and dread in the darkened room. Now and anon Mr. Catherwood's heavy step was heard as he paced the hall. From time to time they glanced at Virginia, as if to fathom her thought. She and Puss Russell had come that day to dine with Maude. Mr. Catherwood's Ben, reeking of the stable, had brought the rumor of the marching on the camp into the dining-room, and close upon the heels of this the rumble of the drums and the passing of Sigel's regiment. It was Virginia who had the presence of mind to slam the blinds in the faces of the troops, and the crowd had cheered her. It was Virginia who flew to the piano to play Dixie ere they could get by, to the awe and admiration of the girls and the delight of Mr. Catherwood who applauded her spirit despite the trouble which weighed upon him. Once more the crowd had cheered,—and hesitated. But the Dutch regiment slouched on, impassive, and the people followed.

Virginia remained at the piano, her mood exalted patriotism, uplifted in spirit by that grand song. At first she had played it with all her might. Then she sang it. She laughed in very scorn of the booby soldiers she had seen. A million of these, with all the firearms in the world, could not prevail against the flower of the South. Then she had begun whimsically to sing a verse of a song she had heard the week before, and suddenly her exaltation was fled, and her fingers left the keys. Gaining the window, trembling, half-expectant, she flung open a blind. The troops, the people, were gone, and there alone in the road stood—Stephen Brice. The others close behind her saw him, too, and Puss cried out in her surprise. The impression, when the room was dark once more, was of



sternness and sadness,—and of strength. Effaced was the picture of the plodding recruits with their coarse and ill-fitting uniforms of blue.

Virginia shut the blinds. Not a word escaped her, nor could they tell why—they did not dare to question her then. An hour passed, perhaps two, before the shrill voice of a boy was heard in the street below.



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“Camp Jackson has surrendered!”

They heard the patter of his bare feet on the pavement, and the cry repeated.

“Camp Jackson has surrendered!”

And so the war began for Virginia. Bitter before, now was she on fire. Close her lips as tightly as she might, the tears forced themselves to her eyes. The ignominy of it!

How hard it is for us of this age to understand that feeling.

“I do not believe it!” she cried. “I cannot believe it!”

The girls gathered around her, pale and frightened and anxious. Suddenly courage returned to her, the courage which made Spartans of Southern women. She ran to the front door. Mr. Catherwood was on the sidewalk, talking to a breathless man. That man was Mr. Barbo, Colonel Carvel's book-keeper.

“Yes,” he was saying, “they—they surrendered. There was nothing else for them to do. They were surrounded and overpowered.”

Mr. Catherwood uttered an oath. But it did not shock Virginia.

“And not a shot fired?” he said.

“And not a shot fired?” Virginia repeated, mechanically. Both men turned. Mr. Barbo took off his hat.

“No, ma'am.”

“Oh, how could they!” exclaimed Virginia.

Her words seemed to arouse Mr. Catherwood from a kind of stupor. He turned, and took her hand.

“Virginia, we shall make them smart for this yet, My God!” he cried, “what have I done that my son should be a traitor, in arms against his own brother fighting for his people? To think that a Catherwood should be with the Yankees! You, Ben,” he shouted, suddenly perceiving an object for his anger. “What do you mean by coming out of the yard? By G-d, I'll have you whipped. I'll show you niggers whether you're to be free or not.”

And Mr. Catherwood was a good man, who treated his servants well. Suddenly he dropped Virginia's hand and ran westward down the hill. Well that she could not see beyond the second rise.



Let us go there—to the camp. Let us stand on the little mound at the northeast of it, on the Olive Street Road, whence Captain Lyon's artillery commands it. What a change from yesterday! Davis Avenue is no longer a fashionable promenade, flashing with bright dresses. Those quiet men in blue, who are standing beside the arms of the state troops, stacked and surrendered, are United States regulars. They have been in Kansas, and are used to scenes of this sort.

The five Hessian regiments have surrounded the camp. Each commander has obeyed the master mind of his chief, who has calculated the time of marching with precision. Here, at the western gate, Colonel Blair's regiment is in open order. See the prisoners taking their places between the ranks, some smiling, as if to say all is not over yet; some with heads hung down, in sulky shame. Still others, who are true to the Union, openly relieved. But who is this officer breaking his sword to bits against the fence, rather than surrender it to a Yankee? Listen to the crowd as they cheer him. Listen to the epithets and vile names which they hurl at the stolid blue line of the victors, "Mudsills!" "Negro Worshippers."



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Yes, the crowd is there, seething with conflicting passions. Men with brows bent and fists clenched, yelling excitedly. Others pushing, and eager to see,—there in curiosity only. And, alas, women and children by the score, as if what they looked upon were not war, but a parade, a spectacle. As the gray uniforms file out of the gate, the crowd has become a mob, now flowing back into the fields on each side of the road, now pressing forward vindictively until stopped by the sergeants and corporals. Listen to them calling to sons, and brothers, and husbands in gray! See, there is a woman who spits in a soldier's face!

Throughout it all, the officers sit their horses, unmoved. A man on the bank above draws a pistol and aims at a captain. A German private steps from the ranks, forgetful of discipline, and points at the man, who is cursing the captain's name. The captain, imperturbable, orders his man back to his place. And the man does not shoot—yet.

Now are the prisoners of that regiment all in place between the two files of it. A band (one of those which played lightsome music on the birthday of the camp) is marched around to the head of the column. The regiment with its freight moves on to make place for a battalion of regulars, amid imprecations and cries of "Hurrah for Jeff Davis!" and "Damn the Dutch! Kill the Hessians!"

Stephen Brice stood among the people in Lindell's Grove, looking up at the troops on the road, which was on an embankment. Through the rows of faces he had searched in vain for one. His motive he did not attempt to fathom—in truth, he was not conscious at the time of any motive. He heard the name shouted at the gate.

"Here they are,—the dragoons! Three cheers for Colfax! Down with the Yankees!"

A storm of cheers and hisses followed. Dismounted, at the head of his small following, the young Captain walked erect. He did not seem to hear the cheers. His face was set, and he held his gloved hand over the place where his sword had been, as if over a wound. On his features, in his attitude, was stamped the undying determination of the South. How those thoroughbreds of the Cavaliers showed it! Pain they took lightly. The fire of humiliation burned, but could not destroy their indomitable spirit. They were the first of their people in the field, and the last to leave it. Historians may say that the classes of the South caused the war; they cannot say that they did not take upon themselves the greatest burden of the suffering.

Twice that day was the future revealed to Stephen. Once as he stood on the hill-crest, when he had seen a girl in crimson and white in a window, —in her face. And now again he read it in the face of her cousin. It was as if he had seen unrolled the years of suffering that were to come.

In that moment of deep bitterness his reason wavered. What if the South should win? Surely there was no such feeling in the North as these people betrayed. That most



dangerous of gifts, the seeing of two sides of a quarrel, had been given him. He saw the Southern view. He sympathized with the Southern people. They had befriended him in his poverty. Why had he not been born, like Clarence Colfax, the owner of a large plantation, the believer in the divine right of his race to rule?



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Then this girl who haunted his thoughts! Would that his path had been as straight, his duty as easy, as that of the handsome young Captain.

Presently these thoughts were distracted by the sight of a back strangely familiar. The back belonged to a gentleman who was energetically climbing the embankment in front of him, on the top of which Major Sexton, a regular, army officer, sat his horse. The gentleman was pulling a small boy after him by one hand, and held a newspaper tightly rolled in the other. Stephen smiled to himself when it came over him that this gentleman was none other than that Mr. William T. Sherman he had met in the street car the day before. Somehow Stephen was fascinated by the decision and energy of Mr. Sherman's slightest movements. He gave Major Saxton a salute, quick and genial. Then, almost with one motion he unrolled the newspaper, pointed to a paragraph, and handed it to the officer. Major Saxton was still reading when a drunken ruffian clambered up the bank behind them and attempted to pass through the lines. The column began to move forward. Mr. Sherman slid down the bank with his boy into the grove beside Stephen. Suddenly there was a struggle. A corporal pitched the drunkard backwards over the bank, and he rolled at Mr. Sherman's feet. With a curse, he picked himself up, fumbling in his pocket. There was a flash, and as the smoke rolled from before his eyes, Stephen saw a man of a German regiment stagger and fall.

It was the signal for a rattle of shots. Stones and bricks filled the air, and were heard striking steel and flesh in the ranks. The regiment quivered,—then halted at the loud command of the officers, and the ranks faced out with level guns, Stephen reached for Mr. Sherman's boy, but a gentleman had already thrown him and was covering his body. He contrived to throw down a woman standing beside him before the mini-balls swished over their heads, and the leaves and branches began to fall. Between the popping of the shots sounded the shrieks of wounded women and children, the groans and curses of men, and the stampeding of hundreds.

"Lie down, Brice! For God's sake lie down!" Mr. Sherman cried.

He was about to obey when a young man, small and agile, ran past him from behind, heedless of the panic. Stopping at the foot of the bank he dropped on one knee, resting his revolver in the hollow of his left arm. It was Jack Brinsmade. At the same time two of the soldiers above lowered their barrels to cover him. Then smoke hid the scene. When it rolled away, Brinsmade lay on the ground. He staggered to his feet with an oath, and confronted a young man who was hatless, and upon whose forehead was burned a black powder mark.

"Curse you!" he cried, reaching out wildly, "curse you, you d—d Yankee. I'll teach you to fight!"

Maddened, he made a rush at Stephen's throat. But Stephen seized his hands and bent them down, and held them firmly while he kicked and struggled.



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“Curse you!” he panted; “curse you, you let me go and I’ll kill you,—you Yankee upstart!”

But Stephen held on. Brinsmade became more and more frantic. One of the officers, seeing the struggle, started down the bank, was reviled, and hesitated. At that moment Major Sherman came between them.

“Let him go, Brice,” he said, in a tone of command. Stephen did as he was bid. Whereupon Brinsmade made a dash for his pistol on the ground. Mr. Sherman was before him.

“Now see here, Jack,” he said, picking it up, “I don’t want to shoot you, but I may have to. That young man saved your life at the risk of his own. If that fool Dutchman had had a ball in his gun instead of a wad, Mr. Brice would have been killed.”

A strange thing happened. Brinsmade took one long look at Stephen, turned on his heel, and walked off rapidly through the grove. And it may be added that for some years after he was not seen in St. Louis.

For a moment the other two stood staring after him. Then Mr. Sherman took his boy by the hand.

“Mr. Brice,” he said, “I’ve seen a few things done in my life, but nothing better than this. Perhaps the day may come when you and I may meet in the army. They don’t seem to think much of us now,” he added, smiling, “but we may be of use to ’em later. If ever I can serve you, Mr. Brice, I beg you to call on me.”

Stephen stammered his acknowledgments. And Mr. Sherman, nodding his head vigorously, went away southward through the grove, toward Market Street.

The column was moving on. The dead were being laid in carriages, and the wounded tended by such physicians as chanced to be on the spot. Stephen, dazed at what had happened, took up the march to town. He strode faster than the regiments with their load of prisoners, and presently he found himself abreast the little file of dragoons who were guarded by some of Blair’s men. It was then that he discovered that the prisoners’ band in front was playing “Dixie.”

They are climbing the second hill, and are coming now to the fringe of new residences which the rich citizens have built. Some of them are closed and dark. In the windows and on the steps of others women are crying or waving handkerchiefs and calling out to the prisoners, some of whom are gay, and others sullen. A distracted father tries to break through the ranks and rescue his son. Ah, here is the Catherwood house. That is open. Mrs. Catherwood, with her hand on her husband’s arm, with red eyes, is scanning those faces for the sight of George.



Will he ever come back to her? Will the Yankees murder him for treason, or send him North to languish the rest of his life? No, she will not go inside. She must see him. She will not faint, though Mrs. James has, across the street, and is even now being carried into the house. Few of us can see into the hearts of those women that day, and speak of the suffering there.



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Near the head of Mr. Blair's regiment is Tom. His face is cast down as he passes the house from which he is banished. Nor do father, or mother, or sister in their agony make any sound or sign. George is coming. The welcome and the mourning and the tears are all for him.

The band is playing "Dixie" once more. George is coming, and some one else. The girls are standing in a knot bend the old people, dry-eyed, their handkerchiefs in their hands. Some of the prisoners take off their hats and smile at the young lady with the chiselled features and brown hair, who wears the red and white of the South as if she were born to them. Her eyes are searching. Ah, at last she sees him, walking erect at the head of his dragoons. He gives her one look of entreaty, and that smile which should have won her heart long ago. As if by common consent the heads of the troopers are uncovered before her. How bravely she waves at them until they are gone down the street! Then only do her eyes fill with tears, and she passes into the house.

Had she waited, she might have seen a solitary figure leaving the line of march and striding across to Pine Street.

That night the sluices of the heavens were opened, and the blood was washed from the grass in Lindell Grove. The rain descended in floods on the distracted city, and the great river rose and flung brush from Minnesota forests high up on the stones of the levee. Down in the long barracks weary recruits, who had stood and marched all the day long, went supperless to their hard pallets.

Government fare was hard. Many a boy, prisoner or volunteer, sobbed himself to sleep in the darkness. All were prisoners alike, prisoners of war. Sobbed themselves to sleep, to dream of the dear homes that were here within sight and sound of them, and to which they were powerless to go. Sisters, and mothers, and wives were there, beyond the rain, holding out arms to them.

Is war a thing to stir the blood? Ay, while the day lasts. But what of the long nights when husband and wife have lain side by side? What of the children who ask piteously where their father is going, and who are gathered by a sobbing mother to her breast? Where is the picture of that last breakfast at home? So in the midst of the cheer which is saddest in life comes the thought that, just one year ago, he who is the staff of the house was wont to sit down just so merrily to his morning meal, before going to work in the office. Why had they not thanked God on their knees for peace while they had it?

See the brave little wife waiting on the porch of her home for him to go by. The sun shines, and the grass is green on the little plot, and the geraniums red. Last spring she was sewing here with a song on her lips, watching for him to turn the corner as he came back to dinner. But now! Hark! Was that the beat of the drums? Or was it thunder? Her good neighbors, the doctor and his wife, come in at the little gate to cheer her. She does not hear them. Why does God mock her with sunlight and with friends?



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Tramp, tramp, tramp! They are here. Now the band is blaring. That is his company. And that is his dear face, the second from the end. Will she ever see it again? Look, he is smiling bravely, as if to say a thousand tender things. "Will, are the flannels in your knapsack? You have not forgotten that medicine for your cough?" What courage sublime is that which lets her wave at him? Well for you, little woman, that you cannot see the faces of the good doctor and his wife behind you. Oh, those guns of Sumter, how they roar in your head! Ay, and will roar again, through forty years of widowhood!

Mrs. Brice was in the little parlor that Friday night, listening to the cry of the rain outside. Some thoughts such as these distracted her. Why should she be happy, and other mothers miserable? The day of reckoning for her happiness must surely come, when she must kiss Stephen a brave farewell and give him to his country. For the sins of the fathers are visited on the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Him who is the Ruler of all things.

The bell rang, and Stephen went to the door. He was startled to see Mr. Brinsmade. That gentleman was suddenly aged, and his clothes were wet and spattered with mud. He sank into a chair, but refused the spirits and water which Mrs. Brice offered him in her alarm.

"Stephen," he said, "I have been searching the city for John. Did you see him at Camp Jackson—was he hurt?"

"I think not, sir," Stephen answered, with clear eyes.

"I saw him walking southward after the firing was all over."

"Thank God," exclaimed Mr. Brinsmade, fervently. "If you will excuse me, madam, I shall hurry to tell my wife and daughter. I have been able to find no one who saw him."

As he went out he glanced at Stephen's forehead. But for once in his life, Mr. Brinsmade was too much agitated to inquire about the pain of another.

"Stephen, you did not tell me that you saw John," said his mother, when the door was closed.

CHAPTER XX

IN THE ARSENAL

There was a dismal tea at Colonel Carvel's house in Locust Street that evening Virginia did not touch a mouthful, and the Colonel merely made a pretence of eating. About six o'clock Mrs. Addison Colfax had driven in from Bellegarde, nor could it rain fast enough or hard enough to wash the foam from her panting horses. She did not wait for Jackson



to come out with an umbrella, but rushed through the wet from the carriage to the door in her haste to urge the Colonel to go to the Arsenal and demand Clarence's release. It was in vain that Mr. Carvel assured her it would do no good, in vain that he told her of a more important matter that claimed him. Could there be a more important matter than his own nephew kept in durance, and in danger of being murdered by Dutch butchers in the frenzy of their victory? Mrs. Colfax shut herself up in her room, and through the door Virginia heard her sobs as she went down to tea.



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The Colonel made no secret of his uneasiness. With his hat on his head, and his hands in his pockets, he paced up and down the room. He let his cigar go out,—a more serious sign still. Finally he stood with his face to the black window, against which the big drops were beating in a fury.

Virginia sat expressionless at the head of the table, still in that gown of white and crimson, which she had worn in honor of the defenders of the state. Expressionless, save for a glance of solicitation at her father's back. If resolve were feminine, Virginia might have sat for that portrait. There was a light in her dark blue eyes. Underneath there were traces of the day's fatigue. When she spoke, there was little life in her voice.

"Aren't you going to the Planters' House, Pa?" The Colonel turned, and tried to smile.

"I reckon not to-night, Jinny. Why?"

"To find out what they are going to do with Clarence," she said indignantly.

"I reckon they don't know at the Planters' House," he said.

"Then—" began Virginia, and stopped.

"Then what?" he asked, stroking her hair.

"Then why not go to the Barracks? Order the carriage, and I will go with you."

His smile faded. He stood looking down at her fixedly, as was sometimes his habit. Grave tenderness was in his tone.

"Jinny," he said slowly, "Jinny, do you mean to marry Clarence?"

The suddenness of the question took her breath. But she answered steadily:

"Yes."

"Do you love him?"

"Yes," she answered. But her lashes fell.

Still he stood, and it seemed to her that her father's gaze pierced to her secret soul.

"Come here, my dear," he said.

He held out his arms, and she fluttered into them. The tears were come at last. It was not the first time she had cried out her troubles against that great heart which had ever been her strong refuge. From childhood she had been comforted there. Had she broken her doll, had Mammy Easter been cross, had lessons gone wrong at school,



was she ill, or weary with that heaviness of spirit which is woman's inevitable lot,—this was her sanctuary. But now! This burden God Himself had sent, and none save her Heavenly Father might cure it. Through his great love for her it was given to Colonel Carvel to divine it—only vaguely.

Many times he strove to speak, and could not. But presently, as if ashamed of her tears, she drew back from him and took her old seat on the arm of his chair.

By the light of his intuition, the Colonel chose tins words well. What he had to speak of was another sorrow, yet a healing one.

“You must not think of marriage now, my dear, when the bread we eat may fail us. Jinny, we are not as rich as we used to be. Our trade was in the South and West, and now the South and West cannot pay. I had a conference with Mr. Hopper yesterday, and he tells me that we must be prepared.”



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She laid her hand upon his.

“And did you think I would care, dear?” she asked gently. “I can bear with poverty and rags, to win this war.”

“His own eyes were dim, but pride shone in them. Jackson came in on tiptoe, and hesitated. At the Colonel’s motion he took away the china and the silver, and removed the white cloth, and turned low the lights in the chandelier. He went out softly, and closed the door.

“Pa,” said Virginia, presently, “do you trust Mr. Hopper?”

The Colonel gave a start.

“Why, yes, Jinny. He improved the business greatly before this trouble came. And even now we are not in such straits as some other houses.”

“Captain Lige doesn’t like him.”

“Lige has prejudices.”

“So have I,” said Virginia. “Eliphalet Hopper will serve you so long as he serves himself. No longer.”

“I think you do him an injustice, my dear,” answered the Colonel. But uneasiness was in his voice. “Hopper is hard working, scrupulous to a cent. He owns two slaves now who are running the river. He keeps out of politics, and he has none of the Yankee faults.”

“I wish he had,” said Virginia.

The Colonel made no answer to this. Getting up, he went over to the bell-cord at the door and pulled it. Jackson came in hurriedly.

“Is my bag packed?”

“Yes, Marsa.”

“Where are you going?” cried Virginia, in alarm.

“To Jefferson City, dear, to see the Governor. I got word this afternoon.”

“In the rain?”

He smiled, and stooped to kiss her.



“Yes,” he answered, “in the rain as far as the depot, I can trust you, Jinny. And Lige’s boat will be back from New Orleans to-morrow or Sunday.”

The next morning the city awoke benumbed, her heart beating but feebly. Her commerce had nearly ceased to flow. A long line of boats lay idle, with noses to the levee. Men stood on the street corners in the rain, reading of the capture of Camp Jackson, and of the riot, and thousands lifted up their voices to execrate the Foreign City below Market Street. A vague terror, maliciously born, subtly spread. The Dutch had broken up the camp, a peaceable state institution, they had shot down innocent women and children. What might they not do to the defenceless city under their victorious hand, whose citizens were nobly loyal to the South? Sack it? Yes, and burn, and loot it. Ladies who ventured out that day crossed the street to avoid Union gentlemen of their acquaintance.

It was early when Mammy Easter brought the news paper to her mistress. Virginia read the news, and ran joyfully to her aunt’s room. Three times she knocked, and then she heard a cry within. Then the key was turned and the bolt cautiously withdrawn, and a crack of six inches disclosed her aunt.

“Oh, how you frightened me, Jinny!” she cried. “I thought it was the Dutch coming to murder us all, What have they done to Clarence?”



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"We shall see him to-day, Aunt Lillian," was the joyful answer. "The newspaper says that all the Camp Jackson prisoners are to be set free to-day, on parole. Oh, I knew they would not dare to hold them. The whole state would have risen to their rescue."

Mrs. Colfax did not receive these tidings with transports. She permitted her niece to come into her room, and then: sank into a chair before the mirror of her dressing-table, and scanned her face there.

"I could not sleep a wink, Jinny, all night long. I look wretchedly. I am afraid I am going to have another of my attacks. How it is raining! What does the newspaper say?"

"I'll get it for you," said Virginia, used to her aunt's vagaries.

"No, no, tell me. I am much too nervous to read it."

"It says that they will be paroled to-day, and that they passed a comfortable night."

"It must be a Yankee lie," said the lady. "Oh, what a night! I saw them torturing him in a thousand ways the barbarians! I know he had to sleep on a dirty floor with low-down trash."

"But we shall have him here to-night, Aunt Lillian!" cried Virginia. "Mammy, tell Uncle Ben that Mr. Clarence will be here for tea. We must have a feast for him. Pa said that they could not hold them."

"Where is Comyn?" inquired Mrs. Colfax. "Has he gone down to see Clarence?"

"He went to Jefferson City last night," replied Virginia. "The Governor sent for him."

Mrs. Colfax exclaimed in horror at this news.

"Do you mean that he has deserted us?" she cried. "That he has left us here defenceless,—at the mercy of the Dutch, that they may wreak their vengeance upon us women? How can you sit still, Virginia? If I were your age and able to drag myself to the street, I should be at the Arsenal now. I should be on my knees before that detestable Captain Lyon, even if he is a Yankee." Virginia kept her temper.

"I do not go on my knees to any man," she said. "Rosetta, tell Ned I wish the carriage at once."

Her aunt seized her convulsively by the arm.

"Where are you going, Jinny?" she demanded. "Your Pa would never forgive me if anything happened to you."



A smile, half pity, crossed the girl's anxious face.

"I am afraid that I must risk adding to your misfortune, Aunt Lillian," she said, and left the room.

Virginia drove to Mr. Brinsmade's. His was one of the Union houses which she might visit and not lose her self respect. Like many Southerners, when it became a question of go or stay, Mr. Brinsmade's unfaltering love for the Union had kept him in. He had voted for Mr. Bell, and later had presided at Crittenden Compromise meetings. In short, as a man of peace, he would have been willing to sacrifice much for peace. And now that it was to be war, and he had taken his stand uncompromisingly with the Union, the neighbors whom he had befriended for so

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many years could not bring themselves to regard him as an enemy. He never hurt their feelings; and almost as soon as the war began he set about that work which has been done by self-denying Christians of all ages,—the relief of suffering. He visited with comfort the widow and the fatherless, and many a night in the hospital he sat through beside the dying, Yankee and Rebel alike, and wrote their last letters home.

And Yankee and Rebel alike sought his help and counsel in time of perplexity or trouble, rather than hotheaded advice from their own leaders.

Mr. Brinsmade's own carriage was drawn up at his door; and that gentleman himself standing on the threshold. He came down his steps bareheaded in the wet to hand Virginia from her carriage.

Courteous and kind as ever, he asked for her father and her aunt as he led her into the house. However such men may try to hide their own trials under a cheerful mien, they do not succeed with spirits of a kindred nature. With the others, who are less generous, it matters not. Virginia was not so thoughtless nor so selfish that she could not perceive that a trouble had come to this good man. Absorbed as she was in her own affairs, she forgot some of them in his presence. The fire left her tongue, and to him she could not have spoken harshly even of an enemy. Such was her state of mind, when she was led into the drawing-room. From the corner of it Anne arose and came forward to throw her arms around her friend.

"Jinny, it was so good of you to come. You don't, hate me?"

"Hate you, Anne dear!"

"Because we are Union," said honest Anne, wishing to have no shadow of doubt.

Virginia was touched. "Anne," she cried, "if you were German, I believe I should love you."

"How good of you to come. I should not have dared go to your house, because I know that you feel so deeply. You—you heard?"

"Heard what?" asked Virginia, alarmed.

"That Jack has run away—has gone South, we think. Perhaps," she cried, "perhaps he may be dead." And tears came into the girl's eyes.

It was then that Virginia forgot Clarence. She drew Anne to the sofa and kissed her.



“No, he is not dead,” she said gently, but with a confidence in her voice of rare quality. “He is not dead, Anne dear, or you would have heard.”

Had she glanced up, she would have seen Mr. Brinsmade’s eye upon her. He looked kindly at all people, but this expression he reserved for those whom he honored. A life of service to others had made him guess that, in the absence of her father, this girl had come to him for help of some kind.

“Virginia is right, Anne,” he said. “John has gone to fight for his principles, as every gentleman who is free should; we must remember that this is his home, and that we must not quarrel with him, because we think differently.” He paused, and came over to Virginia. “There is something I can do for you, my dear?” said he.



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She rose. "Oh, no, Mr. Brinsmade," she cried. And yet her honesty was as great as Anne's. She would not have it thought that she came for other reasons. "My aunt is in such a state of worry over Clarence that I came to ask you if you thought the news true, that the prisoners are to be paroled. She thinks it is a—" Virginia flushed, and bit a rebellious tongue. "She does not believe it."

Even good Mr. Brinsmade smiled at the slip she had nearly made. He understood the girl, and admired her. He also understood Mrs. Colfax.

"I'll drive to the Arsenal with you, Jinny," he answered. "I know Captain Lyon, and we shall find out certainly."

"You will do nothing of the kind, sir," said Virginia, with emphasis. "Had I known this—about John, I should not have come."

He checked her with a gesture. What a gentleman of the old school he was, with his white ruffled shirt and his black stock and his eye kindling with charity.

"My dear," he answered, "Nicodemus is waiting. I was just going myself to ask Captain Lyon about John." Virginia's further objections were cut short by the violent clanging of the door-bell, and the entrance of a tall, energetic gentleman, whom Virginia had introduced to her as Major Sherman, late of the army, and now president of the Fifth Street Railroad. The Major bowed and shook hands. He then proceeded, as was evidently his habit, directly to the business on which he was come.

"Mr. Brinsmade," he said, "I heard, accidentally, half an hour ago that you were seeking news of your son. I regret to say, sir, that the news I have will not lead to a knowledge of his whereabouts. But in justice to a young gentleman of this city I think I ought to tell you what happened at Camp Jackson."

"I shall be most grateful, Major. Sit down, sir."

But the Major did not sit down. He stood in the middle of the room. With some gesticulation which added greatly to the force of the story, he gave a most terse and vivid account of Mr. John's arrival at the embankment by the grove—of his charging a whole regiment of Union volunteers. Here was honesty again. Mr. Sherman did not believe in mincing matters even to a father and sister.

"And, sir," said he, "you may thank the young man who lives next door to you—Mr. Brice, I believe—for saving your son's life."

"Stephen Brice!" exclaimed Mr. Brinsmade, in astonishment.

Virginia felt Anne's hand tighten. But her own was limp. A hot wave swept over her. Was she never to hear the end of this man.



“Yes, sir, Stephen Brice,” answered Mr. Sherman. “And I never in my life saw a finer thing done, in the Mexican War or out of it.”

Mr. Brinsmade grew a little excited. “Are you sure that you know him?”

“As sure as I know you,” said the Major, with excessive conviction.

“But,” said Mr. Brinsmade, “I was in there last night, I knew the young man had been at the camp. I asked him if he had seen Jack. He told me that he had, by the embankment. But he never mentioned a word about saving his life.”



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“He didn’t,” cried the Major. “By glory, but he’s even better than I thought him, Did you see a black powder mark on his face?”

“Why, yes, sir, I saw a bad burn of some kind on his forehead.”

“Well, sir, if one of the Dutchmen who shot at Jack had known enough to put a ball in his musket, he would have killed Mr. Brice, who was only ten feet away, standing before your son.”

Anne gave a little cry—Virginia was silent—Her lips were parted. Though she realized it not, she was thirsting %a hear the whole of the story.

The Major told it, soldier fashion, but well. How John rushed up to the line. How he (Mr. Sherman) had seen Brice throw the woman down and had cried to him to lie down himself how the fire was darting down the regiment, and how men and women were falling all about them; and how Stephen had flung Jack and covered him with his body.

It was all vividly before Virginia’s eyes. Had she any right to treat such a man with contempt? She remembered hour he had looked, at her when he stood on the corner by the Catherwoods’ house. And, worst of all, she remembered many spiteful remarks she had made, even to Anne, the gist of which had been that Mr. Brice was better at preaching than at fighting. She knew now—and she had known in her heart before—that this was the greatest injustice she could have done him.

“But Jack? What did Jack do?”

It was Anne who tremblingly asked the Major. But Mr. Sherman, apparently, was not the man to say that Jack would have shot Stephen had he not interfered. That was the ugly part of the story. John would have shot the man who saved his life. To the day of his death neither Mr. Brinsmade nor his wife knew this. But while Mr. Brinsmade and Anne had gone upstairs to the sickbed, these were the tidings the Major told Virginia, who kept it in her heart. The reason he told her was because she had guessed a part of it.

Nevertheless Mr. Brinsmade drove to the Arsenal with her that Saturday, in his own carriage. Forgetful of his own grief, long habit came to him to talk cheerily with her. He told her many little anecdotes of his travel, but not one of them did she hear. Again, at the moment when she thought her belief in Clarence and her love for him at last secure, she found herself drawing searching comparisons between him and the quieter young Bostonian. In spite of herself she had to admit that Stephen’s deed was splendid. Was this disloyal? She flushed at the thought. Clarence had been capable of the deed,—even to the rescue of an enemy. But—alas, that she should carry it out to a remorseless end—would Clarence have been equal to keeping silence when Mr. Brinsmade came to him? Stephen Brice had not even told his mother, so Mr. Brinsmade believed.



As if to aggravate her torture, Mr. Brinsmade's talk drifted to the subject of young Mr. Brice. This was but natural. He told her of the brave struggle Stephen had made, and how he had earned luxuries, and often necessities, for his mother by writing for the newspapers.

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“Often,” said Mr. Brinsmade, “often I have been unable to sleep, and have seen the light in Stephen’s room until the small hours of the morning.”

“Oh, Mr. Brinsmade,” cried Virginia. “Can’t you tell me something bad about him? Just once.”

The good gentleman started, and looked searchingly at the girl by his side, flushed and confused. Perhaps he thought—but how can we tell what he thought? How can we guess that our teachers laugh at our pranks after they have caned us for them? We do not remember that our parents have once been young themselves, and that some word or look of our own brings a part of their past vividly before them. Mr. Brinsmade was silent, but he looked out of the carriage window, away from Virginia. And presently, as they splashed through the mud near the Arsenal, they met a knot of gentlemen in state uniforms on their way to the city. Nicodemus stopped at his master’s signal. Here was George Catherwood, and his father was with him.

“They have released us on parole,” said George. “Yes, we had a fearful night of it. They could not have kept us—they had no quarters.”

How changed he was from the gay trooper of yesterday! His bright uniform was creased and soiled and muddy, his face unshaven, and dark rings of weariness under his eyes.

“Do you know if Clarence Colfax has gone home?” Mr. Brinsmade inquired.

“Clarence is an idiot,” cried George, ill-naturedly. Mr. Brinsmade, of all the prisoners here, he refused to take the parole, or the oath of allegiance. He swears he will remain a prisoner until he is exchanged.”

“The young man is Quixotic,” declared the elder Catherwood, who was not himself in the best of humors.

“Sir,” said Mr. Brinsmade, with as much severity as he was ever known to use, “sir, I honor that young man for this more than I can tell you. Nicodemus, you may drive on.” And he slammed the door.

Perhaps George had caught sight of a face in the depths of the carriage, for he turned purple, and stood staring on the pavement after his choleric parent had gone on.

It was done. Of all the thousand and more young men who had upheld the honor of their state that week, there was but the one who chose to remain in durance vile within the Arsenal wall—Captain Clarence Colfax, late of the Dragoons.

Mr. Brinsmade was rapidly admitted to the Arsenal, and treated with the respect which his long service to the city deserved. He and Virginia were shown into the bare military



room of the commanding officer, and thither presently came Captain Lyon himself. Virginia tingled with antagonism when she saw this man who had made the city tremble, who had set an iron heel on the flaming brand of her Cause. He, too, showed the marks of his Herculean labors, but only on his clothes and person. His long red hair was unbrushed, his boots covered with black mud, and his coat unbuttoned. His face was ruddy, and his eye as clear as though he had arisen from twelve hours' sleep. He bowed to Virginia (not too politely, to be sure). Her own nod of are recognition did not seem to trouble him.



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“Yes, sir,” he said incisively, in response to Mr. Brinsmade’s question, “we are forced to retain Captain Colfax. He prefers to remain a prisoner until he is exchanged. He refuses to take the oath of allegiance to the United States.

“And why should he be made to, Captain Lyon? In what way has he opposed the United States troops?”

It was Virginia who spoke. Both looked at her in astonishment.

“You will pardon me, Miss Carvel,” said Captain Lyon, gravely, “if I refuse to discuss that question with you.” Virginia bit her tongue.

“I understand that Mr. Colfax is a near relative of yours, Miss Carvel,” the Captain continued. “His friends may come here to see him during the day. And I believe it is not out of place for me to express my admiration of the captain’s conduct. You may care to see him now—”

“Thank you,” said Virginia, curtly.

“Orderly, my respects to Captain Colfax, and ask him if a he will be kind enough to come in here. Mr. Brinsmade,” said the Captain, “I should like a few words with you, sir.” And so, thanks to the Captain’s delicacy, when Clarence arrived he found Virginia alone. She was much agitated She ran toward him as he entered the door, calling his name.

“Max, you are going to stay here?”

“Yes, until I am exchanged.”

Aglow with admiration, she threw herself into his arms. Now, indeed, was she proud of him. Of all the thousand defenders of the state, he alone was true to his principles—to the South. Within sight of home, he alone had chosen privation.

She looked up into his face, which showed marks of excitement and fatigue. But above all, excitement. She knew that he could live on excitement. The thought came to her—was it that which sustained him now? She put it away as treason. Surely the touch of this experience would transform the boy into the man. This was the weak point in the armor which she wore so bravely for her cousin.

He had grown up to idleness. He had known neither care nor responsibility. His one longing from a child had been that love of fighting and adventure which is born in the race. Until this gloomy day in the Arsenal, Virginia had never characterized it as a love of excitement—as any thing which contained a selfish element. She looked up into his face, I say, and saw that which it is given to a woman only to see. His eyes burned with a light that was far away. Even with his arms around her he seemed to have forgotten



her presence, and that she had come all the way to the Arsenal to see him. Her hands dropped limply from his shoulders. She drew away, as he did not seem to notice.

So it is with men. Above and beyond the sacrifice of a woman's life, the joy of possessing her soul and affection, is something more desirable still—fame and glory—personal fame and glory. The woman may share them, of course, and be content with the radiance. When the Governor in making his inauguration speech, does he always think of the help the little wife has given him. And so, in moments of excitement, when we see far ahead into a glorious future, we do not feel the arms about us, or value the sweets which, in more humdrum days, we labored so hard to attain.

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Virginia drew away, and the one searching glance she gave him he did not see. He was staring far beyond; tears started in her eyes, and she turned from him to look out over the Arsenal grounds, still wet and heavy with the night's storm. The day itself was dark and damp. She thought of the supper cooking at home. It would not be eaten now.

And yet, in that moment of bitterness Virginia loved him. Such are the ways of women, even of the proudest, who love their country too. It was but right that he should not think of her when the honor of the South was at stake; and the anger that rose within her was against those nine hundred and ninety-nine who had weakly accepted the parole.

"Why did Uncle Comyn not come?" asked Clarence.

"He has gone to Jefferson City, to see the Governor.."

"And you came alone?"

"No, Mr. Brinsmade brought me."

"And mother?"

She was waiting for that question. What a relief that should have come among the first.

"Aunt Lillian feels very badly. She was in her room when I left. She was afraid," (Virginia had to smile), "she was afraid the Yankees would kill you."

"They have behaved very well for Yankees," replied he, "No luxury, and they will not hear of my having a servant. They are used to doing their own work. But they have treated me much better since I refused to take their abominable oath."

"And you will be honored for it when the news reaches town."

"Do you think so, Jinny?" Clarence asked eagerly, "I reckon they will think me a fool!"

"I should like to hear any one say so," she flashed out.

"No," said Virginia, "our friends will force them to release you. I do not know much about law. But you have done nothing to be imprisoned for."

Clarence did not answer at once. Finally he said. "I do not want to be released."

"You do not want to be released," she repeated.

"No," he said. "They can exchange me. If I remain a prisoner, it will have a greater effect—for the South."



She smiled again, this time at the boyish touch of heroics. Experience, responsibility, and he would get over that. She remembered once, long ago, when his mother had shut him up in his room for a punishment, and he had tortured her by remaining there for two whole days.

It was well on in the afternoon when she drove back to the city with Mr. Brinsmade. Neither of them had eaten since morning, nor had they even thought of hunger. Mr. Brinsmade was silent, leaning back in the corner of the carriage, and Virginia absorbed in her own thoughts. Drawing near the city, that dreaded sound, the rumble of drums, roused them. A shot rang out, and they were jerked violently by the starting of the horses. As they dashed across Walnut at Seventh came the fusillade. Virginia leaned out of the window. Down the vista of the street was a mass of blue uniforms, and a film of white smoke hanging about the columns of the old Presbyterian Church Mr. Brinsmade quietly drew her back into the carriage.



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The shots ceased, giving place to an angry roar that struck terror to her heart that wet and lowering afternoon. The powerful black horses galloped on. Nicodemus tugging at the reins, and great splashes of mud flying in at the windows. The roar of the crowd died to an ominous moaning behind them. Then she knew that Mr. Brinsmade was speaking:— “From battle and murder, and from sudden death—from all sedition, privy conspiracy, and rebellion,—Good Lord, deliver us.”

He was repeating the Litany—that Litany which had come down through the ages. They had chanted it in Cromwell’s time, when homes were ruined and laid waste, and innocents slaughtered. They had chanted it on the dark, barricaded stairways of mediaeval Paris, through St. Bartholomew’s night, when the narrow and twisted streets, ran with blood. They had chanted it in ancient India, and now it was heard again in the New World and the New Republic of Peace and Good Will.

Rebellion? The girl flinched at the word which the good gentleman had uttered in his prayers. Was she a traitor to that flag for which her people had fought in three wars? Rebellion! She burned to blot it forever from the book Oh, the bitterness of that day, which was prophecy of the bitterness to come.

Rain was dropping as Mr. Brinsmade escorted her up her own steps. He held her hand a little at parting, and bade her be of good cheer. Perhaps he guessed something of the trial she was to go through that night alone with her aunt, Clarence’s mother. Mr. Brinsmade did not go directly home. He went first to the little house next door to his. Mrs. Brice and Judge Whipple were in the parlor: What passed between them there has not been told, but presently the Judge and Mr. Brinsmade came out together and stood along time in, the yard, conversing, heedless of the rain.

CHAPTER XXI

THE STAMPEDE

Sunday dawned, and the people flocked to the churches. But even in the house of God were dissension and strife. From the Carvel pew at Dr. Posthelwaite’s Virginia saw men and women rise from their knees and walk out—their faces pale with anger. At St. Mark’s the prayer for the President of the United States was omitted. Mr. Russell and Mr. Catherwood nodded approvingly over the sermon in which the South was justified, and the sanction of Holy Writ laid upon her Institution. With not indifferent elation these gentlemen watched the departure of brethren with whom they had labored for many years, save only when Mr. Brinsmade walked down the aisle never to return. So it is that war, like a devastating flood, creeps insistent into the most sacred places, and will not be denied. Mr. Davitt, at least, preached that day to an united congregation,—which is to say that none of them went out. Mr. Hopper, who now shared a pew with Miss Crane, listened as usual with a most reverent attention. The clouds were



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low and the streets wet as people walked home to dinner, to discuss, many in passion and some in sorrow, the doings of the morning. A certain clergyman had prayed to be delivered from the Irish, the Dutch, and the Devil. Was it he who started the old rumor which made such havoc that afternoon? Those barbarians of the foreign city to the south, drunk with power, were to sack and loot the city. How it flew across street and alley, from yard to yard, and from house to house! Privileged Ned ran into the dining-room where Virginia and her aunt were sitting, his eyes rolling and his face ashen with terror, crying out that the Dutch were marching on the city, firebrands in hand and murder in their hearts.

“De Gen’ral done gib out er procl’mation, Miss Jinny,” he cried. “De Gen’ral done say in dat procl’mation dat he ain’t got no control ober de Dutch soldiers.”

Mrs. Colfax fainted.

“Oh Miss Jinny, ain’t you gwineter Glencoe? Ain’t you gwineter flee away? Every fambly on dis here street’s gwine away—is packin’ up fo’ de country. Doan’t you hear ’em, Miss Jinny? What’ll your pa say to Ned of he ain’t make you clear out! Doan’t you hear de carridges a-rattlin’ off to de country?”

Virginia rose in agitation, yet trying to be calm, and to remember that the safety of the household depended upon her alone. That was her thought,—bred into her by generations,—the safety of the household, of the humblest slave whose happiness and welfare depended upon her father’s bounty. How she longed in that instant for her father or Captain Lige, for some man’s strength, to depend upon. Would there be wisdom in flight?

“Do you want to go, Ned?” she asked. She has seen her aunt swoon before, and her maid Susan knows well what to do. “Do you want to go, Ned?”

“Laws Mussy, no, Miss Jinny. One nigger laik me doan’t make no difference. My Marsa he say: ‘Whaffor you leave ma house to be ramsacked by de Dutch?’

“What I gwineter answer? Oh Miss Jinny, you an’ Miss Lill an’ Mammy Easter an’ Susan’s gwine with Jackson, an’ de othah niggahs can walk. Ephum an’ me’ll jes’ put up de shutters an’ load de Colonel’s gun.”

By this time the room was filled with excited negroes, some crying, and some laughing hysterically. Uncle Ben had come in from the kitchen; Jackson was there, and the women were a wailing bunch in the corner by the sideboard. Old Ephum, impassive, and Ned stood together. Virginia’s eye rested upon them, and the light of love and affection was in it. She went to the window. Yes, carriages were indeed rattling outside,



though a sharp shower was falling. Across the street Alphonse, M. Renault's butler, was depositing bags and bundles on the steps. M. Renault himself bustled out into the rain, gesticulating excitedly. Spying her at the window, he put his hands to his mouth, cried out something, and ran in again. Virginia flung open the sash and listened for the dreaded sound of drums. Then she crossed quickly over to where her aunt was lying on the lounge.



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“O Jinny,” murmured that lady, who had revived, “can’t you do something? Haven’t you done anything? They will be here any moment to burn us, to murder us—to—oh, my poor boy! Why isn’t he here to protect his mother! Why was Comyn so senseless, so thoughtless, as to leave us at such a time!”

“I don’t think there is any need to be frightened,” said Virginia, with a calmness that made her aunt tremble with anger. “It is probably only a rumor. Ned, run to Mr. Brinsmade’s and ask him about it.”

However loath to go, Ned departed at once. All honor to those old-time negroes who are now memories, whose devotion to their masters was next to their love of God. A great fear was in Ned’s heart, but he went. And he believed devoutly that he would never see his young mistress any more.

And while Ned is running to Mr. Brinsmade’s, Mrs. Colfax is summoning that courage which comes to persons of her character at such times. She gathers her jewels into a bag, and her fine dresses into her trunk, with trembling hands, although she is well enough now. The picture of Clarence in the diamond frame she puts inside the waist of her gown. No, she will not go to Bellegarde. That is too near the city. With frantic haste she closes the trunk, which Ephum and Jackson carry downstairs and place between the seats of the carriage. Ned had had the horses in it since church time. It is not safe outside. But where to go?

To Glencoe? It is three in the afternoon, and Jackson explains that, with the load, they would not reach there until midnight, if at all. To Kirkwood or Webster? Yes; many of the first families live there, and would take them in for the night. Equipages of all sorts are passing, —private carriages and public, and corner-stand hacks. The black drivers are cracking whips over galloping horses.

Pedestrians are hurrying by with bundles under their arms, some running east, and some west, and some stopping to discuss excitedly the chances of each direction. From the river comes the hoarse whistle of the boats breaking the Sabbath stillness there. It is a panic to be remembered.

Virginia leaned against the iron railing of the steps, watching the scene, and waiting for Ned to return from Mr. Brinsmade’s. Her face was troubled, as well it might be. The most alarming reports were cried up to her from the street, and she looked every moment for the black smoke of destruction to appear to the southward. Around her were gathered the Carvel servants, most of them crying, and imploring her not to leave them. And when Mrs. Colfax’s trunk was brought down and placed in the carriage where three of them might have ridden to safety, a groan of despair and entreaty rose from the faithful group that went to her heart.

“Miss Jinny, you ain’t gwineter leave yo’ ol mammy?”

“Hush, Mammy,” she said. “No, you shall all go, if I have to stay myself. Ephum, go to the livery stable and get another carriage.”



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She went up into her own deserted room to gather the few things she would take with her—the little jewellery case with the necklace of pearls which her great-grandmother had worn at her wedding. Rosetta and Mammy Easter were of no use, and she had sent them downstairs again. With a flutter she opened her wardrobe door, to take one last look at the gowns there. You will pardon her. They were part of happier days gone by. She fell down on her knees and opened the great drawer at the bottom, and there on the top lay the dainty gown which had belonged to Dorothy Manners. A tear fell upon one of the flowers of the stays. Irresistibly pressed into her mind the memory of Anne's fancy dress ball,—of the episode by the gate, upon which she had thought so often with burning face.

The voices below grow louder, but she does not hear. She is folding the gown hurriedly into a little package. It was her great-grandmother's; her chief heirloom after the pearls. Silk and satin from Paris are left behind. With one glance at the bed in which she had slept since childhood, and at the picture over it which had been her mother's, she hurries downstairs. And Dorothy Manners's gown is under her arm. On the landing she stops to brush her eyes with her handkerchief. If only her father were here!

Ah, here is Ned back again. Has Mr. Brinsmade come?

What did he say? Ned simply pointed out a young man standing on the steps behind the negroes. Crimson stains were on Virginia's cheeks, and the package she carried under her arm was like lead. The young man, although he showed no signs of excitement, reddened too as he came forward and took off his hat. But the sight of him had a curious effect upon Virginia, of which she was at first unconscious. A sense of security came upon her as she looked at his face and listened to his voice.

"Mr. Brinsmade has gone to the hospital, Miss Carvel," he said. "Mrs. Brinsmade asked me to come here with your man in the hope that I might persuade you to stay where you are."

"Then the Germans are not moving on the city?" she said.

In spite of himself, Stephen smiled. It was that smile that angered her, that made her rebel against the advice he had to offer; that made her forget the insult he had risked at her hands by coming there. For she believed him utterly, without reservation. The moment he had spoken she was convinced that the panic was a silly scare which would be food for merriment in future years. And yet—was not that smile in derision of herself—of her friends who were running away? Was it not an assumption of Northern superiority, to be resented?

"It is only a malicious rumor, Miss Carvel," he answered. "You have been told so upon good authority, I suppose," she said dryly. And at the change in her tone she saw his face fall.



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"I have not," he replied honestly, "but I will submit it to your own judgment. Yesterday General Harney superseded Captain Lyon in command in St. Louis. Some citizens of prominence begged the General to send the troops away, to avoid further ill-feeling and perhaps—bloodshed." (They both winced at the word.) "Colonel Blair represented to the General that the troops could not be sent away, as they had been enlisted to serve only in St. Louis; whereupon the General in his proclamation states that he has no control over these Home Guards. That sentence has been twisted by some rascal into a confession that the Home Guards are not to be controlled. I can assure you, Miss Carvel," added Stephen, speaking with a force which made her start and thrill, "I can assure you from a personal knowledge of the German troops that they are not a riotous lot, and that they are under perfect control. If they were not, there are enough regulars in the city to repress them."

He paused. And she was silent, forgetful of the hub-bub around her. It was then that her aunt called out to her, with distressing shrillness, from the carriage:— "Jinny, Jinny, how can you stand there talking to young men when our lives are in danger?"

She glanced hurriedly at Stephen, who said gently; "I do not wish to delay you, Miss Carvel, if you are bent upon going."

She wavered. His tone was not resentful, simply quiet. Ephum turned the corner of the street, the perspiration running on his black face.

"Miss Jinny, dey ain't no carridges to be had in this town. No'm, not for fifty dollars."

This was the occasion for another groan from the negroes, and they began once more to beseech her not to leave them. In the midst of their cries she heard her aunt calling from the carriage, where, beside the trunk, there was just room for her to squeeze in.

"Jinny," cried that lady, frantically, "are you to go or stay? The Hessians will be here at any moment. Oh, I cannot stay here to be murdered!"

Unconsciously the girl glanced again at Stephen. He had not gone, but was still standing in the rain on the steps, the one figure of strength and coolness she had seen this afternoon. Distracted, she blamed the fate which had made this man an enemy. How willingly would she have leaned upon such as he, and submitted to his guidance. Unluckily at that moment came down the street a group which had been ludicrous on any other day, and was, in truth, ludicrous to Stephen then. At the head of it was a little gentleman with red mutton-chop whiskers, hatless, in spite of the rain beginning to fall. His face was the very caricature of terror. His clothes, usually neat, were awry, and his arms were full of various things, not the least conspicuous of which was a magnificent bronze clock. It was this object that caught Virginia's eye. But years passed before she laughed over it. Behind Mr. Cluyme (for it was he) trotted his family. Mrs. Cluyme, in a pink wrapper, carried an armful of the family silver; then came Belle with certain articles

of feminine apparel which need not be enumerated, and the three small Cluymes of various ages brought up the rear.



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Mr. Cluyme, at the top of his speed, was come opposite to the carriage when the lady occupant got out of it. Clutching at his sleeve, she demanded where he was going. The bronze clock had a narrow escape.

“To the river,” he gasped. “To the river, madame!” His wife coming after him had a narrower escape still. Mrs. Colfax retained a handful of lace from the wrapper, the owner of which emitted a shriek of fright.

“Virginia, I am going to the river,” said Mrs. Colfax. “You may go where you choose. I shall send the carriage back for you. Ned, to the levee!” Ned did not lift a rein.

“What, you black rascal! You won’t obey me?”

Ned swung on his seat. “No, indeedy, Miss Lilly, I ain’t a-gwine ’thout young Miss. The Dutch kin catch me an’ hang me, but I ain’t a-gwine ’thout Miss Jinny.”

Mrs. Colfax drew her shawl about her shoulders with dignity.

“Very well, Virginia,” she said. “Ill as I am, I shall walk. Bear witness that I have spent a precious hour trying to save you. If I live to see your father again, I shall tell him that you preferred to stay here and carry on disgracefully with a Yankee, that you let your own aunt risk her life alone in the rain. Come, Susan!”

Virginia was very pale. She did not run down the steps, but she caught her aunt by the arm ere that lady had taken six paces. The girl’s face frightened Mrs. Colfax into submission, and she let herself be led back into the carriage beside the trunk. Those words of Mrs. Colfax’s stung Stephen to righteous anger and resentment—for Virginia.

As to himself, he had looked for insult. He turned to go that he might not look upon her confusion; and hanging on the resolution, swung on his heel again, his eyes blazing. He saw in hers the deep blue light of the skies after an evening’s storm. She was calm, and save for a little quiver of the voice, mistress of herself as she spoke to the group of cowering servants.

“Mammy,” she said, “get up on the box with Ned. And, Ned, walk the horses to the levee, so that the rest may follow. Ephum, you stay here with the house, and I will send Ned back to keep you company.”

With these words, clasping tightly the precious little bundle under her arm, she stepped into the carriage. Heedless of the risk he ran, sheer admiration sent Stephen to the carriage door.

“If I can be of any service, Miss Carvel,” he said, “I shall be happy.”

She glanced at him wildly.



“No,” she cried, “no. Drive on, Ned!”

And as the horses slipped and started she slammed the door in his face.

Down on the levee wheels rattled over the white stones washed clean by the driving rain. The drops pelted the chocolate water into froth, and a blue veil hid the distant bluffs beyond the Illinois bottom-lands. Down on the Levee rich and poor battled for places on the landing-stages, and would have thrown themselves into the flood had there been no boats to save them from the dreaded Dutch. Attila and his Huns were not more feared. Oh, the mystery of that foreign city! What might not its Barbarians do when roused? The rich and poor struggled together; but money was a power that day, and many were pitilessly turned off because they did not have the high price to carry them—who knew where?



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Boats which screamed, and boats which had a dragon's roar were backing out of the close ranks where they had stood wheel-house to wheel-house, and were dodging and bumping in the channel. See, their guards are black with people! Mrs. Colfax, when they are come out of the narrow street into the great open space, remarks this with alarm. All the boats will be gone before they can get near one. But Virginia does not answer. She is thinking of other things than the steamboats, and wondering whether it had not been preferable to be killed by Hessians.

Ned spies the 'Barbara Lane'. He knows that her captain, Mr. Vance, is a friend of the family. What a mighty contempt did Ned and his kind have for foot passengers! Laying about him with his whip, and shouting at the top of his voice to make himself heard, he sent the Colonel's Kentucky bays through the crowd down to the Barbara's landing stage, the people scampering to the right and left, and the Carvel servants, headed by Uncle Ben, hanging on to the carriage springs, trailing behind.

Here was a triumph for Ned, indeed! He will tell you to this day how Mr. Catherwood's carriage was pocketed by drays and bales, and how Mrs. James's horses were seized by the bridles and turned back. Ned had a head on his shoulders, and eyes in his head. He spied Captain Vance himself on the stage, and bade Uncle Ben hold to the horses while he shouldered his way to that gentleman. The result was that the Captain came bowing to the carriage door, and offered his own cabin to the ladies. But the niggers—he would take no niggers except a maid for each; and he begged Mrs. Colfax's pardon—he could not carry her trunk.

So Virginia chose Mammy Easter, whose red and yellow turban was awry from fear lest she be left behind and Ned was instructed to drive the rest with all haste to Bellegarde. Captain Vance gave Mrs. Colfax his arm, and Virginia his eyes. He escorted the ladies to quarters in the Texas, and presently was heard swearing prodigiously as the boat was cast off. It was said of him that he could turn an oath better than any man on the river, which was no mean reputation.

Mrs. Colfax was assisted to bed by Susan. Virginia stood by the little window of the cabin, and as the Barbara paddled and floated down the river she looked anxiously for signals of a conflagration. Nay, in that hour she wished that the city might burn. So it is that the best of us may at times desire misery to thousands that our own malice may be fed. Virginia longed to see the yellow flame creep along the wet, gray clouds. Passionate tears came to her eyes at the thought of the humiliation she had suffered,—and before him, of all men. Could she ever live with her aunt after what she had said? "Carrying on with that Yankee!" The horrible injustice of it!

Her anger, too, was still against Stephen. Once more he had been sent by circumstances to mock her and her people. If the city would only burn, that his cocksure judgment might for once be mistaken, his calmness for once broken!



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The rain ceased, the clouds parted, and the sun turned the muddy river to gold. The bluffs shone May-green in the western flood of light, and a haze hung over the bottom-lands. Not a sound disturbed the quiet of the city receding to the northward, and the rain had washed the pall of smoke from over it. On the boat excited voices died down to natural tones; men smoked on the guards and promenaded on the hurricane deck, as if this were some pleasant excursion. Women waved to the other boats flocking after. Laughter was heard, and joking. Mrs. Colfax stirred in her berth and began to talk.

“Virginia, where are we going?” Virginia did not move

“Jinny!”

She turned. In that hour she remembered that great good-natured man, her mother’s brother, and for his sake Colonel Carvel had put up with much from his wife’s sister in-law. She could pass over, but never forgive what her aunt had said to her that afternoon. Mrs. Colfax had often been cruel before, and inconsiderate. But as the girl thought of the speech, staring out on the waters, it suddenly occurred to her that no lady would have uttered it. In all her life she had never realized till now that her aunt was not a lady. From that time forth Virginia’s attitude toward her aunt was changed.

She controlled herself, however, and answered something, and went out listlessly to find the Captain and inquire the destination of the boat. Not that this mattered much to her. At the foot of the companionway leading to the saloon deck she saw, of all people, Mr. Eliphalet Hopper leaning on the rail, and pensively expectorating on the roof of the wheel-house. In another mood Virginia would have laughed, for at sight of her he straightened convulsively, thrust his quid into his cheek, and removed his hat with more zeal than the grudging deference he usually accorded to the sex. Clearly Eliphalet would not have chosen the situation.

“I cal’late we didn’t get out any too soon, Miss Carvel,” he remarked, with a sad attempt at jocoseness. “There won’t be a great deal in that town when the Dutch get through with it.”

“I think that there are enough men left in it to save it,” said Virginia.

Apparently Mr. Hopper found no suitable answer to this, for he made none. He continued to glance at her uneasily. There was an impudent tribute in his look which she resented strongly.

“Where is the Captain?” she demanded.

“He’s down below—ma’am,” he replied. “Can—can I do anything?”

“Yes,” she said, with abrupt maliciousness, “you may tell me where you are going.”



“I cal’late, up the Cumberland River. That’s where she’s bound for, if she don’t stop before she gets there. Guess there ain’t many of ’em inquired where she was goin’, or cared much,” he added, with a ghastly effort to be genial.

“Do you care?” she demanded, curiously. Eliphalet grinned.

“Not a great deal,” he said. Then he felt called upon to defend himself. “I didn’t see any use in gettin’ murdered, when I couldn’t do anything.”



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She left him. He stared after her up the companionway, bit off a generous piece of tobacco, and ruminated. If to be a genius is to possess an infinite stock of patience, Mr. Hopper was a genius. There was patience in his smile. But it was not a pleasant smile to look upon.

Virginia did not see it. She had told her aunt the news, and stood in the breeze on the hurricane deck looking southward, with her hand shading her eyes. The 'Barbara Lane' happened to be a boat with a record, and her name was often in the papers. She had already caught up with and distanced others which had had half an hour's start of her, and was near the head of the procession.

Virginia presently became aware that people were gathering around her in knots, gazing at a boat coming toward them. Others had been met which, on learning the dread news, turned back. But this one kept her bow steadily up the current, although she had passed within a biscuit-toss of the leader of the line of refugees. It was then that Captain Vance's hairy head appeared above the deck.

"Dang me!" he said, "if here ain't pig-headed Brent, steaming the 'Jewanita' straight to destruction."

"Oh, are you sure it's Captain Brent?" cried Virginia. The Captain looked around in surprise.

"If that there was Shreve's old Enterprise come to life again, I'd lay cotton to sawdust that Brent had her. Danged if he wouldn't take her right into the jaws of the Dutch."

The Captain's words spread, and caused considerable excitement. On board the Barbara Lane were many gentlemen who had begun to be shamefaced over their panic, and these went in a body to the Captain and asked him to communicate with the 'Juanita'. Whereupon a certain number of whistles were sounded, and the Barbara's bows headed for the other side of the channel.

As the Juanita drew near, Virginia saw the square figure and clean, smooth-shaven face of Captain Lige standing in front of his wheel-house. Peace crept back into her soul, and she tingled with joy as the bells clanged and the bucket-planks churned, and the great New Orleans packet crept slowly to the Barbara's side.

"You ain't goin' in, Brent?" shouted the Barbara's captain.

"Why not?" responded Mr. Brent. At the sound of his voice Virginia could have wept.

"The Dutch are sacking the city," said Vance. "Didn't they tell you?"

"The Dutch—hell!" said Mr. Brent, calmly. "Who's afraid of the Dutch?"



A general titter went along the guards, and Virginia blushed. Why could not the Captain see her?

“I’m on my reg’lar trip, of course,” said Vance. Out there on the sunlit river the situation seemed to call for an apology.

“Seems to be a little more loaded than common,” remarked Captain Lige, dryly, at which there was another general laugh.

“If you’re really goin’ up,” said Captain Vance, I reckon there’s a few here would like to be massacred, if you’ll take ‘em.”



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"Certainly," answered Mr. Brent; "I'm bound for the barbecue." And he gave a command.

While the two great boats were manoeuvring, and slashing with one wheel and the other, the gongs sounding, Virginia ran into the cabin.

"Oh, Aunt Lillian," she exclaimed, "here is Captain Lige and the Juanita, and he is going to take us back with him. He says there is no danger."

It is unnecessary here to repeat the moral persuasion which Virginia used to get her aunt up and dressed. That lady, when she had heard the whistle and the gongs, had let her imagination loose. Turning her face to the wall, she was in the act of repeating her prayers as her niece entered.

A big stevedore carried her down two decks to where the gang-plank was thrown across. Captain Lige himself was at the other end. His face lighted, pushing the people aside, he rushed across, snatched the lady from the negro's arms, crying:

"Jinny! Jinny Carvel! Well, if this ain't fortunate." The stevedore's services were required for Mammy Easter. And behind the burly shield thus formed, a stoutish gentleman slipped over, all unnoticed, with a carpet-bag in his hand. It bore the initials E. H.

The plank was drawn in. The great wheels began to turn and hiss, the Barbara's passengers waved good-by to the foolhardy lunatics who had elected to go back into the jaws of destruction. Mrs. Colfax was put into a cabin; and Virginia, in a glow, climbed with Captain Lige to the hurricane deck. There they stood for a while in silence, watching the broad stern of the Barbara growing smaller. "Just to think," Miss Carvel remarked, with a little hysterical sigh, "just to think that some of those people brought bronze clocks instead of tooth-brushes."

"And what did you bring, my girl?" asked the Captain, glancing at the parcel she held so tightly under her arm.

He never knew why she blushed so furiously.

CHAPTER XXII

THE STRAINING OF ANOTHER FRIENDSHIP

Captain Lige asked but two questions: where was the Colonel, and was it true that Clarence had refused to be paroled? Though not possessing over-fine susceptibilities, the Captain knew a mud-drum from a lady's watch, as he himself said. In his solicitude for Virginia, he saw that she was in no state of mind to talk of the occurrences of the last



few days. So he helped her to climb the little stair that winds to the top of the texas,—that sanctified roof where the pilot-house squats. The girl clung to her bonnet Will you like her any the less when you know that it was a shovel bonnet, with long red ribbons that tied under her chin? It became her wonderfully. “Captain Lige,” she said, almost tearfully, as she took his arm, “how I thank heaven that you came up the river this afternoon!”

“Jinny,” said the Captain, “did you ever know why cabins are called staterooms?”



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“Why, no,” answered she, puzzled.

“There was an old fellow named Shreve who ran steamboats before Jackson fought the redcoats at New Orleans. In Shreve’s time the cabins were curtained off, just like these new-fangled sleeping-car berths. The old man built wooden rooms, and he named them after the different states, Kentuck, and Illinois, and Pennsylvania. So that when a fellow came aboard he’d say: ‘What state am I in, Cap?’ And from this river has the name spread all over the world—stateroom. That’s mighty interesting,” said Captain Lige.

“Yea,” said Virginia; “why didn’t you tell me long ago.”

“And I’ll bet you can’t say,” the Captain continued, “why this house we’re standing on is called the texas.”

“Because it is annexed to the states,” she replied, quick a flash.

“Well, you’re bright,” said he. “Old Tufts got that notion, when Texas came in. Like to see Bill Jenks?”

“Of course,” said Virginia.

Bill Jenks was Captain Brent’s senior pilot. His skin hung on his face in folds, like that of a rhinoceros. It was very much the same color. His grizzled hair was all lengths, like a worn-out mop; his hand reminded one of an eagle’s claw, and his teeth were a pine yellow. He greeted only such people as he deemed worthy of notice, but he had held Virginia in his arms.

“William,” said the young lady, roguishly, “how is the eye, location, and memory?”

William abandoned himself to a laugh. When this happened it was put in the Juanita’s log.

“So the Cap’n be still harpin’ on that?” he said, “Miss Jinny, he’s just plumb crazy on a pilot’s qualifications.”

“He says that you are the best pilot on the river, but I don’t believe it,” said Virginia.

William cackled again. He made a place for her on the leather-padded seat at the back of the pilot house, where for a long time she sat staring at the flag trembling on the jackstaff between the great sombre pipes. The sun fell down, but his light lingered in the air above as the big boat forged abreast the foreign city of South St. Louis. There was the arsenal—grim despite its dress of green, where Clarence was confined alone.



Captain Lige came in from his duties below. “Well, Jinny, we’ll soon be at home,” he said. “We’ve made a quick trip against the rains.”

“And—and do you think the city is safe?”

“Safe!” he cried. “As safe as London!” He checked himself. “Jinny, would you like to blow the whistle?”

“I should just love to,” said Virginia. And following Mr. Jenks’s directions she put her toe on the tread, and shrank back when the monster responded with a snort and a roar. River men along the levee heard that signal and laughed. The joke was certainly not on sturdy Elijah Brent.



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An hour later, Virginia and her aunt and the Captain, followed by Mammy aster and Rosetta and Susan, were walking through the streets of the stillest city in the Union. All that they met was a provost's guard, for St. Louis was under Martial Law. Once in a while they saw the light of some contemptuous citizen of the residence district who had stayed to laugh. Out in the suburbs, at the country houses of the first families, people of distinction slept five and six in a room—many with only a quilt between body and matting. Little wonder that these dreamed of Hessians and destruction. In town they slept with their doors open, those who remained and had faith. Martial law means passes and explanations, and walking generally in the light of day. Martial law means that the Commander-in-chief, if he be an artist in well doing, may use his boot freely on politicians bland or beetle-browed. No police force ever gave the sense of security inspired by a provost's guard.

Captain Lige sat on the steps of Colonel Carvel's house that night, long after the ladies were gone to bed. The only sounds breaking the silence of the city were the beat of the feet of the marching squads and the call of the corporal's relief. But the Captain smoked in agony until the clouds of two days slipped away from under the stars, for he was trying to decide a Question. Then he went up to a room in the house which had been known as his since the rafters were put down on that floor.

The next morning, as the Captain and Virginia sit at breakfast together with only Mammy Easter to cook and Rosetta to wait on them, the Colonel bursts in. He is dusty and travel-stained from his night on the train, but his gray eyes light with affection as he sees his friend beside his daughter.

"Jinny," he cries as he kisses her, "Jinny, I'm proud oil you, my girl! You didn't let the Yankees frighten you—But where is Jackson?"

And so the whole miserable tale has to be told over again, between laughter and tears on Virginia's part, and laughter and strong language on Colonel Carvel's. What—blessing that Lige met them, else the Colonel might now be starting for the Cumberland River in search of his daughter. The Captain does not take much part in the conversation, and he refuses the cigar which is offered him. Mr. Carvel draws back in surprise.

"Lige," he says, "this is the first time to my knowledge."

"I smoked too many last night," says the Captain. The Colonel sat down, with his feet against the mantel, too full of affairs to take much notice of Mr. Brent's apathy.

"The Yanks have taken the first trick—that's sure," he said. "But I think we'll laugh last, Jinny. Jefferson City isn't precisely quiet. The state has got more militia, or will have more militia in a day or two. We won't miss the thousand they stole in Camp Jackson.

They're organizing up there. And I've got a few commissions right here," and he tapped his pocket.



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“Pa,” said Virginia, “did you volunteer?”

The Colonel laughed.

“The Governor wouldn’t have me,” he answered. “He said I was more good here in St. Louis. I’ll go later. What’s this I hear about Clarence?”

Virginia related the occurrences of Saturday. The Colonel listened with many exclamations, slapping his knee from time to time as she proceeded.

“By gum!” he cried, when she had finished, “the boy has it in him, after all! They can’t hold him a day—can they, Lige?” (No answer from the Captain, who is eating his breakfast in silence.) “All that we have to do is to go for Worington and get a habeas corpus from the United States District Court. Come on, Lige.” The Captain got up excitedly, his face purple.

“I reckon you’ll have to excuse me, Colonel,” he said. “There’s a cargo on my boat which has got to come off.” And without more ado he left the room. In consternation they heard the front door close behind him. And yet, neither father nor daughter dared in that hour add to the trial of the other by speaking out the dread that was in their hearts. The Colonel smoked for a while, not a word escaping him, and then he patted Virginia’s cheek.

“I reckon I’ll run over and see Russell, Jinny,” he said, striving to be cheerful. “We must get the boy out. I’ll see a lawyer.” He stopped abruptly in the hall and pressed his hand to his forehead. “My God,” he whispered to himself, “if I could only go to Silas!”

The good Colonel got Mr. Russell, and they went to Mr. Worington, Mrs. Colfax’s lawyer, of whose politics it is not necessary to speak. There was plenty of excitement around the Government building where his Honor issued the writ. There lacked not gentlemen of influence who went with Mr. Russell and Colonel Carvel and the lawyer and the Commissioner to the Arsenal. They were admitted to the presence of the indomitable Lyon, who informed them that Captain Colfax was a prisoner of war, and, since the arsenal was Government property, not in the state. The Commissioner thereupon attested the affidavit to Colonel Carvel, and thus the application for the writ was made legal.

These things the Colonel reported to Virginia; and to Mrs. Colfax, who received them with red eyes and a thousand queries as to whether that Yankee ruffian would pay any attention to the Sovereign law which he pretended to uphold; whether the Marshal would not be cast over the Arsenal wall by the slack of his raiment when he went to serve the writ. This was not the language, but the purport, of the lady’s questions. Colonel Carvel had made but a light breakfast: he had had no dinner, and little rest on the train. But he answered his sister-in-law with unflinching courtesy. He was too honest



to express a hope which he did not feel. He had returned that evening to a dreary household. During the day the servants had straggled in from Bellegarde, and Virginia had had prepared those dishes which her



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father loved. Mrs. Colfax chose to keep her room, for which the two were silently thankful. Jackson announced supper. The Colonel was humming a tune as he went down the stairs, but Virginia was not deceived. He would not see the yearning in her eyes as he took his chair; he would not glance at Captain Lige's empty seat. It was because he did not dare. She caught her breath when she saw that the food on his plate lay untouched.

"Pa, are you ill?" she faltered.

He pushed his chair away, such suffering in his look as she had never seen.

"Jinny," he said, "I reckon Lige is for the Yankees."

"I have known it all along," she said, but faintly.

"Did he tell you?" her father demanded. "No."

"My God," cried the Colonel, in agony, "to think that he kept it from me I to think that Lige kept it from me!"

"It is because he loves you, Pa," answered the girl, gently, "it is because he loves us."

He said nothing to that. Virginia got up, and went softly around the table. She leaned over his shoulder. "Pa!"

"Yes," he said, his voice lifeless.

But her courage was not to be lightly shaken. "Pa, will you forbid him to come here—now?"

A long while she waited for his answer, while the big clock ticked out the slow seconds in the hall, and her heart beat wildly.

"No," said the Colonel. "As long as I have a roof, Lige may come under it."

He rose abruptly and seized his bat. She did not ask him where he was going, but ordered Jackson to keep the supper warm, and went into the drawing-room. The lights were out, then, but the great piano that was her mother's lay open. Her fingers fell upon the keys. That wondrous hymn which Judge Whipple loved, which for years has been the comfort of those in distress, floated softly with the night air out of the open window. It was "Lead, Kindly Light." Colonel Carvel heard it, and paused.

Shall we follow him?



He did not stop again until he reached the narrow street at the top of the levee bank, where the quaint stone houses of the old French residents were being loaded with wares. He took a few steps back-up the hill. Then he wheeled about, walked swiftly down the levee, and on to the landing-stage beside which the big 'Juanita' loomed in the night. On her bows was set, fantastically, a yellow street-car.

The Colonel stopped mechanically. Its unexpected appearance there had served to break the current of his meditations. He stood staring at it, while the roustabouts passed and repassed, noisily carrying great logs of wood on shoulders padded by their woollen caps.

"That'll be the first street-car used in the city of New Orleans, if it ever gets there, Colonel."

The Colonel jumped. Captain Lige was standing beside him.

"Lige, is that you? We waited supper for you."

"Reckon I'll have to stay here and boss the cargo all night. Want to get in as many trips as I can before—navigation closes," the Captain concluded significantly.



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Colonel Carvel shook his head. “You were never too busy to come for supper, Lige. I reckon the cargo isn’t all.”

Captain Lige shot at him a swift look. He gulped.

“Come over here on the levee,” said the Colonel, sternly. They walked out together, and for some distance in silence.

“Lige,” said the elder gentleman, striking his stick on the stones, “if there ever was a straight goer, that’s you. You’ve always dealt squarely with me, and now I’m going to ask you a plain question. Are you North or South?”

“I’m North, I reckon,” answered the Captain, bluntly. The Colonel bowed his head. It was a long time before he spoke again. The Captain waited like a man who expects and deserve, the severest verdict. But there was no anger in Mr. Carvel’s voice—only reproach.

“And you wouldn’t tell me, Lige? You kept it from me.”

“My God, Colonel,” exclaimed the other, passionately, “how could I? I owe what I have to your charity. But for you and—and Jinny I should have gone to the devil. If you and she are taken away, what have I left in life? I was a coward, sir, not to tell you. You must have guessed it. And yet,—God help me,—I can’t stand by and see the nation go to pieces. Your nation as well as mine, Colonel. Your fathers fought that we Americans might inherit the earth—” He stopped abruptly. Then he continued haltingly, “Colonel, I know you’re a man of strong feelings and convictions. All I ask is that you and Jinny will think of me as a friend—”

He choked, and turned away, not heeding the direction of his feet. The Colonel, his stick raised, stood looking after him. He was folded in the near darkness before he called his name.

“Lige!”

“Yes, Colonel.”

He came back, wondering, across the rough stones until he stood beside the tall figure. Below them, the lights glided along the dark water.

“Lige, didn’t I raise you? Haven’t I taught you that my house was your home? Come back, Lige. But—but never speak to me again of this night! Jinny is waiting for us.”

Not a word passed between them as they went up the quiet street. At the sound of their feet in the entry the door was flung open, and Virginia, with her hands out stretched, stood under the hall light.



“Oh, Pa, I knew you would bring him back,” she said.

CHAPTER XXIII

OF CLARENCE

Captain Clarence Colfax, late of the State Dragoons, awoke on Sunday morning the chief of the many topics of the conversation of a big city. His conduct drew forth enthusiastic praise from the gentlemen and ladies who had thronged Beauregard and Davis avenues, and honest admiration from the party which had broken up the camp. The boy had behaved well. There were many doting parents, like Mr. Catherwood, whose boys had accepted the parole, whose praise was a trifle lukewarm, to be sure. But popular opinion, when once aroused, will draw a grunt from the most grudging.



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We are not permitted, alas, to go behind these stern walls and discover how Captain Colfax passed that eventful Sunday of the Exodus. We know that, in his loneliness, he hoped for a visit from his cousin, and took to pacing his room in the afternoon, when a smarting sense of injustice crept upon him. Clarence was young. And how was he to guess, as he looked out in astonishment upon the frightened flock of white boats swimming southward, that his mother and his sweetheart were there?

On Monday, while the Colonel and many prominent citizens were busying themselves about procuring the legal writ which was at once to release Mr. Colfax, and so cleanse the whole body of Camp Jackson's defenders from any, veiled intentions toward the Government, many well known carriages drew up before the Carvel House in Locust Street to congratulate the widow and the Colonel upon the possession of such a son and nephew. There were some who slyly congratulated Virginia, whose martyrdom it was to sit up with people all the day long. For Mrs. Colfax kept her room, and admitted only a few of her bosom friends to cry with her. When the last of the callers was gone, Virginia was admitted to her aunt's presence.

"Aunt Lillian, to-morrow morning Pa and I are going to the Arsenal with a basket for Max. Pa seems to think there is a chance that he may come back with us. You will go, of course."

The lady smiled wearily at the proposal, and raised her hands in protest, the lace on the sleeves of her dressing gown falling away from her white arms.

"Go, my dear?" she exclaimed, "when I can't walk to my bureau after that terrible Sunday. You are crazy, Jinny. No," she added, with conviction, "I never again expect to see him alive. Comyn says they may release him, does he? Is he turning Yankee, too?"

The girl went away, not in anger or impatience, but in sadness. Brought up to reverence her elders, she had ignored the shallowness of her aunt's character in happier days. But now Mrs. Colfax's conduct carried a prophecy with it. Virginia sat down on the landing to ponder on the years to come,—on the pain they were likely to bring with them from this source—Clarence gone to the war; her father gone (for she felt that he would go in the end), Virginia foresaw the lonely days of trial in company with this vain woman whom accident made her cousin's mother. Ay, and more, fate had made her the mother of the man she was to marry. The girl could scarcely bear the thought—through the hurry and swing of the events of two days she had kept it from her mind.

But now Clarence was to be released. To-morrow he would be coming home to her joyfully for his reward, and she did not love him. She was bound to face that again and again. She had cheated herself again and again with other feelings. She had set up intense love of country in the shrine where it did not belong, and it had answered—for a while. She saw Clarence in a hero's light—until a fatal intimate knowledge made her



shudder and draw back. And yet her resolution should not be water. She would carry it through.

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Captain Lige's cheery voice roused her from below—and her father's laugh. And as she went down to them she thanked God that this friend had been spared to him. Never had the Captain's river yarns been better told than at the table that evening. Virginia did not see him glance at the Colonel when at last he had brought a smile to her face.

"I'm going to leave Jinny with you, Lige," said Mr. Carvel, presently. "Worington has some notion that the Marshal may go to the Arsenal to-night with the writ. I mustn't neglect the boy."

Virginia stood in front of him. "Won't you let me go?" she pleaded

The Colonel was taken aback. He stood looking down at her, stroking his goatee, and marvelling at the ways of woman.

"The horses have been out all day, Jinny," he said, "I am going in the cars."

"I can go in the cars, too."

The Colonel looked at Captain Lige.

"There is only a chance that we shall see Clarence," he went on, uneasily.

"It is better than sitting still," cried Virginia, as she ran away to get the bonnet with the red strings.

"Lige,—” said the Colonel, as the two stood awaiting her in the hall, "I can't make her out. Can you?"

The Captain did not answer.

It was a long journey, in a bumping car with had springs that rattled unceasingly, past the string of provost guards. The Colonel sat in the corner, with his head bent down over his stick. At length, cramped and weary, they got out, and made their way along the Arsenal wall, past the sentries to the entrance. The sergeant brought his rifle to a "port".

"Commandant's orders, sir. No one admitted," he said.

"Is Captain Colfax here?" asked Mr. Carver

"Captain Colfax was taken to Illinois in a skiff, quarter of an hour since."

Captain Lige gave vent to a long, low whistle.

"A skiff!" he exclaimed, "and the river this high! A skiff!"

Virginia clasped his arm in terror. "Is there danger?"



Before he could answer came the noise of steps from the direction of the river, and a number of people hurried up excitedly. Colonel Carvel recognized Mr. Worington, the lawyer, and caught him by the sleeve.

“Anything happened?” he demanded.

Worington glanced at the sentry, and pulled the Colonel past the entrance and into the street. Virginia and Captain Lige followed.

“They have started across with him in a light skiff——four men and a captain. The young fool! We had him rescued.”

“Rescued!”

“Yes. There were but five in the guard. And a lot of us, who suspected what they were up to, were standing around. When we saw ’em come down, we made a rush and had the guard overpowered. But Colfax called out to stand back.”

“Well, sir.”

“Cuss me if I understand him,” said Mr. Worington. “He told us to disperse, and that he proposed to remain a prisoner and go where they sent him.”

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There was a silence. Then— “Move on please, gentlemen,” said the sentry, and they started to walk toward the car line, the lawyer and the Colonel together. Virginia put her hand through the Captain’s arm. In the darkness he laid his big one over it.

“Don’t you be frightened, Jinny, at what I said, I reckon they’ll fetch up in Illinois all right, if I know Lyon. There, there,” said Captain Lige, soothingly. Virginia was crying softly. She had endured more in the past few days than often falls to the lot of one-and-twenty.

“There, there, Jinny.” He felt like crying himself. He thought of the many, many times he had taken her on his knee and kissed her tears. He might do that no more, now. There was the young Captain, a prisoner on the great black river, who had a better right, Elijah Brent wondered, as they waited in the silent street for the lonely car, if Clarence loved her as well as he.

It was vary late when they reached home, and Virginia went silently up to her room. Colonel Carvel stared grimly after her, then glanced at his friend as he turned down the lights. The eyes of the two met, as of old, in true understanding.

The sun was still slanting over the tops of the houses the next morning when Virginia, a ghostly figure, crept down the stairs and withdrew the lock and bolt on the front door. The street was still, save for the twittering of birds and the distant rumble of a cart in its early rounds. The chill air of the morning made her shiver as she scanned the entry for the newspaper. Dismayed, she turned to the clock in the hall. Its hands were at quarter past five.

She sat long behind the curtains in her father’s little library, the thoughts whirling in her brain as she watched the growing life of another day. What would it bring forth? Once she stole softly back to the entry, self-indulgent and ashamed, to rehearse again the bitter and the sweet of that scene of the Sunday before. She summoned up the image of the young man who had stood on these steps in front of the frightened servants. She seemed to feel again the calm power and earnestness of his face, to hear again the clear-cut tones of his voice as he advised her. Then she drew back, frightened, into the sombre library, conscience-stricken that she should have yielded to this temptation then, when Clarence—She dared not follow the thought, but she saw the light skiff at the mercy of the angry river and the dark night.

This had haunted her. If he were spared, she prayed for strength to consecrate herself to him. A book lay on the table, and Virginia took refuge in it. And her eyes glancing over the pages, rested on this verse:—

“Thy voice is heard thro’ rolling drums,
That beat to battle where he stands;
Thy face across his fancy comes,
And gives the battle to his hands.”

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The paper brought no news, nor mentioned the ruse to which Captain Lyon had resorted to elude the writ by transporting his prisoner to Illinois. Newspapers were not as alert then as now. Colonel Carvel was off early to the Arsenal in search of tidings. He would not hear of Virginia's going with him. Captain Lige, with a surer instinct, went to the river. What a morning of suspense! Twice Virginia was summoned to her aunt, and twice she made excuse. It was the Captain who returned first, and she met him at the door.

"Oh, what have you heard?" she cried.

"He is alive," said the Captain, tremulously, "alive and well, and escaped South."

She took a step toward him, and swayed. The Captain caught her. For a brief instant he held her in his arms and then he led her to the great armchair that was the Colonel's.

"Lige," she said,—are you sure that this is not—a kindness?"

"No, Jinny," he answered quickly, "but things were mighty close. I was afraid last night. The river was roarin'. They struck out straight across, but they drifted and drifted like log-wood. And then she began to fill, and all five of 'em to bail. Then—then she went down. The five soldiers came up on that bit of an island below the Arsenal. They hunted all night, but they didn't find Clarence. And they got taken off to the Arsenal this morning."

"And how do you know?" she faltered.

"I knew that much this morning," he continued, "and so did your pa. But the Andrew Jackson is just in from Memphis, and the Captain tells me that he spoke the Memphis packet off Cape Girardeau, and that Clarence was aboard. She picked him up by a miracle, after he had just missed a round trip through her wheel-house."