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TRUE AS STEEL:
OR,
THE FAITHFUL SISTER.

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TRUE AS STEEL;
Sadia a Heroine of the Rebellion

By RED BUNTLINE

THE FAITHFUL SISTER.

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CHAPTER I.

SADIA! A flower in the desert of life! A sensitive flower! Alas! that such should be born in beauty to fill the earth with the fragrance of their lives, and then to perish beneath our gaze—to die—only with the hope of their hereafter resurrection to keep their worshipers from despair. Why is there no transplanting of material beauty from the evanescent present to the eternal future without earthly decay?

The winter winds had swept coldly over one of the loveliest spots in the State of Maryland. And though the warm breezes of spring, and the sunshine and gentle rains had begun to coax out bud and flower from branches and earth, they came slowly, like light breaking half-unwillingly through the clefs of a shattered thunder-cloud. For all nature seemed to feel that a winter of humanity was at hand, when frozen hearts and souls, sealed into hatred, would refuse to be melted, and clash with angry bitterness, one against the other.

The Potomac, which swept past that old plantation homestead known as "Springland," and the home of the Montforts, in its steady march to its ocean destiny, moaned sullenly; the music of its ripples grew harsh as they answered to the call of the winds which pressed rude lips upon them.

And well might it be so. For that river ran as a boundary mark between portions of the Union that were now avowedly hostile to each other. The first alarms of a cruel, unnatural, and fratricidal war had been thrown athwart its silvery sheen—it's beauty was clouded forever!

I said the spot was lovely. So, with its points and surroundings, it was. Upon an eminence overlooking the river, stood one of those large and roomy mansions peculiar to those portions of Virginia and Maryland which were settled in the early days of our country by the better and more aristocratic colonists—mansions somewhat in the style of the home of Washington, mingling a dash of European stateliness with republican ideas of comfort in their architecture. It had broad plazas and colonnades, supported by pillars of Corinthian style; its windows were wide and lofty; its dimensions sufficient to afford shelter for the retinue of a king.

Around it, a grove of forest trees, which, in the leafy summer-time, would hide it from view until the visitor was almost at the threshold.

Back a little way in the rear, and toward the broad acres of cultivated land which stretched eastward from the river, could be seen the neat village of whitewashed huts, known as the negro-quarters.

And away to the right, in a spot where a few lofty pines and other evergreen trees cast a shadow on a neat green sward, stood a small church, built in Gothic style. Neat and tidy, with a gilded cross reared upon the tower, it spoke the faith of those who built it and worshiped there.

And but a few yards away was yet another beauty—one of the most graceful aids that Nature gives to the mourner to symbolize grief.
A group of weeping willows, the earliest-leaved of spring, stood with drooping arms, as sentinels over the family-graves of the Montforts, the Cliffs, and other gentle families of that section of the State.

There were marble slabs and monuments, on which were graven the names of those who had been, but were not now—stones on which were writ their merits and their faith; but grander than the marble handiwork of man stood those drooping monumental trees, which had perchance been planted by some one whose dust now enriched the soil that nourished them in their growth.

Beneath one of the tallest of these trees, almost touched by the drooping branches which overhung the tomb against which she leaned, stood Sadia, the heroine of this story.

And with that church close by, those graves of the good and noble at her feet, framed in by those drooping wreaths of sorrow, let her picture be drawn for the reader’s eye.

Of full medium height, her figure is so faultless that she seems to tower above that stature, even as Mary, Queen of Scots, always looked taller to one at a glance than she really was. Her hair, of a sunny brown, falls in rich careless curls over a white neck, and shoulders which a sculptor would sigh to copy. Her eyes, of that dark, changeable blue which in joyous moments will brighten like ocean’s azure in the sunlight, or in sadder hours darken like that sea in the shadow of the night. His features, rather of the Grecian cast, expressive of great firmness, mingled with tenderness and love. Yet while we look upon her, there seems to be a shade of everlasting sadness in that face. A smile may come upon, a laugh burst from those full, rosy lips, yet there are marks of the heart-storm within, already showing without.

She may be twenty—surely not more. That delicate hand, with but a mourning-ring for its jewel—that slender but perfect form, draped in mourning-robcs, as well as the place where she stands, and the expression of her face, tell the reader that she grieves for losses that may never be made up, while earth is hers.

At a little distance, a young boy and girl are standing, seeming to feel an awe—a fear of approaching the solemn and holy spot where she stands communing with the spirits of the loved who have gone before. Their features show consanguinity; they evidently are brother and sister to her, though yet in their early childhood.

Reader, you now know Sadia De Montfort—she stands by the side of the tomb in which but a few months previous were laid the mortal remains of both her parents. Descended from an ancient and honorable race, one which had held honor and patriotism as choice household jewels, they had been called to this Christian’s home before the clouds of civil war had over-shadowed the land of their birth and love. Blessed fate!

Carlise and Marion, her younger brother and sister, have come with her to the churchyard. They stay out in the sunshine, while she seeks the willow’s shade in the chilliness of her deep sorrow.

But her face flushes up while we are looking at her; the sigh which trembled on her lips is hushed back into the silence of her bosom, and an almost angry flash darts from her eyes, as she observes two gentlemen approach the spot.

“They might at least have let me grieve alone over my dead!” she murmured, as she walked away from among the graves toward the persons alluded to, who paused outside the little churchyard on the lawn which fronted the edifice.

A glance at these intruders before she meets them.

One—the elder of the two—has a look which, though differing in most respects from hers, still exhibits sufficient resemblance to prove blood relationship. He is tall, finely formed, with good features. But his expression is indicative of a passionate and vindictive character. Firmness, to obstinacy, can be seen in the down-drawn corners of his thin lips. His age must be thirty, perhaps more; for he has lived well, and it is hard to tell the age of a fast liver at a glance. No matter for his age; we introduce to you Warburton De Montfort, elder brother of Sadia, and one who assumes to himself the control of the estate of Springland, and all upon it; for his father died suddenly and without a will, and he at once assumed control as the senior heir. Though there is much that is cold, haughty, and unlovable in him, yet there is that also which we cannot find in his companion—manhood—open, out-looking manhood.

That companion is his cousin, Sadia’s cousin, Mr. Randolph Beverly, lately of the United States Navy, who has resigned from that service because the “Mother of Presidents” and the Harlot of Nullification have chosen to commence a quarrel in the Union family, and he thinks his services may be needed in the lap of the one or at the apron-strings of the other. While he was in the Navy, and before treason was known to be lurking under the flag which he served, he visited Springland, was received cordially by his aunt and uncle, then living, and especially that he was the son of the only sister (already deceased) of Mrs. De Montfort, received from her every token of love and esteem. He, with the susceptibilities of a sailor who is supposed to find a sweetheart in every port, fell deeply in love with his cousin Sadia; and that love, or passion it might be, he yet clings to, with more than a sailor’s constancy.

But his character was what we commenced to study. It was truly disloyal to the flag which he had sworn to serve; his ingratitude to the
country which had educated him, were shown by his deserting both before the warcloud of Rebellion had more than risen above the horizon. At look at his small black eyes, which moved restlessly all the time and never were for a moment fixed, even when he was speaking, upon those of the person whom he addressed, would tell the student of human character that he was treacherous and cowardly; his foppishness of dress and manner spoke of vanity without foundation; in short, he was a person whose stock of manhood was lamentably deficient, notwithstanding the “good blood” he came from. It had deteriorated in the cahun.

And now reader, you have a pretty fair picture of three of my most important characters—the angel, the mortal, and the fiend. Let us see how we will get along with them.

“Not finding you at the house, after our return from the morning’s ride, we walked in search of you, sister!” said the brother. “Cousin Beverly leaves to-morrow for Charleston, and wishes to be with you as much as possible before he goes!”

Sadia bowed, but did not trust herself with a reply; for the sad emotions which had made her quiver, while she stood by those dear graves, had not passed away.

“Yes, fair cousin, Warburton speaks truly!” said the young ex-officer. “I have been informed that a commission waits for me from our new Government, and I expect soon to be again afoot to defend Southern rights against Northern oppression, and to teach the cowardly Yankees what the blood of the nation’s chivalry can do!”

A strangely-scornful smile passed over the face of Sadia, but still she made no reply.

“Beverly will join the Navy, and I the Army!” said Warburton, rather nervously, for he did not like the quiet way in which his sister received the information given. “For now that Sumter has surrendered, and the Abolition President called for troops, there must be war, and, for a short time, plenty of it, until the Yankees see we are in earnest, and then they’ll be as anxious to cry for peace as they are now for war.”

Sadia heard this, and still made no reply.

“You do not seem to be much interested either in us or the struggle upon which we are about to enter, fair cousin!” said the young aspirant for naval honors.

“When men are rising in rebellion against the Government which they have sworn to sustain; when they turn ungratefully upon the mother who has nurtured them; they need not expect those who love their whole country and its dear old flag, to feel any great personal interest for them and none of that favorable to them or their treasonable cause!”

And now those dark flashing eyes spoke as well as Sadia’s lips, telling him how inexpressible scorn could be, when felt by a brave and patriotic woman, looking upon treachery and cowardice.

And he, turning pale with emotion, and a petty anger which a spirit so mean as his could not suppress, exclaimed:

“Treason to the Confederacy can be punished in a woman as well as a man!”

“I am aware, Sir,” she replied scornfully, “that martyrs are always found in a good cause, no matter what their sex may be! And I would prefer the honor of martyrdom for the Union, than a ignoble position upon the black throne of treason!”

“Sister Sadia—I would thank you to forbear these gratuitous insults to our cousin—the day may come when you will bitterly rue them!” and the flush of anger darkened the cheeks of the brother as he spoke.

“My sentiments are distasteful to Randolph Beverly, he can easily avoid hearing them. I never seek his presence. And now you will certainly excuse my further attendance, for I wish to see my little brother and sister safely to our desolate home. Thank Heaven they are too young to mix with treason!”

“I think Marion will make a most acceptable midshipman in the vessel to which I shall be attached. I had intended to make the proposition to Warburton earlier than this, for the South in this struggle will need every available person!” said young Beverly, in a sarcastic tone.

“Never, never!” cried Sadia, indignantly. “That boy and poor little Carline are all that is left for me to love, protect and cherish. And if Warburton carries out his mad intention of joining the Southern Army, I shall make them my sole charge, and in some yet loyal part of the Union try to preserve them from the ills of a cruel and heartless world!”

“I think, my most interesting sister, that my consent will be found necessary for such a step, not only as the head of the family, but one who will not permit their young hearts to be turned away from their own sunny South. I will not attempt to control your political tastes; however mad they may be, but I will take charge of the children!”

“It will be very easy for you to care for them, Sir, when you are fighting against the flag which our dear father almost worshiped!”

“If I cannot pay the attention to them which their youth make necessary, gold can hire requisite attendants—gold can purchase truth against treason!”

“Yes, the truth of an Arnold or an Iscario! I will not parley longer with a brother so unnatural. Come, Marion and Carline, come to the house with your poor sister!”

The two children, who had been listening half terrified to the angry conversation about themselves, closed up to their sister like young birds seeking a mother’s protection, and hurried away.
from their dark-browed brother, whose tones had never been kind to them.

And he and his scheming cousin stood abashed by her indignant words and looks, until she had passed beyond the hearing of their voices.

Then young Beverly said in a bitter tone:

"The hopes which you have encouraged in my heart of an alliance with your sister, do not seem to stand upon a very firm foundation now!"

"She acts and talks like a fool. But if you care as much for her as your words hitherto have indicated, you will not let a woman's whims or weakness thwart you in your wishes. The very hint which you gave of getting Marion into the naval service with you, struck terror into her heart. I will give my consent to his going, and only withhold it on one condition."

"And that?"

"Is the fulfillment on her part of the engagement which I have made for her. If she becomes your wife, I will have her here in full possession of the old homestead, whereto I go to do my share in clearing out the invaders of our homes, and the destroyers of our ancient rights and privileges. If not, she shall leave that home as a wanderer, for I will not be trifled with. And I will force her to a determination this night!"

"If I was not bound off so soon, Warburton, I would deprecate your haste. As it is, I feel too much interested in the matter to ask for delay. If she refuses the proffer which I authorize you to make of my hand and name, then give me Marion for a companion, and see what a sailor I'll make of him!"

"Rest satisfied, Beverly. The matter shall be brought to a crisis this night. And now let us go up to the old mansion and try some of the peach and honey which my father left for the especial benefit of myself and friends. The angry words I have uttered and have listened to, have made me as dry as an Eastern shore herring."

"Of course I'll join you, cousin. When a sailor refuses grog you may consider the end of the world at hand."

And the cousins followed the same path taken by Sadia, leading to the old mansion.

CHAPTER II.

It was but a couple of hours later when Sadia De Montfort, seated in her own quiet chamber in the mansion wherein she had seen her happiest as well as her saddest days, was intruded upon by her brother, who had come to perform the promise made to his heartless cousin.

"I have come, Sadia," said he, upon entering the room, "to know your final decision in regard to the proposal made for your hand by Randolph Beverly. He is soon to leave us, but cannot go without knowing whether you intend to listen to his suit or not."

"Then he need not delay his departure an hour," replied the lady, scorn flashing her lovely face. "I despise him and his suit, and never, under any circumstances, would I listen to the thought of linking my fate with that of a traitor to his flag and country! That is my answer—the sooner he departs, the better it will be for my peace."

"Perhaps not, Miss Obstinance! If he goes, our Marion goes with him to serve in the Navy of the Confederacy."

"You use that threat to alter my determination, Warburton. It is useless. You dare not let my little brother go from the roof-tree where his brave and loyal father lived in honor, and died respected."

"I dare anything! You know my nature well, and that I allow no obstacle to thwart my will, foolish girl!"

"You may dare much of evil, Warburton, but nothing so unmanny as to carry out your threat with the vain hope of coercing me into a hated marriage."

"You will see, and that before another sun rises!" he replied, moodily. "If you bear to lose the company of your last relatives on earth, you are more stubborn than wise. I intend to go South to-morrow morning, and before going, to close this house. The children and their servants will go with me. You can remain in solitude, or go as the affianced bride of one more than worthy of you."

"Affianced or wedded, I will not go, Warburton; nor can you tear my little brother and sister from me without first destroying my life! Beware of making me desperate! As hot blood runs in my veins as flows in your own, and despair will lend a double strength to my arm."

"A woman's threats are always idle," was Warburton's contemptuous reply, as he rose and left the room.

"God help me!" sighed poor Sadia, when she stood alone in her chamber. For she knew that a firm will and a strong power were opposed to her. And though she would not show weakness in the presence of her persecutors, she felt more than she was willing to admit.

"I must be beforehand with Warburton in his intended removal of the children, or they are, indeed, lost to me," she said. "I have but little money at my command, and, alas! few friends to trust. I think old Hunter would serve me for the sake of past kindnesses. Him I will try, at any rate. He is faithful and cunning by report, though not as wise as some of our neighbors."

And the lady made quiet preparations for leaving the house upon a nocturnal visit to the only one whom she thought could help her in her difficulties.
Down by the side of the rushing river, not a mile from the mansion already described in our first chapter, stood a small and rude log hut, built partially into the side of the steep bank which overlooked the water. Upon a small plateau in front, barely above high-water mark, a couple of small shingles, of the kind used by fishermen on the river, were drawn up. There was no sign of a garden, or any of the usual comforts appertaining even to the poorest and humbler houses in that section. A fishing-net, and some poles and lines, hung under the outjutting eaves of the hut, told the occupation of its sole inmate.

But we must look in upon him to judge of his character, and learn that he has a part to play in the life-drama which you, reader, are now glancing at.

At the same hour when Sadia De Montfort was sighing for help in her troubles, the inmate of this hut, known generally as Old Hunter, the Fisherman, was eating his supper of fish and hoe-cake, cooked by his own hands. He was a man whose white hairs told of at least sixty years of life, if not more; whose face, bronzed by the exposure to the weather, had many a care-towm worn into it. His dress was rough, but neat and tidy, and there was that unmistakable look of natural nobility upon his care-worn face, which would tell the most careless observer that he had not always dwelt in a hut or fished for a living. Though the furniture of the hut was rude and scanty, a shelf containing quite a little library of books, a few superior engravings hung upon the log walls, told that the tastes and temporary occupation of Thomas Hunter were widely different. While sitting by a rude table, no person would observe any deformity in his tall, erect figure; but when he rose to cross the room to his rude fire-place, to replenish his tin cup from which he drank his tea, a limp in his gait betrayed a lameness which seriously incapacitated him from rapid locomotion. There was one thing upon his walls, so unusual in such a place, that it cannot be passed by unnoticed. It was an oil-painting, evidently the work of a master-hand, representing the scene of a duel, in which one of the combatants had fallen, and the other stood by the side of the dying man, with an expression of grief and remorse upon his face, which only an artist of rare genius could depict. And, in the face of the survivor, though looking much younger, there was a striking resemblance to Thomas Hunter. The seconds and principals seemed to be men of fashion in their day, and the scenery which made up the background of the picture was picturesque in the extreme. A mountain in the distance, a smooth, silver-faced lake close at hand, and the forest trees, tinged with October’s golden and scarlet hues, made up this background so sad a scene. The man who had fallen still grasped his pistol in hand, but the one who stood erect had cast his down upon the grass, as if he detested the weapon which had been the instrument of death in his hand.

The strangest thing of all about the hut was, that not a thing living but Thomas Hunter could be seen about the premises, neither dog nor cat, nor even a bird to keep the solitary company. There are few in the world who have not some living thing to pet—those who have not are indeed desolate; and though the world were full of thornless flowers, it would be a desert to them.

Having finished his evening meal by the light of his wood fire, he removed the single plate, knife, fork, and cup which made up his table-furniture, and lighting an ordinary oil-lamp, took one of the books from the shelf, and sat down to read. His eyes had, however, scarcely rested on the first opened page when a sound outside, almost as light as the rustling of leaves, attracted his attention. Hastily rising to his feet, he placed his hand to his breast, as if upon some concealed weapon, and advanced noiselessly to the only door in the hut—for it contained but that one room. Before he got to the door, a light and timid knock reached his ears.

“Who is there?” he asked in a gruff and husky voice. “Who wants to see poor old Tom Hunter at this time of night?”

“A friend—and that friend a woman in distress!” was the reply, in tones which trembled, either from weakness or excitement.

“Perhaps a decoy of that brave Vigilance Committee, which came and took from the poor old man the rusty musket that he had to shoot a duck with once in a while!” he responded, in a tone of sarcastic bitterness.

“No, Mr. Hunter, no; but one who was always welcome winter before last, when you could not move for the rheumatism that made you helpless.”

“Your voice sounds like that of Sadia De Montfort, and though her father was my best friend while he lived, I have been warned to leave this, my home, for years by his son, Warburton!”

“I fly from the persecutions of that brother now; and I come to ask you to help me in my dark hour of need!” was the response, in bolder and more earnest tones.

“It is she; I will risk opening the door at any rate!” said the old man.

And he withdrew a massive oaken bar which would have withheld the strength of many men, and lifted the wooden latch, which still closed it.

Sadia, pale and trembling from excitement, at once entered the apartment. Hunter immediately recognized her, and his manner of caution changed to that of deep and deferential respect.

“Forgive my doubts, kind lady; but dark and perilous times have come upon the coun-
try, and harmless as my life has been here, it is now threatened by more than one bad man."

"I know it, Mr. Hunter; and the reason, you are true to the flag which my father never would have deserted had he lived. The flag of Washington, of Jackson, of Jefferson, and all good patriots."

"True, Miss Sadia! I fought, when a mere child, under that flag against British wrongs. I am too old to desert it because home-traitors threaten it. But I have no time to speak of myself or my own perils now. You said that you were in distress. Tell me how I can serve you, and the old man, who would long since have died but for the unasked kindness of your parents and yourself, will try to prove that his world-chilled heart has yet the fire of gratitude unquenched in it!"

"My brother has been trying to force me into a revolting marriage with my cousin Randolph Beverly, who has just received a commission in the Rebel Navy. To persecute me into a compliance with his wishes he threatens to remove my brother and sister from my care—to place poor Marion in the Rebel Navy. I wish to save them and myself. To do so, I must start with them for Baltimore this night. Once there, I have friends who will protect them and myself. Can you help me? Do not pause to consider, but think that God will aid all of us; say yes, and prepare to take me away."

Thomas Hunter did pause a moment; in that moment he looked at the painting which I have partially described; glanced around the room, where he had spent many a sadly and therefore happily quiet hour; then, with a sigh, he answered:"

"I knew I would have to go, but did not expect to go so soon, or to have to protect others than myself. I will go; your lives are precious; mine is not. Yours I will save, or lose my own in the attempt; and then the God of the innocent must help you. My boat is light, but it can carry you three; for by the river only can we escape. Once at Washington and past the pickets and guerrillas which already line the river, you can easily reach Baltimore; and I will be near one who may remember the boy who was wounded by his side at Lundy's Lane, and after the war shot his best friend for speaking idly of his fame. I believe Winfield Scott will not forget me when, in my old age, I tender what is left of me in a cause which he, a loyal Virginian, defends!"

"No; he will reward your loyalty, and all that poor Sadia can do to reward your services shall be done. But I must hurry back, for I may be missed from the house, my steps watched, and we should fail."

"Yes; go quickly, lady—bring no baggage. But bring some arms and ammunition, if you can, for I have only a knife to defend our party with, and it is a poor weapon in an old man's hand against odds. Do not be gone over two hours; for then the moon goes down, and we can embark in darkness, and be far away before day dawns. While you are gone, I shall conceal all that I value here, and be ready the moment you come. Bring warm clothing upon yourself and the children, but no provisions. My books and line will find us food till we are beyond danger, if we pass it at all!"

Sadia made no reply; time was too precious for words; she merely pressed the brave old man's hand, and hurried out into the stillness of the night to return to the mansion where she had once reigned the Queen of Beauty, Love, and Light.

"God bless her! it may be the last act of a sad life; but my sun will go down into the valley of death bright to the last, if I am serving her." murmured the old man. And he then reclosed his door, and began to conceal in a secret cavity under his broad hearthstone various articles. Among them, carefully wrapping it in an old canvas sail, was the oil painting we have before alluded to. Leaving him thus engaged, we will travel elsewhere, for we have many scenes to witness, and but brief space to do it in.

CHAPTER III.

In a room furnished gorgeously, but in far different style from that of Sadia, her brother found Randolph Beverly, when he returned from his last threatening interview with his sister. In it a side-board, covered with sparkling decanters and glasses, occupied a prominent position. Boxes of cigars, arms, and implements of sport, hung or were scattered carelessly around. The appearance of the room indicated the taste of him who there met his friends. Beverly was sitting by the marble centre table, discussing practically the respective merits of some rich old wine, and a principe cigar, and seemed so pleased with the occupation, that he hardly turned his head to greet the messenger whose mission had been so important so far as regarded the hopes and desires of the young officer.

Warburton looked rather piqued at the utter coolness of his cousin, not thinking that his own blood ran so hot from the obstinacy which had just defied him.

"You seem to be enjoying yourself, Beverly!" said he, rather tartly. "If I were to tell you that Sadia is as haughtily defiant to my wishes and your own, in spite of all threats, it might lessen your pleasure!"

"Not at all, dear Cousin Warburton. In love as well as war, the most heroic meet reverses, and their best claim to heroism in both cases is to meet them with the stoicism of an Indian. I do not feel that a battle is lost because I am repulsed. Let but our original plan be carried
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out, that leaving in the early morning for the South, with all the servants and both the children, and you will see that she will follow. To buy them she will take me, and when success has crowned the Southern army, aside from all prize-money to be won, two of the handsomest estates in the country will be united! Hope, my dear boy, is strong in my heart yet; and this delicious old wine is not calculated to depress my spirits, I am sure!"

"I should think not. I will try a glass or two to make me feel a little cooler. For my temper was never very good; age does not improve it, I am sure!"

"But it does this wine; it is as mellow as a Creole's kiss, and so potent as her love!"

"I suppose from your language you know something of both!"

"Sailors know a great deal which they never confess, my boy! I refill my glass to you; and after a few more of the same sort are gone, I propose to inquire if there will be anything to punish an early start!"

"You have had fear for that. I have already been preparing for a removal too long not to be ready at an hour's notice to start. You can have all hands ready for a start by sunrise, can't you, Nap?"

The last question was addressed to an intelligent-looking old negro who at that moment entered the room, hat in hand. He raised his hand to the locks of grizzly gray which bordered his high but narrow forehead, and with that obsequious grin which is as natural to a Southern negro as it is to a baboon, replied:

"If Mars'r Warburton tink it can be did, I'm ready to go out. No one gets up at quarters but Mars'r wanted old Napoleon, an' here he is, Sah!"

"Yes; I wanted to see you to get ready for this very move. I don't want any fuss made about it, but get the wagons and mules ready, and the old family-carridge, and my horses, and all the hands for an early start. Let the women make corn bread and cook bacon all night. We shall be at least ten days on our journey. We have got to get clear of the old place for a while, or we'll all be prisoners to the Yankees. They'll hang all the niggers, and put us white folks in jail if they catch us!"

"De Lor, Mars'; but I taught you was all awgine to fight 'em here, an' drive 'em back! Data what the speechers said to de Court House is older day?"

"Yes; but we are going further south, to draw them away from home. We'll whip them there so bad, they'll never get back."

"Yes, Mars', dat's what's de matter, am it? Well, you knows all about dem tings—we niggers don't. Anyting more for orders, Mars'?

"No, Napoleon, I leave everything for you to arrange. Here, take a glass of brandy, and de your work well, and you shall have a bottle full to travel with to-morrow."

"Tank you, Mars'r—tank you. Dis am de real stuff dat lifts de nigger's soul to glory. I'll yuarn dat bottle, see if I doesn't."

And the old darkey went off smacking his thick lips over the beverage which he so highly praised.

"That nigger has been worth more than any dozen we ever had on the place," said Warburton. "After father died, when I saw things were darkening up between us and the North, I discharged our Yankee overseer, and put Nap in his place. The old ripp has got more work out of the boys by half than the Yankee did, and licked them less. But he has used a little more applejack, and meat, and bacon. He thinks if a nigger can get all he wants to eat and drink by working for it, he'll work; and I believe in his policy."

"I shall not dispute it, only I believe a little flogging enlivens men up once in a while. When we had flogging and grog in the old Navy, we had better seamen than when both were abolished."

"You are talking of white men—I of niggers."

"Of course; but I don't make much difference in my ideas of a poor white man and a nigger. I always treat them about the same, only the nigger the best, when there is a choice."

"If our niggers could be trusted with arms, we would soon end this war. But if we give them arms, and make them believe they are as good as white men, that will be the last use they'll ever be to us."

"Of course; and he'll never be so foolish as to do it."

"But what if the Yankees arm them?"

"We must keep them out of Yankee hands. That is what I shall do, and every true friend to the South and Southern rights will do the same."

"I hope so. Pass a fresh decanter from the side-board, Warburton. If we're to keep a night-watch, we must keep our lips wet, or our eyes will close."

"There's no need of keeping any night-watch on our part. Old Nap is faithful, and I will have orders for us to be called an hour before daylight. We can then breakfast, and be on the road by sunrise."

"As you like. I'll take another glass, and turn in, for one watch below is better than three on deck."

And the already half-tipsy son of Neptune took another smile, bade his cousin good-night, and went to his room humming a part of an old naval drinking-song.

CHAPTER IV.

When Sudia reached the back-door of the
mansion, on her return from her visit to the old fisherman's hut, she suddenly and unexpectedly encountered old Napoleon as he was returning from his visit to his master's room. He recognized her by the light of the tin lantern which he carried in his hand, and taking off his hat, said:

"Is you gittin' ready, too, Missy Sady?"

"Getting ready for what, Napoleon?" she asked, seeing by his manner that something important was on his mind.

"Why, de movin' in de mornin'-de movin' ob ebberyting and ebberybody. Dat's what Mars'r Warburton tole me to git ready for."

"Did he tell you why this movin' was to take place?"

"Yes, Missy Sady. He said de Yankees was a comin' to hang all us niggers, and put de white folks in jail."

"Well, you may believe him, Napoleon. He is your master; but he will not include me in his movin'. I shall not go with him."

"Why, Missy, you wouldn't let the Yankees put you in jail?"

"No, Napoleon, they will never do it. Instead of hanging the negroes, they would set them free. But I do not wish to interfere with my brother's arrangements; you do as he bade you. I can look out for myself."

"What, Missy, wid all de hands done gone away? Dat'll neber do! Doesn't you 'member dat my Silla is your old nurse, dat has alwyas been wid you since you was a baby. And didn't you good ole sader tell her an' me dat we must neber lebe you till we died."

"Yes, Napoleon. I remember all that. And you and Priscilla have ever been faithful to me. I shall be sorry to part with you; but if you go South with my brother, we must part."

"By golly I I don't want to go no furder. Souf dan I now. I likes dis ole place-I likes ebberyting about it, and I don't half belebe all I've heard, no way. I wish you'd tell me what to do, Missy Sady? I feel as if I belonged to you more dan anybody else, and my Silla does all belong to you. An' all de people on de place lub you, Miss Sady, 'cause, since you was a lily gal, you had a smile an' a kind word for 'em ebbery day, and neber forgot 'em while de Christmas log was burnin'. You jes tell us what to do, and see if we don't do it now!"

"Where did you leave my brother?" was Sadia's question, after a moment's reflection.

"Up in his room wit dat drinkin' ossifer, Mars'r Beverly—bofe of 'em carryin' bout as much as dey could hold."

"Do you think they will be out again tonight?"

"No, Missy Sady. Cause dey lebe all for dis chile to do 'bout gittin' ready for a start."

"Then, Napoleon, if I can trust you I will tell you a secret."

"You jest can trust me, Missy Sady. You neber spoke a cross word to me in all your life, you tink I not be true to ole Mars'r's favorite chile? I cut out my tongue before I tell anything she tell me not to tell!"

"I will tell you then, Napoleon. My brother wishes me to marry that drunken cousin of his. I will not."

"No wonder, Missy Sady. You is good enough for Gimral Jackson, or any odder great man; and I tink Mars'r Beverly am poor trash any way!"

"Do not interrupt me again, Napoleon, but hear all I have got to say."

"Yes, Missy Sady. I is all 'tention."

"Your master, my brother Warburton, wants to force me to this marriage, by carrying you all off, and taking my little brother and sister with him, too. Them I will save by carrying them away to a safe place this very night. I have already made arrangements for it. That is the secret I was going to tell you. You will not betray me, I know."

"No, Missy Sady, not neber. But it seems to me like a new light was breaking out afore me. I didn't half like de hurry Mars'r Warburton seemed to be in. And den he gib me a glass of brandy, an' promised me a whole bottle on de road to-morrow. I neber knew him do so much as dat afore for me, and I've worked harder dan any mulo on de place for him since your good ole sadder died. Dere's sumfin' in de Bible dat I've heard 'em talk about de debbil temptin' folks. I reckon dat bottle of brandy was meant to tempt dis nigger to do wrong. Derefore, and because I don't tink I shall hab dat bottle to-morrow, 'cause I mean to fly from de temptation. Just where you go, Miss Sady, dis chile and his ole wife Silla will go. Dat am a spoken fact! Dis chile sees de light, and it is where you goes, an' he'll folle dat light sure. And dere's more dan me will go too wid you, Missy Sady."

Sadia, who expected no aid but that of old Hunter in her intended flight, was at a loss what to say or do now. Sue well knew how faithful all of her father's old servants were to her; she knew, too, that if the plans of her brother were carried out, they would be taken into a worse servitude—probably sold to help the treasury of a disloyal Confederacy, or used in some way to aid in carrying on a cruel and unjust war, which her noble and loyal heart could only look upon with horror. And she thought that it might be in her power to arrest their destiny; but in attempting to do so, she might fail; and if she did, she might lose the little brother and sister whose safety was now her main care.

All of these things passed rapidly through her mind, and she hesitated what to do.

"Missy Sady, what am de trouble, for dis chile sees dat sumfin' trouble your mind right smart!" asked the old negro.
THE FAITHFUL SISTER.

"I was thinking how it would be possible for me to take you and a few more of the faithful servants with me, without danger of our being pursued and you being taken from me. For me they will never dare to take!"

"How was you agwine at first, Missy Saday?"

"In a boat down the river, to-night, with a trusty friend. But the boat will only carry four."

"Dere's more'n one boat on de river, Missy Saday, I s'pect. We got four belongin' to dis plantation, an' any one ob dem will carry a dozen ob us niggers. You just say you luff us go wid you, and I reckon when Mars' Warburton wake up in de mornin' he'll find de horses an' de mules, but he must drudge um hself! Ya, ya! jes' say we may go, Missy Saday, and see if we isn't all ready, wid plenty to eat on de way!"

"And will you fight if we are pursued?"

"Yes, if Missy Saday tell us to. She our captain, and we'll 'by orders! But I reckon Mars' mights as well set along wid his tree or four double-barrel guns and de two rifles and dem pair of revolvers dat he practices wid ebery day! We may need 'em more dan he does!"

"Yes—all the available arms must be taken. And now that I say you may go, hurry, Napoleon, and get all the people that you can trust ready, and meet me with your boats in front of old Hunter's bat, on the river, in two hours. No words or actions to betray our intentions to the only two who will oppose them. I will try to see them yet, and get them so lulled into security that they will sleep late. Send Priscilla to my room right away. She must help me take care of Marion and Carloline. Come yourself for the arms and ammunition in an hour. You will find them in the dark cupboard at the end of the front hall. I will have the door unlocked."

"All right, Missy Cap'n Saday; I 'stand de orders, an' I 'bove 'em, see if I doesn't."

And the old negro, following his new light, hurried away; while Sadia, more hopeful from having additional strength with her, entered the house with a lighter heart than she had when she left it.

Pasing the room where she expected to hear sounds of convivial enjoyment from her brother and cousin, she paused to listen. But she heard nothing. Both had retired, to sleep away the effects of their potations. This she learned by questioning the servant, who had been directed to call them at four o'clock in the morning. She told him that he might go to sleep, she would herself awaken them. And the drowsy boy very willingly hurried away to his blanket in the kitchen; for one of his race seldom refuses a chance to sleep.

Sadia now hurried to her own room, and laying aside the hood and shawl which had been her protection against the heavy dew of the night, she entered the next apartment which opened from within here, where on two beds rested those who only were dear to her on earth—her little sister and younger brother. She woke them both with kisses, and asked them if they would rather go away and live with her than be carried off by her brother.

That brother they both feared, but did not love; for fear and love in a human heart are incompatible. Therefore, their answer can be easily supposed. With tearful eyes and clinging arms, they begged to go wherever she went, and that they might never be separated from her. She told them to dress noiselessly, and began herself to gather such light and easily-carried articles as would make the journey comfortable as possible. All her money and jewelry she carefully secured upon her person; and then, when her old nurse Priscilla came, she placed the children in her charge, and went herself upon the most responsible and dangerous duty of the night, that of securing arms and ammunition. For, to get them, she had to go into the room a-joining her brother's bedroom, and she knew not whether his slumberers would be heavy or light. But, at all risks, the arms must be had—to render her departure more safe, pursuit less rapid; for no one would pursue an armed party, themselves unarmed.

With a hand served by the courage of her true womanly heart, she cautiously opened the door of the room in which the cousins had spent the evening, and where the arms were kept. The light still burned upon the centre-table, and by it she saw, to her surprise, not unmixed with terror, her naval cousin, stretched at full length on the floor. A broken tumbler, an empty decanter, the stains on the carpet showing where most of its contents were gone, told what had brought him back after having bade his cousin good-night, and the reason of his downfall.

At first she hesitated to enter, but the low moaning of the inebriate proclaimed his insensibility to hearing, for thunder was but little more than an echo to it.

Glancing across the room, and observing that the door of her brother's bedroom was closed, she stealthily entered, and going to that door, listened. Here, too, she heard heavy breathing; and now, satisfied of safety, she hurriedly gathered the weapons and ammunition from different parts of the room and took them outside. Then the ludicrous and contemptible position of her cousin raised the spirit of mischief in her bosom, and tearing a leaf from a note-book, she wrote upon it:

"Sleep on, brave cavalier, with your chosen bride by your side. Though weak in the spirit at present, she may be resuscitated by due attention, and you in rising once more upon your feet. Hock and eggnog are excellent for a morning headache; both can be found in the cellar. But a cure for the heartache may not be found any easier than will be the one who pent
TRUE AS STEEL; OR,

these lines, and prefers to leave you and her brother with your battle than to go where only Rebels for a time can prosper. Farewell forever.

"SADIA DE MONTPMORE."

These lines she penned upon Beverly's breast with a fearless hand; then extinguishing the light, she noiselessly left the room.

To take the arms below to the place designated, occupied her but a few minutes, and she found Napoleon there already waiting for them.

"Golly, Missy Cap'n Sady! we is in luck!" he cried. "You'st got 'em all."

"Yes," she replied. "The revolution I shall carry myself, for I know how to use them. Thomas Hunter must have one of the best guns, for he is a brave old man, and will be our guide."

"Yes, Missy; he brave. He live dere all alone by himself, and not 'frail of de debbil. He swar' at de Vigliams mens, I hear 'em say, awful, cause dey take his ole gun from him. Some of 'em say dey hang him one dese days. If he go' way wid us, dey'll have to catch him afore dey hang him."

"Well, never mind talking any more, Napoleon; it is time we were all moving. In half an hour, I shall be at the river-side with the children and Priscilla. Every one not ready to embark when I get there will be left; for we must be many miles from here before day dawns!"

Napoleon said no more, but carefully putting the ammunition-belts about his person, he gathered up the arms and left.

CHAPTER V.

The time had elapsed when Sadia was to return to the hut of the old fisherman. This he knew by reference to an old silver watch which he frequently looked at; and he began to show considerable nervousness, going frequently to his door to look out and listen. All at once he saw and heard something which more than ever startled him. He closed his door as he stepped outside, that the fire-light might not glare out, and then beat low down that he might be sure his eye-sight had not deceived him. For he thought he had seen dark figures moving between him and the water which rolled in a smooth, unbroken tide beyond. He was not mistaken. Noiselessly they were moving down to the river-bank—who or what, he did not know, but he counted until he saw twenty persons standing between him and the shining water.

What could it mean. They had passed within a few yards of his hut without noticing it, apparently—they had passed within ten feet of his up-turned boats without paying the least attention to them.

"Something foul is going on, I'm afraid!" he murmured. "I fear the poor girl's plan has been discovered, and they want to catch her in the act of leaving. It must be so. I will at least meet her on the road, and warn her of what I've seen."

And the old man, acting upon the impulse of the thought, hurried off in the narrow path which led up to the mansion, making his steps as light as possible, while near his supposed enemies. After leaving the bank of the river, he increased his pace to a run, which was very suddenly interrupted as he turned a narrow corner around a brush-fence, by a collision. And that collision so sharp and sudden that both parties reeled back and fell to the earth—the clattering of weapons showing that one of the party was well armed.

"The devil—who's that?" was Hunter's first exclamation as he picked himself up, and peering forward in the darkness, tried to make out what it was that lay grunting and groaning before him.

"Oh, good Mars'r Debbl, if you is de debbl, don't butt'sin' dia chile no more!" groaned the man in the path, whom the reader may recognize easily as Napoleon, with his load of arms.

"Only a nigger. What a fuss you make, darkey!" said the old fisherman, contemptuously. "Who are you? Speak, or I'll let you feel the weight of my boot."

The negro had ceased howling when Hunter spoke; and now recognizing his voice, in a much altered tone, he asked:

"Isn't dat you, Mars'r Hunter. Cause if it is, I belongs to Missy Sady, an' she'll be along here right directly, to tell you so!"

The old man muttered something about a woman's folly in trusting a nigger—he evidently having a very poor opinion of the race. Then he replied to the question.

"Yes—I am Tom Hunter. What are you doing out this time of night?"

"Didn't you hear dese guns a ratlin' when you butt me ober like a sheep? I was a fetchin' ob de best gun on de plantation for you, sah—but dere's somethin' coming down de path behind dis chile. He'd better be up, so as to be ready for another buttin' match. But I knows who dey is. My Silla's eyes shine in de dark all same as a cat's!"

"I knows dat are wussless nigger's voice—dat's my old 'Nap' in de road—Miss Sady! What you layin' dere for when we's pectin' you down to de ribber!" said a sharp voice; and a negro woman, bearing a child in her arms, gave Napoleon a lift in the rear with her foot that started him to his feet in an instant.

"What is the matter here?" now asked a voice clear as the note of a silver bugle.

"Nuffin, Miss Sady, on'y Mars'r Hunter butt agin me in front, and now Silla butt agin me from behind. I is up, an' I got de arms an' ammunition all safe! I neber drap not one ob dem, dough I drap myself uncommon hard!"
said Napoleon, who gathered himself up in marching order.

"And what brought you here, good friend Thomas?" asked Sadia, who recognized Hunter in spite of the gloom.

"Because, Miss Sadia, at the time when I expected you, a lot of persons, whom I do not know, filed silently past my hut, and I left them standing on the bank of the river. I thought it was some trap to catch you, and I ran up here quickly to meet and warn you. In so doing, I run afoul of old Napoleon here, whom I now know. The collision knocked most of the sense out of me, and about all out of him, to judge from his talk. Now, have you any idea who those people are that evidently are on the watch for some one?"

"Yes, Thomas. They are my father's faithful slaves, who prefer to follow me, and share my fortunes, to going South with my cruel and unnatural brother!"

"All going?" asked Hunter, quietly.

"All but one, and him I knew to be devoted to his master's interest. He sleeps like a log in the old kitchen!"

"Well, Miss, it is by your orders, and I'll not grumble against it. I only say, that so large a party cannot easily evade discovery. With one boat I could have got through undiscovered.

But we have no time for parley. If your people have boats, let them follow the one in which I take you and your brother and sister. Of the arms, I want one gun—if we are pursued, and discovered, we must all fight. No words now, but hurry to the river. We can be but four hours afloat before we must haul in and hide for the day! If we are lively, we can reach a lagoon by that time, where we can, with ease, find one day's safety from the keenest search!"

"Lead the way—we will follow!" said Sadia, who led her little brother Marion by the hand, while Carlene slept in the old nurse's strong arms.

In a short time, the river-bank was reached; and Thomas Hunter, assuming direction of matters, soon saw that all hands were in the boats. When he saw the quality of the plantation-boats for capacity and speed, and the stalwart arms which were ready to tug at the oars, he altered his mind about taking one of his own boats; but taking the oars from both, and knocking a hole in the bottoms to render them useless, left them, and then took a seat in the fastest of the plantation-boats, in which he had already placed Miss Sadia and her charges.

It was an hour later than the time he had named, when the boats, three in number, pushed off, but they darted down the rapid river with a speed which satisfied him; for he said, in a low tone, to Sadia, as they glided away from the shores of the dear old place:

"I feel as if God was with us, lady, and that our plans and wishes will be carried out. Before daylight, we will reach the safest hiding-place on the Potomac. There we can spend the whole day in counting our numbers, examining our resources, and laying plans to guide our future movements, which must be made to move at night only, until we reach Washington."

"Very well, good friend. I resign the whole management to you," said Sadia.

And, worn out with excitement and exertion, she dropped her head upon the lap of her old nurse, and slept.

CHAPTER VI.

While our voyagers are progressing with all the speed which hope and fear, and the current of a river too often crimsoned with human gore, can give them, we will mentally walk back to the almost deserted plantation, and see how affairs open there with the dawn of day—as the dawn of day, I said.

When day dawned, so far as human kind was considered, all was as still as if none were living within the mansion. The roosters had been crowing for hours, and the unimilked cows lowing in their lot, and the horses whinnying for grain in their stalls for a long time, when Warburton De Montfort was aroused by the heat of the sun, over an hour high, shining in through the window upon his feverish face.

"This is four o'clock with a vengeance!" he cried, as he sprang from his bed, and dashed his head into a basin of cold water. "I'll lick the life out of that stupid boy of mine! I suppose he went to the barn to look after the horses, and dropped asleep on the hay. We should have been across the ferry, and moving over into the valley by this time."

Hurriedly putting on his clothes, he entered the next room; and there he saw the cousin whom he wished to force upon his brave, loyal, and lovely sister, lying precisely as she had left him the night before.

Glancing at the paper pinned upon the breast of Beverly, he stooped, read it, and at once recognized the handwriting.

"Rather a severe out upon a young gentleman of decidedly convivial qualities," he said, sarcastically.

Then shaking the sleeper roughly by his arm, he cried out loudly:

"Wake up, Lieutenant! wake up! This is rather a harder bed than the one in your own room."

"Is it four o'clock?—time to go?" muttered Beverly, partially aroused.

"Not four yet, but it will be soon—after dinner, man. What on earth are you doing here?"

"God only knows. I have been walking in my sleep, I expect; for I went to my room after leaving you last night. And here I am with a dazed bad headache."

"But a recipe for its cure is pinned to your
breast, I see. You have had an earlier visitor than I, it seems."

"Thunder and Mars! I know I was tight last night, but I did not expect to be exposed to this," muttered Beverly, as he tore the paper from his coat, and looked at it. "But what does she mean about leaving, cousin? Is there not some serious meaning in that?"

"I reckon not," replied Warburton, quietly.

"She has threatened leaving home more than once, and has never done it yet."

"A woman's threats are not always to be despised. I wonder what brought her here to discover me in my condition?"

"She may have come for some cordial or liquor for a sick nigger. They always go to her for everything they want. By-the-way, I should think a little peach and honey would do you good, cousin. I know a few spoonsful will not hurt me. And then we'll meet the haughty lady at breakfast, and see if she is ready to be left alone or go with us, where glory waits us."

"I shall not object to the peach and honey, believing it more palatable if less poetic than hoek and sodas-water," said Beverly, approaching the sideboard. "But, Warburton, I'm afraid something has gone wrong, or we should not have been allowed to oversleep ourselves. Your directions to Napoleon to be ready for an early start were very explicit. And the last words I heard you say were, 'we are to be called at four o'clock'!

"Yes, and my body-servant, Bob, was told, the last thing, to do so. I'll soon see where the curse is! Brush yourself up and get ready for breakfast. By Jove, I wonder where my guns and revolvers have gone? I gave no orders to have them packed. Sadia must have been playing us some trick."

And Warburton, who at this late moment discovered the loss of his arms, began to be a great deal more anxious than his cousin had seemed to be. He hurried out of the room, and instantly repaired to the room usually occupied by his sister. She was not there. He darted into the inner apartment, where little Carline and Marion always slept. They, too, were gone.

"By heavens, she has carried them off!" he cried, in angry bitterness. "She has not slept in her bed; but theirs have been occupied. I must see her, for she cannot get them out of my reach!"

And he rushed out to find some servant, of whom to make further inquiries. In hunting over the house, he at last stumbled on Bob, still snoring in his blanket, before the embers of the kitchen-fire.

"Get up, you cursed scoundrel!" he shouted, kicking him with his heavy boot. "Is this calling me at four o'clock? Get up before I kick the black heart out of you!"

"Wha—wha's de matter, Mars'r Burton?" exclaimed the terrified boy, rising to a sitting posture, and rubbing his great red eyes as if to open them wider.

"Matter enough! Where is Miss Sadia? Speak, you black imp, or I'll send one more nigger to the devil, and that in a hurry! Out with what you've got to say!"

"Miss Sadia, I hasn't done seen her since last night. arter I carry up your wass-ers, and you told me to sit up and call you at four o'clock. Dat I was agwine to do, but she said I needn't mind dat—she'd call you herself, and I might come down an' go to sleep; and so I did, for I was berry tired. Dat's all I know, Mars'r Burton, fore God it is—an' I didn't mean nuffin wrong—you knows I didn't!"

"No; curse you! you don't know enough to mean to do wrong, but yet do a—d—sight of it. Go blow the horn for old Napoleon, and tell him to have every nigger on the place up in the room right away!"

"Yes, Mars'r Burton; I do 'em right off!"

And the terrified boy, who had never seen his master so angry before, hurried off; and in a minute more the notes of the far-sounding plantation-horn rung out in the still morning air.

Meanwhile, Warburton rejoined his cousin, who, having finished a hurried morning-toilet, had returned to the room of the former.

"It is as bad as you expected. The girl, and both of the children, are gone!" said Warburton, as soon as he entered the room.

"Gone? Where?"

"I have no idea. I have sent for all the servants to try and find out. I can find no house-servant about but Bob, and he says my sister met him, after he received my last orders, and told him to go to sleep—that she would call us."

"By Jove, we'll have a chase to catch her, I fear. For she is as smart as women ever are made! If she has a start, and we don't get her true quickly, we'll find her words in that note coming true! We should have kept watch and watch ourselves!"

"I wish we had. But there is no use in crying for that which is done. To undo it is our first work. Well, Bob, what news—are the hands coming in?"

"De hands, Mars'r Burton? I tink de debbil done bin about last night. I blowed de horn and blowed it, and I didn't see nobody a stirrin'! So I jes run down to de quarters fast an' ebber I could, an' look in all de cabbins, and dere wasn't a single nigger dar. Day'r all clean gone, Mars'r Burton!"

"The horses, mules, wagons, too, I suppose!" cried Warburton, as he ground his teeth in anger.

"No, Mars'r; dem's all hers; I see dem about. But de smoke-house door stan' open. I guess somebody been in dar!"

"Are you sure my saddle-horses are here?"
"Yes, Mars'r; I hear 'em whinny in de stable, when I run by."

"Then saddle two of them in a hurry. Beverly, we'll try and find a cold bite to breakfast on, fill our disks, and by that time the horses will be ready. Then we'll see what has become of this fast woman; for I believe she has encircled off every hand but Bob on the place. They may have gone to some near point, to claim protection; they would not have started men, women, children, and all, for a long journey without wagons and animals to draw them."

"Have you no boats? Can't niggers find transportation by water as well as by land?" asked Beverly, quietly.

"By Jove! I'll bet a hundred you've hit it. We have boats for taking wood and produce to market, and for the hands to fish in. I'll bet that mad girl has made a start for Washington, to put herself and the niggers under the protection of the cursed Federals! But she can never get there. The river is too well picketed by our folks; and if I find she has taken that track, she can have but a short start, and we'll soon overtake her!"

"I may be of some help to you in the trip; but I cannot be long absent, for I have to report for duty very shortly!"

"Oh I'll have her back in a day or two—never fear; and now that she has taken such a bold hand, I'll exercise my full scope of power over her! She shall go where I list, and do what I wish, or she shall envy the fate of the poorest wench that ever worked in a rice-field. But I'll go look for a cold-out, which we'll wash down with something as good as coffee, and then we'll see if we can strike the trace of these early skedaddlers!"

CHAPTER VII.

When Sadia De Montfort awoke on the morning of her departure, she was astonished to find the boats no longer moving down the broad and clear river, which she knew and loved so well, but brought to, motionless, in a brook just wide enough to admit their passage. The water was clear and sparkling where the boats had been drawn in under some overhanging branches, but a little ways below they seemed to deepen into a darker, deeper pool, as if they had already found their vent in the back-water of some large stream; and such was the case. The jar of the boats striking the shore caused Sadia to awake, and she instantly asked the old fisherman where they were.

"Full forty miles below your own sweet 'Springland', lady, and in a spot so far back from the river, and so surrounded by swamps in front, and mountains in our rear, that I think we can pass a day, or even more, here, if it be necessary, without any one suspecting our location. I came here and built a hut three years ago, and though I fished and hunted all about for nearly two months, I did not see a human soul. If I had gone out upon the river, I could have seen plenty of them—but I did not choose to. Now, if you please, as we must pass the day here, we will all go up and see if my old home is safe. It is but five minutes' walk from here."

"I am ready; come Marion and Carlisle; we will see what kind of a home we can find in the wildwood."

"And you, boys, bring along something for breakfast. You can build a fire in here without danger," added Hunter, as he, with a courteous bow, extended his hand to assist Sadia to the shore.

The old path from the landing was still plain, though somewhat obstructed by brambles; but these were brushed aside by the yet vigorous old man, as he stumbled along ahead of Sadia, carrying the double-barreled shot-gun in his hand, which Sadia had given him. It seemed to Sadia scarce two minutes from the time when she left the boat, before they emerged from the thick underbrush and overhanging forest-branches into a small circular prairie of perhaps two acres. On the left of this rose a perpendicular wall of rock, the base evidently of some great mountain; and under this cliff, close by where a spring rushed out in a miniature torrent from the dark rocks, was the hut of which Hunter had spoken.

It was larger and better built than the one which he had left at Springland; and he told Sadia, that when he built it he had entertained thoughts of making it his final home, because of the utter seclusion of the spot and the plenty of fish and game in the vicinity.

While he was yet speaking, a herd of a dozen or more of red deer emerged from the underbrush within a few rods of them, and walking out to feed on the little prairie, saw the party, but did not fly, as those timid animals always do in places where they are hunted.

"I want no better proof that no one has yet discovered my secret," said old Hunter quietly, as he drew up his gun, and with the unerring aim of an old marksman, discharged both barrels, one so quickly after the other that both reports mingled as one.

Two of the deer lay struggling in the death-throes in an instant, the rest slowly trotted back into the woods, turning their heads now and then, more in wonder than in terror.

"Now, boys, there is fresh meat for two days at least, eat as hearty as ye may. Go and dress it, and we'll soon have some of it doing for breakfast," said the old man, as he quietly reloaded his gun with buck-shot as it had been before. "I have a nice fire-place over there in the house; and if the roof hasn't leaked, there is plenty of dry wood inside. Let us go and see, Miss Sadia!"

The lady, whose eyes had so suddenly been
drawn from the wild beauty of the scenery to the act of the hunter, had, ever since he fired, been looking fearfully on the struggles, now over, of the animals who had gazed so innocently at the very hand raised for their death.

"Oh, they were too beautiful to be killed!" she said, with a sigh. "I could have watched them for hours, wish never a thought of harm in my bosom."

"Unless you grew hungry, Miss Sadia, and remembered the savoury haunches of venison, that so often smoked on your father's board. I have sold him more than one in my time, and he was a noble hunter himself!"

Sadia smiled, in spite of her pity for the poor deer.

"You were right in shooting them, good Thomas!" said she. "But it was, nevertheless, hard to see them die. We, Doubtless, shall need all the provision we can get on the way; for our colored people are not used to starvation, or anything even approaching to famine."

By this time the hut was reached. Thomas opened the door, which was latched inside, by inserting his knife between the doorpost and door, then lifting the latch, for the "latch-string did not hang out", to make entrance easy on that occasion.

The large room was dry and clean. A huge pile of dry fire-wood near the fire-place made good the promise of Thomas, that cooking operations could soon be got under way.

"Please notice one thing, Miss Sadia," said the old man, who had hurriedly kindled a blaze. "Step out and see how you like the draft of my chimney. Of course, you can judge by the smoke."

Sadia stepped out, and though a dense smoke had been ascending in the fire-place, she could see no sign of it rising from the roof of the hut.

She returned and reported as much.

She looked once more, lady—far up the mountainside where the bushes are very thick, and, possibly, you may see a blueish mist, looking far more like the light fog of a mountain-spring than anything else," said the old man.

Sadia went out, and soon saw the mist alluded to, which she or few others would have ever supposed to be smoke.

"My chimney is a cave, that winds its flues up through the rocks a long way—but it has a good draught, and that is all that is required for a nice fire."

And the bright blaze, leaping from fagot to fagot of the freshly-heaped wood, verified his words.

And the negro women, gathering in with their cooking-apparatus and provisions, soon had corn-bake baking, bacon and venison frying, coffee and water boiling, and sweet potatoes roasting in the embers.

"You will have but a sorry meal, compared with the luxuries left at Springland, lady; but it is the best we can do," said old Thomas, as he saw Priscilla laying out before her lady on his slab table, some of the choicest pieces of venison, nice hoe-cake, with butter brought from the plantation, roasted potatoes, and fragrant coffee.

"The breakfast is better, and will be eaten with a better appetite than any that I could have taken at Springland in the company of my persecutors," she replied. "Come, good Thomas, you who are our father, guide, and protector, must take the head of the table, or I and the children will surely have no appetite."

The old fisherman tried to excuse himself, but without avail. Sadia would only eat if he joined in the repast.

The meal was heartily partaken of. The wildness of the scene, the peril of the adventure, the rudeness of the preparations, seemed to heighten rather than to mar the appetites of the whole party. For the negroes, as soon as the table had been served, gathered in grotesque groups about the hut, and, with their breakfasts in their hands, ate and chatted as merrily as if they had not lost sight of their old plantation-home, perhaps forever.

After the morning meal was over, Thomas Hunter told Sadia that it would be necessary for him to go in a boat with a couple of men, to a point where he could see what passed upon the river, to discover if they were pursued, or if piroquet-boats were on the move.

He advised her to rest, for no danger could approach, except from the point where he would be on the watch. That he would return by night, or earlier if advisable, and then their journey would be resumed, if it could be done with safety. To some of the men he gave fishing lines, and showed them where fine fish could be caught, to add to their dinner bill of fare, and then he hurried off with Napoleon and another picked hand, to see how matters looked river-ward.

CHAPTER VIII.

The cold breakfast which Warburton De Montfort had to provide for himself and cousin, could not have been very inviting, or else anxiety overbalanced appetite; for Bob was not ten minutes in having the saddled horses at the door—the master's rude awakening had started him on a lively gait, and he kept it up. But the gentlemen were ready and at the door before the horses were.

"Stay here and look out for things till I get back," cried his master, as he sprung into the saddle. "Now, Beverly," he added, "we will first gallop down to our boat-landing, and see if the boats are drawn up in the boat-house, as they could be, if all is right in that direction."

Beverly bowed his assent, and followed the lead of the others, who, taking a lane well-
THE FAITHFUL SISTER.

Marked by cattle and cart tracks, dashed off to a point on the river, nearly a quarter of a mile above the hut of the old fisherman. Here a dock jutted out into the river, and at its lower side was quite a capacious boat-house, with a floating platform capable of holding a dozen or more ordinary skiffs. But there was no boat to be seen there now.

"You were right, Beverly, you were right—the boats are gone, and of course we know who took them! The next thing is, to gather three or four trusty men, and pursue them!"

"Where are the boats to do it in?" asked Beverly dryly.

"There are plenty besides ours on the river. An old curse called Tom Hunter, who lives by hunting and fishing, a quarter of a mile down, always has two or three in order, good boats of his own build. I heard that the rascal has Union propitiations, and I ordered him off the place a few days ago, for he has been one of father's 'charity tenants', as I call them, for years. If he hasn't left, we will take his boats. And we may hear something from him about the fugitives—for he always about."

"Then let's ride down there. Every minute we lose is a gain to them!" cried Beverly.

Warburton remounted and rode rapidly down the river, followed by his cousin. Before they had ridden half way, a long and melancholy howl, like that of some lost dog, reached their ears. And it seemed to be echoed or answered by a good many more. A gallop of three minutes more exhibited the source of this "mad music", for if a dog's howling is not enough to drive one mad, I'd like to know what would. All the dogs on the plantation, hounds, coon-dogs, and curs, seemed to have gathered there to lament the departure of those who had fed them and hunted with them. For every negro who has a Sunday, and loves coons and possums, has his dog, and would share his last hock-cake with him, if meat was scarce.

"Here, right in front of the old curse's cabin is where the party embarked. They would not take the dogs in the boats for fear of discovery, and here the beasts have remained!" exclaimed Warburton.

And then he rode up and saw the well-defined tracks of the main party who had come down in the narrow by-path, while only three or four went to bring the boats down.

"Old Hunter's boats lie up there yet—we'll see what he says about this clodus!" he added, as he rode furiously up to the door of the old hut, which stood invitingly open.

"Not a soul here! The fire yet smoking, but everything else gone. The old curse is their adviser and guide, I'll bet a thousand!"

"Yes, and he has left you a nice pair of boats to follow him in!" said Beverly, who had examined the boats as he rode up. "Their bottoms are stone in, and they are useless."

"The infernal villain! I wish I had shot him when he told me, had my father lived, he would have been true to the old flag."

"Blast the flags! Let us talk work, for now we have something to work upon. Here is a white man aiding and abetting, yes, leading the escape of your slaves—your property. He must be followed, captured and punished. You have a Vigilance Committee of fifty men right in your neighborhood—get enough of them to accompany us, and we'll have the party yet in twenty-four hours, if they are not already in the hands of some of the river-pickets."

"Good. I will act upon that. But they have at least eight or ten good guns, plenty of ammunition, for all mine is gone, and two revolvers, every weapon I had in the house!"

"I had nothing but my sword, and that was hanging in my room when I left there. I hung it when I first went there. Let us ride back to the house, refresh, then organize at least three boats' crews, well armed, and follow them!"

"Follow? The devil will be to know where they have gone!" said Warburton, moodily, as he turned his horse's head toward the house.

"They have no refuge but in Washington, I tell you: no route but the river they can follow. All we need is, force and speed to overtake them before they get there. If not, farewell your hopes for your niggers—my hopes for your sister's hand. She has shown so much wit and spirit in this adventure, that I love her more madly than before, and would not lose her for an admiral's commission in our new Navy. Ride up, man—ride up! I am in a hurry to be afloat and after them!"

Warburton spurred on rapidly, and rode up to the door, where Bob, once more asleep, nodded on the horse-block.

"You cursed nigger, if you are the last I've got, I'll kill you!" he shouted, and raised the butt of a loaded riding-whip to strike the poor fellow.

"Hold on, Coz—our horses haven't been fed yet this morning—don't kill Bob till he has done that. Use the other end of your whip this time!" cried Beverly, catching his arm.

Warburton almost cursed his cousin for his interference; but the end of the whip was changed, and a cut across the cheek, which first left a white streak, then deeply reddening with the gushing blood, woke the poor devil to a sense of the fact that his master had "one nigger left!"

"Wake up, you cursed Caliban, and rub down and feed these horses when they are cool. Now, go and saddle my fox-hunter and the race-mare. Have them in ten minutes, or you're as dead as the lead in the butt of this whip!" he cried, as poor Bob sprang to his feet with a howl rather than a yell of agony.

"Better yet," said Beverly. "I didn't think about they're having left you all your stock.
We will be ready for the road in ten minutes. I'll buckle on my sword, now; it may be of use before we're through."

And Beverly hurried up to the room which he had occupied as a guest, and in a moment rejoined Warburton, who was on his way to the refreshment-room with it in his hand.

"I used to wear it in the Old Service, but it will do as well in the new," he said, as he saw Warburton's eye glance upon the scabbard decorations. "It is a Solingen blade, mounted to the U. S. pattern by old Ames, of Springfield, the father of good war-cutlery in this country. The blade will double. I will show you yours.

And as he advanced into the well-remembered room where Sadia had pinned her last compliment upon his breast, he drew; a curse came with it, for only half the blade was attached to the hilt of the sword.

"Who in the name of the fool fiend has broken my sword?" he cried, as he turned the sheath upside down.

The other part of the blade dropped upon the floor as he did so, and, with it a paper, which he picked up and read.

"May God curse me if I ever forgive her for this!" he cried, as, with a face utterly white with rage, he cast the paper upon the floor and stamped upon it.

Warburton stooped and picked it up; for he saw the handwriting of his sister. And he smiled bitterly as he read her words:

"The sword once worn in an honorable service is unfit for the hand of a Rebel in a false cause. A loyal woman has taken her only means of preventing such use being made of it. When Randolph Beverly will send me the bill of cost for the weapon, the writer will repay it with pleasure.

SADIA DE MONTFORD.

"Rather hard upon you—rather hard, Beverly. If you had slept in your own room last night, she would hardly have ventured upon the last trick. But name the price of the weapon, cousin; for the honor of the family, I'll pay it."

"I'll tell her the price when I see her once more. Until then, let the debt stand," said Beverly, bitterly, casting the sword, scabbard and all, from him.

"Don't take it too hard, my boy. Take a drink or two, and we'll be off; for I am not fond of river-navigation, and the shorter our trip is, the better it will please me."

"Well, as you say, so be it, Warburton. I care nothing for the loss of the sword; it is only the cool and contemplatious way she did it. I hardly know how a woman's weak arm could have snapped so good a blade. But let the matter pass for the present. I'll put the fragments back in the scabbard, and stow it away among your old closet-tumbers. I'll soon wear as good a one."

"Certainly, for I'll purchase it myself—the best there is in Richmond, when we get there."

I hear the horses at the door. Here is a well-filled hunting-dask for each of us. Pocket and off!"

In a few moments, poor Bob was master pro tem. of the mansion of Springfield.

CHAPTER IX.

To say that Sadia was not anxious during the absence of her faithful friend and guide, Thomas Hunter, would be to utter an untruth. But all credit to the woman's heart within her, which had yet known no love but that felt for her kindred, her anxiety was for the safety of the brave man who was periling his life in her cause. She wandered all about the fairy spot chosen for their retreat, and she could find no sign of living men ever having been there, except such as Hunter had told her were made by himself.

When the sun as well as her watch proclaimed the high hour of noon, she sat down with Marion and Carlino to a delicious dinner prepared by the hands of her faithful old nurse. There was soup made from terrapins caught near the stream; delicious fish from its waters; venison cooked in various ways; and, of course, the inevitable cornbread and bacon, without which no Southern meal in the olden time was complete. More to please her faithfu servants than to gratify her own appetite, Sadia tasted of every dish, and saw her little charges enjoy themselves hugely, as well as the servants, in the bountiful repast given them by Nature.

After dinner was over, expecting to travel all night, she lay down upon a bed of fragrant herbs, gathered by her women, and sought a little rest, directing that she should be called the moment the good guide returned.

She awoke before she was called, and the sun was then low in the western sky, but Hunter had not come or sent her any message. As the sun sunk lower and lower, so her heart went down toward the dark horizon of sadness. What if Thomas, whose faith she did not doubt, had been captured or slain! Who, then, would be equal to the task of guiding her past the dangers which she knew were before her? Her negroes would obey her orders, but they neither could nor would think for her. They knew nothing of the river.

The sun at last went down, and yet no arrival—no signal—no message. Fearing for the worst, she placed her armed men at a point which commanded the channel through which they had reached the spot, and stationing herself, revolver in hand, in advance, determined that no one should reach their position, except it was Hunter and his men, without finding a sharp resistance.

The twilight deepened into darkness. The owls hooted through the forest, and now and then some sharp, shrill cry would reach her ear, which would send a chill to her heart. Whether
it came from bird or beast she knew not; for she was not versed in woodcraft.

Her people, seeing her so anxious, forgot the natural apathy of their race, and huddled around her, as if she alone could protect them. For a little time it was thus; the darkness deepening, and the silent, terror-stricken people huddling close up to her. Then it began to grow lighter; the power of the moon, already up, but hidden in a bank of clouds which had partially over-spread the sky, exhibited itself, and threw out, in bold relief, the great forest-trees, with their widespread arms, the glittering water, and the grouping around the poor orphan-girl.

"Hark! I hear the dash of oars, sister," said Marion, who held and insisted upon keeping the other revolver in his hand. For his brother had let him fire it a few times, and he thought he could fight, if it was little. Or so at least he said.

Sadia listened, and sadly said:

"It is only the dash of the stream among the rocks above, Marion."

"No, sissy, no; listen now—it comes nearer and nearer; and there—what's that?"

A sharp and prolonged whistle sounding from but a short distance below, reached the ears of every one there.

"Hush! no answer!" said Sadia, in a loud whisper. "It may come from enemies."

All was silent a moment, then she distinctly heard the dash of oars again. And a moment later she could see the head of a boat just emerging from the dark eddy which I have spoken of once before.

"Who comes there? Stop and answer, or twenty loaded guns will open on you!" cried Sadia, in a voice which did not tremble.

"Hardly twenty, Miss Sadia, but enough in good hands to give a big crowd a heap of trouble," said Sadia, in a voice which she recognized instantly as that of old Thomas. "I'm sorry I haven't any countersign to give you, but if you agree not to fire those twenty guns, I'll come in and report.

"O good Thomas, come quickly! You stayed so long that I thought you was lost, and I began to expect my persecutors rather than you," cried Sadia.

"So I see by my reception. If I had known I would be kept so long, I should have arranged a signal by which you might have known me. As it was, I was whiskled, for fear you might have them twenty guns pointed at me."

"Oh, do not, good Thomas, laugh at me any more. Was it not wise to represent myself stronger than I was?"

"Custumary in war, if not wise; but many a battle is lost by it, kind lady. But now that I am with you, if you'll start these darkies off to cooking something to eat, I'll be obliged. For I have something to tell you."

"In a hurry, you've forgotten all about supper," said Sadia. "Now let us have it at once."

And as the negroes started off joyfully to obey her orders, thinking the crisis of danger all over, she walked slowly on with Thomas Hunter, followed by Marion and Carlisle.

"Now, good Thomas," she said, "I will hear all that you have to say. Tell me without reserve our hopes and our dangers. The one may cheer, the other shall not appall me."

"Well, Miss, we are followed. I was in hopes they would either come quicker, or else not before night. It was almost sundown when three boats, with five men in each, came down the river. One boat followed close along each bank; the other took the centre of the stream, and they had signals by which any one could inform the other of news.

"The man who steered one of these boats was your brother; the one who steered the second that Navy cousin of yours, and the third old Carl Michel, as he called himself; that old French pirate that has been such a terror to weak-headed negroes, and so useful to the Vigilance Committee of late in carrying out their devilish plots of vengeance.

"I recognized all three and most of the crew before they were within half a mile of me. So did old Napoleon, and his hair—wool, I suppose I'd better call it, is full white now; it was only gray this morning."

"O Mr. Hunter, do not joke, but tell me all!"

"I'm not joking, kind lady. Napoleon and the other boy were almost scared out of their wits; for one boat was not four hundred yards back from where we were hidden, and we were within twenty feet of the shore, in a clump of laurels right over the beach.

"I just told the cowardly curs to crawl back fifty feet and lay wit's their faces to the ground, and if they raised their heads till I went and bade them do it, I told them I'd blow them from their bodies.

"They were glad enough to get out of sight of what was coming down the river, and they crawled back as I told them to. And it was well for us all they did—for they'd have never kept still under what next happened."

"Right under where I lay, at the foot of the bluff, not forty feet from me, a beautiful spring gushed out from the rocks, and dashed into the river with considerable velocity. It appears old Michel, who knows a good deal about the river, had been to this spring before; for he hailed in toward it from the centre of the river, when about a quarter of a mile above, and signaled to the boat on the other side to come over.

"The first boat which reached the spot was his own, and it was lucky for us; for Warburton, your brother, passed without seeing the entrance by which we found the swamp and bayou that is our only path to this place."

"Are you seen no sign?" asked Michel, who
was filling a cup at the spring when your brother Warburton landed.  
"'Nothing; not a track, or a place where a boat has touched the shore, so far, and no streams large enough for them to go up!' replied your brother.  "'Why do you stop here?' 
"'One time because it is one bon spring—wataire all same like ice.  Two time because it shall soon be night, and we must deliberat what we sail do when we cannot see ze shore, nor see one anozzare!  Tree time, because you make me your pilote, your guide, and for ze time I am all same as ze capitaine!  You understand!' 
"'Yes, I understand; but you were so late in getting off that I expect they are half-way to Washington, ahead of us!' 
"'I doubt zat ver' mooc, Messieur de Montfort.  And I shall explain!  Zey 'ave 'm only tree boats, no more big zan ours, 'bout dirty peoples, more or little.  Zey 'ave plenty provis with you from your store-house.  Zem boat must be ver' low in ze wataire.  Ze oor not have good sweep—ze men not 'ave room for pull fast an' strong!  Eh bien—you understand zat?' 
"'Yes—yes—go on!' 
"'Well zey leave; some time not more zan four, five, or six hour before ze day zis morn- ing.  Zey could not go in zat time more zan tirty or forty mile, wiz current an' all.  In zis lecile time we come more zan forty mile!' 
"'Well, what of that?' 
"'Zis, sare—zis, if you please to understand!  Zey must stop when ze daylight come, for we picket all ze river, and nooss can pass in ze day wizout hail.  You see how many time we 'ave been hail zis afternoon, eh?' 
"'Well, what does this amount to? asked Warburton, as Beverley landed to join in the conference. 
"'Zat is what I will say now zat Messieur Beverlee 'ave come!  Zey cannot be on far ahead of us.  Zey are hide somewhere all zis day, and will voyage zis night.  Now, I propose one of us boat go right on an' warn all ze pickets for lookout.  Ze ozzare two stay one mile below where ze rivare is ver narrow, and watch at anchor—one man watch, ze rest sleep.  Ze one boat go fifty mile to-night, to-morrow night we join him.  S'pose we no catch 'em before—eh, you understand?' 
"'Yes; which boat should go before?' said Warburton. 
"'Not mine; for I do not know the river!' said Beverley.  
"'Ze rivare know itsef, Messieur Beverlee, and ze boat know ze rivare.  You put him in ze middle, an' go to sleep wiz all your men.  You wake up wiz ze sun sixty, seventy, miles from from zis!  But I do not want you to go.  I will go.  Only I wish zat you both will look to ze shore ze same as I do all zis day, till we meet again to-morrow before ze set of ze sun, for I will not go so far as not to meet wiz you if you come?' 
"'Then it is understood—let us be off to our stations!' said Warburton.  
"And, lady, in three minutes more they shoved off and were soon out of hearing, but not out of sight; for the two boats are anchored where the river is not three hundred yards wide.' 
"Heavens, Thomas! what made you such a mime! I have been thinking I heard all this myself!' 
"Old Michel has been a great deal in my hut, lady.  Because I used to speak French when I was young, he came to talk French to me, and has tried more than once to get me into work with him which would have been creditable to no man.  I am used to his words and ways, and, in describing what he said, spoke just as he did.  But to go on, Miss Sadia, as soon as I saw that their boats were anchored, and no alterations made in the plans I so providentially discovered, I roused up 'Nap' and the other boy, and hurried back to report, as I have done.' 
"'And now that they are ahead of us, what can we do? Can we not go back and take the wagons and teams, and boldly drive off east to Baltimore?' 
"'Ah, lady, I fear caution has not yet suf- ficiently been developed in you to make a safe commander.  There were thirteen of the Vigi- lance Committee only in the boats from the neighborhood of Springland! Where do you think the rest are? With full knowledge of what we have done, we never could return there and live—not to speak of escape!' 
"'True—true!  'What can we do? Is there no hope?' poor Sadia exclaimed, almost wildly. 
"'Yes, there is hope.  But we can only reach success now through patience! Fortunately, after the closest examination, they have passed the channel to this retreat without discovering it.  They will not examine the points they have passed so closely again.  What we have now to do is, to wait here until, tired of search, they believe that you have escaped, and return!  We have provisions, and can command more.  I will keep a daily and nightly watch on the river, and after they have returned, we will try to evade the pickets; for they, at least, will not be so strongly on the look out for us then as now.' 
"'Well, it must be so, I suppose.  Our people can soon build rude shelters for themselves, for that will be needful if storms should come on.' 
"'Of course—but no fire must be made ex- cept in my large fire-place.  A smoke might draw attention here, if made out in the open air.  There is plenty of room for cooking at that fire, and we shall have no colder weather than this,' said the old fisherman, passing for Sadia to precede him into the cabin, at which
CHAPTER X.

The advice of honest old Tom Hunter was the only thing which Sadia, with her party, could follow under the circumstances. And as soon as the negroes knew that they were to remain some days in the beautiful spot to which they had been conducted, they at once set themselves to rearing comfortable huts near the first cabin. In a short time this was done, and when, on the afternoon of the third day, Thomas came up for a short visit from his post of observation, leaving Napoleon on the lookout, he said:

"I believe the negroes would soon make themselves as comfortable here anywhere, Miss Sadia. They can laugh at a storm now, and I see that fish, terrapin, rabbits, possums, and coons are a drug with them. If it wasn't for the war, you might start a splendid plantation on a small scale here! This prairie would grow almost anything that ever was raised on the soil of Maryland!"

Sadia smiled, faintly.

"I thank you, Thomas," said she, "for doing all you can, in words and deeds, to render this delay supportable. But I shall never feel at ease until my journey is over, and I am under the protection of the strong arm of the Federal Government!"

"I hope that will be in a few days, lady; the party will not remain long below. Failing in overtaking us, they will think, perhaps, we have landed somewhere on the river, found friends, and gone on an overland route. At any rate, they will not hit the right track!"

"I pray Heaven they may not!" said Sadia.

"But is it not darkening up very suddenly, Thomas? I feel as if a storm was coming up!"

"There is; I have noticed signs of it all day! I hope the hands have gathered you plenty of dry wood; for a good fire, in a dreary night, is a great comfort. Many a night, in my old cabin, when the Potomac ran at its height, and the storm was loud and wild, with a huge fire roaring under my dry roof, I have listened to the turmoil without, thought of old times when storms were nothing to me, and been as happy as—as I ever have been for the last forty years! But we are going to have an awful storm. There will be nothing more on the river this night. The hands may as well come in from fishing and work at once, and our boats be got out of the stream and turned bottom side up! I will see to this now, and you look out and make them bring you in plenty of wood and fresh bedding, good lady. The storm may last a night, or even longer."

And the old man hurried away, for one of those sudden entire oversailing of the skies, common in southern latitudes, but seldom seen so far north as even the Potomac had occurred, and though it was yet far from the hour of sunset, the atmosphere became almost as dark as night.

The negroes did not require to be called in from fishing or labor; with their instinctive terror of a thunderstorm, they were already seen hurrying in, some bringing dry wood, others fish and game. Hieral was making for headquarters as fast as possible. Thomas stopped a few of the strongest of the men, to assist him in securing the boats. This had barely been done, and the party under shelter, when it seemed as if all the artillery of heaven had opened at once. Flash after flash of lightning ran zigzag through the air, almost blindly bright; the thunder pealed incessantly; the terrified negroes huddled together in the large cabin, and crouched down in silent terror.

Sadia stood by the door, which she kept open, and looked out with an admiration of the grand and fearful in Nature intuitive to such souls as hers. Old Thomas seemed pleased with her bravery, showing, as it did, the difference between mental strength and weakness, for there, at her feet, cowered stalwart blacks, able to rend her limb from limb, now struck with mortal terror at that which they had seen many a time.

For a short time, though it seemed long to them, this terrific hurricane tilled; then the huge masses poured down their torrents of sun-drawn moisture. Never had Sadia seen rain come down so pitilessly, she thought, and she was thankful that her people were so well sheltered; for, dry and cheerful, now that the terrifying thunder and lightning had passed away, they sat and chatted before the large fire, seeming as happy as if fear never had found a place in their breasts, or care either.

"You did not seem to fear the storm at all, Miss Sadia!" said Thomas, as, with her permission, he lighted his pipe, and took a seat where its smoke found a draught up the chimney.

"Oh, no!" she replied, with enthusiasm. "I never was. From a child, I have watched the rushing clouds, the forest trees writhing in the gale, and listened to the deep-toned thunder, not with fear, but with a sort of wild pleasure! When the bright lightning played among the dark clefts of the cloud-mountains, gilding their rough edges, and racing higher and thicker like a serpent of fire, I have clapped my hands gleefully—it seemed so wildly grand!"

"I, too, lady, have looked up on storm clouds as you do—but before the thought of their gathering passes away, another thought that of the evil they may have done to the helpless—comes upon my mind."

"I think of the strong and the beautiful who
may have been stricken down by the flash which darted down from the dark cloud; of the building fired; of the woe worked by the fiery bolt of destruction. And when the gale lashed our beautiful river into snowy foam, and I see great forest trees wrinkle, and groan, and bow before the strength of the wind, I think of some giant ship, filled with a precious freight of human lives, battling against the might of the terrible storm. I see her breasting the mountain surges, and steering for some port of safety—every one of her crew awake to danger, but sternly striving to meet and overcome it! I see her sails riven from the yards—her spars swept away from their strong fastenings—the power to steer her lost. I see brave men turn pale, and feeble ones grow strong, not for hope of life, but because there is no hope below, and they look above. I see the great waves dash the helpless ship upon the hidden rock—in an agony of thought I see her shattered, her crew all battling with the mad waters! They struggle—a moment, and they are gone! The storm sweeps on in its wild beauty, and laughs a maniac laugh over its work!"

So wrapped in his thoughts had Thomas become that his looks as well as his words betrayed the intensity of his feeling, and the very negroes looked up at him with awe, as if he was some superior being, speaking of things above all human ken.

"I little thought there was so much true poetry in your heart, Mr. Hunter," said Sadiq, her own eyes moistened with the picture he drew. "So much real feeling—so much deep thought!"

"Ah, lady!" he sighed, "Thomas Hunter is not now what he once was. Once he had high hopes, bright aspirations, cherished friends. One evil hour—one mad act, regretted ere it was done, and those hopes fell, those aspirations were clouded forever, and he fled away from the love of woman and of man, and tried to hate even himself! But I will not speak of the past—I will only look forward to my duty now, and hope for an end upon some glorious field, where the flag of my country floats victorious and defiant above the trophies won from its enemies! The storm is breaking away, and I must go down to the river to see if poor Napoleon and his mate haven't been washed away or scoured out of existence!"

The old man, without waiting to hear Sadiq's intended remonstrance about his going out, strode forth in the darkness, and was gone in a moment.

"Strange man!" she murmured. "I wish that I knew his history, yet I dare not ask more than he has chosen to reveal, for fear of wounds his feelings."

CHAPTER XI.

Four days were spent by Warburton de Mont-
scouts, and others, that its proprietor, out of necessity, had become willing to accept compensation for his hospitality. His wife and two fair daughters, in his absence, aided by several "intelligent blackbirds," waited upon the guests, supplying edibles and bibbles according to the best of their ability, at regular Dixie prices.

Calling for a room and refreshments for their companions, Montfort, Beverly, and Michel asked for a separate one for themselves.

To this they were lighted by a dark-eyed daughter of the guerillas, who supplying them with liquor and cigars, and receiving their orders for supper, left them to their discussions.

"Well, Michel, this is a cursed poor return for your assurances that my sister and her party could not get away from us," growled Warburton, as he seated himself, and drank off a huge tumbler of undiluted apple-jack.

"Yes, I must say, Michel, for an old sailor, though a good guide, you've been poor on the scent. The parties are not within our reach yet."

"Poor on ze scent, Messieur Beverlee? Poor on ze scent! By dam, do you take me for one dog wiz my nose to ze ground. For more little zan zat same I have made one gentilhomme seek ze grace of God from his confessin', after he have feel some few inches of my rapier! By dam, Sara—if me no find people where zey is not, you need not blame me, who are both yourselves as much in ze dark."

And Michel twirled the ends of his von mustache with such fierce energy, and looked so angry, that Beverly hastened to say that he had no idea of comparing him with a dog, and that he attributed their want of success to bad luck rather than bad management.

"Eh bien! I accept your apology, Messieur Beverlee, and in zis cas de vie I drink your very good beer!" And Michel drank off a glass of the apple-brandy, to prove that he was already mollified.

"Well, Michel," said Warburton, "what have you to advise for a next move? They have either not come down the river at all, or else, having done so, they have evaded us, and got into the city."

"Why for not you go zare and see, Messieur De Montfort?"

"With my name published far and wide as one of the most bitter Secessionists of my State. No, my dear Michel, notoriety is very good, but an arrest and trial for treason might make me even more uncomfortable than I am."

"Eh bien! Zat is one bon excuse. Why for you not go for to try to find ze ladee of your love in ze citee, eh, Messieur Beverlee?"

"I have even stronger reasons than my cousin for avoiding my chances for accommodations made of a Federal prison!" said Beverley, laughing. "Will you not go, Michel? You know the lady and children, and most of the hands."

"Ah, Monsieur Beverlee, I should ver proud to visit ze citee of Washington. But, zat, zere, I am afraid if I shal go zere zat ze Gov- ernment will make ze offere of Generale, or someing like zat, and zere I should 'ave to be untrue to ze friends zat me 'ave leave behind, and to ze beautiful South. Same, I dare ex- pose me personne to ze sword or ze pistol, but I dare not expose my heart to ze temptation. For I am ver well known in Washington. Ze Count De Brownski introduce me zere to everybody, and ze make of me un grand how for several weeks. I was ver appree, until one day a gentilhomme at ze Hotel de Willard make observation zat he have loss his watch in my company. I was ver indignant at zat, and more zat he called me one dam French tief. I lend him four or zive lads of my ponyard right in his breast, where his heart beat. He never call me French tief no more; but I leave ze Hotel de Willard in about one minute, and I have nevar been zare since. Nor do I care ver much for togo! No, mon dieu, no! I sink zat I 'ave leetle bill at zat hotel to settle. I will settle him when Messieur Davis occupy ze Maison Blanche—what zey call ze White House!"

"I don't blame you for declining to go there, then," said Warburton, laughing. But it hardly seems possible to me that they could have got down the river; and also impossible that we could have passed them anywhere upon it. Both shores have been searched, hundreds of persons questioned, and no traces found."

"Might they not have gone up the river, instead of down?" asked Beverly.

"Up? No. The current above Springland is so rapid in many places that no boat could stem it. And the people up that way are Seaesh to the backbone!"

The girl now came in with three or four servants bearing the supper which our party had ordered, and the conversation slackened while the table was laid, and preparations made for them to break a long fast. After she had seen them fairly at work at the bountiful supply laid before them, she put a small bell on the table, and said:

"If anything more is wanted, ring the bell, gentlemen, and I will attend you."

"And a fairer attendant all Virginian, famed for its beauty, could not give us," said Beverly, in his usual lepish way.

"A soldier's daughter requires no flattery," Sir," said the girl, with a look which did not flatter him.

He made no reply. He saw that he was treading upon dangerous ground. How few men know how to properly express their admiration of a lady's qualities of mind or person in her presence without offending her natur-
ral modesty. Of course, a rude soldier wouldn’t attempt it. He might charge a battery at the beach in a horde of reckless devils as himself, and succeed; but to charge over the barriers which every man with a chivalrous heart in his bosom respects—he wouldn’t do it.

Little was said by the trio while the substantial supper was under discussion in a practical way. Ham and eggs, fish and oysters, cornbread and chicken fixings, all went the way of doomed flesh and fish very rapidly. The drink was still apple-jack, now mollified with a little sugar and weakened with a little water, for tea would be an insult to an eleven-o’clock supper for a Southern gentleman.

While it was in progress, however, thought was busy in the brains of at least one of the party. And when they sat back and lighted fresh cigars, he said:

“If Stuart would only come, he would find some way to aid us in learning whether the party have reached Washington or not.”

It was Warburton who spoke. Almost at the same instant, the rapid galloping of a horse was heard for a few moments, and then it ceased, as the rider drew up before the house.

“Suppose zat what zey say in ze old time, come to ze veritable, eh—zat when you speak of le diable, he come; zen zat gentilhomme zat ‘ave just come must be le Capitaine Stuart, eh?” said Michel, with as much of a smile as his scarred old visage ever could bear upon it.

“You may be right. I will see, at any rate,” said Warburton, rising and leaving the room.

He returned in a few moments afterward, accompanied by a man of about middle height, thin-formed, and thin-faced, but whose eye, as bright as that of the eagle, seemed to pierce the person he looked upon. His frame, though light, was lithe and sinewy; and a glance would tell any observant man that he was active and powerful. He wore a plain suit of gray, well covered with mud, showing that he had been riding hard and recklessly, heavy top-boots, with spurs at the heels. The butt of a revolver could be seen where his coat lacked a button at the waist; but no other weapon was in sight.

“Gentlemen, here is our host, Captain Stuart, of the Independent Confederate Rangers,” said Warburton, as the two entered the room.

One of the party—Michel—needed no introduction, for Stuart at once grasped and heartily shook his hand.

“I’m glad to see you, old friend,” said he.

“Have you made any more Yankees dance for you lately?”

“Ah, ha! Capitaine, you have bon mémoire,” said Michel, with a grin, as he thought of an act of his to which the Captain alluded. “Zat was ver fine dance, only ze musk was too slow, eh? Ha, ha! It was ver fine.”

“I must tell you about that scrape before you go, Montfort; it was rare fun,” said the guerrilla chief. “But now tell me about this business of yours, and let me see what I can do for you.”

“Will you not take a dose of something strong to take the chill of the night air from your veins?” asked Beverly, with a studied air of politeness, as he pushed the decanter over toward Stuart.

“Thank you; no,” said the latter. “A man who has ridden forty miles in less than five hours cannot have felt much chill in his veins, you may well suppose. Go on, Montfort. I am waiting for you.”

Warburton now stated all about the exoinds of Sadia and the slaves, not, however, saying anything about its real cause, leaving Stuart to suppose that her Union feelings alone had actuated her. When he mentioned her supposed guide, old Thomas Hunter, Stuart shook his head.

“She has one of the best men for the business in the country. I know him. He has hunted and fished on the river for twenty-five or thirty years at least. He is an educated man, and was born a gentleman, and, if I have been told, was once an officer in the Army.”

“He don’t look much like one in his latter days,” said Warburton, contemptuously.

“Nevare mind zat. I ‘ave tell you before zat he was one soldier,” said Michel. “‘Are not I talk wiz him upon ze science de guerre in ze language of France? Certaumment, I ‘ave so done. He smart like ze diable, nevare would he escape old Carl Michel. Nevare!”

“Our river pickets are too much on the alert, it seems to me, for any boat to pass them. For upon them do we depend to keep much information away from the Federals. Yet you think your sister and her party must have reached the city?” said Stuart.

“Yes; for I cannot imagine where else she can be, and there would be her only near place to find protection in her cursed plans.”

“Well, it can be ascertained if she is there. My girls manage, one or the other of them, to get down there every day or two. They are acquainted with several of the leading clerks of the different departments, and with most of the reporters. It will be ascertained to a certainty by this time to-morrow evening whether they are in the city or not. So rest easy upon that score.”

“A thousand thanks, my good friend—a thousand thanks!” said Warburton, joyously.

“I have renewed hope now.”

“When you return, you do not propose going back in your boats, I hope,” said Stuart, suddenly changing the subject.

“I razzare zink it would be one big fool idea to do zat. If take us ten day zat way—we go in two wiz ze horse,” said Michel.

“But where will we find horses?” suggested Beverly.
"Do not trouble yourself about that. There are yet a few fools in Virginia who dare to call themselves Union men. Whenever I need horses, I make them pay for their folly by borrowing the horses of such men for the use of myself and the Confederacy," said Stuart. "If you recover your whole party, Union men shall find transportation for them. They give what I ask, and never grumble—before me, at least, for I always carry a larist at the ring of my saddle, and a few of them have seen the larist-dance, haven't they, Michel?"

"Ha! ha! yes, Captain; zat dance to slow musique. It is admirable performance—admirable! I shall 'ave to come wiz you ver soon, for ze people up ze Potomac are too slow. Zey only whip two school teachare to death last week, and burn one abolition man—bah; zey are too slow. Zey should see Paris in one émeuté; zen zey could see somesing of action. A barrier here and a barrier zere, wiz dead soldiers on one side, dead citizens ze ox-zere, and women sing like ze diable on ze top! Every lamp-post 'ave a jewel, zat jewel an aristocrat zat 'ave dance ze dance of death! Ah, Paris is one grand place in revolution!"

And the old corsair's eyes sparkled, as he remembered, probably, the ferocities of the followers of Marat, Danton, and Robespierre.

"Can you get to Washington to-night, Kate?" asked Captain Stuart of the same daughter who had waited upon the party before, and who now came in answer to the bell which he had rung.

"I can ride down to the Long Bridge to-night, father, and get passed over early in the morning," was the reply.

"That will do, dear; get ready. I have work for you. Take the black horse; he is swift, sure footed, and used to that road, and it is dark to-night!"

"Yes, father." And the beautiful girl hurried away.

"You surely will not send her out alone on such a night as this toward the Federal lines!" said Warburton, in astonishment. "She cannot have numbered eighteen summers!"

"Only sixteen," said Stuart, with a smile.

"But she can ride wherever a horse can carry me; and the man upon whom she raises her revolver may as well breathe his last prayer to God. I have no fears for her safety; little Kate Stuart can take care of herself; and before we sleep to-morrow night you will learn through her all that can be learned of your party in Washington. Have you any likeness of your sister with you—if so, let me have it, for I must now go to give my girl her final instructions."

"Beverly has one which he can lend for the occasion, I presume; for he borrowed it of me a year ago, and has never returned it, though I have seen it often in his possession," said Warburton.

The young Lieutenant affected to be slightly confused—confusion in a sailor, ye gods! But he took out his pocket-book, and from within it produced a photograph of Sadia.

"A quietly-looking girl, by Jove!" muttered Stuart, as he looked at the picture. "I would know her among a thousand. Kate will take this with her, and return it safely. Now, gentlemen, enjoy yourselves over your bottles and cigars, and when you feel weary, rooms will be ready for you. You can do nothing before to-morrow night, so take things easy. In the morning, I may have a word to say about your boats; we shall need a good many in a short time, and probably can make it advantageous to you to part with yours. Good night."

And the guerrilla left them to their enjoyment.

CHAPTER XII.

Kate Stuart was the favorite child of her bold and dashing father, because in many point his character was so like his own. Apparently insensible to fear, she was daring and graceful in horsemanship; and, as he had remarked, if she fired her revolver at a living thing—bird, beast, or man—death would surely follow the certainty of her aim. She was strange to say, as lady-like in her demeanor, and as calm and self-possessed within doors, as the best bred belle that ever turned hearts wild at Saratoga, or drove men into dissipation despairingly at Newport. Her father's means had enabled him to have her educated in every accomplishment; and young as she was, in music, languages, general knowledge she was well versed. And throwing himself right into the front of the dark army of Secessionism, he was already using her in many ways to aid his ambitious plans—for the plan of every leader in that mad scheme was founded not upon even the supposed good of his country, but upon his own personal ambition! This may be said to be an opinion; but their every act proves it to be based upon the foundation of truth.

When Captain Stuart left the room where his guests were, he repaired to another on the first floor, which he called his armory. It might also have been termed a museum, for in the variety and style of arms there was everything to choose from. It seemed as if the old heroes of the Revolution, the Hessians and the Yagers, and even the Red Men of the forest, had helped to swell his stock. Flintlock and percussion, single and double-barreled, guns, pistols, rifles, and revolvers were packed in the corners, or hung upon the walls. Old Scottish broadsword, shipcutlasses, old rapiers, regular sabres, all were scattered about looking grim and rusty, but dangerous for all that.

So large and various was the collection, that I have no doubt the old women's gan could have been found in it—the one which she remember-
ed, “without stock, lock, or barrel”, that went off through carelessness.

The Captain upon entering the room, opened a small cupboard, which contained arms, which were kept with more than common care. In it there were three or four sabres, several short carbines, and at least a dozen revolvers, all without rust, and evidently ready for use.

He took down a red morocco belt from a hook to which was appended a pair of holsters. From each of these he took a silver-mounted Colt’s revolver; and having removed the caps, and examined the tubes, to see that the powder was dry, he carefully re-capped them. A neat little bowie-knife finished the appendages of this belt, which a moment later he buckled around the waist of his daughter when she entered the room.

“Go, my good girl, on this errand, with care for yourself,” he said, as he pressed his thin pale lips upon her white forehead.

“You have not yet told me what the errand is, father dear,” she said, with a saucy smile.

“Do you wish me to win some new secret from those poor fools who think that, because I listen to their flatteries, I may respect or believe them?”

“No, child. Miss Sadia de Montfort, the eldest sister of the Montforts who is up stairs, has seen fit to abscond from her brother’s plantation with her younger brother and sister, and all the slaves, nearly in number. He thinks—as she was a strong Union girl in sentiment—that she has managed to get down the river, enter Washington, and claim the protection of the Federal Government, on the plea that he is a Rebel. Here is her photograph. Look well at it; for I want you to discover if she has reached Washington, and, if so, what steps she has taken with the Government about her affairs, and where she lives.”

“She is pretty; I like her proud, pure look,” said Kate, abstractedly, as she took the picture in her hands.

After looking at it a moment, she put it in a morocco card-case which she drew from her pocket; and then turning to her father, asked which of the gentlemen up-stairs was the Montfort.

“The taller and more manly of the two. For you know Michel?” replied Stuart.

“I am glad it is not the other; for I should hate to serve him; he is a puppy!” said Kate, quietly.

“Aha! how has he roused the tiger in you, Kate?”

“He told me what my glass told me long ago—that I was good-looking; and was weak enough to think his words would please, instead of making me despise him!”

“Poh, child! you are like powder; you go off too fast, sometimes.”

“Then, father, sparks must not light on me, if they wish to avoid an explosion. Is this all?”

“Not quite. The guide to Miss de Montfort is supposed to be old Thomas Hunter. Do you remember a fisherman—a very intelligent old man—whom I brought in from the river-bank, where he had camped in a storm, and insisted upon his staying with us until it was all over?”

“Yes, father, he was lame, and said he had been wounded at Lundy’s Lane—a brave old man!”

“A brave old traitor to the South, I fear, for he is Southern born. But he is the same man. If you see him there, or hear of him, you will know that the party have most likely all got to Washington. Do not be longer gone than midnight—tomorrow, if it can possibly be helped. And now, God speed and bless you, child; be careful of yourself, and shoot down the first man who breathes or looks an insult!”

“Never fear for me, father dear—bye-bye!”

And wrapped in a dark mantleette, the graceful girl hurried out of the room.

A few moments later, the sound of galloping hoofs told that she was off like a winged spirit of the night upon her errand.

Her father looked down the flinty avenue which led from the house, and, for a minute or more, he could trace her course by the fire struck from the horse-shoes on the stones—after that, all was still on the road, and with a sigh, he left the window and the room.

CHAPTER XIII.

Within about a couple of miles of the Long Bridge, which spans the Potomac at Washington, and not far from the classic shades of Arlington, which the Rebel General Lee has so long sought to look upon, if not to repossess, stood at the commencement of this war a neat and quite unperturbing little wayside inn. Though the vicinity of a city where travelers generally were either bound, or from whence they were coming, made its custom purely transient, yet that custom was considerable. It was a pleasant drive to it from the city—there was good stable-room, and attentive hostlers, and a bar where excellent liquors and wines could be had at prime prices. A neat dinner, or a tasty game and fish-supper, could be had there at most times, for Barney Sullivan was a good liver himself, and knew well the wants of those who required good catering. It was his boast that he had spent two fortunes in the “old country”, left him by rich relatives, deceased, and that with the remnant of the last he had opened his house, the “Shamrock”, not for the profit of the thing, but just to keep “plenty of genteel company” around him.

And this he had, for, muciled with his wit and oddity, and plesed with the quality of his liquors and wines, many of the first and fastest of the Washington bloods paid him frequent
THE FAITHFUL SISTER.

Captain's daughter, out there in the could! Up wid you, dear, and on wid a shawl, and bring her in, while I start up the hostler, and make her a bit o' somethin' warm to kape death from the young heart of her!'

While Barney was talking, he was not idle, but soon a light appeared in one room, and then in another, and by the time Kate had dismounted, her horse was taken charge of by Barney himself, while at the door she was met by the rosy-cheeked wife in question, who, in not very full dress, embraced her warmly, and hurried her into a snug little parlor, where she left her until she (Mrs. S.) could make herself "a bit decent", to use her own words.

She was only gone a few moments, when she came in as tidy as if she had just come from a May-day ball, bringing a glass of wine-negus right from the hands of Barney, who sent her word it must be taken to kill the chill of the morning.

"I'll take it more to please you and Barney than for the real need I have of it!" said Kate, laughing.

And she drank the carefully-prepared beverage, which her rapid night journey did not render unnecessary. For she had ridden many miles at a gallop, and could not but have felt some fatigue, even as her host father had, when she left a man under her care, and came into a fast moving horse as his own.

And Barney said, "Come to me, Kate, I want to talk with you about some serious matters."

Kate had a look of such entire loyalty in her face, that Barney felt an assurance that Mrs. Sullivan was nothing but the daughter of all that had gone before her, and that they, too, had been good women.

"Faith an' who is that thumpin' there when we're all so sound asleep as ever Jonah was in the belly of the say-sarpint? Who are you—spake, or I'll be after hatin' the tayktite, and scaldin' ye off!"

"Don't put yourself to such trouble, Mr. Sullivan! But rouse up your hostler, and have my horse taken care of, and tell that rosy-checked wife of yours that Kate Stuart wants to shake hands with her!"

"Howly saints—it is her! Wake up, Kathleen—wake up, darling! It's your favorite, the
“O Mrs. Sullivan, you’ll kill me with laughing. What makes you Irish people always so funny?”

“Faith, I don’t know, without it is like other matters wid our nation. Ould Inland has made many a bloody war, but Irishmen have to fight them out for her. So people have to laugh, and if we didn’t make the fun for ’em to laugh, who would? But there! I hear my Barney calling my name. It’s a clane shirt, mayhap, the darlin’ is wantin’; for he always puts his best fut foremost when you come to the “Shamrock”, Miss Kate. Sure an’ if I hadn’t a clane title to his hand and heart, it’s jealous I’d be of the man! Hurry and wash up! There’s combs, brushes, and plenty of soap, water, and towels in the room. Breakfast will be ready as soon as your swate little mouth is ready for it.”

And the cheery little woman, having shown Kate to her room, disappeared in the direction from which she last heard the musical voice of her husband.

Kate removed her dark riding-mantlet and gray riding-skirt, and developed a very neat figure in a dress of dark blue merino. Taking off, also, a pair of riding-boots, made men-fashion, which might have been numbers four or five, she exhibited still a neat two-and-a-half gaiter-boot over her little foot, which had thus been preserved from mud and other injury. And letting down the long curling hair which had been nettled up for the ride, she shook it out, and then dipping her sweet face and dimpled hands into the bowl filled with sparkling water, she soon removed all traces of travel and fatigue.

When, half an hour later, she went back into Kathleen’s parlor, the little woman could not, for the life of her, help catching her in her arms, and kissing her, vowing all the time that she looked more like a fairy than a woman.

And Barney, too, soon came in, and his tongue was as profuse in its delivery of flattering compliments as that of his wife, and his drool expressions kept Kate laughing till the tears ran down her cheeks.

“I have a favor to ask of you to-day, Mr. Sullivan,” she said, as soon as she could get quiet enough to speak.

“Faith, anything but my allegiance to Kathleen yonder you may ask, lady, widout danger of a refusal from Barney.”

“This favor is not so serious as to endanger your allegiance anywhere. You have a pass for yourself and family over into the city, have you not?”

“Troth I have, and small danger of my losin’ it.”

“Well, all I ask is to be one of your family, and to ride over there early this morning. I want to do some shopping before this growing war makes it impossible for us poor country-girls to get to town to buy anything.”

“Oh, what a whopper you tould me an hour ago, Miss Kate!” said Kathleen. “Sure it was a husband as good-lookin’ as Barney you said you was after!” cried Kathleen, laughing.

“Why couldn’t you keep my secret, you talkative woman, you!” exclaimed Kate, in feigned anger. “Now he’ll be running down every good-looking man he meets, and I’ll have no chance at all!”

“The Lord preserve the hearts you’ll break before the day is out!” said Barney, laughing.

“But will you take me over!”

“To be sure I will, my darling. And if an ugly man squints at you, I’ll speak of Bladensburg and ten pieces to him! And your own beautiful horse will be resting nicely in his stable the while! But if it wasn’t for the Yankee habit of askin’ questions that I don’t like entirely, I’d ask you, Miss Kate, in the name of all nature, what made you come out in a dark night like the last, instead of a bright day, as this is going to be. If your horse had stumbled, you might have broke your neck, and there’d been an angel too many in the next world, and one too little in this!”

“O Mr. Sullivan, when will you leave off your blamney?”

“When I forget the taste o’ whisky-punch, my darling—never before. But there goes the breakfast-bell. If a hot rowl, and a bit of Potomac shad, broiled to a nasty, and some baked pertalties, don’t go good with coffee this morning, Saint Boniface may be left out of the calendar! Come, my young night-hawk, see if your appetite isn’t freshened by your exercise. Ate hearty, and then Kathleen shall rig up to keep you from runnin’ away wid my heart altogether, and go along wid us. And we’ll stay in the city as long as you like, and come away when you want, for I’ve got Phil Fogarty so broke in to the house, that he can see to things as well as I, if there’s no large crowd about? Come to breakfast now!”

CHAPTER XIV.

As it had been their first comfortable “night in” for some time, Warburton de Montfort and his companions, with one exception, slept late on the morning after their arrival at the house of Captain Stuart. That exception was the ever-reckless old corsair, Michel, who never slept but in snatches, dreaming apparently then of some of his wild acts, and often muttering wild things even in his transient slumber. He was up with the dawn, and with Captain Stuart was off to his stables, examining the points of some half-dozen or more thorough-bred horses, which he descanted upon with the knowledge of an old horseman.

A horn or two of old peach-branchly welcomed the lips of both of the cavaliers, and many a wild tale of forays, even in this young Rebellion, passed between them.
"You had better join me permanently, Mich-ell!" said Stuart, when they came back from the stables, and seated themselves in comfortable chairs on the piazza fronting the river. "I have been promised a regular cavalry command—raise it to a brigade, if I can. You shall have a good birth in it if you will come?"

"I rank you, Capitaine—I rank you! You do me much honor! But I 'ave been promised a chief part in one grand enterprise; one magnifico speculatione; zat 'ave witz its danger much profit! I 'ave promise I would try it—I will try. If zat enterprise fail, and yet I survive, I will come to you, mon cher Capitaine, in any capacity zat you may permit!"

"Well, you will not find me insensible to your merits, my dear fellow. Is your enterprise by land or water?"

"Both, Capitaine—both. It would be to betray confidence to say anything more before I 'ave permissions from zem zat engage me, or I would tell you all!"

"Oh, never mind that. I am generally as little curious about the secrets of others as I am strongly careful, on the opposite, of my own. Do you suppose your party would like to go on a horse-hunt, to-day?"

"I will not speak for them. For myself, I should be delighted to go upon any kind of a hunt. I like not to be still!"

"I thought, as they will probably need horses to go back on, they might not dislike to pass the day in making a trip with me of about twenty miles from here. We can cross the river in our boats, and take a couple of wagons that one of our friends has on the other side, and reach the place I want to go to by noon. There are about thirty fine horses corralled there, that will go to fill a contract with the Federal Government next week, if I do not get them."

"Ah, zat would be von ver' gran' pisets! It would be ver' wrong zat such good honest schentilhomme as you and myself should need for horses, and ze Yankee 'ave zem so near while we 'ave zem not. I shall propose to my friends zat we go look at zem horses, and buy zem ze way I once buy a watch and diamond ring from a priest down in Granada! I told him I would take zem from him according to ze law of ze Scripture—wizout money and wizout price. He look ver' black, and he make much complaint; but ze watch did not stop, and I sold ze ring afterward for one thousand dollare. I sought I quote to him Scripture wiz bon effect."

"Ah, Michel, I'm afraid you've been a hard case."

"Certainty! I do not deny zat, Messieur le Capitaine—I do not deny zat; but when I get ver' old—say twenty-thirty year from now—I shall reform, take a young wife, and die a ver' good man, if I 'ave plenty of monee to be good viz; because it is ver' hard to be good if you are poor. When ze money gets low viz me, zen the devil alway rises. When I 'ave plenty of money, I only sink of when I 'ave been bad, not how I shall be bad."

Stuart could not help thinking that there was some philosophy in Michel's idea; and so he said.

"By the way, Michel," he continued, "how have you got over your love affair over in Winchester, that you were sighing about when I saw you last?"

"Ah, Mon Dieu! You mean ze widow! I got over wiz dat one gran' facility. Ze lad-zee 'ave represent to me zat she loof me ver' much; zat she 'ave two hundred niggare, and two gran' plantation, and one house in ze cito. When I hear zat, I loof her ver' much! Oh, nevare love I a woman so much! And so I de-clare to her zat I, a Count of ze grand empire of France, wish much for to marry wiz her. To zat she was ver' willing. I feel gran', superbe, 'appy! I sink how I make zem niggare take voyage for New Orleans, where zey were work tiz time so much as here. We were ver' soon to be marry, when one day a schentilhomme tell me zat if I will not get mad viz him he will tell me someing of ver' grave importance to me."

"I tell him I will listen, and I will not get mad,"

"He tell me zen zat ze widow was one grand humbug, and was make fool of me. Zat she 'ave no monee, no niggare, no house in ze cito, no plantation, no nosing."

"By dam! I tell him if he prove what he say I will he his friend forevare; if not, I will fight him till he die!"

"He did prove it; and zen I was his friend forevare."

"But the widow. How did you break with her?"

"Ah, Capitaine! you would 'ave laugh to see me resign the honare of her hand. I tell her I did not tink I was capable of manage so smart a laddie and so much propriete all at one and ze same time; that some more fortunate man must reign upon ze golden throne of her loof! Oh, by dam! how mad she look. She understand me! Zat night she went away. Ze next day, four milinaire send to me zeir bill for bonnett, dress—everysing she 'ave bought, wiz ordare zat I shall pay. I tell zem zat I will pay when she shall become Madame Carl Michel, not before. Zat was all of zat af-faire, Capitaine."

"And well you got out of it," laughed Stuart.

"Excuse me, Michel; it is my breakfast hour; and I'm going to rouse your company, or they'll sleep all day."

"Zat is right, Capitaine—zat is right. If we make zat expedition for get ze horse, we must be on ze way ver' soon. I will assist you. You wake ze schentilhomme above, and I will start ze lazy mens below."
CHAPTER XV.

There were few more stylish equipages than the double-seated, Gotham-built light wagon which Barney Sullivan brought out before the door of the 'Shamrock.' For the purpose of carrying his Kathileen and Kate Stuart over to Washington. His team, a pair of black Morgan mares, well matched, suited admirably to the size of the wagon; and when the two women—one of them very beautiful and the other decidedly good-looking—were in, and he on the front seat, in his neat driving-cost, spotless gloves, and well-curled hair and whiskers, the whole turn-out was one that could nowhere pass unnoticed, even in the most stylish crowds.

On the Virginia side of the river, soldiers, mostly, were the admires of Barney's dashing show—for the most of the civilians and all the open Seeshe had moved away, or, in the new phraseology of Dixie, they had skedaddled. It was but a short drive to the end of the Long Bridge, where a strong guard was placed, and where an officer examined the passes of all who crossed.

He appeared to know Barney well, for he smiled good-naturedly as he drew up to exhibit his pass, and said:

"All right, mine host of the 'Shamrock'; you have shown your pass too often to need it now. If all on this side of the river were like you, I, too, could take a drive over to the city, instead of standing guard on this cursed bridge all day!"

"Thank you, Lieutenant. When you're off duty, come out and see us. Hambrocks sends me over prime oysters every day, and I've some capital shad on hand—not to speak of the nectar that you jolly sons of Mars love when duty permits its use."

And Barney drove on, while the officer, whose eye had rested admiringly but not with insolent boldness upon the form and face of Kate, still cast a long, lingering gaze in her direction.

"Who was that officer?" asked Kate, after they had passed out of hearing.

"One of the Rhode Island boys—I forget his name. His father is a big cotton manufacturer, and supplies him plentifully with money. He has been over to my place with some of the Massachusetts Sixth several times."

"His father had better have given him brains than money!" said Kate, quietly. "A man, however, in his position can be shot as well without brains as with them. He'll be food for our Southern buzzards one of these days!"

"Like many a better man. War is a devilish wasteful trade altogether!" said Barney, with a laugh. "Where do you wish to go to on the other side, Miss Kate—for we'll soon be over? My team measures miles nearly as fast as the locomotives on the railways do!"

"I am willing to be left anywhere on the avenue, only so that I know where to find you when my business is over," said Kate. "You can, if you like, drive me up as far as the Capitol, and, if you stop near there, I will walk down.

"I always put up my horses at Keogan's; and my Kathileen has a cousin close by, where she goes to have a chat when we are over. We'll drive there, and then you'll see where to come when you get ready. You needn't hurry yourself, nor fear for any split of Barney's tongue, if you are over on business for your father, as you may be; for he is a man after my own heart, and has spent too many a free dollar with me, to let him or his ever be forgotten."

"I thank you, Barney. Neither he nor I will ever forget your kindness. I knew I could depend upon you, and I should have asked the favor I have. I may be delayed in my business till night, or it may be settled in an hour or less time. I will try and not inconvenience you or your good Kathileen."

"Don't inconvenience yourself, or you'll inconvenience us, darling," was Kathileen's reply, as she pressed Kate's little hand.

"And tell me, Birdie, didn't you forget your pocket-book last night, in the hurry of coming away? because if you did, Barney Sullivan has got two or three cool hundred with him, to-day, that he don't know how to get rid of."

"Does this look as if I did, my good friend?" asked Kate, with a laugh, as she took from her pocket a large silk purse, and showed it to him, well filled with gold. "Father never lets me go without pocket-money."

"The more glory to him, darling; but I meant no harm. I would serve you if I could."

"I know it, Barney; there are no friends whom I value more than I do you and Kathileen, in fair report or foul, you are the same to us."

"And long may we live to be so! Ah, my little lady, I saw that! That officer bowed very low, and you blushed. I'm sure he is as good-looking as I am. Is he to be the happy man?"

"No, indeed, you foolish fellow; he is only a passing acquaintance, who, one of these days, may wish that he had never seen me. He asked and got an introduction to me not long since, and—that's all."

"All that you have to tell us just now, you mane. Well, never mind; it's not us will bother you about him any more. But he's a devilish fine-looking fellow!"

"It was him who made the charge at the Crescent Roads last week, and cut his way out of a net laid for him by Ball's Cavalry. He got considerable credit for it—all he deserved, I reckon!"

"Faith, I know his name now. I liked the cut of his jib. A fighting man suits me, I don't care where I find him."

"I had rather find him on the side I am on; but if he is a man, I'll respect him anywhere.
Ah! Kathleen, how would you like to be that lady—the one in the open carriage whom we are just going to meet?"

"What, the one with the driver and footman dressed in blue, with silver lace around their hats?"

"Yes—the same."

"Faith, I know who she is, and that she has a big man for a husband; but I'd rather be myself, with Barney here to look at and call my own, than to be the big woman she'll be for the four years she lives in the White House, and the little one she may be after that."

"You don't think much of the position of a President, it appears."

"Faith, I wouldn't think much of heaven, if I was only to have a taste of it and then lose it."

"You see the ould woman has a mind of her own, Miss Kate."

"Yes, and a sound one, too, Barney, and you should be proud of it."

"I am sure! But here we are, aforesinest her cousin's. Whenever we're wanted, you find the one or other of us here."

"Very well; I will alight here also, Barney. I can walk where I wish to go," said Kate. And when Barney reined in she left the wagon. And, reader, for the present, we'll leave the party, for we are wanted elsewhere.

CHAPTER XVI.

After Warburton de Montfort and his party had breakfasted, Captain Stuart repeated to them the same information that he had given Michel in regard to the horses. And his proposition to make up an expedition to go after them was received with unanimous satisfaction by all the party except Randolph Beverly, who, considering it beneath the dignity of a naval officer to act as a horse marine, thought that he could spend his day far more pleasantly in getting up what he considered a harmless flirtation with Captain Stuart's eldest daughter, Annie—who, of a different type of beauty from Kate, her sister, also differed materially in character. For she was romantic and dreamy; she lacked the wild vigor of heart and body, the fiery daring of soul, the sister independence, so to call it, of the younger but, in every apparent way, more matured sister. Beverly had read Annie's character at a glance, and he determined to study it further, for one day, at least, rather than to expose himself to the dangers and hardships of a guerrilla foray.

Therefore, he made so many excuses of being fatigued, not very well, etc., that he was left behind to keep the landlady and her daughter company, while every other man about the place joined the bold guerrilla chief on the expedition.

It was full nine o'clock in the day when the party crossed the river; and Beverly, in his slippers, sat upon the piazza, and looked out upon them, as they crossed, with an indifferent laziness which quite provoked old Michel; for the last words he said when he left were:

"If you no go wiz us to look for one horse to ride home upon, Messier Beverlee, you need not suppose we bring you anything better than a cow or a shackeass for to ride upon! No, by dam—not!"

Beverly laughed quietly, and, turning to Miss Annie, who was looking at the crossing with her great, dreamy, black eyes, said:

"Do not you think, fair lady, that my choice of a quiet day with the gentler sex, to brighten it by their sweet presence, is preferable to a long ride over a muddy road, with only a horse to pay for the trouble at the end of it. Having the price of more than one horse in my pocket, I believe it far more agreeable to hire rough work done than to perform it. What do you think, lady?"

Annie started at the last question, and blushed enchantingly, for her thoughts had been so minutely pre-occupied that she had not heard one word of all this well-arranged opening for conversation, and only knew that he had been saying something to her. Even its nature she knew not.

"I was thinking of — of sister who went away last night, Sir, and did not hear what you were saying, Sir," she said. "Excuse my want of attention. When you speak again, I will try to be a listener rather than a dreamer."

"Your sister must have had an unpleasant and perilous ride in the night, it seems to me," said Beverly, glad to get Annie into a conversation any way.

"Oh! Kate glories in such things. Nothing delights her more than to join my father in his dangerous expeditions; and had she been here to-day, she would have been the first across that river," said Annie, her dark eyeskindling with enthusiasm as she spoke of the daring nature of her pet sister.

"And do you never go out with your father?"

"Never, Sir, without he has need of both of us for some purpose—to carry an order or the like of that! I am more of the quiet and home nature of my dear mother, and do not love peril and excitement."

"There speaks the true woman's soul," said Beverly, thinking that he had struck the vein. And he at once dashed off into a hyperbole upon the nature of home, quiet, and luxury.

Annie was now really listening to him, and if he had looked very closely, he would have seen a quiet little smile gathering upon her face, which had in it more of contentment than admiration. He was overdoing the thing. For Annie Stuart had more good strong sense than he gave her credit for. She was not, it is true, a Di Vernon, neither was she an Ophelia, likely to go moon-struck or mad under any feelings which he could arouse.
"Are you fond of music, Miss Stuart?" he asked, as an opening for another point of attack.

"Some kinds," she said, quietly. "There, I like that exceedingly! Do you not think it superb? There is both tone and compass for you.

And Annie burst out laughing while a huge old wench, who had been out getting some vegetables for the kitchen use, passed by them, singing an old negro refrain at the very top of her voice. The words, like the music, were suitable to the singer, and anything but romantic; and Beverly now saw plainly that Annie, susceptible as she might be to true romance, was no mere child for a sop to fool with.

So he affected to be highly taken with her appreciation of the ludicrous, and laughed heartily at the music which she praised, though inwardly he was chagrined at the apparent impossibility of making himself interesting to the lady.

A new thought struck him. He would try another vein, one which he had seldom known to fail, especially with ladies who dwelt inland and read poetry.

"Have you ever seen the ocean, Miss Annie?" he asked.

"No, Sir; though I have read much about it, and thought more."

"I am a child of the ocean, Miss Annie."

"You, Sir?"

"Yes—as Byron says:

"My home is on the dark blue sea,
My thoughts as boundless, and my heart as free."

"You are lucky, Sir. Why did you not stay with your Mother Ocean, instead of coming in here among our mountains and swamps."

"Because, most fair and witty lady, variety is the spice of life which gives it all its flavor."

"So I used to read in one of my schoolbooks. You must have gone to school once, to judge from the source of your quotation."

"I believe I am at school now," he said, with some confusion. "Are all the young ladies around here as smart as you and your pretty sister?"

"Smarter in some things. For instance, they are good at recruiting—persuading strong, healthy, likely-looking young gentlemen like yourself to enter into the service of the Confederate States, where they can win more honor and do more good than they can by praising beauty which would rather be defended than flattered."

"Lady, you cannot accuse me of being backward in the cause. I already have a commission in the Confederate Navy."

"Then, why, Sir, are you here? Have I not heard already that vessels are fitting out to skim the ocean, and to show the audacious Yankees of the North that the South has its rights upon the sea as well as the land?"

"I was on the eve of departure for service when my cousin asked my assistance to regain his property."

"And will you, Sir, let an affair of a private nature take you away from a public duty? Alas, Sir! if all the sons of the South thus enter boldly into the contest at the onset, alas for the hopes of independence which we have formed. Look at my noble father! Not one night in twenty does his head press a pillow. His money, his life, even us, his loved children, he has thrown into the treasury of his country's necessities; and, Sir, all—all will go without a murmur, before he will draw back one inch from the step he was one of the first to take. And he will rise, and we will triumph, and then—then—"

She paused, seemed to think she was going too far in her enthusiasm before a stranger, and did not finish the remark she had commenced.

"Then what? Do not pause in your eloquent remarks, fair lady?"

"I should only have added, Sir, that those who neglect their country in her hour of need will not be forgotten in her hour of triumph. For upon a scroll of infamy, blacker than the shades of night, will their names be recorded as a proof of shame forever."

"I hope, lady, that my name will not be found on such a scroll."

"And I also hope so, Sir. I may be too earnest, almost unwomanly, in my anxiety for the South; but I know the fearful nature of the contest which we have initiated. With no treasury, armies yet to form and discipline, a new government has to struggle with an old one."

"You forget, lady, that our Government is made up of statesmen who have borne leading parts in the affairs of the united nation for many years. They do not lack experience."

"No, but they lack power and the unity which gives power."

"Miss Stuart, I little expected to find so much thought in one so young, and of that sex which is supposed to think more of dress and adornment, and of seeking means to attract admiration, than anything else."

"Supposed so by men who look for nothing more than beauty or amusement in women!" said Annie, almost contemptuously. "If you read the history of the women of the Revolution. You will see, that in those days they were found of value to the patriot's heart and arm. But I do not wish to speak in praise of our sex I fear you will have a dull day before you."

"Not if I have you to converse with, lady."

"You need not pay me any more compliments, Sir. They fall upon barren ground. I have to assist my mother in her daily duties. If you wish to hunt or fish, you will find a bowling-piece or fishing-tackle in the armory. To ride, you can saddle yourself a horse in the stable. Or if to read, there are plenty of books and magazines in the next room on the right of the parlor, which father uses both as a business-room and a library."

"I thank you, Miss Annie. I shall avail my-
self of your kindness in some way, and I pray
you not to take serious notice of my foolish lit-
tle nonsensibilities, in the way of compliments.
They come from my lips, often, ore I think them.
But I know, when I assure you that I deeply re-
spect your exalted sense of duty, that you will
accord me the justice of believing what I say."
"I will; and I hope, Sir, to hear that you are
moving forward in the path of duty."

"It is well for us of the South that Northern
women are not so urgent upon their men to
spring to arms, or we would be crushed out by
numbers before we could arm ourselves."

"Our only hope is in their delay, in their
coldness. If I read them aright, they are a cold
and passionless people, who require to be struck
more than once before they fairly wake up and
get mad. But when they are aroused, their an-
ger will not subside easily. But you must ex-
cuse me, Mr. Beverly. I must go and assist my
mother. Make yourself at home; it is likely
that father and your friends will return shortly
after nightfall. If you should go out, remember
that we dine at two."

"What a superb girl!" said Beverly to him-
self, as she left his side. "She is worth ten of
her mad-cap sister. If she had Sadia's— But
no! I'll think of no one but Sadia; for I'd save
her now, if I knew that Satan would get my soul
for it."

CHAPTER XVII.

It was after ten o'clock at night, when Captain
Stuart returned, with de Montfort and his party,
leaving, as usual, been completely successful in
his foray. Forty good horses, and the arms and
equipments of seven men, who had intended to
escort them to the Government depot, was the
result of the expedition. It was as old Michel
gleefully remarked:

"One ver good speculacione."

One of the first questions which the Captain
asked upon entering the house, was:

"Has Kate returned yet?"

To which his other daughter replied:

"No, dear father; she is hardly time, without
she left the city very early."

"True, darling. My impatience takes no note
of time lately. Hurry up supper for our guests.
We are a hungry lot of beggars, for we've taken
nothing solid since we left here in the morn-
ing."

"Supper is ready now, father. We only wait
for you."

"Then ring the bell. We are as ready as we
ever shall be, I reckon."

The ball soon gathered all hands into the
main dining-room, where a smoking supper-
table, furnished as only Virginia tables in earlier
days could be furnished, put them in splendid
humor.

Alas for Virginia now! her days of princely
luxury are forever past—crushed out by the

treason of her own children, who, led into folly
by the fire-brands of Carolina, are too proud to
acknowledge their error, but persist in their
own surely-coming destruction. Never were
suicides more cool and desperate in their deter-
mined self-destruction than the sons of Southern
and Eastern Virginia. But I forget I am telling a
story—not writing homilies upon rebellion.

"How have you passed your day, Mr. Bever-
ly?" asked his host.

"Agreedly, Sir. How else could I? Your
library at my disposal, I made use of it. After
dinner, seeing that a few brace of wild ducks
were dodging around the river-bank, I borrow-
ed one of your guns, and I believe a half-dozen
of them are now before you. You see, I have
not been altogether idle. How could I, when
your own good lady and daughter were busied
all the time in preparing for your comfort
against your return?"

Beverly had glanced at the face of Annie, who
was pouring out tea when her father asked the
question, and the ungenerous thought that he
had of answering that he had been listening to
lectures on patriotism from her, passed from
him in a moment.

"Your services have been less fatiguing
than ours, but by hungry men, will be appre-
ciated," said the Captain, as he set to carving
some of the ducks for his guests.

The latter did not need any especial urging
to make them fall to. They "went into" the
edibles in the most complimentary manner—
that is, complimentary to the getters up of
so good a supper.

After the guests' appetites were satisfied,
they mostly adjourned to the lawn in front of
the house to smoke, or, lighting their pipes, took
seats on the piazza and discussed politics, the
incidents of the Rebellion, and such other mat-
ters of interest as came into their minds.

But one there was who seemed in little hu-
mor for discussions or any kind of conversation.
He paced to and fro upon his piazza hurriedly,
often pausing when he arrived at its southern
end, and gazing down the road which led toward
Alexandria.

The guerrilla looked for the pride and the
daring of his heart. It was time that she was
back.

At last, his impatience became such he ordered
his favorite horse out; and he was just on the
point of mounting to go to meet her, when the
gallant girl arrived.

The white foam flecks that flew from the
mouth of the jet black steed, its smoking sides,
told how rapidly she had come, and how much
she had tried to lessen the time which anxiety
had made miserable to him.

"I am glad you have come, darling!" said
her father, as he lifted Kate from the saddle
with his strong arms. "I was about going out
to meet you!"
"I came as quickly as I could, father. I was detained in the city until late. But I will tell you all when we are alone. Let me go in and get a glass of water; I feel faint and tired. I have had no rest since I left here."

"Poor girl, I overtak your strength, I know I do, but I have no one else to help me that I can depend on."

"I know it, father, and do not shrink from anything that I can do for you."

"Bless you, girl; go in and take a glass of wine, and then come to me in my own room, and tell me the result of your visit."

"Yes, father. I saw an old friend of yours, father, in Washington. He little thought whose daughter he was making love to."

"Who was it child?"

"The lieutenant of cavalry whom you so nearly captured at Fairfax Court-House, and had another brush with at the Cross Roads."

"Well, he is a gallant fellow, if he is a Fed. Nothing but his very daring saved him or his men. A slow-goer would have been ridden down before he could have formed to meet my charge. But go in, child; I will have your horse put away—he needs care."

CHAPTER XVIII.

When Warburton de Montfort saw Kate Stuart arrive, he instantly called Michel and Beverly together, and they went to their private room to await the report which they expected to hear from Washington. They were not detained there long in anxiety.

Captain Stuart, after a brief interview with his daughter, entered the room and said:

"Gentlemen, your game has not yet arrived at head-quarters. No trace can be found or word heard of Miss Sadia de Montfort or her party in Washington, though parties of fugitives are arriving there daily."

"Then where on earth can she be?" said the brother, pale with disappointment.

"Either yet hidden somewhere on the river, or else she has from the start taken some other track, throwing you upon a false scent," said Stuart. "My daughter has made the most careful inquiry, and the sources of her information are such that nothing could transpire of an official nature without her learning it. You may judge of her facilities when I tell you that at four o'clock she heard of our capture of horses. You may judge it was only two when they were taken, and it was an hour's ride to the nearest telegraph station, where those who telegraph to Washington for help which they will not get, want to."

"When our errand here is over and empty-handed, we will have to sneak back to Springland. With one nigger left, I could plant on a large scale if I hadn't other work on hand," said Warburton, bitterly.

"Despondency is a poor cure for evil. You will never regain your property by giving up."

"I have little hopes of it now," said Warburton, gloomily.

"Pox, man, before the year is out you may have the power to demand full reparation from the hands of the Federal Government, if that Government then exists, for every loss you have sustained. When they see the allies which I look for showing their hands, the Yankees will not talk quite so confidently of crushing what they are pleased to term a rebellion. When England and France, who cannot do without our cotton, come to our aid with money, arms, ships, and recognition of our rights as an independent nationality, then you can hold your head up, and if you can't find your niggers, claim and get the worth of them."

"Yes, when that when arrives. But I have no faith in these allies. They will not aid us until we are beyond the need of aid, one way or the other."

"Poh, you are in error. Do you think our leaders have so little sagacity that they would have risked the bold step they have taken without the surity of material help from abroad? No Sir! Nearly two years ago it was promised officially, and in no less a place than the City of Washington. I was present, so was Letcher, Wise, Pryor, as well as Davis and Mallory. I can name others. And not one man of them would have come out boldly in this matter without a guarantee of foreign aid. What could the old Union have done in the Revolution but for the aid of France?"

"Qui! I answer you zat, shentlemens," said Michel, triumphantly. "When France shake hands wiz you, all will be well. But dam ze Ros Bifs, dam ze diable Anglaise! I no like zem—no nevare! Zey mardare ze old Napoleon, zey play wiz Louis like one cat play wiz a mouse, only to put him undare by-and by. Sacre bleu—dam ze Ros Bifs!"

"I do not feel much like discussing politics. The game of Secession is open. I shall take a full hand in it, win or lose," said Warburton. "If I hear no more of the absentees when I get back to Springland, I shall sell all my stock, close up everything, and let the place care for itself till the war is over. If I live through that, I will be able to re-stock it then."

"Spoken most sensibly, Montfort. And now, if you intend making an early homeward start, I will leave you to your rest. I will have the river watched just as closely as before, and if I fall upon the least trace of the fugitives, you shall hear of it."

"Both thanks and pecuniary recompense will be yours."

"I can dispense with both when I serve a friend," said Stuart, quietly. "I wish you a good-night. I shall be astir before dawn, and will have your animals fed, ready for a start, and your own breakfast ready. I want the horses.
out of the way which we took yesterday, for Kate heard hints of a cavalry party being sent out to look after them. So far, the Federals have not been able to trace me directly in anything; though under another name they've got rough charges against me. I never do my worst work except in disguise. But again, good-night."

CHAPTER XIX.

It is so long since we have glanced back to our heroine and her lonesome camp that the reader may think we have forgotten her. Far from it; but if we keep not an eye upon all of the actors in this drama of real life, its claim may be imperfect, and not hold the minds of all who read, as we desire.

Over a week had elapsed after the fearful storm which was described in the tenth chapter, and yet old Hunter and Napoleon, both keeping in turn vigilant watch, failed to discover any sign of the return of the searching party who had gone down the river.

And of all the party in camp, but one seemed to regard their delay with painful anxiety. Of course, that one was Sadia. For she felt that for her and those with her there was no real safety except under the bright folds of the national flag, and where Rebellion had no power.

But those with her, all negroes except Hunter and her brother and sister, released suddenly from all labor except hunting and fishing, and the procuring of fuel sufficient to cook their food by, thought themselves in a perfect paradise. They had plenty of excellent food, plenty of time to sing, sleep, or dance away care, and their nature, almost animal, required nothing more on earth. Like most of their class, they had no thought of the morrow, and being safe and undisturbed for so many days, they had forgotten all fear of pursuit, all thought of danger.

Not so Sadia. The longer their stay, the more anxious her heart, the more sleepless her eyes. Her old nurse in vain tried to cook delicacies which would tempt her appetite; and the next time old Hunter came up from the river-side, she called him apart, and told him, in tears:

"Sumfin' must be done for dat poor chile, or she'll sure be done gone. She don't eat nuffin', Sat—nuffin' at all."

"I know she frets; poor lady, I will try to comfort her," said the good old man.

And he went to Sadia, and asked her to walk with him a little way, apart from the hearing of the others.

Sadia went more cheerfully than usual, and her first question, after they were alone, accounted for it.

"Have you brought me news which will justify our starting down the river once more?" she asked.

"Alas, dear lady, I have no news. Either I or Napoleon have been constantly on the watch, but we have neither seen or heard any ascending party—seen nothing but an occasional scouting party over on the other side of the river. This side is so swampy that they never are seen there. But you are fretting yourself to death, Miss Sadia. Your cook says you neither eat nor sleep!"

"I cannot help it, Mr. Hunter. I know and feel our peril, and that delay only increases it."

"And yet, dear Miss Sadia, how can we, without serious danger, yet leave a place where we at least find present security? They must be on the river yet."

"I do not think so."

"Why, Miss Sadia, they could not well have passed up unobserved."

"I do not think they ever will pass up in boats, Mr. Hunter. The value of the boats would not be worth the toil of rowing them up against the swift current, if they have gone very far down in search of us, and they have undoubtedly gone as far as they could without coming in contact with the Federal force near Washington."

"Strange that I should not have thought of that," said the old fisherman, musingly. "And I believe you are more than half right, Miss Sadia," he continued. "Come to think of it, if I was the captain of a searching party like them, I think myself, if I failed in finding what I was after on the river, I'd divide my party below, and come up by land both sides, to see if I couldn't strike the trail somewhere. Like as not they have done this, and maybe they are back at Springfield before this time. If we only knew that they were, the sooner that we get away from here the better."

"How can we possibly find out?"

"In no way, without I go there. I shouldn't dare to trust any of the black folks. If they were caught, they would be forced to tell where they left us."

"Yes; too true. And you must not go, my friend. I would sooner risk all in a passage down the river. If we cannot pass unimpeded, we can fight our way through, perhaps."

"If all our force was made up of white men, it wouldn't be so risky," said Hunter, thoughtfully. "And as it is, I don't see as we can better ourselves. I am getting tired of delay myself. I want to see my old General, and take a hand in this new war, if it has got to come to that."

"Do risk it, Mr. Hunter—do! I would rather meet danger boldly at once than live in continual terror of it," said Sadia, earnestly.

"Well, lady, your wish shall be gratified very soon. I will see at once to the state of our provisions, and be ready. The first dark night, with the wind blowing down stream, shall be the night of our trial."
TRUE AS STEEL; OR,

"I wish it were the night which follows this day!" I said Sadiad.

"It may be, lady. The wind is even now in the right direction."

"And look, my friend, at the clouds which are gathering over the sky. It cannot but be dark with such a sky."

"True, lady, if it only lasts—if it only lasts. Do not fret any more; if it is possible to leave to-night, I will make no delay in starting. But I beg you, for your own sake, to eat a hearty meal, and drink a glass or two of wine to strengthen you for the work."

"I will, Mr. Hunter—I will! And I will pray to the good God to guide us and preserve us from peril."

"Then I shall feel contented, lady, and I will go to my duty at once," said Hunter, who saw, almost with wonder, how quickly the sad face of the young lady brightened with the new hope before her.

And she, with a lighter step and a far brighter eye than had been seen for days, returned to the hut, to glad her old nurse with an order to cook a good nice dinner, for she said she felt hungry.

CHAPTER XX.

Supplied with horses by their late successful foray on the Maryland side, Harburton de Montfort and his party were all ready for a homeward start, on the morning after Kate Stuart's return from her visit to Washington; and taking an early breakfast, they made preparations for an early start.

"I wish we could prevail upon you to go with us to our section," said Harburton to Captain Stuart, as the latter added in fitting out the party with bridle and saddles. "It might be beneficial to you, and I know it would be to us."

"How so?" asked the Captain.

"For us, because you know all the roads, and could show us the shortest route. For you, because I could readily raise you a hundred or more good men for your new command."

"The last is a good reason, if I could only be assured of the men," said Stuart, quietly. "As to the route, you cannot easily lose your way if you follow the river-road up. But the men. Do you think I could recruit a hundred or so of good light cavalry?"

"Yes; I feel so confident that I will contribute five thousand dollars to aid in fitting out your regiment, if you fail to recruit the number in three days after you have arrived in our section."

"You strongly tempt me!" said Stuart, pondering for a moment. Then he added: "I will risk the trial and go with you. I can leave matters here for a few days, for I have brave hearts and watchful eyes about my home! You need not delay your departure; it will not take me five minutes to get ready. You and your party can move on by the river-road, and I will soon overtake you."

"A thousand thanks, my noble Captain! It is even possible, that with your keen, scouting knowledge, we may yet get on the trail of my niggers."

"I can scent a Yankee further than I can a nigger!" said the Captain, with a laugh; and he turned and entered the house, to prepare for his journey.

Warburton, having now mounted, took the advance of his party, Beverly riding upon his left, and Carl Michel upon his right.

"I have good news!" said Warburton, as they rode away at a moderate pace.

"'Ef? Bon? Suppose you explain, Messier?" said Michel, quickly.

"Captain Stuart is going to Springfield with us!"

"Ef? Zat is grand intelligences! Capitaine Stuart is so good as twenty men. I shall feel more glad than before; but, aha, I was nevar made wi' my short legs for to ride upon ze horse. I shall make myself very much fatigue in a very little time. Will de brave Capitaine come wis us very soon?"

"Yes; he told me to ride on and he would very soon overtake us!"

"Ef bien! Do not let us ride too much quick. Zis horse, when he go up and down, in what you call ze trot, shake my stomach intolerable! Mon Dieu! If zis ride continue for very long time, I shall be medicine ready for ze devil—well shaken before taken!"

Michel's companions could not but laugh at his droll idea, and while they were laughing heartily Captain Stuart rode up.

"Ah, mon cher Capitaine, zay laugh at me!" said Michel, half inclined to be angry, half inclined to laugh himself. "I have merely explain to zem my grand misery upon zis diable horse, and zey sink zat it is very funny! By dam, to zem it may be very funny, but to me it is so ouzer way! It is almost as bad as ze crucify zat my friend, Messier Kooponen, of Phila-delphi, used to speak about some time. I like pot ze trot, Capitaine, I like not ze trot!"

"Then let us gallop. That pace is as easy as a craddle!" said Stuart, with a laugh, as he touched his coal-black steed with the spur.

The horse of Michel, which did not lack spirit, bounded forward by the side of the Captain, and the whole cavalcade in a moment was in a swift but easy gallop.

"You like this better, do you not?" Stuart asked of Michel, as the pace became smooth and regular.

"Oui! Zis is much improve upon ze trot. But better I like ze cradel of ze men an ze cradel of ze horse, Capitaine!"

"I fear you will never make a cavalryman, friend Michel!" said Stuart, with a laugh.
THE FAITHFUL SISTER.

“No, mon cher Capitaine; no, navire! If I could ride ze same as you, I would go win you more soon ran win any ozzare man upon ze world!”

“I doubt it not; and, as we have a hill before us, we will come down to a walk,” said Stuart, checking his horse down after a gallop of a mile or two.

“Ah, bon! Zia is ze pace sat is most agreeable!” said Michel, with a sigh of gratification.

“How long will it take us to reach Spring-land?” asked Warburton of Stuart, riding up beside him.

“If we use our spurs judiciously, and our horses have good bottom, we will easily be there a little after noon to-morrow,” said Stuart.

“We will be two-thirds of the way where I propose to stop for the night.”

“Our horses may ‘ave ze bottom; but, by dam, I doubt very much if I ‘ave any of ze bottom left when I get zere!” groaned poor Michel, with a woful face.

But he rode on, nevertheless, side by side with Stuart, and when the hill was passed, manfully joined in the renewed gallop of the party.

CHAPTER XXI.

Thomas Hunter was no laggard when his mind was made up, and he at once set to work. Observing that clouds were indeed overspreading the sky, as Sadia had already noticed, and that a rainstorm was surely coming on, he hurried his preparations for departure, for he well knew that there would be little watch kept on the river in a stormy night.

“We shall have a hard night of it, Miss Sadia!” he said to her heroine, when she insisted upon his joining her at a late dinner.

“But if you and the children are well wrapped and covered up, you will not suffer much, and we will be far more safe on the river in a rainy night, for it takes more patriotism than Rebels have to keep a strict picket-watch in a drenching rainstorm.

“I shall not need any personal inconvenience, my good friend,” said Sadia, with a smile, “if our journey can be prosecuted safely. My little brother and sister can be shielded from the storm, for I did not forget your advice to bring plenty of warm clothing for them.”

“That is all right. We will move down the bayou before dark, so as to get out on the river at the earliest possible moment!” said Hunter.

“We have provisions enough, have we not?”

“Yes, lady—more than enough. And the negroes have brought too much luggage. I shall leave everything except what is actually needed, so as to lighten the boats, and make them more speedy!”

“What do you think best, my friend? I rely fully upon your judgment and courage!”

“Thank you, Miss Sadia. I’m an old stick, it is true; but yet I am tough, and do not forget the days when I was something, and knew what service was and could do it. If I only meet my old General, and he remembers me, I will show that there’s life left in me yet. I hardly think he will have forgotten me. How well I remember the charge he led at Lundy’s Lane. He was young, and I was but a boy; but it was glorious work. The red-coats, veterans of many a field abroad, held us in scorn at first; they said we knew nothing about cold steel, but that day they found the American bayonet too much for British valor. They ran in the lane, and Captain Miller drove them like fying sheep from the battery on the hill, and the victory was ours. Scott was down, but God saved him for other days and more glory!”

Sadia looked with wondering eyes upon the change which the enthusiasm of past glorious memories made in the old man’s appearance. His eyes flashed with all the fire of youth—his very form seemed to dilate—his face flushed, and his voice was full and powerful.

“I hope you will soon see your old General, for, once where he is, we will all be in safety!” said Sadia.

“You may be sure of that. Now, eat heartily, lady, and do not refuse at least two good glasses of wine to strengthen you for the voyage to-night!” replied Hunter. “And as I took a hearty bunch a little while ago, you will now let me go to get the boats ready, I know, for my appetite is fully satisfied!” he added.

Sadia could not refuse her assent, for her anxiety to leave and be on the way was so great that she could scarcely keep her promise of making a hearty meal.

Hunter at once set to work in preparing the boats for the party, only allowing the colored people to put in such things as were actually necessary for the trip, and provisions enough to last them for the three days, or rather nights, in which he hoped to make the passage.

This done, and the people all having partaken of a hearty meal, he got them into the boats, and himself taking charge of the leading boat, in which Sadia and her young charges were seated, he pushed off, followed by the rest.

Long before they had got out of the bayou, the threatened rainstorm came on, not very heavily, but in a drizzling way, which was anything but comfortable.

It was dark when the boats reached the river, and took in Napoleon and the man who watched with him; and when Hunter turned his boat’s head down-stream, the shore could not be seen at ten yards distance. He had fastened the painter of each of the boats behind him to the stern of the next, to avoid separation and a confusion which would create noise. He kept his course by the sound of the ripples breaking against the shore, urging all of the crews to make as much speed as possible, for the further
they got in such a favorable night, the better for them.

Sadie did not heed the pelting of the storm; and as the wind, coming from astern, added their progress, she did not regret that it blew almost a gale. She was regardless of the discomforts which added to her safety the more. For few persons would voluntarily choose to be abroad on such a night, unless kept there by dire necessity, or the stern and despotic rules of military discipline, which but too often amounts to tyranny, especially where men raised from the lower ranks of life, by chicanery or cunning, reach high official positions. Brave men and gentlemen never become tyrants—our best officers are ever the kindest to those over whom they hold power.

With this digressive remark, we will leave our party for a while upon the river.

CHAPTER XXII.

The party, under the guidance of Captain Stuart, did not have a very pleasant evening to close their first day’s ride with, and the storm which so favored our fugitive friends on the river, became to them—I mean Stuart and his party—so serious an impediment in the way of darkness and softening the road, that he did not reach the point he intended on the start, but was forced to stop twenty miles short of it.

But the storm, like most spring “spells of weather,” was only transient, and the sun of the next morning was not an hour high when the shame-faced clouds broke away from before it, and the day came out as smiling as—as let me think—well, a pretty women going out shopping with a full purse in her pocket. I can’t find a more appropriate simile for a lovely spring day, that I know of.

But though all was bright above, the heavy rain of the night had given the roads the usual Virginia mud consistency, which one must get stuck in a few times to be enabled to thoroughly appreciate. It “sticker closer than a brother,” and is as heavy as—the sins of a copperhead.

Therefore the progress of the land party was slow, and it was late in the afternoon when Stuart and Warburton’s party rode by the spot on the opposite side of the river from which Sadia had moved only the night before.

“Were you particular in looking in, over in the lagoons yonder, when you came down the river?” asked Stuart of Warburton, who rode on his right side.

“Over there?” replied the young planter.

“I did not know there were any lagoons there, and we made no search beyond the shore, where we saw no signs!”

“There are lagoons in there, somewhere. Old hunters have described them to me. And when old Tom Hunter was at my place, he told me he had been camping out and hunting some-
expense," said the Captain, with a laugh.

And the sooner you have supper after that, the better pleased we'll be!"

CHAPTER XXIII.

The sun rose bright and clear the next morning. There had been a few showers during the night, but the rain had not been continuous, nor so heavy as on the night before.

After breakfast, Captain Stuart having secured a boat, started in company with Washburton, Beverley, Michel, and a selected part of the others for a crew, to investigate the opposite shore, and look into the lagoon or lagoons which he might find there. And it was not long after he reached the opposite shore before he discovered the well-blinded mouth of the little creek which led into the swamp which so well-concealed the place where Hunter had so long and so safely hidden his party.

"Did you enter this creek when you went down?" he asked of Warburton.

"No; we did not even see it!" said the latter.

"Then we had best keep an eye open, and look to our arms!" said the wary guerrilla chief, for this is as likely a spot as any for them to take refuge in. We will follow the channel up at any rate, and see what is to be seen. Look to your arms, all hands!"

"Pah! The niggers will never dare to show fight!" said Beverley, contemptuously.

"A hickory gad would drive a hundred of them!"

"It would take more than that to drive old Tom Hunter!" said Stuart, quietly. "And if you have had much experience with runaway niggers, you ought to know, if they've got arms, they'll use them. No man ever loses by being ready for action, brush or no brush!"

"Well, if they do show fight, it will be the worse for them and Warburton's pocket!" said the other.

The party now rowed on, somewhat troubled to keep the channel in the gloom of the swamp, but still making progress.

And, after getting ashore a dozen times or more, they at last entered the bright and rapid little stream which I have before described, and at once, in newly-cut timber, and in stakes driven down on the shore to fasten boats to, discovered signs of the missing party.

"By Jupiter, we've got them!" cried Washburton, excitedly.

"Yes, if they have not gone. Some one has been here in boats lately, and by the sign of deerkins on the limbs yonder, they've had plenty of game!" said Stuart.

"And zero is ze landing-place and ze road to somewhere," said Michel, pointing to a well-trodden path leading back from the creek.

To land, secure the boat, and with the whole party following to cautiously examine the path and follow it through the bushes, was Stuart's first work. Upon arriving at the edge of the little prairie, the huts were at once discerned, but no signs of any person could be discovered.

"I'm afraid we are too late!" said Stuart.

"But we will soon see!"

And he gave the order to double quick without noise for the huts.

Here the yet burning embers of the fires, and plenty of fresh and yet untainted fish and venison, told that but a few hours had elapsed since the huts had been deserted.

"Do you recognize any of these things?" Stuart asked of Warburton, as he pointed to a lot of the baggage left behind by Hunter's order.

"Yes, distinctly! These things all come from my place!" replied the young planter.

"When do you suppose they left here?"

"Either last night or the night before—not sooner; for the fires are not yet out, and the meat here is perfectly fresh. They evidently intended to make speed, or they would not have left so much behind them!"

"Where do you think they have gone to?"

"Down the river, of course. No boat can go any higher than we have come. The creek is impassable above the landing. I saw that with a glance, and the last two nights have both been dark, and so stormy that our river-pickets would be of no use, for not one in a hundred would keep watch in such weather."

"Then would not our best plan be to take the back track?" asked Warburton.

"Certainly, dividing our party. One portion of us will return on horseback, the others should follow the river in the boat. Of one thing I feel confident. Too good a watch is kept down at my house for them to pass there, day or night!"

"Then we will arrange our party and hurry back. I begin to think we'll succeed yet, thanks to your sound sense and scouting skill, Captain Stuart!" said Warburton, joyfully.

"I think myself that we'll get them below!" said Stuart. "And now, friend Michel, you will have a chance to exchange your trotting-horse for a boat-ride!"

"Ah, zat make so much happy zat I cannot speak how glad I am! Sacre, if we find ze niggars I will make zem carry me in one palanquin like ze Chinese before I again ride ze horse zat trot! Trot is but one oZZare name for grand misery. If I was Messieur Jeff Davis, I would made every sacre Yankee prisoner do nossing but ride ze horse zat trot until he sware he nevar again fight wiz us South! By dam, zat would take ze brave out of zem!"

"I'm afraid some of them would soon trot out of custody," said Stuart, with a laugh. "But back to the boat, gentlemen—every hour now will count; for, as the sailors say, a stern chase is apt to be a long one!"
In ten minutes, more the party were again afloat, and on their way out toward the river.

CHAPTER XXIV.

And now reader, we will ourselves anticipate the answers, and go and look for Sadia and party.

Steadily, all of the first night after their departure, they kept at the oars, and uninterupted they made good headway. It is true that they frequently saw lights along the shore, and often, even above the noise of the storm, heard the fierce barking of watchdogs which may have scented them; but just before day dawned they reached a small sluggish creek, with which Hunter was acquainted, and in this found concealment.

Here, being close by large plantations on either side; they passed a sadly-anxious day not daring to leave the boats, or to make the least noise, for fear of discovery and detection, for more than once people came so near them that their voices could be distinctly heard.

It was a painful day to Sadia—her position in the boat was cramped and uneasy, but no murmur did she utter, not even a sigh would she allow to escape her lips; her heroic soul, warmed with the true fire of patriotism, scorned to set the bad example of complaint.

But it cannot be denied that she rejoiced when the long and weary day came to a close, a day spent by the thoughtless negroes in slumber; and her eyes, which had not closed all the day, brightened joyfully, when old Hunter, taking advantage of the darkness and the falling drops of a light shower, one more gave the order to push out, and again resumed his course down the river.

"Will we not by morning be so near the Federal lines that we can keep on without stopping?" asked Sadia, in a low tone, of Hunter, after they had been under way some little time.

"I hope so, lady. I sincerely hope so. If we only pass one place, I will risk it. The man I fear most on the river was once my friend, but he is the chief of a band of guerillas now, and is famed for his daring deeds in the Rebel cause. I fear him and his band the most, and he lives close by the river-side. If we can but pass there before day, I will risk going on; for it is not far from the Federal lines if they are where I heard they were before we started."

"Urge the men to do their best, then," said Sadia. "My eyes will not close in sleep until we are safe, I am sure."

"They are doing their best now, lady. I gave them their orders before we started, and they are working as hard as they can, and still keep it up."

"I think we do go even faster than we did last night. I hope and pray we can keep up your speed."

"I will see to that, lady. Wrap yourself up closely, for if you get sick from this exposure, you will be helpless almost. I am a pretty fair sort of pilot, but would make a poor hand at doctoring."

"Do not fear my getting ill," said Sadia, quietly. "Until we are safe, excitement alone will sustain me."

"If you could lie back and sleep, I could cover you and the children together with this sheet of canvas, and no rain could reach you," said Hunter. "I would feel much easier if you and I promise at the least sign of danger to awaken you."

"Well, to please you I will try," said Sadia, and she leaned back by the side of her little loved ones, and the kind-hearted old man drew the sheltering canvas over her.

And in spite of her belief that she could not sleep, Sadia, worn down with long watching and anxiety, and perhaps lulled by the soft dropping of the rain, and the gentle ripple of the waves, the best of soporifics, soon showed by her regular and heavy breathing that she slept.

And this was much to the delight of the old fisherman; for he had witnessed with pain that fatigue and care was fast wearing her strength away.

She slept and dreamed. And at first it was a happy dream—a dream of childhood's sunny hours. Once more she lived beside her kind parents, the light and the joy of their eyes—the recipient of blessed words of kindness. Again, she wandered beneath the shady trees of Springland; again, from amid the tall grass she gathered the anemone and the violet, and rejoiced in the perfumes which human art can only imitate, but never equal. Oh, that thou couldst thus dream forever, sweet Sadia!

But even in dreams, change will come. And her dream changed. She fancied that she was flying over a waste and dreary desert, closely pursued by one whom she hated so far as hate could be felt in her noble heart. And her pursuer was Randolph Beverly. He seemed to gain upon her, in spite of her exertions to escape. In her misery and terror she screamed, and—woke up!

Woke, alas! to a reality for terror; for the first gray of coming day was in the sky, and dimly, right before them in the river, she could distinguish two boats filled with men, and she heard a stern and angry voice cry out:

"Hold on with them ears there, or you are dead game! We must see who you are!"

Quick as thought, Hunter cut out the towing-line between him and the boats astern, and said, in a low tone:

"Down with your head, Miss Sadia; quick, I am going to try to pass them, and if they fire you may get hurt!"

Then, in a louder tone, he sung out:

"The river is as much ours as yours! Give way, boys, give way!"
THE FAITHFUL SISTER.

"Halt there; halt, or we'll fire!" shouted the first speaker.

"Two can play at that game! Look out, for we are armed!" shouted Hunter.

Alas, for him, the too sudden reply! It came in a pistol-shot which pierced his breast, and so terrified the craven negroes in the boat that they instantly ceased rowing, and cowered down in the bottom of the boat in abject fear and helplessness.

"There's something, you infernal Rebs, to pay for my death!" cried poor Hunter, as raving strength, though wounded to death, he raised his gun and fired a load of buckshot into the boat which was nearest; the yellis arising therefrom telling that the shot told effectually.

"Miss—Miss Sadia!" gasped the dying man, "if you ever see the old General, tell him I died true to the flag, God bless it, and—"

He said no more—a gurgle, and he was dead.

The next moment, the boats were side by side, and poor Sadia! with whom to resist, now unsupported by her people, would be madness, found herself a prisoner to men who boldly avowed themselves Rebels and guerrillas.

"This must be the party those fellows were after, who stopped at the Captain's!" said one of the party.

"Yes; curse them! Is that fellow dead who fired on us?" said another.

"Yes. You gave him his last dose!"

"If it had taken effect earlier, it would have saved us one dead man, and three that are badly hurt. You had better take this lady and the negroes to the Captain's house, and keep them there till he comes back!"

"Yes; that 'll be the best way."

CHAPTER XXV.

Though a prisoner to rude men, Sadia received no direct insults; for I care not what others say, I have yet to learn by personal experience, or reliable authority, of a case where Americans, either North or South, forgot their manhood and treated the gentle sex with brutality. And in a short time she and her little brother and sister were landed, and conducted to a house, with some of the inmates of which we are already acquainted.

"Whom have you here—what were you firing for, Mr. Mendenhall?" asked Kate Stuart, as the leader of the party entered the house ahead of the prisoners.

"A lady and two white children who were trying to run the river with a lot of negroes!" replied the man. "We shot a white man, and lost one of ours killed and three more wounded. Will you find a safe place for the lady and children? We'll look out for the negroes!"

"Yes, certainly! Have your wounded men brought in, and we will attend to them also!"

"Thank you, Miss Kate! I wish your father was here! I think this is the party that the men he has gone with were after."

"Ah—indeed. I will soon know!"

And when Sadia a moment after entered the house, her brother and sister clinging to her side, Kate bowed gently, and said:

"Come with me, Miss De Montfort. I will try to make you comfortable in an upper room!"

"Ah—you know my name?" said Sadia, surprised and startled out of all presence of mind.

"Certainly. Your brother and particular friend, Mr. Randolph Beverly, who were here looking for you, described you so particularly, that, as you see, I recognized you instantly!" replied the sharp-witted girl.

"Randolph Beverly my friend? Lady, if you knew how I loathe that man, you would not have the heart to utter his detested name in my presence!" said Sadia, hastily.

"A man! I did not think he deserved the name!" said Kate, with a laugh. "He made no friends here, I assure you!"

"Then why am I made a prisoner when I am only flying from his hated addresses?"

"Your brother charges that you are carrying off his negroes; I believe, and I suppose if my father was here, he would say that in carrying negroes over to the Federal lines you would be giving aid and comfort to the enemies of the Southern Confederacy!" replied Kate; "but come up stairs, lady, you and the children, and get your wet clothes off, and you can talk as much as you like, without so many listening ears around you!"

Sadia gladly turned to obey, for too many eyes were gazing upon her.

"Do you want a guard, Miss Kate?" asked the temporary leader of the guerrilla band.

"No—I will be responsible for the lady!" said Kate, quietly, leading the way to an upper chamber, where she was soon joined by her sister, who gently and kindly asked her in getting Sadia and the children to exchange their wet for dry clothes.

"How can you be so kind to me, and yet have the heart to detain me to await the further persecution of my unkind brother and such a wretch as you acknowledge Randolph Beverly to be?" asked Sadia, tearfully.

"Who talks of detaining you, my dear girl?" asked Kate, quietly. "So far am I from doing it, that I am ready to aid you and these little ones to get as far from pursuit as possible. As to the negroes—there I dare not interfere, for they are property, and my father would never forgive me for giving you a chance to take them with you!"

"And you will indeed let me and my brother and sister go on?"

"Yes, and help you to do it safely. I do not believe in the persecution of a sister woman, and I despise Mr. Beverly from the mo-
ment he opened his lips in my presence. Why, the puppy actually made love to both my sister and myself, but he got more than he expected from both of us!"

"Oh, bless you, dear ladies—bless you!" said Sadia, tears of joy pouring from her eyes.

"There—there—don't cry, dear, or you'll set us to doing the same thing. I'll go down and have some breakfast ready, and send it up; and to-night, if you are rested, we will see if you cannot get started once more down the river!"

"A thousand thanks, dear lady—but stay. I have one favor which I hope you will forgive me for asking!"

"Name it—we will do all that we can for you, without compromising our father's position."

"A poor but honest old man was my guide down the river!" said Sadia, sadly. "He was killed a little while ago by the men who made us prisoners. The favor I ask is, that he may be decently buried. His name was Thomas Hunter, and he was once a friend to your father!"

"Poor old Tom Hunter, I remember him well!" said Kate. "Your request shall surely be attended to Miss Sadia—I will see to it personally. Now sit down and try to feel contented until I can get time to see you again!"

CHAPTER XXVI.

A day of rest worked wonders for Sadia, even though it was a day of sadness, with the remembrance of poor Hunter's sudden death upon her mind; and the thought that her affectionate and faithful people would inevitably be retained, and undoubtedly now be sent South, into a worse servitude than they had ever known before.

Often during the day the two sisters came and talked kindly to Sadia, and when she spoke of her old nurse, tearfully, as one who had ever been with her, Kate avowed that she would take the responsibility upon herself of taking Cynthia away from the rest, and keeping her with her mistress.

And when Cynthia found that she was to go with her dear "Miss Sadie," the old woman pleaded so long and so well for her "ole man," as she called Napoleon, that he too was included in the arrangement, to his inexpressible joy; for the greatest terror that can be brought in view of a Maryland negro is that of being sold off South.

"We are the more ready to let you have these people," said Kate, by way of explanation, "because your best way to reach Washington with the children will yet be by the river, and you will need them to row your boat!"

"But will he not be again stopped on the river and arrested?" asked Sadia, anxiously.

"No; for before you leave I will give you a pass that all of our kind of people will respect. Kate Stuart's pass is as good as that of her father, where he is known! Why, I go with him on very many of his expeditions! I'm quite a warrior, I assure you!"

And the beautiful girl laughed heartily.

Sadia had too much policy to say what she thought, that she wished Kate would war for the right instead of the wrong; so she smiled and said she had no doubt she'd prove a valuable "Joan d'Arc."

"Sister Annie is of a different mold!" said Kate, with her usual gay laugh. "I am papa's wild, wayward and untamable; twice more comfortable on the back of a good horse than I would be in a rocking-chair; and far more fond of listening to the bugle than the guitar or piano. But she, like my mother, is gentle, tender and loving, and wouldn't hurt a cat without it scratched her, much less draw a bead on a man, as I have done, and hope to do again."

"Oh, Kate, Kate, what is the use of trying to make yourself out worse than you are?" said Annie, in a tone of gentle reproof.

"I'm not, sis—I'm not doing so! You know I'm a regular tiger-cat!"

"I know that to me you are a good-hearted, loving sister," said Annie. "But," she continued, "if we are to get Miss De Montfort on her road, it will soon be time to make preparations."

"Yes; they are mostly made, however. She must eat a hearty supper before she goes, and after that, or before, if you like, Annie, I wish you would fill a basket with something substantial, to last our guest until she gets into the city. And Miss Sadia," she added, turning to our heroine, "you must promise that if at any time you should chance to see me in the city, you will never recognize me in the presence of any other person, or ever point me out as the daughter of a Confederate officer!"

"Certainly, I will promise that. You do not think, after all your kindness, I could be so ungrateful as to betray you?"

"Certainly not! I know you would not, intentionally. But impulsive ladies, and I can see that you are impulsive, sometimes forget themselves, and are not upon their guard, as an ice-hearted creature like myself always is!"

"You an ice-hearted creature!" said Sadia, smiling in spite of her sadness. "I think your blood and heart would be found on trial as warm as that of those whom Byron wrote about when he said:

"The cold in clime are cold in blood,
Their love can scarce deserve the name;
But thine is like the lava-fluid
Which burns in Etna's breast of flame!"

"Oh, don't quote poetry to me—I have none in my soul. I'm all reality. So I'll send up your supper, of which you must eat very heart-
THE FAITHFUL SISTER.

illy, for soon after you are done, I shall start you on your down-river trip, and you will feel the need of all your strength then."

And Kate, with a verse of the "Bonny Blue Flag" on her lips, hurried away. But Annie remained.
"You must not think my sister half so wild or heartless as she pretends to be," said Annie, after Kate was gone. "Under her apparent levity, she conceals deep and tender feelings, and strong and true affections. She idolizes our father, and his wild and not unromantic life and many perils have charms for her. But it is her love for him, and fears for his safety, which makes her so often his companion in scenes of danger."

"I doubt it not," said Sadia. "To me she acted like an angel, and I shall never forget her, you, or your kind mother."

"Do not speak of it. We are women, and do but our duty to one of our sex who has been unmanfully persecuted. But there comes support. Excuse me while I go to prepare something for your support on your journey."

CHAPTER XXVII.

So bad were the roads, that Michel in charge of the boat-party was some hours ahead of Stuart and the other horsemen. And Michel did not reach the house of the guerrilla until the afternoon of the day after Kate, accompanied by the children, and Napoleon, and Cynthia, had departed for Washington. And so well had Kate and her sister arranged that departure, and so carefully concealed it afterward, that not one of the guerrillas stationed at that point knew anything about it; and their information to Michel was, that the whole party was there except Hunter, who had been killed. And thus he reported to Stuart, Warburton, and Beverly, when, pretty well fagged out, they arrived at a late hour in the evening.

"Just as I hoped and expected," cried Stuart, gayly, as he entered the house, and returned the fond salutations of his daughters.

"Where is my sister? I wish to see the hardened creature at once!" said Warburton, nervously.

"Does not Mr. Beverly share your anxiety?" said Kate, with a malicious smile. "I really admire his taste in falling in love with so much beauty and wealth!"

"Of course, I should like to see my fair cousin," said Beverly, while a flush darkened his face.

"Then you had better continue your journey, Sir, as far as Washington, if you do not fear a desperater fato in that section," said Kate; "for the gentle girl is there most undoubtedly before this time."

"Kate, you young mischief, cease jesting," said her father, tapping her playfully on the cheek.

"I am not jesting, father," said Kate, quietly. "Not jesting? You do not mean that the lady has escaped?"

"I mean, father, that she wished to go on to Washington with her brother and sister, and she went. She was not properly like the negroes. And I have never yet seen you either harm, persecute, or detain a woman as a prisoner, my dear and noble father. And could I be so pitifully base as to keep a sweet and persecuted girl a prisoner here, to be forced to listen to the unwelcome addresses of a man whom she loathes and detests, even as I do, myself?"

And Kate's flashing eyes rested upon the form of Beverly with a look of withering and unmitigated contempt.

Stuart tried to look angry; but he loved his child too well to succeed in the attempt.
"It was very wrong, Kate, very wrong," he said; "but since the negroes are here, Mr. De Montfort, I think, will be consoled for his loss."

"D—n the negroes!" cried Beverly, in a towering rage. "I wouldn't have had that girl escape for thousands!"

"Mr. Beverly's interest in the negroes, of course, vanishes with the lady who might have had a share of them had she remained," said Kate, in a tone of biting sarcasm.

Beverly's face was almost black with passion; and a reply, full of anger and insult, trembled on his lips; but he dared not utter his thoughts in the presence of Captain Stuart. Well he knew that the father's hand would quickly avenge any contumely cast upon the daughter.

"I'm glad I've got the niggers at any rate!" said Warburton, more quietly. "And the sooner I can get them out of my hands for cash, the better I shall be pleased, he added. "Can't you find a market for them, Stuart?"

"Yes, at reduced prices; but they must be sent well into the interior to get anything like a price for them."

"I care not where they are sent. It will, perhaps, be a long time before I shall need hands on the plantation! I will leave their disposition entirely to you, Captain Stuart, trusting to your honor that you will do as well as you can for me."

"Well, I will accept the trust. But here's something from head-quarters, by the looks of the messenger."

A man dressed in the gray uniform of the Confederate Army, who had just ridden up at full speed, dismounted, and handed Stuart a package.

"Give me joy, gentlemen!" cried the latter, as he unfolded and read an official document and a letter which accompanied it. "Here is my commission as a Colonel in the Confederate Army, and the promise of that of a Brigadier-General in the Cavalry as soon as I raise twenty-five hundred men. Warburton, if you will go up and recruit the men you told me of,
shall be my first Major, and when I get the brigade you shall have my regiment."

"A bargain, by Jupiter, Colonel, a bargain!" cried the young planter. "You attend to my muggers, and I'll take the back-track for Springland in the morning!"

"You certainly take your sister's escape with the children very coolly!" said Beverly, bitterly.

"Why should I not. I have no one to look out for a support but myself now," said Warburton, with a dry laugh.

"By heavens, I will not give her up so easily, or be made a laughing-stock of!" cried Beverly, in a rage. "I am worth a few thousands yet, and I'll spend every cent to make that proud girl my wife!"

"Will you not have me or Sister Annie now?" asked Kate, sarcastically. "You were very attentive to each of us in turn, the other day!"

"Kate, Kate, this is going too far!" said Captain Stuart, gravely. "Remember that Mr. Beverly is my guest."

"Pardon, father, pardon! I could not help it!" said Kate, demurely. "I'll go and read French for two hours, by way of penance. As a repentance."

"Stop, you little tease! Go and see that our supper is got ready. We are half famished!"

"I'm all obedience, dear father. It shall be on the table in a few minutes."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

"Messieur Beverly, suppose you come out in ze air wiz me—it is more cool, and we can smoke one cigar of tabac before ze supper!" said Michel, who had been a listener during the scene detailed in the foregoing chapter.

Beverly, who was angry with everything, himself included, was about to reply angrily to the Frenchman's invitation; but a meaning look in Michel's eye restrained him, and he saw that an interview was wanted by the latter.

"Well, I need cooling off," said he, bluntly. "I have no objection to join you in a promenade and a cigar."

And the two left the house.

"You wanted to see me for something, where others were not present, did you not, Michel?" asked Beverly.

"Certainement! Zat was why I desire you to take wiz me ze air."

"Well, what is on the topic?"

"Zis! You observed a little time ago zat you would give all ze thousand dollars zat you possess to catch zat ladee! Now, Messieur Beverly, I have bon correspondents and friends in Washington, in Baltimore, in Philadephia, and New York, and wiz money—wiz money, I say— I can possibly do zat which you ver moom desire. At ze least, I can learn where she go to, where she live, and zen zere may be some plan zat you may get her yet for your wife."

"Good, Michel! If you can assist me you shall be well paid for it, you and your friends!"

"Eh bien—zat is all zat we shall require!" replied Michel. "And now, Messieur Beverly, what shall you do—where go you from here?"

"To Richmond, as soon as I can, to see my old friend, Mr. Mallory, the Secretary of the Navy. He will soon find a place where my services will be required."

"Eh, biau! I shall very soon go to Richmond myself. From zero I shall come to ze Shesapeake, for one very grand speculation is to be in ze smuggling of songs zat are never made in ze South—in carry arms and nice things for ze ladie zat ze coast-blockade will keep away."

"Ah, that is the secret of your intended speculation. I have no doubt that it will be profitable—dangerous, too, I should judge."

"Some danger—some danger!" said Michel, shrugging up his shoulders as only a Frenchman can. "But nevare mind zat, if plenty of ze money come. I have run many grand risk for ze money—many, many upon ze sea and land."

"But there is one thing money couldn't tempt you to do," said Beverly, smiling for the first time since he had heard of Sadie's departure.

"What is zat, I should like for to know?" asked Michel.

"To ride a hard-trotting horse a thousand miles," said Beverly, with a laugh.

"Sacre! You are right, Messieur Beverly. All zat gold zat a horse could carry would not make me endure so much misery. No, Sare, no! When I go to Richmond, I will ride in ze cart wiz ze ox for draw me, or I will walk wizout ze shoe to my foot, before I ride ze horse zat trot."

"Why do you not go with me in the morning? I intend to buy or hire a carriage, for my own use; for, to tell the truth, I do not care to extend my own horsecar-exercise."

"When shall you depart?"

"To-morrow morning, as early as possible. I don't want to stay a minute longer than I can help under the same roof with that devilish and provoking girl. By Jove! if she had a lover, I'd kill him out of spite, and try to break her heart."

"I cannot go so soon," said Michel. "I must hear from my friends in Baltimore and in Washington before I go. But nevare mind. I will be zere all in good time. And it is very possible zat I may hear of ze ladie before you shall see me. I make arrange zat shall give you grand pleasure."

"Well, do your best, my dear friend. You know my desire, and you shall not regret any service that you may render me!"

"Eh, bien! I will not forget you."

"Supper, gentlemen, supper," cried Stuart, at that moment.

"Zat is one very good word at zia time," said Michel, throwing away his cigar.
"One that will not need much repetition" said Beverley. "I've an appetite that would hardly reject a rice-supper, such as old Commodore Kennedy used to deign in."

"Sacrilege! I have eaten and sat where more bad men sat," said Michel, as he and Beverley entered the house.

CHAPTER XXIX.

Safe in the city of Washington, but carried at once before the Provost-Marshal by theicket-guard which she first met inside the Federal lines, the wild anxiety and terror of Sadia was over.

The gallant young De Kay, aid to General Mansfield, was the examining officer; and not only were Sadia's explanations fully satisfactory to him, but his gentlemanly courtesy such, that he escorted her to the house of a gentle and very respectable lady, who, upon his statement, readily agreed to board Sadia and the children, as well as the two servants, while our heroine chose to remain in the city.

And upon her stating that she desired to see General Scott, to convey to him the dying message of her faithful guide, the young officer offered on the following morning to procure her an interview with the venerable hero, though he was then harrassed with a flood of business, though confined to his room by illness which altogether precluded his taking the saddle and bearing the Army in person, as he had done through two glorious and successful wars, and desired to do again.

Thus we see that, with manly and chivalric hearts, our Sadia, beautiful, gentle, and in distress, could but find friends. And thankful was she on finding herself safe in that great city; and no one need wonder that when she retired to her pleasant chamber that night, with those dear children by her side, she breathed a heartfelt prayer of thankfulness to the Father of all, for her deliverance from peril.

And what can be more beautiful than to see the young and pure-hearted looking up to the Source of goodness and purity with thankful eyes—trusting in that Arm which knows no weakness—hopeful and strong even in that trust!

In the forenoon of the day after her arrival in the city, Sadia was visited by the young officer before-mentioned, who kindly came to fulfill his promise to escort her into the presence of the hero of Lundy's Lane. For those who love him need not look back to his hundred battle-fields for his fame—they most love to dwell upon that field where the proud Britons were awakened from the dream that they alone were invincible with the bayonet.

The General, though unable to rise from his invalid chair, received his visitors with urbanity, and listened with interest to the story of Sadia; and he, a son himself of a seceded and rebellious State, could well appreciate the patriotism which had impelled her action.

And when she came to speak of Hunter, whom he did not remember until the duel fought to vindicate his name from foul aspersion was spoken of, the old warrior's eye glistened with the dew of sorrow, and he expressed his regret that the gallant and faithful old man had not lived to see him, and to receive the pressure of his friendly hand.

"We are all passing away—we of the olden time!" said the General, with a sigh. "We must rest content with past deeds, and let younger men win the laurels of the present unhappy contest!"

"We cannot do without you, General!" said De Kay, while his manly face flushed with a smile of undisguised admiration. "Take our old General from us, and what can we do?"

"Much, young man—much! You will find this an age when generals, undreamed of before, called into life, almost, by the great necessities of war, will spring up and grow to be famous in a day. This war, which well I know will not be a trifling matter of months, but a deadly strife of years, will prove world-wide that we are a nation of warriors; and where you count warriors by millions, generals will not be lacking—generals fit for any age, or nation, or command!"

And in his enthusiasm, the old hero seemed to forget the pain which racked his limbs and made old wounds ache afresh. His eyes flashed—the color came to his cheeks and brow, and his tall form seemed to swell with the strength of past memories.

Then turning gently and kindly to Sadia, he asked if she had formed any plans for her future.

"I have a few friends and acquaintances in Baltimore," she replied; "and if there would be safety there, and I could live as a loyal woman there without persecution, I should desire it!" she replied. "The more especially as my altered position will force me to some industrial method of supporting myself and my little brother and sister; for at present I can get nothing from my late father's estate!"

"You will be as safe in Baltimore; yes, even more so than here, for I have strong and abiding faith in the loyalty of the great majority of its citizens. It was true as steel in 1812—it will be now. And the scene of war will be near this city, even, perhaps, in it, before this Rebellion is crushed. The first aim of the insurgents will be, to take it. Had it not been for my preparations, and the readiness of the President in calling out troops, they would before this time have been upon us. Yes, my dear young lady, I would advise you to go there, especially as you there have friends and acquaintances; for a young lady without friends in a great city, is as badly off as a lamb lost in a for
CHAPTER XXX.

A comparison of the two men, and then I'll go ahead with this story. Years ago, when under brave old "Rough and Ready," as we loved to call General Taylor, I served under my country's flag in Florida, I met two young men. The first of them was born under the Spanish flag before the province of Florida was transferred to us, and the blood of a proud and chivalric race of ancestors coursed through his veins. His family lived in the most ancient of American cities, St. Augustine. And nobleness, beauty, and grace, seemed a heritage with them all. Soon after Florida became a United States Territory, the young man (then a boy) alluded to, entered the United States Navy as a Midshipman. Having served the probationary time, he passed his examination with honor, and step by step advanced in service, until at this time (1863) he is in command of a gallant corvette in our service.

When the war broke out, and such recreants as Tatnall, Semmes, and Maffit turned their backs upon the country which has fed, clothed, and educated them, he, though wealthy, and able to live in princely style in his own or a foreign land, remained true to his country and his flag, and forgot not the oath which he took when he accepted his commission. His name should grace these pages, did I not know that his modest and chivalric heart shrinks from publicity. But let those who glance at the "Naval Register" see who has commanded the St. Louis, corvette, since the commencement of the Rebellion, and they may learn whom I do much honor, and admire for his fidelity in contrast with so many bad examples in others.

The other young man, I also knew in Florida, as one whose first start in life came from Government patronage, as one who received much favor and aid from the United States, who, to give him credit, rose from complete obscurity to the high position of a United States Senator. Now, also! he was sunk into the dead sea of treason, and is, and has been since the advent of the Satanic Confederacy, the Secretary of its so-called Navy. His name is Stephen R. Mallory. And now, reader, to do him full justice—no, we cannot do that, it were a hangman's job—we must describe him as he incidentally here steps into our story.

Imagine, then, reader, a man rather above the medium size, somewhat portly, with thick bushy hair just turning to gray, a fine florid complexion, well bewiskered, good featured, and with sharp, intelligent eyes. Well dressed, genteel in manner, and very plausible in speech, he is one of that class who always, or almost always, make themselves popular wherever they are.

And we now introduce him listening to Mr. Randolph Beverly, who has come to ask for orders to some position in the Confederate service.

"Had you come but a day or two earlier, I could have at once given you orders in a seagoing vessel. I regret that we have none ready for sea in any port which can be left. I am sorry, Lieutenant, for your sake. But I can give you temporary duty in one of our gunboats on the James River, and I will remember your claims for better position the very first time an opening offers."

"A thousand thanks, Mr. Mallory, a thousand thanks. I hope it will not be long before we have the nucleus of a handsome navy afloat," said Beverly.

"It will not be long, Lieutenant, it will not be long," said the Secretary, rubbing his hands together in his usual pleasant way. "When old England begins to feel the want of our cotton, and her starving operatives cry for work or revolution, you'll see that she will help us, and a navy will spring into life in a hurry. Yes, Sir, yes! It will not be long that the cursed Yankees will be enabled to blockade our ports. My gifted friend, Maury, who so opportunely caused the destruction of lights and buoys along the coast, is also engaged in the invention of a class of vessels which will open the wondering eyes of a world—of a world, Sir. He is a great man, that Maury, Sir—a great man!"

And again the Secretary rubbed his hands together, and then brushed back the bushy hair from over his brow.

"Dine with me to-day, Lieutenant," said he, "and you will see Maury at my house. And if you call here to-morrow morning at ten, your orders shall be ready for you. But you must consider the duty only temporary, to occupy
your time until something better offers. You
shall have a command as soon as possible."

"What will be the nature of our duty on the
James Point, the old Beverly said to the Michi
dan.

"Merely keeping an eye on the Yankees
down about its mouth, making a dash on any
thing that can be dashed at without risk, and
injuring them whenever any chance offers."

"Well, Sir, I will be ready for any orders to
morrow morning."

"Your orders will be ready then, but the
boat I think of attaching you to is now fitting
out here, and it will be a week or two before she
will be ready for service. You must remember
that, while you are in Richmond, my house is
ever open to you. The officers of the old Navy
who join us now, will find in me an ardent
friend. In fact we can have no navy without
them. We have no seafaring men among our
citizens; and for our crews, must look almost
altogether to a foreign shore.

"It is too true, Sir; but old England on our
side, and, quite as likely, France, we will not
lack for seaman."

"No, indeed, and I hope they will be in a
hurry with their recognition of our indepen
dence. Delay will be death to our hopes.
Money and agents, however, will soon be at
work with both of the Governments we have
named, and we must hope for success."

"I shall look for it, Sir. But I intrude upon
your business-hours. Good morning, Mr. Mal
dory."

"Good morning, Lieutenant. Do not forget
that I dine at four o’clock, and that Maury will
be there."

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CHAPTER XXXI.

Randolph Beverly had been in Richmond
nearly or quite two months. He had become at
ached to a vessel christened a "gunboat", but
rather a hard-looking craft to be honored
with the name of a man-of-war—merely an old James
river tow-boat, with a couple of the iron guns
on board that had been stolen from the Goport
Yard, opposite Norfolk, when naval imba
cility on the Federal side allowed the capture
of that most important point, with its immense
armament, which has since armed Port Hudson,
Vicksburg, Forts Henry, Donelson, and a hun
dred other Rebel defences.

He was returning from an early visit to the
"Exterminator", as the gunboat had been des
perately named, cogitating in his mind the kind of
"smile" in which he should indulge when he
reached the "Exchange", which was close at
hand, when a loud and hearty hail brought him
to, nautically speaking, in a hurry.

"Ah, ha, Messier Beverly! Ah, ha! How
you shall do—how you shall do, my von frant!"

That hail and that accent could come from no
other than his old acquaintance, Carl Michel.

And not at all displeased to meet him. Lieu
tenant Beverly hastened to join hands with the
Frenchman.

"I am glad to see you, Michel!" he cried.

"Come into the Exchange and liquidate, my
friend! I was just thinking of doing it, when I
heard your welcome voice!"

"Eli bien—zat is if you mean by liquidate,
zat it is somesing for to drink, for I feel so dry
as one old chip!"

"That is what I mean, my friend. How do
you leave our friend Stuart, and my cousin
Warburton?"

"Colonel Stuart, I leave very well. He was
much occupi wiz organize and drill his men.
But Messieur De Montfort, your cousin have
depart zo very same day as you, for to recruit
men for zo Confederate cavalry men zat can
endure ze trot—ze miserable trot!"

"How did you make your journey here?"
asked Beverly, who could hardly keep from
laughing at the comical grimmance and shrug
which accompanied the words spoken by
Michel.

"Ah, I have superb accomodashione! I come
all ze way in a carriage, wiz a ladee—a very
nice ladee, Sarc—one what you call zem—one
weedow! One femme charinnante! Ah, Sarc,
nosing is zeere like ze weedow! She have ze
experience, ze knowledge how to make love,
how to be agreeable! Ze ladee wiz whom I
come, she did live too near ze Yankee line, and
she have come to Richmond to reside. And she
is risee, very risee! I sink zat sometime I
shall persuade zat ladee, zat it is more prefer
able to be marry wiz one son of ze grand empe
re of France, zan to be a weedow wiz no one to
leaf but herself!"

"I wish you success!" said Beverly, laugh
ing. "By-the-way, have you heard anything
more of my runaway sweetheart, Miss De Mont
fort?"

"No, not so soon. But I have instruct my
correspondents and friends in Washington and
Baltimore to keep a lookout and find where she
is. And from them I soon shall hear. Very
soon, in one disguise, I shall go to Baltimore
for my schoonar, wiz which I shall commence
my speculations in ze Chesapeake. Zen I will
find out all zat wiz you wish fowr to know, and,
possibly, do even more zan zat. What would
you do if, some day, I should bring zat same
proud lady to you, eh?"

"I would give you half that I own. Yes, if
that would not satisfy you, all!" said Beverly,
his eyes flashing with excitement.

"Well, sings more strange zan zat have oc
cur! Carl Michel have done many sings zat
were more difficlut zan even zat—sings zat we
will not explain at zis particular time."

"Well; here is the Exchange, come in,
Michiel. We will take a julep, and then, if
you’ll go up to my room, we’ll talk matiers
over! Or, if you like it better, I’ll order the
drinks up to my room, and we can take things more leisurely, and drink while we talk."

"Eh bien! Zat is better, Sare. But not ze shushap for me, Sare—I like not ze mint, nor yet ze sugare, nor ze lee, or ze watare. When I drink ze greg, I like him as naturellé—strong like ze giant, ha, ha! I have been upon ze watare so much in my life zat I feel too much respect for it to make drink of it when I can get anything else."

"Very well; I'll have some old cognac, or anything else you like, ordered up to my room; for I stay here when I'm not on duty, for there is no decent accommodation on that devilish tub of a steamboat."

CHAPTER XXXII.

One more glance at our Sadia. For I know the reader must take an interest in one who has risked so much to prove her devotion to the cause for which so many of our bravest and best have given their lives.

Soon after the kind General-in-Chief had furnished our heroine with her promised letters of introduction, she left Washington with her young charges and her two faithful servants, for Baltimore. And well indeed was it for her that the generous forethought of the old veteran had furnished those letters. For several of the friends whom she expected to find in the city had left—some of them less loyal than she had hoped; others, even more doubtful of the security of the city than the old General had been, had gone still further North; and even the few who were there seemed more cold to the fugitive loyalist than they had been in former times to the wealthy planter's favorite child—and she keenly felt this, for proud hearts are ever sensitive, and hers, proud as it was, shrank from receiving any chilling favors.

Therefore, after securing a place of residence in a genteelly respectable private family, at as low a rate as possible (for her stock of money was but too small for the use of one who had been accustomed to every luxury), she looked over her introductory letters, determining to make use of them in the endeavor to find some occupation.

The first which she took from a package of six or seven, was addressed to a wealthy importing firm, whose principal member had also long held a high political position in the country, and who had taken an especially loyal stand in the present crisis, as she had before learned through the public papers. She glanced at his name, and the thought struck her that she had heard her father speak of him, while he lived, as an acquaintance and a friend. A few moments' thought decided her to go and see him before all others. And, with her usual firmness of character, to think was a prelude only to acting.

Therefore, at an early hour she called at the place of business of the firm. The gentlemen whom she wished to see was not yet there, but she was directed to his residence, where she would be sure to find him for some hours to come.

In one of the most pleasant locations in the city she found his residence, and upon inquiry found that he was there.

She was ushered into a parlor fitted up in neatly elegant style, and ornamented, not in the usual "gingerbread style" of the day, but with a taste rarely excelled. Paintings of true merit hung in favorable lights on the walls—everything in view was valuable and durable.

Mr. Winter, we will call him (for it is not polite always to use real names) entered the parlor-door after Sadia had sent her card by the servant; and though the frost of full sixty winters had whitened the hair upon his head, anything but winter was the smile with which he greeted the diffident girl, who rose when he entered the room.

"Miss De Montfort?" he said, as he glanced at her and then at the card which he held in his hand. "I once had a valued friend of that name who lived on the banks of the Potomac—Charles De Montfort!"

"Of Springfield, Sir; he was my father! He was taken from us by the hand of death some time since!" said Sadia, as she handed the gentleman her letter of introduction.

"I had so heard and grieved to hear it, for I knew him as a good and patriotic man!" said Mr. Winter, opening the letter and perusing the contents.

"The daughter, it appears, is indeed worthy of such a father, too," he said, when he had finished the letter. "A recommendation so strong, and from such a source, is a thing to be proud of, my dear young lady; but your father's daughter would have needed no other commendation to me than her own assurance of loyalty at this dark hour in our country's history. My house shall be your home, if you will accept the offer, and I shall feel happy in having such a guest. My wife and daughter will welcome and love you!"

"I am grateful for your offer, Sir; but I cannot accept any home as a mere guest. I came to you, Sir, to ask your aid in procuring me a situation where I can make use of the good practical education which my father gave me. My means are limited. I have my little brother and sister to take care of, and I wish to earn my support. I can be happy in no other way—believe me, Sir, I cannot; for I inherit independence, if nothing else, from my dear father's nature."

"A situation, my dear young lady? Remember you have been used to live without a superior—you will find it hard to be under one now."
"I can bend myself to circumstances, I have made my mind firmly up to that," Sadia replied, quietly.

"What do you wish? The position of a governess or teacher?"

"Not if I can get writing or copying to do; for I fear I have not the long-enduring patience that a governess or teacher must possess to fulfill their office properly. I write a good, plain, bold hand; used to keep all my father's accounts, and am, therefore, correct in figures. I studied arithmetic, algebra, and bookkeeping before I learned French."

Mr. Winter smiled at the confession which not every young lady would have made.

"If you insist upon having something to do," he continued, "I have a vacancy which can be made by promoting a very worthy and loyal man to an even better position. It is the keeping of our invoice-book, into which all our invoices are entered, with a register of each, their number, and their arrangement. If you will accept that, and his salary of one thousand dollars a year, he shall be promoted."

"O Sir; you are too kind, and make me quite happy! When can I commence?" cried Sadia, who almost seemed to see a fortune in the kind offer.

"To-morrow, if you like, my dear young lady. But let me renew the offer of a home in my house."

"Under other circumstances, Mr. Winter, I would gratefully accept an offer tendered with such generous and fatherly kindness. But in the house where I have secured a most comfortable home, and where even the little which I pay for board is needed, a good and loyal man as lying sick and bed-ridden, supported by his indigent wife, who needs boarders to do so. She was so glad to get me, and she has been so kind and motherly to me already, that it would be cruel in me to leave her. And she also finds employment for the two faithful negroes, my old nurse and her husband, who came with me from Springfield. I cannot make them understand that I wish them to be free, and they will not leave me. There they can be kept at work, and be contented while they earn enough to clothe them and provide them with many luxuries. Do not think, my dear Sir, that I am ungrateful for your offer of a home, but accept the reasons which I have given for my refusal."

"I do, Miss De Montfort, recognizing no false pride in your refusal, but a noble principle in your wish to remain where you are. It only adds to my high estimation of your qualities of head and heart. You will ever find a friend in me, and my family will be but too glad to know you.

"Shall I go to your counting-house to morrow, Sir?"

"Yes, at ten o'clock. Your hours will be only from ten to two, in a small office by your-
resemblance to their two-footed brethren in the brute line. A long wooden table stood in the middle of the room, which may have once been painted. But it would be hard to decide, through the coat of grease and dirt upon it. On either side of this table was a row of small heavy stools, about as cleanly as the table.

In the corner of the room was a space partitioned off about waist-high to the dirty-faced and frowzy-haired woman who stood behind it, ready to dispense blue-ruin from sundry square bottles which were arranged behind her. On the front of this (by courtesy) bar, were a dozen or less of these small, thick-bottomed glasses, always to be found in groggeries where the customers generally try to get the worth of their money, so to speak, by taking a glass full of grog whenever they drink.

At this time, one of the square bottles was on the table aforementioned, as were several of the tumblers described; and seated on either side of the same were six men, whose locks as well as dress would have signified to a detective, or any person who was posted on such types and their tones, to say the least. Men who understood the science of garroting; could open a store or a bank with no other capital than a crowbar, a brace and bits, or a set of skeleton keys; could play a fair air or a foul game of cards as necessity or pleasure demanded, and who would think about as little of taking human life as they would of killing a rat. Men who were the Parasites or Ismaelites of society, whose hands were against all men, and against whom all men could not but be.

These men, who were drinking and talking, by their conversation showed that they expected somebody. And who that "somebody" was, became very evident when, with hearty words of pleasure, they hailed the incoming of one of our old acquaintances—no less a personage than Carl Michel.

He was so disguised with a wig of long and bushy-black hair, and with his own gray beard and mustache completely dyed black, that no one except those who had been very intimate with him, and who knew every scar on his war-scathed figure-bead, would have recognized him by sight. But his voice, his accent, the peculiarity of his idiom, or broken English, could not be mistaken by any one who had ever heard him talk.

"Hurrah for Captain Charlie!" cried the men at the table, when he entered. "Hurrah for the bold King of the Chesapeake! Hurrah, old boy! you look like a peacock!"

"Ah, shentilmen, you do me much honor!" cried Michel, advancing and bowing with that grace which seems to be the natural gift of a Frenchman. "I am very proud to meet wiz such a select company! I 'ave shust come from ze gran' Confederacie, and I shall go back, I hope, very soon, wiz one bon cargo of sings zat are very necessaire zere, and for which we shall receive ze gold, l'argent!"

"Good—good!" cried one of the party. "That's the article we go in for, and must and will have one way or another!"

"Certainement! A shentilmen wizout money is like ze goose wizout ze fezzare; or like ze enshine wizout ze steam, or ze cart wizout ze horse!"

"Good, that's the idea! Won't you flood your gullet, old boy?"

"I tank you; I sall not object to take some sing for drink, if it is strong!"

"You'll find it that. You know we're all sworn against the use of water in drinkable shape!"

"Eh bien! I have been of zat persuasion ze forty year!" cried Michel, as he took a stool and filled a glass from the bottle. "Give us a toast, old boy; give us a toast!" cried one of the most hilarious of the party.

"Ah, saxe—you do me much honor! I propose for one sentiment—let me see, I must reflect! I give you, shentilmen, ourselves, one very select company!"

"Hurrah for Charlie, and hurrah for his toast!" cried all hands, and with clashing glasses the toast was drank.

"And now, shentilmen, what about bizness? Is ze schooner engage?"

"Yes; bought and paid for, and a Bay trading license got out, with capital security on the straw-bail system!"

"Eh bien—so far, so good! Ze crew?"

"We are your crew. You are Captain; Danz Terry there is mate, and the rest of us are deckhands and cabin passengers. We will use this crib when we're ashore, and Moll Swipes there behind the bar has agreed to cook for us aboard, and tend here when we're ashore!"

"Eh bien! Zat is one very fine arrangement—very fine! We have one very select crew. What name is ze schooner?"

"The Coquette!"

"Eh bien—zat is one very good name. She will coquette wiz ze Yankees and flirt wiz ze Confederatics! Haha—one very good name! Where now is she?"

"Down at the basin, with one of our sort on board as a watch!"

"Good—good everyzing! Ze next sing is for ze cargo. I have friends zat 'ave nezt zeal will supply us ez everyzing zat I shall ask for! We will make our cargo, and zeen watch for ze night when it storm, and ze Revenue-men keep watch in ze cabin razzare zan in ze deck, and we will go by like ze cloud in ze dark!"

"Hurrah for that. You tell us what you want done, and we'll do it, or break our necks in trying!"

"Eh bien, shentilmen—it is very right. I shall 'ave plenty of somesing for you to do very soon. By ze way, one sing, I 'ave now, zat I wish very much to discover!"
THE FAITHFUL SISTER.

"Talk it out, Captain—talk it out, and consider us on hand for anything but lifting a sawmill and carrying the water-power along!"

"Zis mattare is not so difficult as zat!" said Michel, with a laugh. "I wish much to find a young lady zat leave Washington for zis citie a few days some time ago. She 'ave wiz her un one leetel brozzare and one leetel sistare. And one old niggare name—sacre, what saerilege! name Napoleon! and one woman niggare named Sytina! She come here to live, and I must find out where she live!"

"Ah, ah—got matrimon in your eye—you intend to get married, eh Captain!" asked one of the party.

"No, no—not zat!" said Michel, shrugging up his shoulders. "If ever I get marry, I shall take one weedow zat I loaf very much at Rich mond—one rishe widow, who is very superb; very elegant. I wish to find zis young ladde because I can make plenty of money, if I can get her as far as Richmond! Zere is a shentilman zere zat will give plenty of l'argent for her; for from him she 'ave run away. He is one officer in ze Confederaciel!"

"What's her name? We'll find her out if she's above ground in the city!" said one of the men.

"Mademoiselle Sadia De Montfort was her name when she 'ave leave her friends. I do not sink she will use any ozzare name."

"Good—we'll be on the look-out for her. Take another drink, Captain! You don't shove the glass as fast as you used to!"

"Ah, shentilmen—you see I 'ave much bizness upon my mind now. I will drink one glass, and zen go to see my friends to prepare for ze cargo!"

And the Captain drank a glass, then bowing, retired amid the applause of the miscreant gang.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Sadia sat in the neat little parlor of the house of Mrs. Meredith, where she boarded, gazing with quiet pleasure upon her brother and sister, who were engaged in looking over a couple of illustrated books which she had brought at Taylor's that afternoon, and brought home to them. There was not now a cloud upon her bright and joyous face; her salary, with what she had brought from home, had enabled her to live independently, though frugally, and to purchase many neat little presents for those whom she so loved.

She had taken her guitar up to play one of her favorite fantasies; but the noisy happiness of the children so pleased her, that she did not touch its chords, but remained attracted by the scene at which she was gazing.

So intent was she in this, that she did not see old Napoleon, when, hat in hand, he entered the room; and he, seeing her so much engaged, did not intrude himself upon her, but waited until she should herself notice him.

At last she raised her eyes and saw him, and with a smile, said:

"Ah, you here, Napoleon! Is there anything I can do for you?"

"Nuffin for me, Miss Sadie, nuffin for me! But dere's sumfin on my mind dat I can't keep in. I tole it to my Cynthia, and she tole me to jess come straight an' tole it to you, Miss Sadie!"

"Well, what is it, Napoleon?"

"I's afraid, Miss Sadie, dat some o' dem Seeshe mean to play you wicked trick. Dey is jess mean enough for do anything! You knows dat without my sayin' so!"

"Why, do you think any one means me harm, Napoleon?"

"Cause dis, Miss Sadie, more'n a dozen times lately I've seen some hard-lookin' white cases looin' around here an' a watchin' you when you was a goin' out and a comin' in. An' dey seem to look hard at me and Cynthia, too. An' de other day one oh 'em stop me and says, he: 'Snowball! whar you come from?' He was white folks, an' I didn't like to say what I wanted to; so I touch my hat and say dat wasn't my name, and I come away quick, so as I shouldn't get mad an' be sassy wid him. An' dat same chap met me when I was down to de market for Missy Mer'dith, an' he say, 'here you Springlan' darkey, how's Miss Montfort, eh?' Golly, I was so scare dat I didn't say nuffin, an' I run all de way right home here, and tole Cynthia, an' she made me come an' tole you!"

"We may be watched by some of the emisaries of my brother or cousin," said Sadia, thoughtfully. "But they can do us no harm here, Napoleon. There is a strong military guard in and about the city, and far too many Union people in it, too, for any one to dare to injure us!"

"Dem Seeshe jes like snakes, Miss Sadye—jes like snakes. Dey is a hidin' away, an' you don't know whar dey is till you come right on 'em! I don'tlike dem fellows a pokin' around no way, and if dey wasn't white folks I'd show 'em what Springland muscle was—dat's so! And if dey come a foolin' round in de dark, dey may find out dat dey exile is a sparin' blind in de night, specially when he wants to be!"

"You must be careful, Napoleon! You know how it would distress me if you were injured. And you must keep in after dark. You need not be alarmed for me, I assure you. Remember that I always have a revolver near me, either in my pocket or where I can reach it. And I have good and powerful friends here—friends who will not allow me to be harmed!"

"Yes, I know, Miss Sadie; but I hasn't done nuffin wrong, 'cause I tole you, has I?"

"Oh, no! I thank you, Napoleon, for your watchfulness and kindness. Go and caution Cynthia to be careful and not go out after dark. Ah! I see Mr. Winter coming! I will tell him.
what you have seen. You can go, now, Na-
oleon.'

The old negro bowed respectfully, and went out
by the side door, just as the priceme-
chant entered at the front.

"I called in, Miss Sadia," he said in a friendly
tone, "merely to say that which in business-
hours totally escaped my mind. My wife asked
me this morning to say to you that she would
have a few friends to tea this evening, who would
spend the evening with us, and she wished me
particularly to press you to be one of her visit-
ors on the occasion. Say that you will come,
and our carriage shall call for you."

"You need not send the carriage, for you
know the ears pass very near your house, Mr.
Winter. But I will go with sincere pleasure,
for the kindness I met in your house always
make me feel happy and at home. But please
to sit down for a moment, I have something to
tell you. Napoleon has got quite alarmed
about something, and I wish to tell you what he
says."

Mr. Winter sat down; and Sadia, who had
long before told him the history of her perse-
cutions and escape, now related what Napoleon
had told her.

"There may be something in this!" said Mr.
Winter, who had listened attentively to the nar-
rative. "A man who would force his attentions
upon one who did not like him, would be guilty
of any meanness, any treachery, any crime!
But do not be alarmed at my remark. I shall
take the liberty of having a keen-eyed detective
placed on the look-out, and I assure you that I
do not exaggerate when I say that I feel as anx-
ious for your safety as I would for that of one
of my own daughters!"

"I thank you, Sir! But I thought it better
to tell you of my servant's discoveries and
fears!"

"Yes, surely! And I shall send the carriage
for you this evening, and see you safely home
myself! No words, my dear child — no words,
for I will have my own way. You have no
father now but me, you know!"

"But, Sir, I give you too much trouble —
trouble that is unnecessary, too, it seems!"

"Let me be the judge of that, my dear friend —
let me be the judge of that!" said Mr. Win-
ter, in a kind tone. "My wife and daughters
feel quite as much interest in you as if you
were one of our own family!"

"I am very grateful to them and you, Sir;
and I assure you that such kindness makes me
almost forget that I am an exile!"

"Do not speak of that. How are your broth-
er and sister?"

"Very well, Sir, and very good and studious.
Marion is beginning to be quite a little man!"

"I am glad to hear it. But I must hurry
away. Good afternoon!"

CHAPTER XXXV.

The reader who considers our greatest northern
lakes mere mill-ponds, or an almost land-locked
bay, like the Chesapeake, not dangerous, both
as compared with the almost boundless ocean,
had better take a trip on either or both of the
first-named, and experience a good rousing gale
thereon. If the rolling ground-sea or swell,
white-capped and literally mountain-high, and
the fearful perils of a lee-shore don't roll and
scare the idea out of his mind, then my dozen
years of sea-experiences, beside some "tail
weather" seen on the waters first alluded to,
may go for nothing, and you may mark me
down as a land-lubber who don't know a clew
garnet from a main-to-bowline, or a buntline
from a sparker out-hand.

And this is only preliminary to a scene of act-
ual occurrence in the early part of the present
Rebellion, or rather, to a description of that
scene.

The promise of the Hon. (?) Mr. Mallory to
give Lieutenant Beverly a separate command as
soon as possible, was speedily fulfilled by the
Confederate Naval Secretary; for only a few
weeks after the meeting of the Lieutenant with
Michel in the streets of Richmond, the former
was relieved from his secondary position on
board of the "Exterminator," on the James
River, and ordered to take charge of another
gunboat on the York River, of a like construc-
tion, armament, and size, known as the "Bea-
gle", with similar orders in regard to watching
and annoying such daring Yankee as ap-
proached the Confederate bounds by sea or
land, within reach of his guns.

On the afternoon when the scene occurred to
which this chapter is devoted, Lieutenant-Com-
manding Beverly had run his boat down to the
very mouth of the river to see if any cruisers
were off in the Bay, as he said. But well he
might know that he would find none there; for
no vessel would remain upon the Chesapeake
which could find a harbor in such a gale as
was then blowing, without she was scudding for
an open sea in the broad Atlantic, which she
might do, for the wind was blowing directly
down the Bay. Another gunboat was in com-
pany, and it seemed as if one captain wished
to out-do the other in steam and, even in this
river, in such a wind and sea as existed.

Beverly having run out as far as he dared
with his little tub of a boat, was about to order
the helmsman to shift her course up the river,
when his eye rested for a moment on the white
but scanty canvas of two vessels which seemed
to be scudding down the Bay, both well in on
the western shore where he was.

He called for his telescope, ordering the
helmsman to ring for the engineer to run slow;
and while he was looking at the vessels, a cloud
of white smoke was seen to spring from the bow
of the sternmost one, and soon after, the
null report of a distant gun came faintly down
upon the wind.

"By Jove, there's some fun afoot way
there!" he cried, and he directed the engineer
to keep just speed enough on the boat to make
steerage-way, so that he could observe what
was going on outside. And as the other gun-
boat came up near him, he hailed her com-
mander, who was his junior, and called his at-
tention to the vessels advised him to lay by and
see what was up.

Meantime the two vessels came on almost as
swiftly as the clouds above them, soon showing
themselves to be schooners of clipper-build.
The character of the sternmost one in a short
moment was evident, as seen through Bever-
ly's glass. She exhibited at her peak the Kevenne flag of the United States. The other,
evidently trying to escape from the first, which
had fired several shots to try to bring her to,
showed no flag. That she was either a smug-
gler or in some way an evader of the custom
laws, was evident from the pertinacity of the
pursuer.

Of course, the officers and crews of the Rebel
gunboats took a deep interest in the fate of the
vessel which was being pursued; and, doubtless,
if there had been no such fearful risk as there
was in running outside then, they would have
put off to throw the weight of their guns
against the United States cruiser.

On—on came the two vessels—neither of
them showing more than close-reeded fore-and
aft sails; both seeming almost to bound from
sea to sea over the short but fearfully-heavy
waves.

As they neared the mouth of the river, Bever-
yly noticed that the leading schooner was evi-
dently heading in toward the land; and by way
of encouragement to her if she should happen
to be favorable to the Confederate cause, as she
would be most probably if a smuggler, he had
the stars and triple bars raised upon his flag-
staff, and the long iron thirty-two-pounder on
his forward deck was fired.

The schooner gave almost instant signs of
recognition; for in less than a minute the Rebel
flag fluttered from the gaff, and she headed for
the river as directly as possible.

The revenue-cutter still kept desperately on,
trying every few moments, as if endeavoring to
carry away the spars of the other craft, so as to
disable her. But the sea was so rough and
heavy that the shots all fell wild, and it seemed
as if the craft which carried the Rebel flag
could not but escape.

On—on they came—the schooners seemingly
not a half mile apart, until Beverly thought
that the cutter had come within his range.

Ordering his thirty-two pounder loaded care-
fully with a single round shot, he sighted it
himself, and pulled the lanyard of the gun.

Excitingly, he saw that the shot threw up the
spray close aboard the cutter.

His consort, similarly armed, tried her hand
at a shot, and came even closer than Beverly
had.

And the commander of the cutter, seeing the
odds too great, now that he was coming under
the fire of vessels which lay in smooth water,
took in his foresail, and suddenly hauling up
on a wind, discontinued the chase, venting his
rage, however, in a broadside, which sent a half-
dozen holes through the canvas of the fugi-
tive, and knocked away her main-topmast.

But the damage to the sails came too late;
and while the cutter, lying down gunwale un-
der in the gale, clawed off shore, the other
schooner came sweeping into the smooth water
of the river, with the Rebel flag flying taunting-
ly from her gaff.

"What vessel is that?" shouted Beverly
through his trumpet, as the schooner ranged up
within hail.

"Ze schoonare Coquette, Captain Carl Mi-
ichel, Sare, at your bon service, wiz one very
select cargo for ze grand Confederace!" shouted
a well known voice.

"Heave to, Michel—heave to, my old friend.
I wish to see you!" cried Beverly, instantly
recognizing the Frenchman.

"Sacre! Is zat you, Messieur Beverly? By
darn I am more glad to see you zan I was to
get away from zat Yankee zat zave chase
me so very close. She was more big zan me,
and came more close zan I like—she was more
fast zan I, and if you zave not speak wiz your
big guns when you do, by ze whale zat Jonah
cat, I sink zat I shall be one prize for him!"
cried Michel, as he put his helm down and
rounded to close alongside of the steamer.

"I will be wiz you very soon—so quick as my
men put down one boat. I have some grand infor-
mation for you from Baltimore!" continued
Michel, as he gave orders for his men to haul
up the fore-sail, draw the jib-sheet to windward,
and to put the helm alee, trimming the main-
sheet aft at the same time.

In a few moments the schooner lay almost as
still upon the water as if she had been at an-
chor; for she was, in nautical parlance, hove to,
and with but little drift, held her position.

A boat was soon hoisted over the side, and
maned with a crew of oarsmen, and into this
Michel sprang with much more agility than he
would have exhibited in mounting a horse.

A few strokes of the oars and the boat was
alongside of the steamer, where Beverly stood
at the gangway to receive and welcome the suc-
cessful smuggler.

"Come right down into my cabin, Captain!" said
he, as he grasped the Frenchman's hand.

"There I can hear all the news you have to
tell, and also learn how I can be of service to
you. And I have some capital cognac there!"
*Bon. We will go zere, Sare, and zen I will tell you ze news from Baltimore!*

CHAPTER XXXVI.

The cabin of the Confederate States gunboat Beagle was not very roomy—nor was it furnished in a very enviable style of gorgeousness. It was a little den in the stern of the boat, not a foot larger than a wardroom state-room in one of our magnificent sea-going frigates. But it sufficed to contain Lieutenant Beverly and his baggage, one portion of which was a liquor-case, full one-tenth as large as the trunk of a Saratoga belle, and that was of sufficient size to contain nearly a barrel of various imbibible beverages.

Pointing to Michel at one stool, Beverly took a seat on another, and took from his case a square bottle marked "old Cognias", in gilded letters, and a couple of gilded glasses belonging to the case. Placing them on the table, he filled the glasses, and then said:

"Help yourself, friend Michel. Stand upon no ceremony here. There is some brandy, that I certify came from your own belle France. Help yourself, and fill the blocks of your talking-tackie, so that you can give me the news more easily."

"Ah, Messieur Beverly, you do me much honour. I drink wiz you and to you, and to ze bad luck of zat Yankee cuttare zat come so much too close to me and make ze peep-holes in my sails!"

"Yes; and he would have made some holes in your hull, if our vessel hadn't been in the river, here!"

"Zat is very probable, Messieur Beverly—very probable. As it is, you save one bon cargo of article zat will be very welcome in ze Confederate. I have ze bowie knife, ze revolver, ze powder, ze cap, de percussions, and ze whisky for ze shentiments; and for ze ladies ze silk, ze lace, ze ribbon, ze glove, ze hoop, ze leetle shoe, and ze perfume, wiz erave so much more singas zat not now I can considare!"

"Just what is needed, my dear fellow, and worth half a fortune. For, since the blockade, everything has gone up, as if the people thought they would never get any goods again."

"So much ze better for my speculacione!" replied Michel, laughing. "Zis war will be like paradise for ze speculacione. Ze soldier will fight and get ze los of leg and arm, and die, and all zat; he will go down, but up will rise ze politiciene, and rishe, oh, very rishe, will grow ze shentiments who make ze speculacione! Zey are ze men for zed day. Ha, ha. zey are ze men for zed day!"

"Ah, how much truth in that!"

"Not for us, though!" said Beverly, with a laugh. "But you spoke of news from Baltimore!"

*Oui, cernement, I did do zat. And it is news in which you are very much interested! Except me—I fill again my glass wiz zat bon cocagne, and zen I tell you zat news!*

Michel filled his glass, drank off about half its contents, and then said:

"Ze inac—ze sistare of Messieur Warburton De Montfort—is in Baltimore?"

"Ah! have you seen her?"

"No, Sare; I did not wish for her to see me. For she have seen me before, and it might not be comfortable for her to see me in Baltimore; at ze best, it was bettare for me, for ze friend of ze Confederate have no sight zere now! But tree, four, five of my men have see her, and zey have talk wiz ze two niggars, and ze borszare, and ze sistare!"

"What does she do; how does she live, and where?"

"You ask so much question at one time zat I not know which one to answer at ze first. She have ze employment for write for one very rishe merchand! Zat is ansare zat one. She bravard upon ze street zat you call Carroll; zat is ansare ze two; and how she live? Zat I have not inquire very particulare, but I suppose, like enzare folk, by ze eat, and drink, and sleep, and breathe, so same as you and myself!"

"Well, do you think that it is possible to get her away from Baltimore? I will give five thousand dollars to get her in my power!"

"Wiz zat money, Messieur Beverly, zere is possible many singas. Wiz zat money I tink zat it is very possible ze next time I go to Baltimore zat I shall make it necessary for ze lady to try a change of air for her health—and zen it shall be necessary for her to consult you for ze doctare. Ha—ha—you make one bon doc tore for ze occasions, eh?"

"Well, succeed my friend, succeed, and the money shall be yours, in gold!"

"Ah, zat is one good consideration. I do not like ze money of paper. It may get burn, or eat by ze rat, or ze bank break, and zen it is no good for nozing! But ze gold, zat nevar is destroy, zat is n-vare good for nozing!"

"Well, a-cure the lady for me, and the gold shall be yours!"

"Bien, it shall be done. Excuse me zat I try aouzzare glass of zat cocagne. It remind me so much of ze belle Franca, zat I feel one grand affectione for it!"

"Help yourself, Captain, help yourself, you are as welcome to it as a kiss would be to a maiden of sweet thirty-five! Drink, and then tell me what you propose to do!"

"I can go up ze rivare wiz my schoonare, can I not?"

"Yes, there will be no trouble in that. I will give you a certificate which will pass you anywhere!"

"Zeen I shall go up ze rivare and sell my cargo for l'argent, and ze schoonare too!"
"The schooner? Why will you sell her?"

"Because it will never do for me to go to Baltimore wiz her again. And more, zis rivare will be blockade now by zis dam revenue! Ah, my cher ami, I am one old shild and zey nevare catch Michel asleep—no sace, no. I and my men can get back to Baltimore by ze land, wiz ze money for more cargo and anozzare schoonare. And while ze sace revenue sink zat I am here in ze grand Confederacie, I will be zere, oui—I will be zere to get ready for anozzare grand speculacon. I have some bon friends zere, ze Confederacie have some bon friends zere, but zey must know what you call very dark, very stilly! I will purchase anozzare schoonare and watch for my time, ze same as before, and when I am ready for sail and have put ze revenue on ze blind somewhere, zon I will get for my passengars ze fadde zat you desire, and again I come to ze rivare, or some ozzare one, where I can be safe wiz my speconers!"

"Your plan is good. That is, if you can manage to get the lady once on board without being discovered and foiled!"

"Ah, you nevare mind but what I do zat. I was not born yesterday, or to-day, or to-morrow—sacre no? When ze Yankees get before zis representatif of zis old empire, zey are more smart zan zey ever was before zen!"

"Well I hope you will succeed! It will be a big feather in your cap when you do!"

"I care not for ze fezzare; but ze money, zat is what I like more!" saide Michel, and again he sealed his alliance to la belle France in a glass of cognac.

"And now, Messieur Beverley!" said he as he drained his glass. "I sink I will go on board ze Coquette and proceed up ze rivare! I will write to you when I am away, and tell you when I shall come back, and where, so zat you can prepare for me!"

"Can you transmit letters easily and safely?"

"Oui—certainement, I can. Ze mail is not now so regular as once it was before ze war, but it come and go from Baltimore all ze time! And not only from Baltimore, but Philadelphia and New York. I have more zan one bushel of letters now on ze schooner for Richmond!"

"Indeed! Yours will be a welcome arrival there!"

"Certainement! Good for zat I have letter—but more good zat I have such a bon cargo. If zat miserable cuttare have catch me, I should ave die wiz grief and mad! I shall ave loose more as one hundred tousan' dollars! Ah! what speculacon ze revenue make if I was catch! But it was not done. Ze star of my destiny is bright. Ze tire of my hope burn warm. Excuse me, Messieur Beverley, I take once more a glass of cognac for your very good health, and zen I go to my schoonare and proceed."

"Very well, Michel, go ahead. I'll run up the river a ways with you, and if the wind dies away, perhaps I'll give you a tow."

"Ah! you are very much good, Messier Beverley. I shall not forget you—no Sare, not so long as I remembrare. Your very good health, Sare, and au revoi—au revoi!"

CHAPTER XXXVII.

The author has refrained as long as possible from taking a close view of the inside world, where the patriotic man of business found his chief happiness; in other words, in the "bosom of his family", to quote an old way of speaking of a household. For Mr. Winter was not one of those sordid-hearted men whose whole thought is bent upon gain, and who looks at worth and pleasure only for what it is worth in currency. Now, circumstances make it necessary for a temporary intrusion into the happy circle.

Mrs. Winter herself was one of those fine hearty-looking ladies whom we sometimes, but not often, meet, who, at fifty, do not look to be over thirty years of age. No care had furrowed her smooth brow, or brought silver threads among her dark brown tresses—no cosmetics were required upon her health-tinted and faultless face. Her hazel eyes were afloat with the glow of contentment and peace, and a smile of love and genial kindness made her ever look beautiful to those who loved her.

Two daughters—one eighteen and the other three years older—had been raised entirely under her own eyes, educated at home, far from boarding-school influences and city school conventionalities.

With unlimited means placed at her command, Mrs. Winter had chosen the best teachers that money could procure for her daughters, and the consequence was, that young as they were, they were more elegantly as well as more substantially educated than any other ladies in the Monumental City in their circle of society. They were not strictly handsome girls; but they were well formed, more than ordinary-looking, very graceful and easy in carriage and deportment, and, more than all, thoroughly genteel.

Used to the best society, they seemed unconscious of any advantages which the immense wealth of Mr. Winters might give them, and exhibited none of what I choose to call the ludicrousities of persons aristocracy.

And from the hour when Mr. Winter first presented Sadia to these ladies, our heroine had been with them a decided favorite and an ever-welcome visitor. Indeed, they had more than once striven hard to get her to accept the first proposition of Mr. Winter, and to become a daughter and sister in the the house with them.

But Sadia, with gentle and courteous s—
knowledgments, preferred to remain in her independent position, though a frequent interchange of visits caused a most sisterly feeling to exist between her and the Winter girls.

And it was to meet them and a few select friends at tea, and to spend a socable evening, that Sadia was invited, as we have already intimated in a previous chapter. Sadia had spent such evenings there before, and they had ever been very agreeable. The class drawn to the house of Mr. Winter were not frivolous fashionable, who could talk of nothing but the last party, or fashion, or indulge in nonsensical gossip; they were not blues, or book-worms, but people of life and reality, who lived to enjoy life, and make and share pleasure as they moved along the road of destiny.

The hour was early when the carriage of the merchant called upon Sadia, but she was ready—her elegant form, neatly, fashionably, but not extravagantly attired, and her lovely hair hanging in its natural curls down upon her white shoulders.

At the door of Mr. Winter's house she was met by Carrie and Emma, the daughters whose welcome of kisses and kind glad words went pleasantly into the heart which they would not allow to feel desolate.

And they hurried her up to their own room, and assisted her to arrange herself for the parlor, affectionately acting all the time as if she was a sister rather than one but lately a stranger, and altogether forgetful of the fact that she held a dependent position under the firm of which her father was a member.

"You must put up your prettiest face to-night, Belle Sadia"—said Carrie, the youngest sister, while her laughing blue eyes and sweetly dimpled face seemed to beam with gleeful mischief—"there are three beau above, real lions in their way—two of them "shoulder-straps," and the other a young man of excellent family and fine education, though he is only a sergeant!"

"A hero for each of us, you see!" said Emma, laughing gaily—"two of them sailors and one a soldier. Which will you have, Sadia? As you are our guest, you are entitled to the first choice, by every principle of courtesy."

"Then you as the eldest, Miss Emma—must take the highest in rank—and Carrie as the prettiest, must take the next, of course. I will put up with the Sergeant for the evening, and check my ambition to be beams by shoulder-straps!" said Sadia, joining in the merriment of the kind-hearted girls.

"How magnanimous!" said Carrie, laughing.

"And how flattering to poor me! Really, I must sit for a portrait in some picture-gallery, if I am better looking than you, Sadia!"

"Well, you'll have to wait daylight for that, at any rate. Let us go down, girls. Mother has at least half a dozen to amuse, ladies and gentlemen included, and it is time we went to her relief!" said Emma.

And the three girls went down to the parlor, where family met, also some former acquaintances whom she had before met there, and was introduced in due form to the "lions", who had been discussed so recently up stairs.

The first was a New Hampshire born Lieutenant, whose peculiarities smacked both of granite and codfish, having been born on the hills of the first and having spent his youth in catching the second, or that portion of it at least which preceded his entrance into the Army. He had a tolerable form and a most ferocious moustache, of which he seemed very fond, for he was continually caressing it with his hand and twisting its wiry ends. He was very conversative—very patriotic, and very denunciative of everything Southern—a not very courteous matter, when he was a guest to a Southerner, though a nobly loyal host.

Sadia was glad the moment after the introduction, that the up-stairs allotment, even just as it was, had not assigned Lieutenant Bacon to her. For as a base coin can be detected from a genuine by the ring of the metal—so can a gentleman by birth, education, and principle, be quickly discerned, and his opposite in nature be as easily discovered.

The next introduction, to Lieutenant Fulton, was far more agreeable to her; for he was not only very handsome and gentlemanly, well-educated and graceful, but seemed to be utterly unconscious of having possessed of these favorable qualities. Open-hearted, joyful, and sailor-like, he was one calculated to please the fair sex.

The third introduction was to Sergeant Arnold, and Sadia glanced half smilingly at the Winter girls, when she received this introduction, for she remembered that up stairs he was the one chosen as her "lion" for the occasion.

And as she looked upon his pale face, and his left arm yet in a sling from a recent wound, her warm heart rose in a silent throb of sympathy—not that he was in any way a stranger more deserving of sympathy than the others, but because, perhaps, her womanly feelings caused her to desire to show him the more attention, that his was the humblest rank of all. Yet his azure eye flashed as proudly, and his language was as courteously as that of any other person there, though his manner was especially subdued and unobtrusive.

The conversation had scarcely become general in the parlor before the ringing of the tea-bell called the guests to the dining-room, where a well-set table had the place of the "baby fashion" in some circles of banking tea and cakes around. After an hour, more or less, had been rationally—no pun on rationts intended, I assure you, dear reader—expended, the guests who Sadia found were once more went back to the parlors to enjoy the rest of the evening.
The "old folks," as they who are the oldest choose to style themselves, sat down to whist and chess; the younger gathered around the piano, where music, both vocal and instrumental, lent its dulcet charms to add to the enjoyment of all. Duets on the piano and guitar, songs from each of the ladies, and some capital sea-pieces from Lieutenant Fulton followed, one upon the other, rapidly.

And these were followed by dancing from the piano, in which all the young people participated except Armand, who made his disabled arm a very sufficient excuse for not joining.

Sadia, as soon as she could do so without attracting peculiar notice, withdrew herself from the dancing party, and endeavored to amuse and interest the Sergeant. He was, however, rather an enigma to her. He seemed to endeavor to avoid rather than to court conversation. But she was determined to interest him, and to try to drive from his brow the shade of deep melancholy which seemed to be settled there.

So she talked of war and glory, asked him many questions, and learned, after all, but little of that which she sought—his history, or the secret of the evident sadness which oppressed him. She only learned that patriotism only bound him to the service; for he had left luxury and independence of fortune to join it—that he had been wounded in one of the first skirmishes of the war, and was about to rejoin his regiment, the Cavalry, in Virginia, as his wound was rapidly healing, and he expected soon to be able to take the saddle.

She knew that there was some sad secret gnawing at his very heart, and sympathetically she yearned to know the cause of his sorrow that she might strive to alleviate it; but maiden delicacy would not permit direct questionings, and he seemed all too reluctant to share his thoughts or griefs with another.

Thus the evening passed; and it was midnight before the guests dreamed it was so late. And then, with many expressions of the pleasure with which the evening had been passed, they began to get ready to depart to their homes.

Mr. Winter, as he had promised, had his carriage ordered for Sadia, and got ready to see her home himself. The Lieutenants politely bade her good evening, and left. And Armand also came to thank her for her kind attention to him as an invalid, who could not join in the livelier festivities of the evening.

"It is not likely that we shall ever meet again, Miss de Montfort, for I leave for the front in the morning; hut I hope this Rebellion will soon be put down, the Union restored, and that you will recover the rights which you have been deprived of!" he said.

"I earnestly hope and pray that we may soon have an honorable peace," she replied, "and that you will be restored in health to those who love you!"

"Ah, lady," said he, "in a tone of utter sadness, "love is a passion of which I may not ever dream. Farewell! God bless you! Farewell!"

And bowing his adieu to the others, he hurried away.

"How strangely he acts, and how melancholy he seems!" said Sadia, as, the moment after, Mr. Winter offered his arm to escort her to the carriage.

"Yes; he is quite misanthropical," said Mr. Winter. "And he has some cause; matters known to me in confidence, which I cannot tell you of, but which do him no discredit. He has already rashly risked his life, and I fear will do it again. I feel interested in him, for I have had business with him, and have known him for some years. I had difficulty in getting him to spend the evening with us, but from appearances he seemed to enjoy himself."

"I pitied his apparent loneliness of feeling, and tried my best to amuse and interest him," said Sadia. "I cannot bear to see any one sad, and if I could, I would shed sunshine into every human heart."

"You are a good-hearted girl, Miss Sadia, and will yet make some masculine very happy," said Mr. Winter, with a laugh.

"Or very wretched!" she rejoined, with a smile.

And then, in a moment, she added, more seriously.

"I do not think that I shall ever go so far as to let the joy or misery of any man be dependent upon my whims. I have made up my mind to become that most horrible of terrors, an old maid—that is, if I live to age."

"That, my dear young lady, may not be a discretionary matter with yourself. Love is a strange creature; like the winds, he goeth where he listeth, and those who most boast of their invulnerability are as apt to be wounded as any others. One of these days, when Fortune's smiles begin again to beam upon your path, we will see you with the bridal wreath upon your brow."

"It may be, but much I doubt it," said Sadia, with a smile, as at that moment the carriage drew up before the door of her boarding-house.

The merchant saw her safely in, and bidding her good-night, was driven back to his own residence.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

The business in which Mr. Winter and his firm was engaged—not the importing, but the wholesale part of it—threw him in very frequent contact with United States officers, making him acquainted with many of them, in various branches of service, in consequences of
arm often having contracts to fill with the Government.

One of these acquaintances of his—rather a favorite, too, for his sterling honesty and loyalty, as well as his never-failing humor—was a Captain in the Revenue service whose name was O'Dougal, a rather odd combination of the Gael and the Celt, which he accounted for in this way. His father was a Dougal, of the Douglass clan, and he fell in love with a North of Ireland lassie whose father claimed a descent from an ancient Milesian king. And though he, Mr. O'Ballyback, owned but a poor shanty, a pig, a cow, and a potato-patch, he would not let Dougal have the princess, his daughter, until he consented to put the monarchical "O" before his name. And thus came the name of O'Dougal to this country, for the Captain's father emigrated soon after his marriage and became a democratic sovereign in his own right on American soil.

His son, well educated here and aided by political influence, got a place in the Revenue service here, and in it became a valuable and efficient officer. And he combined the shrewdness of his father's nation with the wit of that of his mother; and though he had none of the brogue, had all the fun of a regular "wild Irishman."

"Ah, how do you do, Captain, just in from a cruise?" asked Mr. Winter, one morning as he met the worthy O'Dougal at the door of his counting-house.

"Under the weather in heart, but above it in body Mr. Winter, thank you," replied the Captain.

"Ah, down in the heart; what is the matter there?" asked Mr. Winter, pleasantly.

"The loss of something that I almost had—but didn't get! Don't laugh when I say I lost what I never had, but lay that to the Irish half of my extraction!"

"I'll not laugh till the laughing part comes in!" said Mr. Winter, with a smile. "But let me know your trouble, Captain. By the way, come up stairs to my private office, and over a glass of old sherry you can tell me more easily, perhaps!"

"Thank you, Sir, I'll go up with you, not for the wine but after you are at leisure, to see you about some business-matters," said the Captain, following the old merchant to the cozy private office, or room, where he generally saw his business friends.

After being seated and taking a glass of old Amontillado, O'Dougal, at the request of Mr. Winter, told his trouble.

"You see, Sir," said he, "one of the Government detectives had been on the watch of a party for quite a time that had been loading a schooner, he thought, with the intent to run our blockade, and supply the Rebels below. He kept his information very much to himself though, only telling me enough to keep me on the alert, and ready to start out and catch the fellows in transit, as the law-peckers have it. Well, so matters went, the detective begging me not to leave port with my cutter, for I was sure to make a hundred-thousand-dollar haul, out of which, with a detective's usual modesty, of course, he expected a "lion's" share. I began almost to think somebody had been 'selling' him, or that he was 'selling' me, the fellow being so very non-communicative; when last Sunday night, just after dark, when we were lying outside all the shipping at our anchor, he came aboard in a shore-boat in a thundering hurry, and told me that the schooner was off, as sure as fate.

"It was blowing terribly fresh from the north and westward then. I told him no vessel had gone down the channel past us, for it was not so dark but what we could see white canvas in that narrow channel.

"He told me that the schooner had not hoisted sail, but had drifted down inside of us with the ebb tide. He had seen her do so himself, and had been bothered to death to find a boat and crew to bring him off to the cutter to let us know.

"Taking his word for it, I got the cutter under way, and stood down the bay, keeping her under as much canvas as I thought any sensible man would carry, and running down the Rebel side of the bay.

"During the night we saw nothing; but when day broke, we made out a schooner ahead of us, which the detective at once swore was the one he had 'spotted'. On this, I put all the canvas on the cutter that her spars would bear, cleared away my 'Long Tom', and got ready to let the gentleman ahead know that I wanted to have a chat with him. But when I made sail he also began to pile on the canvas, and in a little while we both had on all and more than sensible men ought to carry. That satisfied me that he was what the detective thought him to be, and when, after a steady telescopic observation of thirty minutes or more, I found that I was slowly but surely gaining on him, I slapped my hand on my pocket, and said to myself:

"'O'Dougal, you can indulge yourself in a demijohn of the old "mountain dew" when you get back, and make Mrs. O'D. happy with a new dress for herself, and ditto for the younger that's to carry the name high in the next generation.'

"And I went so far as to bid my first Luff keep a close eye on the chase, while I and the detective went below to examine the quality of some old Jamaica that had got into my state-room by some accident or other. For I felt contented. The old cutter has the basis of pretty nearly everything that carries cotton duck on spars, and I was sure we should have
the hundred-thousand-dollar gentleman alongside before many hours.

"Well, we examined the Jamaica once or twice, and then went on deck. The chase was losing ground, and I was well satisfied that she was as good as ours. We had breakfast, and kept on the gain until the craft was nearly in range of my gun. Seeing that she hauled in on the Southern shore rather too much to suit me, as I came up within range, and beginning to fear that she might slip into some of the rivers or creeks on that side of the bay, I began to talk to her with my pivot-gun.

"The shot flew close to her, and I was certain of crippling her, if she didn't heave to. The detective and myself were even counseling how the examination of her cargo was to be conducted, when all at once a round shot from an infernal heavy gun away in shore came plunging along, and almost reached us. Then the schooner ahead, which had shown no colors so far, ran up the Rebel flag, and on going up the rigging a few minutes high, with my glass I saw that there were two infernal Rebel gun-boats lying in the mouth of York River. And as they were peppering away at me now with metal three times heavier than I had, I had no choice but to give up the chase, as the schooner was running right in for them. So I hoisted my wind, gave the schooner a broadside that made her sails look like well-worn dish-rage, and got out of the way. And so I had my chase and my cruise for nothing, and my plans for the 'mountain dew' and the gratification of Mrs. O'D. have all gone by the board. Now I'm sure that's enough to put one's heart under the weather—isn't it Mr. Winter?"

"It was a great disappointment, certainly, Captain, and I deeply sympathize with you. But you cannot always have fortune on your side—that is, good fortune. I hope you will have better luck next time. There is, doubtless, a large trade being carried on from here in that way, and if the Government does not take very severe measures it will increase. For love of money, I am sorry to say, in many hearts is stronger than patriotism."

But, reader, we have somewhere else to go, and as the Captain has told his story, we will leave him and the merchant to do their business in private.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

As the wind was such that his schooner could hold her course up the York River, with only an occasional tack to gain the weather-side of the channel, Michel, after leaving the gunboat of his friend Beverly, made sail up the river, intending to go, at least, as far as West Point, if possible; for from that point a railroad communication with Richmond would enable him to sell his goods at a vast advantage. But he was obliged to heave to at various points; and the nature of his cargo being made known, the needful articles of whisky, arms, ammunition, boots and shoes, and quinine, found a ready and advantageous sale; for, as yet, gold and silver were used plentifully in the South, and Confederate currency had not a very extensive circulation. The pursuaries, of course, were mainly officers and soldiers of the Confederate Army. Once in a while, it is true, a planter along the river, near the military posts, hearing of the arrival, would come on board, and make a purchase; but these visits were few and far between.

Beverly went no further up the river than Yorktown; his orders keeping him further down the river, where it was necessary to watch the expected advance of Federal forces.

Upon arriving at West Point, full ten days after he had entered the river, Michel found quite a body of Confederate cavalry, and was delighted to meet once more his friend, Colonel Stuart, and Major Warburton de Montfort.

"Ah, shentilmen!" said he, when he had, without much difficulty, persuaded them on board his vessel to partake of a sardine-and-cracker-and-cheese lunch, washed down with choice beverages—"ah, shentilmen! I've seen one bon adventure. I was chase by one Yankee-doodle revenue-cutters so very close, zat for one time I sink, if ze diable not favore me, I shall be make one prisoner wizout doubt. I feel very mad—very mad! But ze diable did not desert his favorite zild—no, shentilmen, not I escape wiz ze skin of my teeth! But if Messier Beverly had not been near wiz his gunboat, I sink ze Yankee-doodle would 'ave catch me. Ah, bon fortune zat he was so near!—bon fortune for me! But I shall repay him by and by. I shall get for him ze ladde zat none of you shentilmen could capture!"

"Do you mean my sister?" asked Warburton. And then, as his face darkened with an angry flush, he added: "I mean the one whom I called sister, before she went among the infernal Yankee's!"

"I did mean Miss Montfort, Messieur Warburton!" said Michel, swallowing a sardine, and instantly giving it swimming depth in a half-tumbler of old Cognac.

"Have you seen her? Do you know where she is?" asked Warburton, eagerly.

He found it hard to be so unnatural as to forget a sister.

"I've not seen her, Messieur de Montfort, but any day for the last two weeks, I could 'ave see her, if I so desire. But I knew if she see me, zeen she would suspect somesing wrong, or, at any matter, she would inform ze Yankee ollercare zat I was zere; so I did not go where I could see her or she could see me. But my mens zat I send for zat purpose, zey 'ave see her—zey 'ave talk wiz ze niggares—zey find out all zat I desire!"
“Then she is in Baltimore?”
“Yea, Sare; she is in Baltimore.”
“What is she subsisting on? She cannot have much money.”
“Oh! she is one very smart ladee! She never will want for money zere.”
“What do you mean, Sir? You dare not for an instant couple dishonor with my sister’s name!” cried Warburton, springing to his feet.
All of the brother was not yet lost, even in his Confederate-ruined heart.
“Mon Dieu—no! No, you mistake me, Messire Warburton!” cried Michel, startled by the wild and threatening look of Warburton.
“I nevare speak, nor dream zat ze lady, your sistere, should be less honorable, less pure, less good as one angel! No, gare. When I say she want not for money, I mean zat she ‘ve provo- cure a situation for write and keep ze book in one house of ze grand merchant, and get one big salarie! Now, you understand?”
“Yes—pardon me for wronging you with such a thought. But I don’t know what the devil has got into me lately. I believe I’m suspicions of everybody, myself included!”
“Zen take plenty of ze brandy, Messire Warburton. Brandy make ze heart warm and ze brain fresh.”
“Too free for safety sometimes!” said Stuart, with a laugh. “Do you like your vessel better than my saddles, friend Michel?”
“Your saddles! Ah, Colonel Stuart, were you not my friend I should challenge you for fight wis me, for even so much as say ze word zat remind me of ze trot—trot! Sare, Sare, will I again endure zat misery—nevare!”
And with an unaffected shudder, Michel filled his glass and drank it off to seal his determination.
“By ze way, Colonel, where is ze beautiful ladies, your daughters?” continued Michel, as he refilled his glass.
“Kate is on shore with me—would have been at my quarters to-night, but she went on a scout this morning. Annie is a home-body, and stays with her mother,” replied the Colonel.
“Kate is as much of a soldier as any man in my troop; as good with the pistol as myself, and if she lacks my strength with the saber, she makes up for it in skill. Her cuts and points are swift as winged lightning, and about as deadly!”
“She should ‘ave live in ze time of ze gran’ Napoleon!” said Michel, moved with the enthusiasm which the Colonel evinced. “Yes, she should ‘ave live zen. He would ‘ave make Field Marshale of her, and, and—ah, mon Dieu—it make me mad every time I think of ze gran’ Napoleon, to think zat he should die one prisoner to zee miserable John Bull mens! But ‘are zat he die at Waterloo, bittare zat he die in ze ditch in Frapce zan in ze bed at Saint Helene! Mon Dieu, nevare, nevare can I make myself content when I sink of zat Empereur wis one half ze world at his feet at one time, reduce to ask after zat ze favor from ze perfide Angla or for to give him one home, wis plenty of guard, plenty of doctare for make him go to heaven so soon as possible. Nevare mind, nevare mind, one of zee days, zat will all come back, and Saint Helene will be pay for by ze son and ze grandson, and ze son of zem all zat love ze gran’ Napoleon ze same as I, Carl Michel!”
And carried away on a subject which always set him well nigh crazy, Michel, with tears rolling down his scarred cheeks, swallowed a brim- ming glass of brandy, and then again became calm.
“You spoke of Beverly and my sister in the same connection!” said Warburton to Michel.
“Does he still express a wish to marry her?”
“More zan a wish, Messire Warburton—more zan a wish—he express one gran’ determination! He say he will give me four, five thousand dollare so zat I shall bring her where she can be made his wife!”
“Can you do so?”
“Can I do so, Messire Warburton? Sare, wis money Carl Michel can do almost every sing! He cannot make ze lady love Messire Beverly, but he can bring her where Messire Beverly can for himself speak and try for to make her love him! Ze next time I come from Baltimore, in anozzere schoonare, wis more cargo for ze Confederacie, zat lady will be a passengare wis me! Zat is, wisout you, as her brozare, object!”
“No—I shall not object. It was and is my desire to see her married to Beverly!”
“Eh bien! zen it shall be! I ‘ave now, on zis schoonare, noising but goods for ze ladies of Rishemond. Down ze rivare I sell all my store zat was desire by soldiare and shentilmen—ze pistole, ze knife, ze whisky, and all zat. Ze schoonare, too, is engage for ze Confederacie, to be altare into one steambot. I shall sell my goods and go back to Baltimore, and in four or five, and may be seven or eight weeks, I shall come back wis anozzere schoonare, and anozzere cargo, and then Messire Beverley shall ‘ave ze lady, or you may kill Carl Michel wis one glass of ginja beer!”
“Well, success to your undertakings! You must excuse us now. I hear a bugle ahøre which calls for me!” said Stuart at this moment, and Michel had to forego stating further plans, and see his guests to the boat.

CHAPTER XL

Before making arrangements for transporting his remaining goods to Richmond, Michel selected some presents for his friends Stuart and Warburton, not forgetting the dashing daughter of Colonel, and went on shore to present them in due form.
He was greeted with the warmest courtesy by the two officers, and the never-absent jug of ancient apple-jack was set out, flanked by army sandwiches—an article some of my readers may not have had any experience in. They are not dangerous to digestion—I cannot say so in regard to tea—and are composed of hard crackers and bacon.

After the lunch had been appropriately honored, Michel made his presents to the Colonel and Major, consisting mainly of some fine cigars and good old cognacs; which were received with a profusion of thanks, for such articles are generally considered more precious than gold in camp, for gold cannot always procure them. And were the writer to judge, he would unhesitatingly say, that the camp would even be better off without the articles named, than with them.

"Where now, Colonel, is ze Mademoiselle charmante, your daughtarje, la belle Kate. I'ave somessing very elegant for her," asked Michel.

"Satan is always at hand when he is called for!" cried a cheerful voice at the entrance of the tent, and Kate espied him. She had apparently just come from a ride; for her cheeks were flushed, and a slight flowering of dust lay upon the jaunty gray hat and the long black ostrich feather which drooped from it, as well as upon the gold-embroidered tunic of gray cloth which fitted her elegant form perfectly. "What can I do for you, mon cher Capitaine Fransoise?"

"Ah, Mademoiselle, I am very glad for to see you. You can make me one very happy man, if you shall accept some feetel presents, zat I'ave bring all ze way from Baltimore!"

And Michel hastened to unfold a large bundle which he had brought with him. It contained materials for an elegant dress, a fine shawl of Canton crepe, a lace veil, several pairs gaiters and slippers, and a set of approved—pardon my particularities—and consider that I'm blushing like a moss-rose, or a full blown bollyhook, kind ladies—a set of Yankee patented hoops.

Kate looked at the articles enoily, not a word of pleasure passed her lips, nor a look of curiosity could be seen on her bland-like face. Michel looked up at her in surprise; for he had chosen his choicest goods for the present, and expected, of course, woman-like, she would go into ecstasies over the elegant display. Not she! There was better stuff in her composition than is found in the generality of her sex.

Looking at the articles, she said:

"You are very kind, Captain, and I will accept these articles and send them to my sister; for you can see by a look at my dress—and she glanced complacently at her next tunic, fell Turkish trowsers, and elegant riding boots, with keen roweled spurs affixed—that I have exchanged the woman, in apparel at least, while my dear father is in the field. But I thank you ever more than as if I wore them, for my sister is dearer to me than myself, and these articles will be appreciated by her. And in return you shall have a present from me, Captain!"

And Kate went into an inner apartment of the hut, evidently arranged for her own use. Soon returning, she handed to Michel an elegant silver mounted field-glass, or telescope, such as is used by signal-officers and others on the field.

"Here," she said, "is one of my first captures. It belonged to one of the Yankee General McDowell's Aids; and as I intend to keep so close to the enemy that I shall never need a glass to see them, it will be of little service to me. Take it, Captain, and, when you use it, think of Kate Stuart, full of fun and mischief, with a good deal that is Satanie in her composition, but not utterly heartless, after all."

"Mademoiselle—I shall preserve this glass so long as I shall live!" said Michel, bowing to the very ground. "And since it is for your sistar zat you intend ze articles which I noz present to you, please accept zis—ze one zat was made in Venice—from me!"

And the polite Frenchman took from under his vest a pearl-handled dagger with a golden seashell, most exquisitely ornamented with filagree work.

"Ah—that will be of some use—that is a magnificent present, my dear Captain. I accept it with many, many thanks, and will preserve it, and use it too, when occasion offers!" cried Kate, enthusiastically, as she took the weapon, and after examining it, with continued expressions of gratification, she placed it in her belt beside her silver-mounted pistols.

"Kate is all soldier, you see!" said the Colonel, looking proudly upon his child.

"Yes, Colonel—if all ze ladies in ze Confederacy were like her, and all ze men so brave as her, ze Yankee doedale Government might consider zemselves in one grand war which should last forever, if zey not make peace zemselves!" said Michel, much gratified at the manner in which his last present was received.

"I wish all were alike interested!" said Stuart, with a sigh. "There are too many who are cold-blooded, and willing to do anything but fight! If there is so little enthusiasm in the start, God only knows what the feeling will be by and by, especially if we meet—as we may expect, till we get our hands in—some heavy reverses!"

"Yes; and zem very men zat you so peake of, will be ze ones zat by and by will ask for peace—peace, and—it may be zey will get it! But excuse me—I must go to my schooner to get ready for ze train zat start in three hours for Richmond!"

CHAPTER XLII.

Not more than a month had gone by since Captain O'Dougal had related to his friend Mr. Winter the unfortunate result of his chase after
the blockade-running schooner down the bay, when the Captain once more entered the sanctum or private office of the merchant.

The Captain's jovial face, ruddy as the faces of most seafaring men are, did not exhibit any signs of sadness on this occasion; and his hearty shake of the hand assured Mr. Winter that his "muscle" was in no way out of order.

"I see by the papers that you have been quite lucky in overhauling blockade-runners and taking prizes, Captain," said Mr. Winter, as he motioned the worthy officer to a seat. "I suppose the demijohn is full now, and Mrs. O'D. and the youngsters out in a full rig of new toryyery."

"Thank you, Sir—yes; thank you kindly—yes. The old cutter and yours to command, and in command, have been as lucky as fiddlers lately. And my old friend the detective, who was on the watch for the fellow who got away from me before, says he is back again, and he is quite sure he is buying up another cargo. If he gets clear of me this time, I will eat a fathom of chain-cable, without mustard! I wish the Government would let me have a steam-cutter, instead of our old schooner. I could then dodge into the inlets and little rivers down the bay, and get a peep at the islands—which I cannot now—and do much better than I do."

"Yes; steam would be of service to you. Now, our firm has a fine propeller that we used formerly in the Charleston trade. She is a good sea-boat, and fast. Perhaps, by proper representations, the Government might be induced to charter or buy her for you. We have no present use for her, and the Government could make its own terms with us."

"I wish you could work the matter up, then, Mr. Winter, so that I could get her."

"Well, Captain, if you will write to the Secretary, stating the necessity which you think there is for such a vessel, I will state in another letter that we have one which the Government can have at cost. I do not like to do more, for I would be one of the last to add one extra dollar to the too heavy tax already felt by the Treasury."

"I know that, Sir; and it was to consult you about this matter that I came. I wish to do the best I can for the Government, and every prize I take, as you know, adds to its treasury. It is not alone for my share of prize-money that I am so active, though it takes money to keep Mrs. O'D. and the youngsters afloat and in good condition, not to speak of yours to command."

"And the demijohn, too, which you ever keep at the service of your friends," said Mr. Winter, laughing.

"Oh, you're too hard on me, Sir—toot hard!" said the Captain, trying to look serious.

"Well, I will try to soften my harshness by asking your judgment on some of this old rye, said to have been bottled at the time of the great Whisky Insurrection in Pennsylvania."

And the merchant took a black bottle from a closei, and a couple of tumblers.

"You would be an insult to it to mix water with such prime mellow liquor as this," said the Captain, as he took a sip, and then raised his glass to look through the clear amber of the liquor.

"Splendid—splendid!" he said, admiringly. "It looks like water with sunset afloat on it. And it is as smooth as a lawyer talking to a jury."

And after looking at it as lovingly as a mother at her first-born, he sighed, not sadly, and swallowed it slowly. Then he sighed again, and said in a quiet way:

"That kind of medicine would make the fortune of any doctor."

"For fear that you should be taken ill, I will send a dozen bottles of it on board to you," said Mr. Winter.

"I scarcely know how to thank you," said the Captain. "If it is to be taken as a preventive, I shall never get sick while it lasts."

"Use it as sure or preventive," said Winter, smiling. "When will you take another cruise?"

"Not at present if, as my detective friend says, the fellow who got away from me before is fitting out for another trip. I owe him a grudge, and am bound to have him, if possible. If I could only get your steamer and a good riffed Parrot thirty, or even an eighty-four pounder, I'd have a dash at some of their Rebel gunboats if they came within my range. But I'll go on board and have my clerk make out a letter to the Secretary. Good morning, Sir: good morning."

And the jovial Captain went away with a light heart and a smiling face. Sincerely had he gone, when one of the clerks announced a stranger, whose card bore the name "Alphonse Martel, de Bordeaux."

"Show the gentleman in," said the merchant. "I am disengaged."

A moment later, a short, thick-set gentleman, whose face looked much older than his jet-black hair and heavy beard, entered, and, bowing very low, said:

"Ave I e honore to address Messieur Winter, ze great merchant of whom I hear in France often upon ze time?"

"Yes Sir, that is my name; and this, I presume, is yours," said Mr. Winter, glancing at the card in his hand.

"Alphonse Martel—oui, zat, Sare, is my name. I formerly was live in Bordeaux, but my sentiments zat were very popular when Louis Napoleon was President, and France—poor France—republicke, were not popular when he became ze Emperor. Ze consequence was—zat to save
my head upon my body I have emigrate, and have come to zia grand republique, to live where I can see Liberty.

"Well, Sir, you will find a warm welcome here. Our land is really a home for the oppressed and down-trodden of all nations. Do you intend to go into business here?"

"I have such intention, Sare, and I come to see you, Messieur Wintare, upon biznas. I have been inform zat one very good biznas now in ze war will be for to transport for ze Government of the United States. And as I still possess some money and have one grande passion for ze sea, I 'ave considerate zat I should like very much to go in zat biznas, if I can purchase one good transport. One shantilman zat I was make ze acquaintance, tell me zat you have one very fine steamboat zat perhaps you should like for to sell."

"We have a propeller," said Mr. Winter; "but an officer in the United States Revenue service, who left me just before you came in, has been sent to get her, and is about to try to get her for the United States service. I cannot sell her until the result of his application is learned."

"Ah, I am very much sorry zat I 'ave not come before him; if he do not take her, zen can my application be consaire as next, Messieur Wintare?"

"Certainly, Sare,—certainly. If the Government does not need her, we should be glad to sell her, for at present we have no use for her."

"She is in good ordare, Sare, is she not?"

"Yes, so I understand. Her insurance is at 'A.' And she made excellent trips when we took her off the line; is represented as being very fast, an excellent seaboat, well-found and staunch in every respect."

"When shall I come, Sare, to know if ze Government shall not want her?"

"In the course of a week, if you please; we shall undoubtedly know by that time. But I think that it is very likely that the Government will want her on such liberal terms as we are willing to offer."

And the Frenchman, whose readers we may have recognized, bowed himself from the room.

"I don't like the looks of that man; he has the devil in his eye!" said the merchant to himself, as the door closed.

CHAPTER XIII.

The reader, perhaps, has not forgotten the assemblage of rouges, blacklegs, and regular desperadoes, which composed the very select company chosen by Michel to assist him in his smuggling or blockade-running operations, though they are not of a class with whom we like our memories to dwell. Necessity, that disagreeable tyrant who at times appears in all circles, forces us to again meet them, in order to keep the links of our story from separation.

Immediately after his interview with Mr. Winter, Carl Michel, elegantly dressed as he was, slip into a close-curtained hackney coach, and was waiting near, and was driven to the low and unpopular, though very populous, neighborhood which we once before alluded to—the Point.

Tossing the driver a liberal fee, after he had stopped near the house which we once before described, the Frenchman hurried into it, and passing through the front room, entered that where he last had an interview with his "select company". The same men were there—the same thick-bottomed tumblers—the same black bottles on the long table and behind the bar, and the same frowzy-headed woman stood in the corner.

"Hurrah for the Captain, here he comes! Hallo! he's all in his Sunday-go-to-meeting rig!" cried one of the liveliest of the crew, when Michel entered.

"Yes, you should be very much proud, shultlemens, zat you 'ave one captain who can look so superbe, so elegant, zat he can appear in ze best society of ze bon ton, and be regard ze same as one prince in ze disguise. No one zat 'ave see me wiz my sea-riog upon me would now reconize Messieur Alphonse Martel of Bordeaux. I was treat very polite whereare I go!"

"What about the steamer, Captain? Can we get one?" asked the man who had acted as chief mate on the previous voyage.

"I am afraid not ze one zat we desire. Zat dam revenue-cutarte man is after her, and if he persuade ze Government to buy her, we will be disappoint. Sare, she would be just what we desire! I wish zat revenue-cutarte officare was down in ze bottom of ze Shesapeake!"

"There are ether steamers to be had!" said the first speaker.

"None zat are so good—none so fast, zat draw so little of ze watere, zat carry so much!" said Michel, taking a seat and helping himself to a glass of whisky.

"Well, we must have something. It will never do for us to stay long around here. The infernal detectives are everywhere, and the most of us are so well spotted that we have to keep in doors now!"

"Do not bazzare about that! We shall very soon be off in some way, for I've ze cargo all ready purchase!" said Michel. "And how about ze ladie? 'Ave you discoverate what I desire, Messieur Hoyle?"

"Yes—I've made some discoveries in regard to her habits. She has made few acquaintances in her neighborhood where she goes to visit. But I have learned that she is very charitable, and goes much amongst the poor and sick near where she lives!"
“Bon—in zis way, when we are ready for to sail, we can get her wiz us on board. We send some leetle raggedy boy, or some poor little girl to say zare mozare is very poor and is near for to die, and zey say shall cry a leetle, and she will go quick for to see and to help. We 'ave seen one carriage all ready on ze street, and quick, one, two, tree of us, catch her, put her in, and drive down ze vessel!”

“She'll scream like a steamboat, I'm afraid, when we lay hands on her!” said one of the men.

“If you use one handkerchief over her mouth, I sink she not scream much loud,” said Michel. “And zen if you 'ave put upon it plenty of ze chloroform, she will go into one sleep very soon, directly!”

“Yes—that's the talk. The Captain has the idea!” cried one of the oldest hands in the gang.

“But suppose she should happen to carry barlers. I've known women to do such things, and shoot, too, when it was least expected!”

“Pahow! She is not one of that kind, I don't think!” said the man who had been most forward in making discoveries in regard to Sadia. “She looks as pleasant and gentle as a Quaker girl in meeting, and I've neither seen or heard of any such thing. And the niggers, who are always boasting of what their mistress is and what she does, would be rather apt to hint such a thing, to show her courage. I'll risk getting shot by her, when the time comes. I don't believe that I am to die by a woman's hands at any rate!”

“Not till they make women hangmen, Hoyle!” cried one of the party, with a laugh.

“Well, we will soon make ze arrangements, shentleman!” said Michel. “One sing is certain, when we go, ze ladde must go wiz us; not only because we shall shall get much money for her, but more zan zat, I 'ave given my word and my honore, zat she shall be wiz us; and when I say zat, it shall be. Ze word of Carl Michel, when wiz it he extend his honore, is more sacred zan his life!”

“I reckon we can get her off without much trouble!” said Hoyle. “And I want to be about it as soon as I can, for Baltimore isn't what it used to be to me and men of our kidney. Detectives and coppers are too thick here for comfort. You can't have a decent row without being took up. You can't drop in to take a drink, or look for a pigeon, or a greeny in some hushin' crib, without finding some over-hauling curse close aboard of you! A man has to be extra sharp to keep out of limbo now, in this place!”

And then Hoyle heaved a deep sigh, and drank off a full tumbler of whisky to swim his grief in.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Just as it was in regard to cavalry at the commencement of the war, so for a time was it with the introduction of steam into the naval and revenue service.

And thus it was that Captain O'Dougal's endeavor to get the propeller in place of the old cutter was fruitless, and his proposition to the Department rejected without question. And in his grief at his disappointment he went at once to his friend, Mr. Winter.

“Bad luck to their stupidity,” said he, as he took a seat in Mr. Winter's office—“they tell me that I can do well enough with my cutter under canvas, and the Department can't afford steam! 'Tis enough to make me go to steamimg it on that old whisky you so kindly sent me, Sir!”

“Yes, I was aware that an adverse decision was made!” said the merchant. “We received a letter this morning, declining our offer in regard to the vessel; and upon your account more than our own I regret the disappointment. We already have an offer for our vessel at private sale, and of course we shall ask and get much more for her from private persons than we would ask from the Government at this crisis.”

“Just my luck! If it wasn't for Mrs. O'—and the younger, I'd resign out of spite. Here I've been laying out plans for bagging a lot of fellows that I know are skulking about them rivers, and I can never run my cutter under sail up into the narrow channels; and if I tried it, I'd get caught without a breeze, and like as not get all cut up without the power to help myself! It is too bad—too bad!”

“Well, do not take it too much to heart, Captain. I've a little of that old whisky left; try a glass, and see how it mellows disappointment.”

“Thank you, Sir. I see that you know the weak side of me, coming from the Celtic side of my ancestry; for whisky is the great antidote of grief, I believe, in my mother-land. But joking aside, this puts me out more than I can tell you!”

Mr. Winter filled a couple of glasses of old rye for himself and the Captain, and had just placed his own to his lips, when a clerk entered and said that Mr. Alphonse Armand requested an interview with Mr. Winter.

“Ah—the very gentleman who wants to purchase the steamer! Admit him!” said Mr. Winter, placing another glass on his table.

Dressed full as elegantly as when he first visited the merchant, Mr. Alphonse Martel, alias Michel, entered the room.

Not being aware that any person besides Mr. Winter was there, the Frenchman, in spite of his usual self-assurance, was somewhat taken aback to find a United States officer there, and hesitated at the door.

“Does come in, Sir—no privacy here. Come in, Mr. Martel,” said Mr. Winter, in a friendly tone. “Let me introduce you to my particular friend, Captain O'Dougal, of the Revenue Service!”
THE FAITHFUL SISTER.

"Very proud, Sare, to make ze acquaintance of your friend, Captain de Dugal! Very 'appy Sare," said the Captain, taking off his hat and bowing very low.

"Take a seat, Sir, and join us in a glass of old rye. We were about to indulge when your name was announced!" said the merchant, as he filled a glass and handed it to the Frenchman.

"Ah, Sare, I am very much honoré! I drink to your health, shentlemen!"

"I suppose you came to renew your inquiries about our steamer?" said Mr. Winter, as he replaced his glass on the table.

"Yes, Sare—zat was my bizness!" said the other, looking with a disquieted air at the revenue-officer. "But I am not in one grand hurry—when you are disengaged it will do!"

"Oh, I am disengaged now! The Captain here has just come to inform me that he has failed to make the Government see the necessity of her purchase for his use! Therefore, she is still in the market."

"Eh, bien! zen how much shall you ask for her ze money in cash, right away?"

"We hold her as she lies, ready for sea, at sixty-five thousand dollars."

"Sixty-five thousands of dollars! Zat is much money. But I will see my friends. I sink zat we will purchase! I will see you and let you know, Sare, by one more day."

"Very well, Sir, we will await your decision. If you wish to examine the vessel, the watchman on board will afford you every facility."

"I am much obliged, Sare. I 'ave examine her one, two, tree time, before. I wish you good morning, Sare—and ze same to ze Captain de Dugal."

And Michel bowed himself out with less ceremony than he had used on his first visit.

"I don't like the cut of that fellow's jib!" said Captain O'Dougal, bluntly, when the door closed behind the receding visitor. "He may be all right, and square, but I like to see men look another plum in the eye when they speak to him."

"Your business makes you rather suspicious of all strangers, I expect!" said Mr. Winter, with a smile. Then looking at his watch, he said, "It is near my usual lunch-hour, suppose you go and try a salad, or a soft-crab with me."

"I've no objections!" said the Captain, "especially as I shall be too late for our twelve-o'clock dinner before I get aboard, and I've said good-bye to Mrs. O'Dougal and the youngster for today."

CHAPTER XLIV.

The gang under the rule of Michel were all assembled in their rendezvous on the Point, indulging as usual in liquor and cards, for men of their class know no higher enjoyment than that which they find in such amusement.

"I wish we were ashore again!" said the one named Hoyle, who, in honor of his name, was quite an adept in all the mysteries of old sledge, euchre, forty-fives, etc., etc.

"Wl", I don't see but what we're well enough off here!" said another. "We've nothing to do, money left over, and as good luhsh (drink) as any man can want. I'm in no hurry to leave snug quarters—that's what the matter with me!"

"The luhsh is all O.K.—and the quarters are well enough!" replied Hoyle. "But since these blasted new police and detectives have got to work, a fellow never knows what danger he is in. When old Kane had charge of the "cops" a fellow could do about as he liked. If he got nabbed, a few shiners would clear him, and that was the end of it. The next time we get down into Dixie I believe I'll stay there!"

"A fool you for that. Old Jeff will have you in his bullet-eating army before you can play three hands of euchre, and then some Yank will send you to kingdom come before you're even prayed for! Dixie will do to trade in, but blast the fighting for me!"

The conversation was here interrupted by the entrance of Michel, whose eyes flashed like those of a snake as he cried:

"Good news, shentlemen! Bon informations! Superb news have I for you. I 'ave purchase ze steamboat—I 'ave acquire ze Vapeur! Ze propel zat is name ze Lone Star, belong to our association in ze name of Messieur Alphonse Martel as ownner and Capi-

"Hurrah for him!" shouted one of the gang.

"Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!" cried the rest, amid the clashing of glasses and stamping of feet.

"And now what's next on the peppergram, Captain P?" asked Hoyle. "Can we go on board and get the craft ready for sea?"

"Yes—you can go on ze board—but she is all ready for ze sea. She 'ave coal in ze lockears and watere in ze boilear. All zat now she need is our cargo, and ze provision, and ze fire in ze furnace, and away we shall go! Ah, shentlemen, zis is one grand victory! Now what will ze miserable cutzare do? If she chase us, we run against ze wind and she must tack and tack she is nowhere! Ah, shentlemen—ze Vapeur is one grand idea!"

"When can we get off?" asked Hoyle.

"Zis night, if you all work like ze dable. Ze more soon, ze more better! For zen nobody shall 'ave ze suspicione—you unnerstan' zat?"

"Yes—the idea is good. If the goods can be got on board and we get away before day-light, fareweel danger for a while!"

"Well, we can do it if we try. And now,
Messieur Hoyle, you ave one difficulty before you zat must be done! Must, you understand, for zere must not be ze word fail, or we lose several thousand of ze dollars!"

"You mean the young woman, I suppose!"

"Oui, certaintement! I mean ze young ladie! She must be secure—she must be make one passengare wit us upon ze Lone Star!"

"Well, I think it can be done!"

"Sare, upon zis occasion you must not tink—you must be sure! Zere is in your hand which I give you now, fifty dollare for hire a carriage and any ozzare help you want! Zere must be no mistake!"

"There shall not be," said Hoyle, as he pocketed the money. "You can count upon her being aboard Captain. I'll try the charitable-visit dodge first, and then use chloroform if I must!"

"Eh bien—and now shentiments, so soon as you like you can change your quarters for ze steamboat. Remember if you are ask ze questions, zat you know nussing at all, but zat you are employ for crew by Captain Alphonse Marchel. I 'ave engage ze engineer, and I 'ave secure four niggare for make ze fire! I shall myself go on ze board, and by-and-by you shall see ze cargo come very fast!"

"Good—three cheers for the Captain, and a drink all round before we go aboard!" cried Hoyle.

The cheers were given, of course, and the drinks followed as usual.

Then the preparations for removal were made, and soon the old den on the Point was once more vacated by its riotous crew.

CHAPTER XLV.

We have not before glanced at Sadia in her boarding-house, where, with the good Mrs. Meredith, she found in every respect a home.

It was evening of the night of the same day when Michel gieefully informed his lawless companions of the acquisition of the steamer so useful for their nefarious business.

Mrs. Meredith, one of those still elderly ladies, whose faces seem to map out care and a quiet resignation to the same, sat by a small table engaged in sewing, and listening to the children, who were reciting to their sister Sadia the lessons which they had studied through the day.

The bearing of Mrs. M., her extremely neat and genteel dress, composed as it was of very cheap materials, all indicated the lady of taste, who had seen days when she could afford more elegance than at this time.

The little parlor in which the four were seated, lacked the elegant furniture which wealth would have commanded; but everything was there which was actually needed, and all arranged so neatly and with so much taste that few rooms could have been made more pleasantly comfortable.

Sadia, who, each morning before she went to the counting-room, gave out the lessons which her brother and sister were to study during the day, occupied each evening when at home—and she was seldom out—in hearing those lessons, and correcting any errors into which the dear ones had fallen.

Then until bedtime she read or played her guitar and sang pleasant songs, making home happy with her music. For gentle music and home-love go hand in hand, and the shadows of care fall lightly where they are.

The children had studied diligently, and a happy smile passed over the lovely face of Sadia when she closed the books, and calling them to her side, kissed her brother and sister fondly, while she praised them for their goodness.

"I have so much to make me happy," she said to Mrs. Meredith, who seemed herself to enjoy the pleasure felt by her young boarder.

"The parents who were so dear to me have been lifted up to heaven, and are spared the terrible sorrow of seeing their beloved country disunited, its soil drenched with blood, their own son a traitor, and their cherished home a desolation. Providence has been most kind to me, raised up new friends, and enabled me by my own endeavors to support myself and these loved ones in comfort. Oh, how much have I to be thankful for!"

Few would take their changed lot from influence to a necessity for labor as well as you do, my dear Miss Sadia!" said Mrs. Meredith, with a smile as gentle as her voice. "It is indeed a blessing to have a spirit which, proud in all proper things, can accommodate itself to the lot which necessity brings upon it. And I am far more happy than I was when you first came to my house—for I then feared you would despise under care, as I too often have done. Your cheerfulness has encouraged and ailed me, for I was lonely; and with my poor husband's sufferings to look upon, and so little to aid him with, I often felt as if I would yield to despair and sink under my burden. You came like a blessing to me, my dear girl, and it will be a sad day when I have to part with you. You and the children seem to me as near as if you were indeed my own!"

"I know that you feel so, Mrs. Meredith; your kind acts verify your words; and I hope that it will be long before we part, for I feel indeed at home with you."

"A ring at the door-bell at this moment caused Mrs. Meredith to rise; for she had permitted her servant to go out on a visit that evening, and she had to attend the door in person.

She returned in a moment followed by a ragged and very "hard-looking" boy, whose face seemed to be known to Sadia, for she smiled as she said to Mrs. Meredith:

"I expect this call is for me. How is your mother, my poor boy?"
THE FAITHFUL SISTER.

"Wuss, a heap wuss, Mom, and she wants to see you right off for sumfin!" said the boy, in that sniveling tone which seems habitual to beggary.

"Well, I'll put on my shawl and go down there directly. Hurry home and tell your mother that I'll come in a few moments."

"Yes'm, yes'm." And the ragged boy hurried away.

"You had better let Napoleon go with you, my dear Miss Sadin," said Mrs. Meredith. "I do not like to see you go out in the night alone."

"Oh, it is only a little ways—not more than three or four squares distant, if so far," said Sadis, hurriedly preparing for her walk. "Do not be alarmed, for I will soon be back."

And the noble-hearted girl hurried off upon her mission of mercy. Nevertheless, Mrs. Meredith went into the kitchen and told Napoleon to hurry after his mistress, and not to lose sight of her.

CHAPTER XLVI.

Mr. Winter was at home with his family, listening to a song from his favorite daughter, the pretty and chubby Carrie. The business of the day was over and its cares forgotten. For he was not one of those men who carry the toils of business home with them and never give their mind a moment's rest or the benefit of change.

It was getting pretty well on toward bedtime when a servant hurriedly entered and said:

"The servant of Miss de Montfort is below, Sir, and wants to see you very much. He says something terrible has happened to his mistress."

"To Miss de Montfort? Send the man to me directly!" cried Mr. Winter, springing to his feet.

In a moment, Napoleon, trembling with excitement, and so agitated that he could scarcely speak, came into the room.

"O de Lor! O de Lor! Miss Sadie done gone—Miss Sadie done gone!" was all that the poor negro could say at first.

"What is the matter with your mistress, my man? Speak out, and let me know," cried Mr. Winter.

"She's done gone—done gone! Dey's run her off! cried Napoleon, in almost a howl, as he wrung his black hands in agony.

"Who? Where is she? Speak, and tell me what is the matter, you rascal!"

"I doesn't know where she is now. De blessed angel am done gone!"

"Gone where? Explain yourself before I get out of patience with you!" cried Mr. Winter, angrily.

"Don't be mad wid me, Mars'r Winter; I is most done gone dead now. Jess you listen, an' tell you all I know 'bout how it was."

"Well, go on, and be in a hurry, so that I may know what to do."

"Well, you see, Mars'r, I was a sittin' in de kitchen, round dar at Miss Meridet's, when Miss Meridet come in and says to me: 'Napoleon, your young missus has jest gone out de street on a visit to a sick 'oman as has sent for her. Kum quick, my man, and keep close to her, so no harm don't happen to her.' And I put on my hat and went, Mars'r, jest as fast as I could. I seen her when I got on de street, way on ahead of me, and I went jest as fast as I could, and I'd got most up to her, when two men grabbed her, and shoved her in a carriage dat was a standin' wid de door open right by de sidewalk. She jest give one screetch, and den dey seemed to choke her, for I didn't hear nothin' more. I run jes' as fast as I could to help her, but de men jump in wid her, and de driber whipped his horses into a run, and dey went off like lightnin'. I run and run, and I couldn't catch 'em, and den dey clean went out of sight, and I come back to Miss Meridet, and she done told me to come here to you and tell you. An' I left her and de poor chil'ens a cryin', and some jes' as fast as I could.

"Which way did the carriage go?" asked Mr. Winter, hurriedly.

"Down toward de Basin, Mars'r."

"What color were the horses?"

"Dark cloth, I b'lieve, Mars'r. I was so skeered I didn't notice much."

"Poor child! This is terrible! I will go to alarm the police, and try to get upon the track of the villains!" cried Mr. Winter.

"And you, girls," continued he to his daughters, "go down to Mrs. Meredith's with this man Napoleon, and bring the two children up here. This shall be their home until I find their sister."

"Yes, father," cried Carrie and her sister. And they hurried away to put on garments for the street, while Mr. Winter sent his servant for his hat and cane.

"Have you any idea who can have been concerned in this outrage?" Mrs. Winter asked of her husband.

"Undoubtedly some emissaries of her brother or the dastardly cousin she has told us about," said Mr. Winter. "But I will alarm the police and the Provost-Marshal, and she may yet be rescued. It is the boldest thing that I ever heard of, and I hardly think her captors can escape—or, at the best, I doubt if they can get outside the Federal lines without detection."

Being ready for his walk, the kind-hearted merchant hurried away, telling his wife to take the kindest care of the children when they came.

CHAPTER XLVII.

Alas for Sadie! So sudden had been her seizure, so powerful were those in whose grasp she found herself, that, with strength to scarce
only once for assistance, she was thrust helpless into the carriage, which was instantly in rapid motion. And then some moist cloth seemed to be enveloped around her head, a wild stupefy-
sing sensation came over her, and for a time she knew no more.

When she again knew herself, she found that she was in a small room, not more than eight or ten feet square, with only one chair, a small table, a looking-glass, a wash-stand, and the narrow berth or bed upon which she lay, for furniture. These things she observed by the light of a small swinging lamp that hung from the ceiling above, for the room was tightly closed.

She knew, by hearing the dash of water, the sound of machinery, and feeling a rocking and trembling sensation, that she must be on a steamboat. But that was all that she knew of her situation. So suddenly and so unexpectedly had the events occurred on shore, that she had not even seen the face of one of her captors. She had heard but two words, and they were, "Drive on!"—uttered at the moment she was lifted into the carriage.

Her first action, upon the recovery of conscioussness, was to spring from the bed and to glance in the mirror which fronted her. She saw a pale and anxious face only—no marks of violence.

Then she quickly put her hand down into a side-pocket of her dress, and a flush of returning color came upon her cheek as she drew out a handsome revolver, of that very handy size next to the "Navy pattern". She smiled as she saw that it was yet loaded, and murmured:

"Thank Heaven! this has not been discov-
ered yet! Life and honor are still in my hands!"

And after looking at each cap, to see that it was right, she replaced the weapon in her pocket, and then looked carefully around the room, to examine its capacities as a prison. She now saw, for the first time, a small red curtain on the ceiling, directly over her bed. Upon raising this, a window, about eighteen inches square, permitted her to look out upon an angry sea—the waves dashed and pitching to a greater height than she had ever seen them. At a great distance over the foaming waters, she saw what she supposed to be land, and also, here and there, white specks, like vessels under can-
avas.

A noise as of some one approaching the door caused her to suddenly drop the curtain to its place, and to assume a sitting position on the side of the bed.

The door was opened immediately afterward, and a woman's face—a coarse, repulsive face, surmounted by a frowzy head of hair—looked in.

"So! waked up, hey ye?" said this female, advancing half of a dirty- clad figure into the room. "Feel hungry, eh?"

"Where am I?" asked Sadia, instead of re-
ylying to the question.

"Aboard of a steamer on the Chesapeake. Don't you feel her roll and tumble? A nice breeze and pretty much of a sea on!" replied the woman.

"Where is the vessel going?" asked Sadia, scarcely able to suppress her disgust; for the reeking fumes of liquor came floating in on the repulsive woman's breath.

"To Dixie, to be sure; there's where she's bound! Now will you have some breakfast—fried ham and 'taters, coffee and passengers, with hard-tack dry or soaked?"

"Who brought me here?" asked Sadia, still unheeding the questions of the other.

"You must ask the Cap'n. He knows all about it, and that's more than I do."

"Who is the Captain?"

"Captain Michel, a Frenchman, and just about as smart as men are made now-a-days."

"Michel!—Michel!" said Sadia, quickly.

"Then I know why I have been torn away from my home and friends. He is in the em-
ploy of my brother, or one even yet worse than he. Woman, tell that Michel that I want to see him!"

"Yes, 'm, directly. But what about the breakfast?"

"I do not wish any."

"Very well—so much saved. But I reckon you'll come to your appetite by-and-by."

And the frowzy head was withdrawn, the door closed, and the key turned in the lock.

"Yes, this is the work of either Warburton or Beverly, or perhaps both!" said Sadia, as she again turned to the little window, and looked out upon the dark waves and their foaming crests.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

Mr. Winter, upon leaving his house, instantly went to the office of the Chief of Police, and gave information which at once put the detectives of the whole force afoot on the search for our unfortunate heroine.

From thence he hurried to the office of the Provost-Marshal, fortunately finding that official in; and soon mounted patrols were dis-
patched in every direction. A select party of men, with an officer, were at his request sent with him; and he hurried down toward the wharves in the direction where Napoleon had last seen the carriage going.

It was quite late before he reached the wharves; for it had taken a considerable time to visit the places to which he had gone. Just as they reached a wharf which pointed out toward the lower harbor, a steamer already in motion was seen receding rapidly from it.

"That is the Lone Star, purchased from our firm only this morning!" exclaimed Mr. Winter in surprise. "I do not understand what can
take her out so soon. I understood Captain Martel to say that he had no engagements for her yet, and that it would be some time before he put her into business? There must be something wrong in this! I wish we could stop her and know what is meant by this sudden departure?"

"She'll be stopped down at the mouth of the harbor, where the revenue-cutter is anchored!" said the officer. "No vessel is allowed to pass her at night without having proper authority!"

"Then we will soon learn whether she has that authority or not!" said the merchant. "She has a full head of steam on, and will soon be close to the cutter. She does not seem to avoid her in any way!"

"No; she is running close by her side. What a gale it is, blowing up the bay—nothing but a steamer could make headway in the teeth of it!"

"There—they see her on board the cutter— I see lights flashing from her deck!" cried Mr. Winter.

"Yes; but the steamer does not stop!" said the officer. "See—she keeps on; and now she is by a pound dead ahead of the cutter!"

"Yes; and something is wrong for all that! See how those lights flash from place to place upon the cutter's deck! And there goes a gun! I would stake a thousand dollars that the poor girl is on board of that boat," cried the excited merchant.

"Let us procure a boat and get on board the cutter," said the officer; "we may be of some use there, and at any rate can learn the news."

"Yes," said the merchant. "Look around for a boat, men; I will give ten dollars to the first one who secures a boat to take us off to the cutter."

The inducement was scarcely needed, for the men were all willing, and in a short time a boat was secured, and the party on their way to the revenue-vessel.

But the steamer, apparently unhurried, although three or four guns had been fired from the cutter, had moved rapidly out of sight down the bay.

"What is the matter, Captain O'Dougal?" asked the merchant, when, after a hard row against the wind, his boat was alongside the cutter.

"Matter enough, Sir?" growled Captain O'Dougal. "By the holy harper that played for Moses, I'm man enough to swallow a boot-jack! This is the economy of the Government—there goes a steamer, bound, without a doubt, to Dixie, running right away from me into the wind's eye; and it would be as much use for me now to get under way to look after her as it would be to hunt after Sir John Franklin in a canal-boat!"

"How did she pass you so easily, Sir?" asked the officer.

"Why, she came down upon us so suddenly and with so little noise that the watch did not see her or call me until she was close aboard! I ran up from the cabin and hailed her just as she was passing, asked what steamer she was, and ordered her to heave to!"

"The answer which came from her was, that it was the United States transport Swan, bound down the bay with dispatches, and couldn't stop! I know better, for the Swan is a side-wheel boat instead of a propeller. So I hailed her again, and told her I'd fire if she didn't stop. She then just luffed ahead of me and her skipper sung out, 'shoot—shoot you damn fool!' And I did shoot like a darned fool; for I couldn't throw a shot near her, and in three or four minutes she was out of sight to windward! There is one comfort—there's more than one of our gunboats in the bay below, and the mouth of York River has been closely watched since that rascal schooner got away from me there!"

Another boat came alongside at this moment, and the detective officer, who had before informed O'Dougal of the actions of the smugglers on shore, sprung on deck.

"Has the propeller gone by?" be asked, hastily.

"By? Yes, a half-hour or an hour ago!" said the Captain. "She's hull down before this time, for she went like a scared cat!"

"Unfortunate. I was on the track of her, and put on a wrong scent. She had a valuable cargo on board, and was bound for Dixie!" said the detective.

"Just my luck. Bless the Government that leaves me this old tub to chase fast steamers!" said Captain O'Dougal, bitterly.

"Did you know who the leader of this smuggling party was?" asked Mr. Winter, addressing the Government detective.

"Yes, the same Frenchman who ran a schooner out of here six or eight weeks ago—the schooner which got into York River, and escaped from this cutter."

"Was his name Martel—Alphonse Martel?"

"No—the name he goes by among his gang, is Michel. But such men use whatever suits them, when they have occasion for it!"

"Michel—that name I have heard before! Yes, I have heard Miss De Montfort speak of such a man being the guide for her brother when he was pursuing her. The poor girl must be on board of that steamer. Captain O'Dougal, cannot you give chase to the villain?"

"It would be mere madness to try to beat down the bay in this gale, with the thought of catching a steamer!" said the Captain. "The best thing which can be done will be, to telegraph to Fortress Monroe, and to the Potomac flotilla, that a vessel of her description is on the way down the bay, and to put the gunboats down that way on the lookout for her. She
went fast, but the telegraph-flash can beat her!"

"True—true! I will go on shore and act
upon your advice immediately. For the Govern-
ment telegraph-offices are open night and day!"
cried the merchant.
And in a few moments he was on his way to
the shore.

CHAPTER XLIX.
In a short time after Sadia had told the frowsy-
haired woman that she wished to see Captain
Michel, steps were heard before the door of
the little state-room in which the poor
was confined—the key was turned in the
lock, and Michel, dressed with elaborate care,
and bowing very low, presented himself.
"Mademoiselle, 'ave de me ze honare to say
she wish for to see me!" said the Frenchman,
bowing very gracefully.
"I have seen you before, at my father's
house, have I not?" asked Sadia, glancing with
a cold and stately look at the man.
"I 'ave had de honore to be present to you,
Mademoiselle, in ze house of your very excellent
fazzare!"
"Then, Sir, I have to ask, why I have been
subjected to this cruel outrage?"
"Outrage? Ma'mselle, I do not understand
you. Outrage? Has anybody dare for to ins-
ult you upon ze board of your steamboat?"
"Do you not call it an outrage, Sir, to have
me seized in the streets of Baltimore, when I
was going, as I supposed, upon a mission of
humanity; and by some means, I know not
what, to substitute and render me helpless, and
thus to carry me away from my friends, as you
are now doing?"
"From your friends, Ma'mselle? Excuse me,
but you make one grand mistake! You are
going to your friends—friends who 'ave feel one
very grand anxiety while you was absent from
zem!"
"Friends! I suppose you use that false
 term in allusion to either Randolph Beverly, or
my brother!"
"Certainement, Ma'mselle! Zey 'ave feel
one intense anxiety for ze safety of yourself, es-
pecially Messieur Beverly! He will be so de-
light when he shall see you, zat he will give me,
at ze very least, four or five thousand of ze dol-
lare!"
"I thought so!" said Sadia, in a scornful tone,
while a look of contempt almost made Michel
shrink back before her haughty glance.
"Money alone could tempt a being call-
ing himself a man to commit such a base
outrage upon a poor helpless girl, and to tear
her away from the little brother and sister who
are now left helpless among the strangers in the
great city."
"Ma'mselle, I entreat zat you will not be un-
happy about zem! I will in one short time re-
turn to Baltimore, and zon I will procure zem
for you wizout fail!" said Michel, bowing very
humbly.
"'When did you see my brother last?'"
"About five or six weeks, by gone, Ma'm-
selle!"
"Where?"
"In Virginia, Ma'mselle—as also Messieur
Beverly, and in one very few hours I shall see
zem again, and 'ave ze honare to say zat ze
beautiful Ma'mselle De Montfort is safe wiz
zem."
"Not if I can help it, Sir—I warn you! There
is not a man on earth whom I hold in such utter
abhorrence as I do that Randolph Beverly. And
you may rest assured that I as utterly despise
the minions who disgrace the name of manhood
by serving him—cowards, miserable cowards
that they are!"
A deep flash of anger suffused the face of
Michel, in spite of his self-command. And for
an instant he made no reply, waiting until he
was more under control before he spoke. At last
he said:
"I am very miserable zat while I try to
please and serve my old friends Messieurs de
Montfort and Beverly, zat I 'ave also to incur ze
doctrine displeasure of you, Ma'mselle! I sink
when 'ave wake zis voyage, an' I observe
how very particular I shall be to be honorable,
and make all sings comfortable for you, Ma'm-
selle, you will change your opinion of me! A
chevalier de la belle France, Ma'mselle, cannot
be a coward—he cannot do dishonest."
"A chevalier of France would never make it
his business to abduct a poor helpless girl, who
at the peril of life had fled from persecution—
who had, after suffering many hardships, once
escaped the very persecutions to which you are
dragging me back. Call not yourself a cheva-
lier of France, Sir, while you are the acknow-
ledged hirer of the persecutors of an orphan
girl. You a man! Go, Sir, leave me! Let me,
at least, be alone in my misery!"
"Mon Dieu, Ma'mselle—you are too severe!
I present myself because you send for me, and
now you drive me from you wiz one contempt,
as if I was one dog! If you were one man—
sure—if you were one man, I would feed ze fish
of ze sea upon your body!"
And the Frenchman, too angry to preserve
his attempted composure, dashed the state-room
doors to, locked it, and went away, swearing
bitterly.

CHAPTER L
It was afternoon of the same day, and Michel,
whose long acquaintance with the Chesapeake
and the rivers emptying thereinto made him an
excellent pilot on its waters, was heading his
vessel toward the mouth of the York River,
hoping to make as successful a run this time as
he had done before.
THE FAITHFUL SISTER.

But as he glanced inland through his telescope, he saw something which brought a flush of mingled anger and disappointment over his scarred countenance.

"Sacre!" he muttered through his grating teeth. "I believe zere is one of zem Yankee gunboats zere in ze mouth of ze rivare. I like not zat. Zis boat can run fast; but for fight wizout ze gun, she is no good for noosing! If zat is a Yankee gunboat, I must run by and wait for ze night; zen maybe, in ze dark, I can give him ze slip. When zey catch Carl Michel asleep, zen zey are smart!"

Michel, after these remarks, looked for a short time anxiously toward the vessel that had attracted his attention; and then, fully satisfied of her character, he ordered the helmsman to head the boat down the bay, and ring the bell for the engineer to run her slow.

"She will sink zat I am bound for Fort Monroe or to ze sea," he said to himself; "and I will keep on ze course slow until ze night, and zen I come back."

"Is there not another vessel on ze larboard bow, younder?" asked the helmsman, pointing to a vessel well out in the bay.

"Yes; but zat is noosing. Somebody zat is bound for Baltimore," said Michel, carelessly.

"And there is another one coming up, further in shore."

"Yes; very likely, anozer one bound ze same way. I care not for zen. We are not known down here, and can pass for a transport anywhere, except when we try for run ze blockade. Run up ze Yankee-duckdale flag zere, one of you mens!"

The American flag was hoisted, and the steamer moved on slowly; Michel pacing to and fro on the upper deck, every little while raising his glass to his eye, and looking at the gunboat in the mouth of the river, which, evidently, had steam up.

"Sacre! she is coming out to cut us off!" he muttered, angrily. "Ring ze bell for make ze boat go more fast, zere!"

The order was obeyed, and the steamer moved more rapidly through the water.

Michel now looked anxiously at the gunboat, which, though evidently yet out of range, was now coming toward him under a full head of steam. And his face flushed angrily when she fired one of her heavy guns, which, though the ball could not reach him, would serve to call the attention of other vessels to him.

And as he looked quickly at the vessel before spoken of as on his larboard bow, he saw, to his great annoyance, that she was on his weather-beam now—indeed, rather abaft it—and had altered her course, and was running directly toward him!

"Sacre! Mil diables!" he muttered; "ze nozzer one is a gunboat, too, and now zey both chase me! Zis boat draw no more zen eight feet of ze watter. I will run close to ze shore, where zey cannot come."

And he gave the man at the wheel once more orders to change her course, and went himself to the engineer, to tell him to put on every pound of steam that could be carried.

All hands were now on deck, and anxious faces told that they well knew the danger they were in.

"Cap'n, what does this fellow look like that is coming up the coast?" asked the helmsman.

Michel turned his glass in that direction, and stamped upon the deck in anger as he did so.

"Sacre! it is anozzer of zeem Yankee-duckdale gunboats!" he yelled. "We shall be prisoners, and lose our cargo and our boat! Sacre! nevare was such miserable fortune!"

"Can't we run ashore, and save ourselves in the life-boats?" asked Boyle.

"Zat is our only chance; but zen it is too bad zat we must lose ze cargo and ze boat before we make one trip. If I had guns, I would fight till I die!"

"If we can get the lady on shore, we will, at least, save what we were to have for her," said Boyle.

"Yes; zat is so. You 'ave ze boats all ready for to lower quick, soon. Steer right for ze shore zere, you man at ze wheel! I will get ze lady ready for ze start. Zem gunboats begin for fire, as if zey all knew who we are! I like not zia—I like not zia, at all!"

And the unhappy Frenchman hurried below to see Sadia.

CHAPTER LII

Sadia had noticed the excitement and the hurried trampling of men overhead for some time; and, looking from her little window from which she could see the shore, she had seen that the steamer changed her course several times in a very short period. From this she judged that the steamer was pursued, and her brave, true heart began to beat high with hopes of a rescue.

And when she saw the gunboat coming out, from the river, and saw the smoke and heard the report of her gun, she went down upon her knees in thankful prayer; for now she hoped earnestly to be saved from her persecutors, and soon to be restored to the dear little ones whom she had left in Baltimore.

She rose to her feet upon hearing heavy footsteps approaching her door.

A moment later, the door was thrown open, and Michel, pale with excitement, and trembling with rage, stood before her.

"I have to request, Ma'mello, zat you will put upon you your bonnet and your shawl, and come upon ze deck wiz me!"

"I am very comfortable here, just now, Sir," she said, with a quiet smile.

"Nevare mind zat, I must desire your pres-
once upon ze deck!" she said, impatiently. "And zat wizout delay!"

"Have you anything up there that will interzest me, Sir?"

"Yes, you can see one, two, tree, Yankee doodale gunboat try to catch me, Capitaine Carl Michel!"

"Oh, that will be beautiful! I will go directly with you!" she cried, as if delighted with the idea.

"And sacre, you shall see your disappoint! Zey shall nez zer take you, nor shall zey take me!" he cried, angrily. "You shall see your disappoint, charming Ma'msel1e!"

Sadie made no reply, but dressed herself for the visit on deck, and waving him to lead the way, said:

"Go on, Sir, I will follow you to the deck, to see once more the blessed flag of my country."

Michel went on deck, and the moment he was there he cried to one of his men:

"Haul down zat miserable Yankee doodale flag and put up ze flag of ze grand Confederacie!"

And as this was done, he looked triumphantly toward Sadie, to see what effect that would have upon her.

She smiled and said: "It is right that you hoist the traitorous flag, Sir, to show whom you serve. It does not pain me, for it will soon be lowered in disgrace."

"Not while you are on ze board of ze boat, Ma'msel1e!" said Michel, angrily. "Do you see how fast we go to ze shore? In some little time zis boat will run upon ze ground, and zen wiz ze small boat we will go upon ze land where ze beautiful flag of ze Confederacie wave all ze time in triumph!"

"I doubt much whether your boat is allowed to reach the shore!" said Sadia, exultingly, as a heavy shot from the nearest pursuing steamer hurled through the air close to them.

"Only ten more of ze minutes and we will be zere," replied Michel.

Another ring of smoke from the pursuing steamer, and a round shot passed not ten feet over their heads, carrying away the flag-staff and lowering the Rebel colors in a hurry.

Michel and most of the crew bobbed their heads as the shot screamed through the air so close to them; but Sadia unmoved, with a proud smile, pointed to the flag which lay drooping on the deck, and said:

"Your flag has come down in a hurry, Captain Michel! Are you not going to hoist it again?"

"No time to bozzare wis zat now! One little minute more and we shall be upon ze ground!" cried Michel.

"And, by thunder, none too soon—there's another boat in range and opening on us. The sooner we are out of this, the better I'm pleased," cried Hoyle.

At that moment the boat touched, with a heavy jar, then forged ahead a few lengths, touched again, and then grounded solid.

"Stop the engine and lower the boats!" shouted Michel.

The crew sprung to obey his orders, and the firemen and engineers hurried up from below. Their part of the work was done on that boat.

"Come, Ma'msel1e!" said Michel, hastily, as the first boat touched the water. "Ze shore is but a little way—we will soon be zere. Come to ze boat if you please!"

"I do not please, Sir!" said Sadia, haughtily.

"I prefer to remain here until loyal men come to offer their services to me!"

"Sacre, Ma'msel1e, please or not please, you must go in ze boat!" cried Michel, angrily.

"I must lose my boat and my cargo, but I will not lose you and ze zevre thousand dollars for you! You must come wiz me!"

And he advanced toward her to seize her.

"Halt, Sir! halt, if you value life!" she cried, sternly, drawing the revolver from her pocket and cocking it.

He hesitated, only, however, to measure his distance, for he intended to spring suddenly upon her. But this attempt was prevented, and perhaps his life saved, by the sudden action of Hoyle, who stood behind Sadia, and who, unexpectedly to her, stepped lightly up to her, and wrenched the weapon from her hand before she could use it.

In a moment, now, she was seized by Michel and another man, and in spite of her struggles borne to the boat. And in less time than I take to describe it, every man from the steamer was embarked in the two boats, and they were putting hurriedly to the shore, now but a short distance off.

The gunboats, which dared not approach too near in consequence of the shoal water, kept up a heavy fire; but the boats were not struck, and in a few moments reached the shore.

"Now, sacre! ze Yankee-doodale 'ave not catch Carl Michel!" shouted the Frenchman, as he sprang out on the beach, lifting the half-senseless girl from the boat at the same time.

"Surrender, you infernal Reb!" shouted a commanding voice at that instant, and Sadia uttered a scream of joy as she saw a party of eighteen or twenty men, with an American guidon floating among them, gallop forward from the shelter of the woods near the beach.

"Sacre—we must fight!" shouted Michel, as he saw that the party of Federal cavalry was not large. And he drew a pistol from his belt and fired it at the leader of the party.

"Pretty well aimed, but not in time to save yourself!" cried the leader, striking a terri-
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bie blow with his sabre, which clove the head of the bold smuggler entirely asunder.

And at the same time he reeled and fell from his saddle close by the side of Sadia, for the bullet from Michel's pistol had entered his side.

"Heaven—it is Mr. Armand!" cried Sadia, recognizing the Sergeant whom she had met at the house of Mr. Winter, in Baltimore.

"Oh, I pray you are not fatally wounded!" she cried, as, forgetting her own danger, she tried to raise him.

"I care not, if I have saved you from peril!" said Armand, pressing his hand to his side to check the bleeding, and giving the order to his men not to mind his position, but to capture the Rebels.

And this would have been done in a few moments more, had not a new and powerful intervention occurred. A bugle sounding the charge broke upon their ears, and two or three squadrons of Rebel cavalry came dashing down upon the scanty force of Federals.

The latter resisted for a moment, but against such numbers it was in vain; and soon all who survived of Sergeant Armand's scouting-party were prisoners.

"Whom have we here!" cried the commanding officer of the Rebels. "Why, there is poor Michel as dead as a nail!" he added, in surprise.

"And here, father, is Miss De Montfort—her brother will be surprised at this event!" cried Kate Stuart, for her father was the leader of the party.

"Be careful, there, men. You need not ride over that lady in your awkwardness!" she added.

And dismounting, the brave girl hurried to the side of Sadia and said, in a low tone:

"Do not be disheartened, my dear girl—you have a friend in me, now, as before!"

"Oh, save him, if you can! I fear he is mortally wounded!" said Sadia, pointing to Armand, whose head she had raised, for he had fainted.

Kate looked at the wound, and binding a scarf which she took from her waist over the wound, she said, quietly:

"He bleeds badly, but I think it is only a severe flesh wound. He will not die!"

"Come daughter, get Miss De Montfort in a saddle some way—we must be out of here, for those gunboats will be throwing shell here before we know it!" cried Colonel Stuart.

"She can ride behind me—here Montrose, you and some other careful man take this wounded Sergeant in charge, and be as easy with him as possible!" cried Kate. "Come, Miss Sadia, let one of the men help you up behind me. He shall be carefully cared for, if you are interested in him!"

And the wild girl smiled as she pointed to Armand.

"He is almost a stranger to me, but he was wounded while trying to rescue me from riflemen hands!" said Sadia, blessing, as she was lifted to a seat behind Kate.

A shell from one of the gunboats dropping almost in their midst, and killing two or three of Stuart's men as well as more than half of the men who had escaped from the Lone Star with Michel, now significantly warned Colonel Stuart that the sooner he was out of range the better.

As the prisoners were already secured, the order to gallop was given, and soon only the dead occupied the beach.

When they had ridden out of sight of the vessels, Sadia, who had not spoken before, said to Kate:

"When you first recognized me, you spoke of my brother. Where is he now?"

"In command of one of our battalions, out in another direction to-day!" said Kate. "We will find him in camp at head-quarters, before long."

"I do not wish to see him. I was happy where I was in Baltimore!" said Sadia, sadly.

"Well, do not fret, my dear girl. You shall find a true friend in Kate Stuart, no matter what others may be:" said the Rebel leader's daughter. "Keep as easy as you can and hope for the best!"

CHAPTER LI.

It was a ride of twenty miles, or more, to the camp of Colonel Stuart's Regiment—a weary ride, indeed, to poor Sadia, but it was soon passed over, for the Rebels had advanced very far toward the Federal line on that day, and did not know soon they might be pursued. During the rapid ride, Kate endeavored to cheer up her companion; but Sadia, brave-hearted as she was, could not but feel despondent as she thought of the distance from her friends in Baltimore, and the dependent position in which her little brother and sister must now be placed.

Upon their arrival at the camp, Kate conducted Sadia to her own tent, and made herself feel perfectly easy.

"My wardrobe is not very extensive!" she said, with a gay laugh. "But such as it is, I hope you will make use of it!"

"Many thanks for your kindness. I need it sadly!" said Sadia, with a sigh.

"Do not sigh so heavily. You'll give me the blues! The Sergeant is in a fair way to recover. I wish he was a colonel, for your sake!" said Kate, in a lively tone.

"The Sergeant is nothing to me, except a kind friend, in whom I feel interested, because he was wounded in trying to serve me!" said Sadia.

"You do not seem to think of the real peril which I dread. You know what I risked so much to fly from before!"
"Yes, the persecutions of that puppy-hearted cousin of yours, Lieutenant Beverly! I saw him the other day, but he kept his distance from me. He looks upon me as a regular tiger-cat!"

"Is he near here now?"

"Not far away! He commands a tub that he calls a gunboat, on the York River, a few miles from here!"

"It was he who bribed Michel to abduct me from the quiet home in Baltimore, where I was so happy, supporting myself and my orphan brother and sister by my own industry!"

"I expected as much. I knew that he and Michel were together when the latter made his first successful smuggling-trip. It is likely that you will soon have a visit from him, for news of captures flies fast in this country—it is so seldom we make any, that we let all the Confederates in when we do make one!"

"Oh, can I not be relieved from his persecution!" sighed Sadia.

"Yes; leave that to me. If you want to get back to Baltimore, you shall, if Kate Stuart possesses either wit or courage—and her friends think she has a little of both qualities. If your brother comes, as he will before I can do anything in the way of sending you off, take matters coolly, as if you had made up your mind to submit to what apparently cannot be helped. If Lieutenant Beverly comes, I'll make the camp too hot to hold him! Though I say it, I am the idol of my father, and the men will do my bidding in anything and everything!"

"I shall depend upon you then, kind Kate!" said Sadia, smiling, though her eyes were yet tearful—a kind of sunlight through rain.

"You can do so, my friend. Can you ride well, alone?"

"Oh yes; I have been used to riding on horseback ever since I was quite small!"

"Then you can make up your mind to take a long and pretty rapid ride one of these nights. Maybe I'll send a cavalier with you; but that depends upon circumstances. I'd escort you myself, but I am almost too well known within the Federal lines. If the Yankees had wild Kate Stuart in their hands, they would not be apt to let her go as easily as I intend you shall go!"

"Surely they do not war on women!"

"No, not without a woman plays man, and sets the devil among them, as I do occasionally; riding in upon their picnics and shooting down some of them before they forget their gallant notion about our gentle sex and return my fire. For in spite of my dress they can see that I am a woman—my hair and complexion, or, perhaps, my voice when I cry, 'Charge!' makes them know me. But, my dear girl, are you not hungry—I forgot our bacon, which must be ready by this time?"

Sadia could not deny that she was actually faint from hunger, for she had eaten nothing since the supper taken in Baltimore; and women, angels as we may deem her, must eat or perish, like we coarse-grained and most unangelic men.

And she exhibited a very fair appetite when tin platters of fried bacon and roasted sweet-potatoes and tin cups of strong coffee graced the table of her fair hostess; for though Kate fought side by side with her father and his men, she lived as exclusively alone as it was possible.

CHAPTER LIII.

Sadia had but just finished supper when the tread of horses and the sound of a bugle were heard.

"Some more of our men have come in. Very likely the battle which your brother took out!" said Kate, whose ear, accustomed to such sounds, at once detected the nature of the arrival.

Her conjecture proved true; for, in a few moments, Warburton De Montfort, dressed in the gay uniform of the Rebel service, entered the tent where they were seated. Doffing his cap and bowing very low to Kate, as he had done her good evening, he said to his sister, in a tone as cold as his looks:

"I welcome Miss De Montfort back once more to the Confederate States!"

Sadia looked at him with a glance in which it could be plainly seen that sisterly affection had not entirely fled from her heart, cruel as she had been treated, and she replied:

"I am glad to see that you are yet alive, brother Warburton; but I assure you that I had much rather have been left alone in peace, in the home of my own seeking!"

"Fehaw, girl—it was no place for you among strangers!" said Major De Montfort, hastily.

"Those strangers were more kind to me than my own kindred!" replied Sadia, quietly.

You have given me no chance to be kind to you!" replied the brother. "You fled away from my care when I was at Springfield, and even took off all the negroes, intending to deliver them over to the infernal Abolitionists! But, as good luck turned out, I got them back, and they are now where the negro-worshippers may look for them in vain!"

"Sold, I suppose—the very people whom you have heard our father say he intended to free, and whom he would have freed had not death so suddenly came upon him!"

"Yes, sold! and their price invested in good Confederate bonds!" said Warburton, with a sneering laugh. "So that, after all, you and that miserable old thief, Tom Hunter, failed in your great undertaking. I'm glad that he lost his worthless life!"

"And I regret it. Thank Heaven that your cruelty has not extended to poor Napoleon and
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Cynthia—they, at least, are free and in comfort, receiving pay for their labor, and living independently besides."

"You need not boast too much of that, traitress!" cried Warburton, angrily. "Now that you are secured, Michel will have little difficulty in getting the children and the two negroes to follow you."

"You will have to go into a hotter place than this to find Michel—he has been called home by his Satanic master!" said Sadia, in a quiet manner.

"Yes—his head was like the Union, when I saw it last—completely divided," said Kate, with a malicious smile.

"What, Michel killed? I did not hear of that!" said Warburton.

"Yes, thank Heaven for ridding the earth of such a villain!" said Sadia. "You and Randolph Beverly have lost your most useful tool in him."

"A tool, Miss? Look out that we do not find worse tools than he was! If you had justice done you, you would rot in jail for nigger-stealing."

"Major De Montfort, you must not forget where you are, Sir!" said Kate, sternly, while her eyes flashed angrily. "If you forget the common courtesy due from all gentlemen in the presence of ladies, you must not blame me for reminding you of it. And, Sir, whether she be considered as a prisoner or a guest, Miss Sadia belongs to me, and not to you! And I will not permit her to be insulted or annoyed while she is here! Understand that!"

"I beg your pardon, Miss Stuart," said Warburton, testily. "The language of the girl was enough to provoke a saint."

"Therefore, it should not have provoked Major Warburton De Montfort," said Kate, in a sarcastic tone, "for I never heard of his possessing any very saintly qualities."

"Good evening, Miss Kate," said the Major, now fairly angry. "I will see that you are not long put to the trouble of entertaining my sister, either as a prisoner or a guest."

And he turned away from the tent, trembling with passion.

"Oh dear Kate, how can I repay you for so nobly taking my part!" cried Sadia, the woman in her exhibiting itself in the usual way—id est, kissing Kate, and shedding a shower of tears."

"There—there—don't cry. I suppose the wretch—I must call him so, if he is your brother—will try to get you out of my care. Do you think you will be strong enough for a midnight ride?"

"Oh yes—I am quite strong now," said Sadia, eagerly.

"Well, I will see if I can find an escort for you. It is possible that there may be two prisoners less in this camp before morning," said Kate. "Excuse me while I go out and see what preparations I can make, and what state your Sergeant is in."

CHAPTER LIV.

Kate was not absent a great while. When she came back, a radiant smile made her handsome face look more than usually beautiful.

"Fortune favors the brave, my dear, Miss Sadia," she said, in a low tone. "Your brother has applied for leave until to-morrow morning, and has ridden off in the direction of York River, intending, doubtless, to take counsel with the immortal Beverly, upon the ways of taming tiger-cat me, and bringing your lovely self into proper subjection. So he is out of the way for the night. The officer of the day is a young fool that is in love with me, and will wink at any of my oddities, in passing out foragers for my own especial table, and the like of that. Now, can you wear men's clothes, upon 'this occasion only,' as they say in the show-bills?"

"With such an example as you set, if my safety depends upon it, it would be worse than prudery to decline to do so!" replied Sadia, while the thought brought a blush of modesty to her cheek.

"I will rig you up in my own uniform—I have a spare one," said Kate, gayly; "and then provide you with Federal overcoats, or you'll be shot by their pickets before you have a chance to tell them who you are. And now, dear, don't blush, I have still better news for you, your Sergeant is so far out of danger that he will undertake the task of escorting you to the Federal lines. Once inside of them, your return to Baltimore will be easy.""

"O dear, kind Kate, God will reward you, for I never can."

"I ask no reward, my dear girl, but the satisfaction of serving you, and of punishing that repulsive puppy, Randolph Beverly. He will go raving mad when he finds that you have escaped, after being so nearly in his power; and I expect your brother will have worse than the dumb ague when he discovers your absence. They will be terribly angry with me, but they dare not go any further; for my father is too much of a man to see a woman persecuted, and he has few hospital accommodations, and will not blame me for letting your wounded Sergeant go."

"Kate, you do love to tease me in calling that poor Armand mine, whom I have never seen but twice in my life!"

"Well, his heart is yours at any rate, say what you may; for when I asked him if he was strong enough to protect you in a midnight ride to the Federal lines, he said that he was strong enough to die for you, angel that you was! Now, a man doesn't want to die for a woman without he loves her. And now don't feel bad—I know he is only a sergeant, but he is brave enough to be a general; and better
than all, one can see at a glance that he is a gentleman born and bred. If he wasn’t an enemy to the Confederacy, I’d take him off your hands myself, my lady, if you couldn’t appreciate him?”

“I am sure I appreciate his kind devotion,” said Sadia, with a smile. “But one can appreciate without loving, can they not?”

“No, if they’re as demonstrative as I am,” said Kate, with a laugh. “But a truce to this nonsense. I must think of getting you ready, for it is already well on in the night. Can you shoot a pistol?”

“Yes, I have practiced with pistols for amusement. I had one, but it was taken from me on the boat,” replied Sadia.

“Well, I will let you have a pair, but don’t use them on any of our people, except it becomes actually necessary to effect your escape!”

“You may rest assured that I never would fire upon any human being except when forced to do so in self-defence!”

“You are kinder then than I,” said Kate, with a laugh. “But come, I must dress you up for your trip.”

Of course, reader, modesty will demand our temporary absence now.

CHAPTER LV.

It was midnight, or thereabout, and all was still in the Rebel camp, when Kate Stuart led Sadia out into the open air from the tent in which she had blown out the light a half-hour before. There was no moon, but the star-light was sufficient for them to see how to avoid the tents, and Sadia moved along in her strange attire silently behind Kate for some distance. They were hailed by only one sentinel, to whom Kate gave the countersign; and in a few minutes after she whispered to Sadia that they were outside of the precincts of the camp.

A walk of near a quarter of a mile along a well-defined and apparently a much-traveled road, brought them to a small grove of leafy pines; and here Kate, cautioning Sadia not to be surprised or to speak low, led the way.

A few steps from the road they found two powerful thorough-bred horses standing, held by Sergeant Armand, who, seated upon a log, was resting and waiting for his fair companions. He was fully armed with a sabre and pistols, and when asked by Kate if all was ready, replied in the affirmative.

“Then mount and away, my dear girl,” said Kate, kissing Sadia, warmly. “I have given you one of my own horses, and borrowed one from your brother’s stable for Mr. Armand. You must keep straight on this road until you reach your pickets, which, if you ride fast, will be by a little after daylight; that is, if you are not interrupted. By the way, do not forget the countersign if you should meet a patrol on our side, though I know of none being out. It is ‘Beauregar!’”

And giving Sadia one more long, fervent kiss, which made poor Armand sigh as if he considered such “sweetness wasted” a sacrilege, Kate helped her to mount the spirited horse, and led it out into the road.

“Good-bye, and God bless you both,” she said, in a low and tremulous tone; and then she turned toward her father’s camp, while they rode rapidly down the road which she had pointed out as their course.

For a time, they rode swiftly on in silence. Sadia was the first to break it.

“Does not your wound inconvenience you very much, Mr. Armand?” she asked.

“More through weakness than pain, kind lady,” he replied. “I lost so much blood before it was staunched, yesterday, that my strength is much lessened. But I shall be able to go through, I think; at least, to see you safe inside of our lines. If I fail after that, it will be but little matter!”

The utter sadness of his tone touched the heart of Sadia, but the speed at which they were going made conversation difficult, and she did not reply to his words.

They did not break a gallop, nor meet with any interruption, before the day broke, when Armand rode at a slower pace, for he said they were now near the Federal lines. He was on guard with which he was acquainted. And the decrease of the rapid pace was agreeable to Sadia; for, unused to riding so fast and so far, she felt more fatigue than she wished to acknowledge to her companion, whose pale cheek and quivering lip told that he was suffering pain which he would not speak of.

Armand now handed Sadia a blue Federal overcoat which Kate Stuart had provided, saying that it was necessary to cover the gray uniform there, or they might get a shot from some ambushed picket before their character could be understood. And he also put on one which had been provided for him, for Kate had to make him put on a gray uniform to get him safely out of the Rebel camp.

This done, they rode on at an easy gait, looking every moment to catch a view of the Federal pickets. But they were doomed to meet a sight not half so welcome. Coming to a turn of the road, they saw at a very short distance, directly in front of them, a body of at least a dozen horsemen, whose gray uniform at once told that they were Rebel scouts who had been trying to get a peep at the Union lines.

“Heaven’s! What shall we do?” said Sadia, in dismay, as she glanced at the fearful odds, and saw, too, that the opposite party had seen and was preparing to meet them.

“There is but one thing to do, lady. I must cut a path through them! Follow me, and...
THE FAITHFUL SISTER.

Mr. Winter was seated in his parlor with his family a few evenings later than that on which occurred the events narrated in the last chapter.

Marion and Carline were there, both sad and sorrowful, for much they missed their dearly loved sister.

"Have you heard nothing further from Fort Monroe, husband, in regard to the lost steamer and poor Sadia?" asked Mrs. Winter.

"Only a full confirmation of the news which we first received!" replied the merchant. "The steamer was run on shore by the smugglers, who deserted her, and escaped to the land with a lady, who was undoubtedly poor Sadia. The gunboats took possession of the steamer and succeeded in getting her off, and she is now in the possession of the Government. A party of Rebel cavalry was seen to carry the lady to the interior with them!"

"I am afraid I shall never see my dear sister again!" said Marion, mournfully.

"Yes, we will!" said Carline, with touching simplicity. "I have prayed to God to give her back to us, every night and morning since she has been gone. And sister told me once that prayer would always be answered if we were only good. And I have tried to be very good since we lost her!"

And as the holy trust of that pure young heart should not go unrewarded, a violent ringing of the door-bell announced a visitor. And in a moment afterward, weeping in the fullness of her joy, Sadia was clasping her young sister to her breast.

It is scarcely necessary for me to describe the joyful scene that occurred then and there, and to recount the manner in which Sadia told the tale of her adventures, already known to the reader.

It must suffice for me to say, that she accepted an offer, made in a manner which would admit of no refusal, thenceforward to make her home in the house of the kind-hearted merchant.

CHAPTER LVII.

Under the friendly care of Mrs. Winter, Sadia De Montfort soon recovered from the exhaustion of body and depression of spirit consequent on the afflictions she had so bravely passed through.

With throbbing heart and an exclamation of joy, she listened one morning while Mr. Winter read at the breakfast-table an account of a naval engagement in which Randolph Beverly, at once her lover and her persecutor, met with a fate as just as it was terrible. For the first
time for many months she felt the assurance of safety for herself and her dearly-loved brother and sister.

In a skirmish not long after, her brother, Warburton, received injuries that ultimately led to the amputation of one of his limbs. A prisoner, crestfallen and repentant, he willingly received the attention of his much-abused sister, who did not hesitate to act as his nurse in the hospital, and to use every means in her power, on his taking the oath of allegiance, to have him removed to Baltimore, where she could obtain for him proper medical advice.

Colonel Stuart, promoted to a Generality, has long paid the forfeit of treason—death. But he fell as a soldier should fall—with his harness on, fighting to the last.

Of his brave-hearted daughter, Kate, Sadia sometimes hears, but seldom speaks, and then with a hopeful smile, which shows that something unknown to us is bright in the brave though misguided girl's future. Whatever her fate may be, her good-heartedness toward our heroine deserves perpetual sunshine.