DUNN BYRON ARCHIBALD

GENERAL NELSON'S SCOUT

Byron Dunn
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General Nelson's Scout:

Содержание

Byron A. Dunn
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TO

Milton,

MY LITTLE SON,

**WHO WAS GREATLY
INTERESTED IN THE STORY**

OF "GENERAL NELSON'S SCOUT,"

WHILE BEING WRITTEN,

AND WHO GAVE ME MANY VALUABLE HINTS,

THIS VOLUME IS

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the following pages the threads of history and fiction are closely interwoven. The plot of the story is laid in the dark and stormy days of 1861, amid the waving trees and blue grass fields of Central Kentucky.

No State wept more bitter tears at the commencement of the dreadful struggle between the North and the South than Kentucky. With loving arms she tried to encircle both, and when she failed, in the language of one of her most eloquent sons, "So intense was her agony that her great heart burst in twain."

Resolutions of neutrality did little good. Sympathies and beliefs are not controlled by resolutions or laws, and never can be. Kentucky was divided into two great hostile camps. The Secession element was very active, and the Union men saw the State slowly but surely drifting into the arms of the Confederacy.

Then it was that Lieutenant William Nelson of the United States navy, a well-known and very popular Kentuckian, asked the privilege of raising ten regiments of Kentucky troops. The request was granted, and Nelson at once commenced his task. Only a man of iron determination and the highest courage would have dared to undertake such a work. He became the object of the fiercest hatred and opposition, – even from many who professed to love the Union. But he never wavered in his purpose, and established a camp for his recruits at Dick Robinson, a few

miles east of Danville.

Here it is that the story opens, and Nelson is the chief historic figure – a figure with many imperfections, yet it can be said of him as it was of King James V., in "The Lady of the Lake":

> "On his bold visage middle age
> Had slightly pressed its signet sage,
> Yet had not quenched the open truth
> And fiery vehemence of youth;
> Forward and frolic glee was there,
> The will to do, the soul to dare."

All military movements chronicled in the story are historically correct. The riot in Louisville, the fight for the arms, the foiling of the plot, the throwing of the train from the track, are all historical incidents.

Every real character in the story is called by his true name. In this class belong Colonel Peyton and his son Bailie. The high character of the one and the eloquence of the other are not overdrawn.

The story of Shiloh, as told, may be contradicted, but, the author believes, cannot be successfully controverted. Had it not been for General Nelson, Buell's army would never have reached the battlefield of Shiloh Sunday night.

Fred Shackelford and Calhoun Pennington, the heroes of the story, are children of the imagination, as well as their relatives and friends.

With this brief introduction, the author sends forth this little volume, hoping that the rising generation may not only read it, but enjoy it, and be somewhat enlightened by it.

Through bitter tears and dreadful carnage the Union was preserved; and through it all there has come a great blessing. Thoroughly united, the North and the South are vying with each other in upholding the honor of the flag. Shoulder to shoulder they stand, battling that the last remnant of tyranny may be driven from the New World.

B. A. D.

Waukegan, Ill., June, 1898.

CHAPTER I.
THE QUARREL AND THE OATH

A short distance from Danville, Kentucky, on the afternoon of July 21, 1861, two boys might have been seen seated by the roadside under the branches of a wide-spreading oak. Near by, tethered to the stout rail fence which ran along the side of the road, were two spirited thoroughbred horses that champed their bits and restlessly stamped their feet, unnoticed by their young owners, who seemed to be engaged in a heated discussion.

The two boys were nearly the same age and size, and were cousins. Calhoun Pennington, who was the more excited of the two, was very dark, and his black hair, which he wore long, was flung back from a broad and handsome forehead. His countenance was flushed with anger, and his eyes fairly blazed with suppressed wrath.

His companion, Frederic Shackelford, was not quite as large as Calhoun, but his frame was more closely knit, and if it came to a trial of strength between the two, it would take no prophet to tell which would prove master.

Frederic was as fair as his cousin was dark. His eyes were deep blue, and his hair had a decided tinge of red. The firm set lips showed that he was not only a boy of character, but of decided will. While his tones expressed earnestness and deep

feeling, his countenance did not betray the excitement under which his cousin labored. Young as Frederic was, he had learned the valuable lesson of self-control.

So earnest did the discussion between the two boys become, that Calhoun Pennington sprang to his feet, and raising his clenched hand, exclaimed in passionate tones: "Do you mean to say that Kentucky is so sunk in cowardice that she will not enforce her proclamation of neutrality? Then I blush I am a Kentuckian."

"I mean to say," calmly replied Frederic, "that it will be impossible for Kentucky to enforce her ideas of neutrality. Kentuckians are no cowards, that you know, Calhoun; but it is not a question of courage. The passions aroused are too strong to be controlled. The North and the South are too thoroughly in earnest; the love of the Union on one side, the love of the rights of the States on the other, is too sincere. We could not remain neutral, if we wished. As well try to control the beating of our hearts, as our sympathies. We are either for the old flag, or against it."

"I deny it," hotly cried Calhoun; "you fellows who are always preaching about the old flag are not the only ones who love the country. It is we who are trying to keep it from becoming an instrument of oppression, of coercion, who really love the old flag. But I know what is the matter with you. Owing to the teachings of that Yankee mother of yours, you are with the Abolitionists, nigger-stealers, the mud-sills of creation, lower and

meaner than our slaves. You had better go back to those precious Yankee relatives of yours; you have no business in Kentucky among gentlemen."

Frederic's eyes flashed. He raised his clenched hand convulsively; then, with a tremendous effort, he controlled himself and slowly replied: "Calhoun, we have always been friends and companions, more like brothers than cousins; but if you value my friendship, if you do not wish me to become your deadliest enemy, never speak disrespectfully of my mother again. If you do, young as I am, I shall demand of you the satisfaction one gentleman demands of another. This refused, I shall shoot you like a dog."

For a moment Calhoun gazed in the countenance of his cousin in silence. In the stern, set features, the dangerous gleam of the eye, he read the truth of what he had heard. He was fully as brave as his cousin, and for a moment a bitter and stinging reply trembled on his lips; then his better nature conquered, and extending his hand, he said: "There, Fred; I didn't mean to hurt your feelings, much less reflect on the memory of your mother. From the North though she was, she was one of the best of women, and you know I loved her almost as much as you did yourself, for in many ways she was a mother to me. Forgive me, Fred."

Fred grasped the extended hand, and with tears in his eyes exclaimed, "I might have known you did not mean it, Cal. You are too noble to say aught of one who loved you as my mother

did. Forgive my hasty words."

"There is nothing to forgive, Fred; you did just right."

For a moment the boys remained silent, and then Fred resumed: "Cal, we must both try to be charitable. Simply to be for the North or the South does not make one a gentleman. True manhood is not measured by one's political belief. Your father is none the less a gentleman because he is heart and soul with the South. Calhoun, dark and fearful days are coming – have already come. Father will be against son, brother against brother. Members of the same family will become the deadliest enemies. Our beloved Kentucky will be rent and torn with warring factions, and the whole land will tremble beneath the shock of contending armies. Ruined homes will be everywhere; little children and women will flee to the mountains for safety."

"Not if Kentucky enforces her position of neutrality," broke in Calhoun. "The picture you draw is one you Unionists are trying to bring about. We, who would enforce neutrality, would avoid it."

"Calhoun, don't be deceived. You know that in many parts of Kentucky it is dangerous now for a Union man to express his sentiments. Hundreds of Kentuckians have left to join the Confederate army. They do so boldly with colors flying and drums beating. On our southern border, armies are gathering ready to spring over at a moment's notice. Kentucky cannot, if she would, remain neutral. I feel, I know, evil times are coming – are now here. Calhoun, a few moments ago we came near having a deadly quarrel. I shudder as I now think of it. What if we had

quarreled! What if one of us had killed the other, we who are like brothers! Oh, Calhoun! let us swear eternal friendship to each other. Let us promise to be careful and not say anything to each other that will rankle and hurt. We know not what will come, what the future has in store for us, or whither we shall be led. Let us swear to succor and save each other, even at the peril of our lives, if necessary. Wherever we may meet, let us meet as friends – each ready to protect the life and honor of the other. Let us swear it."

"Fred," slowly replied Calhoun, "it is a very strange compact you ask. It sounds like some old story of knight-errantry. You must be getting romantic. But when I think of how near we came to flying at each other's throats, if you are willing to make such a solemn compact, I am."

And there, on that July evening, under the spreading oak, the boys clasped hands and took a solemn oath to stand by each other, come what might; even unto death would they be true to each other.

Little did either think what would be the outcome of that strange compact. Little did they realize that the day would come when that oath, if kept, would lead both into the very jaws of death – an ignoble and terrible death. That oath, under the spreading oak, on that July evening between two boys, was to become the pivot around which the fate of contending armies depended.

Calhoun was the first to speak after the making of the solemn

compact. "Fred," he exclaimed, "now that we have sworn eternal friendship, it will not do for us to quarrel any more. Like the man and his wife they tell about, 'we agree to disagree.' But see how restless our horses are. They must be disgusted with our loitering. Let us have a race. See that tree yonder, nearly a mile away, where the Danville and Nicholasville roads cross? I can beat you to that tree, and if I do, the South wins."

"Done," cried Fred, for he had all the love of a true Kentucky boy for a horse race. "Now, Prince," said he, as he unhitched his horse, and patted his glossy neck, "you hear. This race is for the old flag. Win, or never hold up your head again."

"Selim," cried Calhoun, "how do you like that? It is the cause of the Sunny South that is at stake. Win, Selim, or I will sell you to the meanest Abolitionist in the North."

Both boys vaulted into their saddles, and at the word their steeds were away like the wind.

CHAPTER II.
THE MEETING WITH NELSON

Never was there a hotter race run in Kentucky. Neck and neck the horses ran, neither seemingly able to gain an inch on the other. The goal grew alarmingly near. Each rider bent over the neck of his flying steed, and urged him on with word and spur. The tree was scarcely twenty yards away. "Now, Prince, if ever," cried Fred. The horse seemed to understand. With a tremendous effort, he plunged forward, and passed the goal half a length ahead.

"Won!" cried Fred, but his huzzah died on his lips. The excitement of the race had made the boys careless, and they ran into a squad of horsemen who were passing along the other road. Fred came nearly unhorsing the leader of the squad, a heavy-set, red-faced man with bushy hair that stood up all around his large head. He was dressed in the uniform of an officer of the United States navy. As for Calhoun, he entirely unhorsed a black groom, who was bringing up the rear of the squad.

The darky scrambled to his feet unhurt, and forgetting his fright in his enthusiasm, shouted: "Golly, massa, dat was a race, suah. Dat a hoss woth habin'." Like a true Kentucky negro, he loved a fine horse, and gloried in a race.

But with the officer, it was different. As soon as he could quiet

his horse, he let fly such a volley of oaths that the boys sat on their horses too dumfounded to say a word. The officer swore until he was out of breath, and had to stop from sheer exhaustion.

At the first opportunity, Fred took off his hat and politely said:

"We beg a thousand pardons, sir, but I was racing for the old flag, and had to win, even if I had had to run over the commander-in-chief of the army, instead of a lieutenant of the navy."

"Lieutenant of the navy! lieutenant of the navy!" roared Nelson, for it was he, "I will show you, young man, I command on dry land, as well as on the water," and the air once more grew sulphurous.

"Really," dryly remarked Fred, "if you fight as well as you swear, Kentucky will soon be clear of rebels."

Nelson's companions roared with laughter. As for Nelson, his face twitched for a moment, and then he, too, commenced to laugh.

"It is a good thing for you, young man," he exclaimed, "that you don't belong to the army or I would have you tied up by the thumbs. As it is, will you tell me what you meant by saying that you were racing for the old flag and had to win?"

"Why, sir, my cousin, here, challenged me for a race, saying if he won the South would triumph; but if I won, the old flag would be victorious. So you see, sir, I had to win, even if I had had to run clear over you. You ought to thank me for winning the race, instead of swearing at me for jostling your dignity a little."

Nelson chuckled.

All of this time Calhoun, after soothing his horse, had been a quiet spectator of the scene. He felt nettled over losing the race, and was not in the best of humor.

"So," said Nelson, turning to Calhoun, "you ran for the South to win, did you? Might have known you would have been beaten. What have you got to say for yourself, anyway, you – little rebel?"

Calhoun's eyes flashed. Drawing himself proudly up, he said: "I am no rebel. I am a Kentuckian, and am for the neutrality of Kentucky."

"Neutrality of Kentucky," sneered Nelson; "of whom did you learn that twaddle, youngster? Neutrality is a plea of cowards to hide their disloyalty."

Calhoun grew deadly pale. He forgot everything in his passion, as he fairly hissed:

"And you are Lieutenant Nelson, are you? That recreant son of Kentucky, who, in spite of her pledge of neutrality, the pledge of a sovereign State, is violating that pledge by raising troops to subjugate a brave and heroic people. You are the Benedict Arnold of Kentucky. If I had my way, you would hang from the nearest tree. Cowards are they who would keep the pledge of neutrality given by the State? You lie, and boy that I am, I hurl defiance in your face," and tearing a riding glove from his hand, he hurled it with all the force he could summon into the face of the astonished Nelson.

For a moment Nelson was speechless with rage; then

mechanically he reached for the pistol in his holster. With a sharp exclamation, Fred spurred his horse between the angry man and Calhoun, and striking down Nelson's arm, cried: "How dare you! For shame, to shoot a boy!" Then turning to Calhoun, he gave the sharp command, "Go! go at once!"

Calhoun obeyed, and boy and horse were off like a shot; without a word of apology, Fred followed. Nelson made a movement as if to pursue, but at once reined up his horse. The look of anger soon passed from his face; he began to chuckle, and then to laugh.

Turning to one of his staff, he exclaimed: "Gad! Lieutenant, I came nearly forgetting myself and shooting that boy. It would have been an outrage. He has the grit, the true Kentucky grit. I am proud of both of those boys. I shall keep my eye on them. What soldiers they would make!"

Such was General William Nelson, fiery, erratic, and oftentimes cruel, but at all times ready to acknowledge true courage and manliness in his worst enemy. To him, more than to any other one man, does the government owe the fact that Kentucky was saved to the Union. In the face of the fiercest opposition he never faltered in his purpose of raising troops, and the most direful threats only nerved him to greater exertion.

The two boys looking back, and seeing that they were not pursued, brought their horses to a trot and began to talk of their adventure.

"Fred," said Calhoun, "you are the first to get in your work

on that oath. I believe the brute would have shot me if it had not been for you."

"You certainly gave him great provocation, Cal. It was very ungentlemanly in him to attack you, a boy, as he did, but these are war times. My! but you did go for him, Cal; you really looked grand in your fiery indignation. I could not help admiring you, even if you were foolish. It is a wonder he did not shoot you, for Nelson is a man of ungovernable temper when aroused."

"He would have shot me, Fred, if it had not been for your brave interference. Come to think about it, I could not blame him much, if he had shot me; for I could not have offered him a greater insult than I did. I was hasty and excited; you were cool and collected. Fred, I thank you."

"No more of that, my boy. But, Cal, try and govern your tongue. Your hasty speech and temper will get you in serious trouble yet."

"I gave the villain no more than he deserved. There is no other man in Kentucky doing as much as Nelson to overthrow the sovereignty of the State; there is no other man doing as much to array one portion of our people against the rest; and if bloodshed comes, no man will be more to blame than he. He should be arrested and hanged as a traitor to Kentucky, and I am glad I told him so."

"Calhoun," answered Fred, "you have heard neutrality talked so much you are blind to the real facts. Nelson was right when he said neutrality was but a blind for secession. If Kentucky is

saved to the Union, it will be saved by the efforts of such men as he. There can be no middle ground; you must be for or against the Union."

"I confess," answered Calhoun, "while I have been talking neutrality, my real sympathy has been with the South. Down with coercion, I say, and death to all renegades like Nelson."

Fred smiled. "How about renegades like myself, Cal? But I am glad to hear you expressing your true sentiments; it shows you are honest in them, at least."

"Fred, why can't you think as I do? You are too honest, too brave, to side with Abolitionists and mudsills. They are a dirty, low, mischievous set, to say the least. There can be but one issue to the war. The whole dirty crew will run like cravens before the chivalric gentlemen of the South."

"Don't be too sanguine, Cal, about the running. Do you think such men as Nelson, Fry, Bramlette, Woodford, and a host of others I might name, are cowards?"

"Oh! I didn't mean the few Kentuckians who are espousing the Union cause, but the riff-raff and scum of the North."

"You will find the men you call the 'riff-raff and scum of the North,' are just as earnest, just as brave, as the sons of the South."

"Do you think so?"

"Why not? Are we not of the same blood, the same language? This idea that the people of the South are a superior race to the people of the North is one simply born of our pride and arrogance. But you ask me why I side with the North. Because

the North battles for the old flag; because it loves freedom. Cal, do you think a just God will ever let a Confederacy be successful whose chief corner-stone is human slavery?"

Calhoun flushed and muttered: "They are nothing but niggers, and the Bible upholds slavery."

"We will not argue that. My great-grandfather on my mother's side fell on Bunker Hill. Our great-grandfather fought at Yorktown; our grandfather was with Jackson at New Orleans. All fought under the old flag; all fought for freedom, not for slavery. Now, do you think I can raise my hand to help destroy the Union they helped to found, and then to perpetuate? I cannot do it. You think differently, but let us remember our oaths and be friends, even unto death."

"Do you think I can forget it, after what you have just done for me? But see, the sun is getting low; let us stop this discussion and hurry up."

Judge Pennington, the father of Calhoun, resided in Danville, and the two boys soon cantered up to his door. Fred did not put up his horse, as he was to return home. After tea the boys sauntered down to the hotel to see what was going on. There they met Nelson and his party. Their first impulse was to go away, pretending not to notice him, but that would have been cowardly; so they walked up to him, apparently unconcerned as to what might happen. To their surprise, Nelson held out his hand, and laughingly said:

"How are you, my young Hotspurs; and so you want to see

me hanged, do you?" addressing Calhoun. "Well, my boy, better men than I may be hanged before this trouble is over; and many as brave a boy as you will kiss mother for the last time. My boy, if it needs be that we must die, would it not be better to die under the folds of the old flag than under the bastard stars and bars?"

Calhoun turned away; he dared not trust himself to speak, so Fred, not to have his cousin appear rude, said: "Lieutenant, let me once more apologize for running into you. I am very sorry we were so careless."

"No apology is necessary, my son. A boy who runs a race for the Union and wins need not apologize. I would know you better, lad; Kentucky has need of all such as you."

Just then an orderly rushed up to Nelson and excitedly said something in a low tone. Nelson uttered an exclamation of surprise, turned abruptly, and rapidly walked to the telegraph office, where a dispatch was placed in his hands. He glanced at it, turned pale, and brave man though he was, his hand shook as though stricken with palsy. Silently he handed the dispatch to Colonel Fry, who stood by his side. As the Colonel read it, great drops of sweat stood out on his forehead. "Great God!" was all that he said.

"Fry," said Nelson, huskily, "see Colonel Bramlette, who is fortunately in Danville; gather up all other Union officers that you may see, and meet me at once in my room at the hotel."

It was a group of panic-stricken officers who gathered in Nelson's room at the hotel. Here is the dispatch that had created

such consternation:

Cincinnati, July 21, 6 P. M.

Lieutenant Wm. Nelson:

Our army has been disastrously beaten at Bull Run, and are in full retreat for Washington. That city may be in possession of the enemy before morning.

Anderson.

When the dispatch was read, not a word was spoken for a moment, and then Colonel Fry asked if it was not possible to keep the dispatch secret.

"No use," replied Nelson; "it has already passed through the hands of a score of disloyal operators."

"I knew," spoke up a young lieutenant, "that those miserable Eastern Yankees would not stand up before the Southern soldiers. We might as well disband and go home; all is lost."

"Lost! lost!" thundered Nelson, turning on the young lieutenant like a tiger. "Go home, you craven, if you want to; all is not lost, and will not be lost until every loyal son of Kentucky is slain. We have enough men at Dick Robinson, poorly armed and equipped as they are, to hold Central Kentucky. With such colonels as Fry, Bramlette, Garrard Wolford, and the host of gallant officers under them, I defy the devil and all the Secessionists in the State to wrest Central Kentucky from us."

And with loud huzzahs the officers present swore to stand by Nelson, and come what might, they would hold Central Kentucky

for the Union. How well that pledge was kept history tells.

"It is not for Central Kentucky, I fear," continued Nelson; "it is for Louisville. Can we save that city for the Union? It must be saved. The loyal men there must save it, at all hazards. They must know that we are standing firm in Central Kentucky. But how? The telegraph is in the hands of the enemy. Any word I sent would be known at once. Oh! I have it, Fry; send for that light-haired boy I was talking with at the hotel. Have him here right away."

Fred Shackelford was found just as he was mounting his horse to return home. Wondering what Nelson wanted with him, he accompanied the messenger to that officer's room, where they found him pacing up and down the apartment like a caged lion.

"Where is your companion?" abruptly asked Nelson of Fred.

"At home; he lives here," answered Fred.

"Where is your home?"

"A few miles out on the Richmond road."

"Your name?"

"Frederic Shackelford."

"Frederic, you have a good horse?"

"Yes, sir; one of the best and fastest in Kentucky."

"Good; now Frederic, you told me that you loved the Union."

"Yes, sir. I promised my mother on her deathbed ever to be faithful to the old flag."

"Would Kentucky had more such mothers. A boy like you never breaks a promise to a mother. Frederic, do you want to do

your country a great service, something that may save Kentucky to the Union?"

"What is it, sir?"

"To take some important dispatches to Louisville. Can you make Nicholasville by ten o'clock? A train leaves there at that hour for Lexington, thence to Louisville, arriving early in the morning."

Fred looked at his watch. "It is now seven," he said. "Yes, I can make Nicholasville by ten o'clock, if I have the dispatches right away."

"They will be ready in ten minutes," said Nelson, turning away.

In less than ten minutes the dispatches were given to Fred with instructions to place them at the earliest possible moment in the hands of James Speed, Garrett Davis, J. T. Boyle, or any one of a score of loyal Louisvillians whose names were handed him on a separate sheet of paper.

Fred mounted his horse and rode away, and soon the swift beating of his horse's hoofs on the dusty turnpike died away in the distance.

CHAPTER III.
THE DAY AFTER BULL RUN

Could Frederic Shackelford reach Nicholasville in less than three hours? "Yes, it can be done, and I will do it," thought he as he urged his steed onward, and left mile after mile behind him. It was the test of speed and bottom of the best horse in Kentucky against time.

While Fred is making this desperate ride, our young readers may wish to be more formally introduced to the brave rider, as well as to the other characters in the story. Frederic Shackelford was the only son of Richard Shackelford, a prosperous Kentucky planter and a famous breeder of horses. Mr. Shackelford was a graduate of Harvard, and while in college had become acquainted with Laura Carrington, one of the belles of Boston, and a famous beauty. But Miss Carrington's personal charms were no greater than her beauty of mind and character. After the completion of his college course, Mr. Shackelford married Miss Carrington, and transplanted her to his Kentucky home. The fruits of this union were two children, Frederic, at the opening of this story a sturdy boy of sixteen, and Belle, a lovely little girl of twelve. Mrs. Shackelford was very happy in her Kentucky home. She was idolized by her husband, who did everything possible for her comfort. Yet, in the midst of her happiness and the kindness

shown her, Mrs. Shackelford could not help feeling that there was a kind of contempt among native Kentuckians for New England Yankees. As the strife over slavery grew fiercer, the feeling against the North, especially New England, grew stronger. Many a time she felt like retorting when she heard those she loved traduced, but she hid the wound in her heart, and kept silent. But she could never accustom herself to the institution of slavery. She was a kind mistress, and the slaves of the plantation looked upon her as little less than an angel; but she could never close her eyes to the miseries that slavery brought in its train.

She died a few days after Fort Sumter was fired upon. A few hours before she passed away she called Frederic to her bedside, told him how his great-grandfather had died on Bunker Hill, and asked him to give her a solemn promise to ever be true to the flag of his country.

"Remember, my son," she said, "that a just God will never prosper a nation whose chief corner-stone is human slavery."

These words sank deep into Frederic's heart, and were ever with him during all the dark and terrible days which followed. He readily gave his mother the promise she requested, and a few hours afterward she sank peacefully to rest.

As much as Frederic loved his mother, and as deeply as he grieved for her in the months and years that followed, he thanked God that she had been spared the misery and agony that would have been hers if she had lived.

Mr. Shackelford was so prostrated by the death of his wife

that for some weeks he paid no attention to the turmoil going on around him. He was an old line Whig in politics, but a stout believer in the rights of the State. He deplored the war, and hoped against hope that some way might be found to avert it.

Judge Horace Pennington, the father of Calhoun, was one of the most honored citizens of Danville. He was a veritable Southern fire-eater, and had nothing but contempt for anything that came from the North. But his integrity was as sterling as his politics were violent. He was the soul of honor and truth, and despised anything that looked like deception. He had no words too strong in which to express his contempt for the part Kentucky was taking in the great drama that was being enacted. When the State refused to join the Southern Confederacy his rage knew no bounds. He would have nothing to do with the plotting that was going on. "Let us go out like men," he would say, "not creep out like thieves." When the State declared for neutrality, he said: "The State is sovereign; she can do as she pleases, but it is a cowardly makeshift; it will not last."

The mother of Calhoun was a sister of Mr. Shackelford, but she died when Calhoun was a baby, and for years another Mrs. Pennington had presided over the Judge's household. For this reason much of the childhood of Calhoun had been spent at the home of his uncle, and thus it was that he and Frederic were more like brothers than cousins.

The position of Kentucky, at the beginning of the great Civil War, was peculiar. She refused to furnish troops for the

suppression of the rebellion; she refused to secede. Her governor was an ardent Secessionist; the majority of the members of the Legislature were for the maintenance of the Union. Her people were nearly equally divided. As a last resort the Legislature passed resolutions of neutrality, and both the Federal and Confederate governments were warned not to invade her sacred soil. For a time both governments, in part, respected her position, and sent no troops from other States into her territory. But the citizens of Kentucky were not neutral. They violently espoused the cause of one side or the other. Thousands of Kentuckians left the State and joined the armies of the Confederacy. All through the State the secession element was very active, and the Federal government saw it must take some action or the State would be lost to the Union. So Lieutenant William Nelson of the United States navy, and a native Kentuckian, was commissioned to raise ten regiments of Kentucky troops for service in the Union army. This movement met with the most violent opposition, even from many professed Union men, who claimed that Kentucky's position of neutrality should be respected. The militia of the State, known as "State Guards," was mostly officered and controlled by the Southern element. In opposition to the "State Guards," companies were organized throughout the State known as "Home Guards." The "Home Guards" were Union men. Thus Kentucky was organized into two great hostile camps. Such was the condition of affairs at the opening of this story.

It lacked just five minutes of ten o'clock when Fred reined in

his reeking horse before the hotel at Nicholasville. Placing the bridle in the hands of the black hostler, and handing him a ten-dollar bill, Fred said: "I must take the train. This horse has been ridden fast and long. See that he has every attention. You know what to do in such cases."

"Trus' ole Peter fo' dat," answered the darky, bowing and scraping. "Youn' massa will hab his hoss bac' jes as good as ebber."

Fred just had time to catch the train, as it moved out from the depot. When Lexington was reached he had to make a change for Louisville. The news of the defeat of the Federal forces at Bull Run had reached Lexington, and late as it was the streets were thronged with an excited crowd. Cheers for Beauregard and the Southern Confederacy seemed to be on every tongue. If the Union had friends, they were silent. In the estimation of the excited crowd the South was already victorious; the North humbled and vanquished. It was now but a step before Washington would be in the possession of the Southern army, and Lincoln a prisoner or a fugitive.

That the Union army had been defeated was a surprise to Fred. He now knew why Nelson was so urgent about the dispatches, and realized as never before that the nation was engaged in a desperate conflict. The cries of the mob angered him. "I wonder where the Union men are," he growled; "are they cowards that they keep silent?" And Fred was about to let out a good old-fashioned yell for the Union, regardless of consequences, when

he recollected the mission he was on. It must not be; he must do nothing to endanger the success of his journey, and he bit his lip and kept silent, but his blood was boiling. Just before the train started two gentlemen came in and took the seat in front of him. They were in excellent humor, and exulting over the Confederate victory in Virginia. One of them Fred knew by sight. He was a prominent politician, and an officer of the State Guards. The other gentleman was not so distinguished looking as his companion, but his keen eyes gave his clear-cut features a kind of dare-devil expression. But beyond this, there was something about the man that would give one the impression that he was not only a man of daring, but of cool, calculating judgment, just the man to lead in a movement that would require both daring and coolness. As soon as they had seated themselves, the first gentleman, whom we will call Major Hockoday, turned to his companion and said:

"Well, Morgan, isn't this glorious news? I knew those truckling Yankees could never stand before the gentlemen of the South. I hardly look for much war now. Washington will fall, and Lincoln will be on his knees before a week, begging for peace."

Major Hockoday's companion was no less a personage than John H. Morgan, afterward one of the most daring raiders and dashing cavalry leaders produced by the South.

Morgan did not answer for a moment, and then slowly replied:

"Major, I think that you politicians, both North and South, ought to show more sense than you do. There are those Northern

politicians who have been declaring the war would not last for ninety days. The time is up, and the war has hardly begun. Now you fellows who have been associating so long with the dough-faces of the North, think the whole North is a truckling, pusillanimous set. In my business I have met another class in the North – thrifty and earnest. They are not only earnest, but brave; and not only brave, but stubborn. They will hold on like bulldogs. I fear the effects of this victory will be just opposite to what you think. It will make our people overconfident; it will tend to unify the North and nerve her to greater exertion."

"Nonsense, Morgan," replied Major Hockoday, "what ails you? You will hardly hear a peep from the Union men of Kentucky after to-morrow. The only thing I regret is that Kentucky has not taken her rightful place in the Southern Confederacy. We have talked neutrality so much, it is hard to get away from it."

"Hockoday, like you, I think Kentucky has played the rôle of neutral too long – so long that she is already lost to the Confederacy, only to be retaken at the point of the bayonet. Central Kentucky is already in the hands of that devil, Nelson. Poorly organized as he is, he is much better organized than we. Gods! how I would like to be at the head of a cavalry regiment and raid that camp at Dick Robinson; and I would do it, too, if I had my way. But you politicians, with your neutrality, have spoiled everything."

"Look here, Morgan," replied Major Hockoday, a little

nettled, "be reasonable. It was neutrality or worse. Look at the Union sentiment we had to contend with. The State absolutely refused to secede. The elections all went against us. The Legislature is against us. We had to take neutrality to keep the State from going bodily over to the Yankees – "

"That's it," broke in Morgan, "with your twaddle about State rights you allowed your hands to be tied. The Legislature should have been dispersed at the point of the bayonet, the election annulled, and Kentucky declared out of the Union. If we had done this two months ago, we would have been all right."

"That is what we propose to do now," said the major. "See here, Morgan," and he lowered his voice to a whisper. Fred yawned, and leaned his head forward on the seat apparently for a good sleep, but his ears were never more alert. He could only now and then catch a word something like this:

"Send message – Tompkins – Louisville – Knights Golden Circle – take Louisville – Stop at Frankfort – Send Captain Conway – All excitement – Bull Run – Louisville ours."

Fred leaned back in his seat, shut his eyes, and commenced to think hard. What did it mean? And this is the conclusion that he reached: That Major Hockoday was going to send a message from Frankfort to some one in Louisville; that there was to be an uprising of the Secessionists with the intention of capturing the city. "Oh!" thought Fred, "if I could only get hold of that message. Can I?" and again he fell to thinking.

In the rear of the car sat two men, one dressed in the uniform

of a Federal officer; the other a sharp, ferret-looking man who would readily pass for a detective.

An idea came to Fred. He thought a moment, and then said to himself, "I don't like the deception, but it is the only way. If I have the opportunity, I will try it. I must have that message if possible. It may mean much to the Union cause; it may mean much to Louisville."

The train stopped at Frankfort, and Major Hockoday and Morgan alighted. On the platform stood a short, stumpy man with a very red face and a redder nose.

"How do you do, Captain," said Major Hockoday, stepping up to him and shaking hands, at the same time slipping an envelope into his other hand, and whispering some hurried instructions into his ear.

"Trust me," said the captain; "I will see that your letter reaches the right person and in time."

Fred had followed Major Hockoday out of the car, took note of every movement, and heard every word that could be heard.

The bell rang, and the captain entered the car. There was a little delay, and Fred, who had got on the rear of the car, said to himself, "This little delay is a blessed thing for me, for it helps me carry out my plan." He waited until the train was getting under good headway, and then entered the car puffing and blowing and dropped into the seat beside the captain, where he sat panting as if entirely exhausted.

"You seem to have had a hard run for it, my boy," said the

captain.

"Y-e-s, – had – to – make – it. Had – to – see – you," panted Fred, speaking in gasps.

"Had to see me!" exclaimed the startled captain. "I reckon there must be some mistake."

"No – mis-mistake. Wa-wait – until – I – catch – my – breath," and Fred sat puffing as if he had run a mile race. His companion eyed him not only in surprise, but with suspicion.

After Fred had let sufficient time elapse to regain his breath, he said in a low tone: "You are Captain Conway of the State Guards, are you not?"

"Yes, but what of that?"

"You have just received an important letter from Major Hockoday to be delivered in Louisville."

Captain Conway stared at Fred in astonishment; then said in a fierce whisper, "How do you know that?"

"Don't get excited," whispered Fred; "don't attract attention, or all is lost. Listen! Hardly had the major placed the letter in your hands before he received the startling intelligence that he had been watched, and you spotted. Do you see those two men in the rear of the car, one in the uniform of a Federal officer, the other a keen looking fellow?"

Captain Conway turned quickly and saw the men, both of whom happened to be looking at him, and as the captain imagined with sinister designs.

"What of it?" he asked in a trembling voice.

"The gentleman seated by the side of the officer," continued Fred, "is a noted detective from Danville. The plan is to declare you a celebrated thief, and arrest you and take you off the cars at Eminence. Once off, they will search you, get your dispatches, and let you go."

"But there may be some on the train who know me."

"That will make no difference; they will claim they are not mistaken, and that you must prove you are not the person wanted before some magistrate."

"What can I do? What did Major Hockoday say for me to do?" asked the now thoroughly frightened captain.

"He said that you should give me the letter, and for you to leave the train before it reached Eminence, thus giving them the slip."

"Boy, you are an impostor. It is simply a plot to get hold of the letter. Why did not Major Hockoday write me this order?"

"He had no time."

"I shall not give you the letter."

"Refuse at your peril. What do you think will happen when you are arrested and Major Hockoday's letter gets in the hands of his enemies. He will shoot you at sight for betraying him."

"How do I know you tell the truth?" asked the captain, visibly weakening.

"How did I know about the letter of Major Hockoday, if he had not sent me?" retorted Fred.

The captain grasped at the last straw. "To whom am I to deliver this letter?" he asked. He was in hopes that Fred could

not answer.

"Tompkins," answered Fred, trembling, thinking his answer might be wrong.

The captain was convinced, yet sat silent and undecided. He glanced back; the men were still looking at him. He shivered, and then slyly slipped the letter into Fred's hand. The train stopped, and the captain arose and went forward as for a drink of water. At the door he hesitated as if still undecided. Fred's heart beat fast. Would he fail after all. No, he would jump from the train himself first. The bell rang for the train to start, and the captain turned as if to come back, at the same time glancing at the two gentlemen in the rear of the car. The detective-looking individual had arisen to his feet, and was reaching for his hip pocket.

Captain Conway waited to see no more; he turned, bolted from the car, and plunged from the now moving train into the darkness.

The detective-looking gentleman drew a handkerchief from his pocket, wiped his perspiring face, and sat down again. On such little incidents do great events sometimes depend.

Fred drew a long breath. He had taken desperate chances, and won. For a moment he felt exultant, and then his face grew serious. He had always been the soul of truth and honor. "And now," he thought, bitterly, "I have been lying like a pirate." Had he done right? He hardly knew, and the wheels of the cars seemed to say, as they rattled along, "You are a liar, you are a liar," over and over again, until he leaned his head on the seat in

front of him, and his tears fell thick and fast.

Poor Fred! He had yet to learn that deception was one of the least evils of war.

The dawn of the long summer day was just beginning to brighten the east when the train rolled into the station at Louisville. Early as it was, the streets were full of excited men and boys, cheering for Jeff Davis and the South. Fred at once found his way to the home of one of the best known Union men of the city, whom we will call Mr. Spear. The household was already astir, and Fred's ring was at once answered by a servant, who cautiously opened the door and asked, "Who is dar?"

"Is Mr. Spear at home?" inquired Fred.

"Yes, sah."

"Tell him a messenger from Lieutenant Nelson wishes to see him."

The servant withdrew, and in a moment returned, and throwing open the door, said, "Massa says, come right in, sah."

Fred was ushered into a large drawing-room, where to his surprise he met the inquiring gaze of more than a score of serious looking men. They were the prominent Union men of the city, conferring with a number of the city officials as to the best method of preserving peace and order during the day. The danger was great, and how to meet it without precipitating a conflict was the question which confronted them. Now all were interested in the message brought by Fred, and his youthful appearance caused them to wonder why Nelson had chosen so young a messenger.

"You have a message from Lieutenant Nelson, I understand," said Mr. Spear.

"I have."

"When did you leave Nelson?"

"Last evening a little after seven," answered Fred.

"Where?"

"At Danville."

"Impossible; you are an impostor."

"You are mistaken. I rode to Nicholasville in time to catch the ten o'clock train to Lexington, thence to Louisville."

Those present looked at each other in surprise. The feat to them seemed scarcely possible.

"Your message," said Mr. Spear, "must be important to demand such haste. Where is it?"

"Here, sir," replied Fred, handing him the letter. Mr. Spear hastily tore it open and read:

Danville, Ky., July 21, 7:00 P. M.

To the Union Men of Louisville:

I have just received news of the defeat of our forces at Bull Run. Even if Washington falls, we must not despair. Kentucky must be held for the Union. Thank God, I have organized enough troops to hold Central Kentucky against any force the disorganized rebels can bring against us. Our great danger is your city. Hold Louisville, if her streets run red with blood. Do not let the loyal officials be driven from power. Call on Indiana troops if necessary. Don't hesitate.

Dare anything to save the city.
Nelson.

"Gentlemen," said Mr. Spear, "the advice of Lieutenant Nelson should be followed to the letter. The city must be saved, peaceably if possible, by force if necessary."

There had been a few in the assembly who had hesitated on the expediency of using force, but the ringing words of Nelson had completely won them over. Louisville was to be held for the Union, come what might.

"And now," said Mr. Spear, "in the name of the loyal citizens of our city, let us thank this brave boy."

Fred blushed, and then stammered, "This is not all, gentlemen." Then in a modest way, he told of his overhearing the conversation between Major Hockoday and Morgan, of his plan to get possession of the letter, and how well he had succeeded. "And here, gentlemen," he continued, "is the letter."

There was a murmur of astonishment, and Mr. Spear, taking the letter, broke it open and read:

Lexington, Ky., July 21st, 10 P. M.

J. T. Tompkins, Louisville, Ky.

Honored Sir: – The news of the great victory in Virginia will kindle a flame from one end of Kentucky to the other. By the time this reaches you, I trust Washington will be in the hands of the Confederate army, and Lincoln a prisoner or a fugitive. Now is the time to strike. The State Guards are eager, but owing to the stand of the State

regarding neutrality, it would not be wise for them to begin a revolution in favor of the South, as that action would bring the Federal troops down on us, and we are not strong enough yet to resist them. With you it is different. You are at the head of a powerful secret order known as "The Knights of the Golden Circle." The State is not responsible for your acts or those of your organization. During the excitement of to-morrow organize your order, and hurl the cowardly and traitorous city officials of Louisville from power. The State Guards will not do anything to prevent you, and many, as individuals, will help you. Act promptly fearing nothing. See that not a single Union rag is left waving in Louisville by to-morrow night.

Signed: Major C. S. Hockoday,
State Guards.

For a moment the men looked into each other's faces without a word; then there came a storm of indignation.

"The cowardly, traitorous wretch!" was the exclamation heard on all sides. "Forewarned is forearmed," said Mr. Spear, grimly. "Gentlemen, I think we shall be fully prepared for Mr. Tompkins and his 'Knights of the Golden Circle,' What say you?"

"That we will!" was the cry of all. "Mr. Tompkins will get a warm reception."

Then they crowded around Fred and nearly shook his hand off. But he sat silent, and at last looking up with burning cheeks, stammered: "But – but, I lied – to Conway."

He said this so earnestly, and looked so dejected that the

company at first did not know what to say; then they all burst out laughing.

This hurt Fred worse than a reprimand, and the tears came into his eyes. Mr. Spear seeing how it was, at once commanded attention, and said: "Gentlemen, our levity is ill-advised. This boy is as truthful as he is brave. As he looks at it, he has been guilty of an untruth." Then turning to Fred, he took him gently by the hand, and said: "Your action is but a fitting testimonial to your truthful nature. But be comforted. What you have done, instead of being wrong, was an act of the greatest heroism, and you deserve and will receive the thanks of every Union man."

"Do you think so?" asked Fred, faintly.

"I know so, and not only this, but your action may save hundreds of lives and our city from destruction. Let the good that you have done atone for the deception you practiced towards Captain Conway."

Fred felt relieved. Then he was told he must have some rest after his terrible ride and the exciting events of the night. He was ushered into a darkened chamber, and not until after he had lain down, and the excitement under which he had labored began to pass away did he realize how utterly exhausted he was. Tired nature soon asserted itself, and he slept the peaceful sleep of the young.

When Fred awoke, the house was very still. He looked at his watch, and to his surprise found it was after ten o'clock. Hurriedly dressing, he went downstairs, where he met Mrs.

Spear, and when he apologized for sleeping so late, she told him she had orders not to awake him, but to let him sleep as long as he would. "But come," she said, "you must be nearly famished," and she led him into the dining-room where a tempting meal was spread.

What puzzled Fred was, that although it was so near midday, the house was darkened and the gas burning. Every shutter was closed tight. Mrs. Spear appeared nervous and excited, and the servants looked as though frightened out of their wits. Although everything was so still in the house, from out-of-doors there arose a confused noise as of the tramping of many feet, the mingling of many voices, and now and then the sound of wild cheering as of an excited mob. Fred looked inquiringly at Mrs. Spear. She smiled sadly and said:

"This promises to be a terrible day for Louisville. But for the forbearance of the Union men, there would have been bloody fighting before this. The news of the Confederate victory in Virginia has crazed the rebel element. It is thought an effort will be made to overthrow the city government. If there is, there will be bloody work, for the Union element is prepared. Companies of men are in readiness all over the city to spring to arms at a moment's notice. I fear for my husband, I fear for all of our lives, for Mr. Spear is a marked Union man." She stopped, choked back a sob, and drawing herself proudly up, continued with flashing eyes: "But Louisville will be saved, if husband, house and everything go."

Of such metal were the loyal women of Kentucky. Fred hastily swallowed a cup of coffee, ate enough to appease his hunger, and announced his intention of going out on the street.

"You must not," said Mrs. Spear; "my husband left special word for you to remain indoors. There is danger out."

Fred smiled. "That is just the reason I shall go out," he answered, quietly.

"Then, if you must go," replied Mrs. Spear, "here is a weapon," and she handed him a superb revolver. "You may need it, but do not use it except to protect your own life, or the life of a Union man. This is the order given to all loyal citizens. Do nothing to provoke a quarrel; keep silent even if insulted, but if a conflict comes, protect yourself."

Fred thanked her, promised to be careful, and went forth into the city. Through the principal streets, vast throngs were sweeping, acting as if bereft of reason. Everywhere the Confederate flag was waving. Union flags were being trailed in the dust and stamped in the mire. Cries for Jeff Davis, and groans for Lincoln were heard on every hand.

As time went on, the mob grew more violent. "Down with the Yankees!" "Kill the nigger-stealers!" "Kentucky is no abolition State!" "Death to the Lincoln hirelings!" were the cries which echoed and re-echoed through the streets. Soon stories of outrages, of private grounds being entered and flags torn down, of brutal beatings began to be heard. The Unionists began to gather in knots and resent insult. Yet each side seemed to dread

the beginning of a real conflict.

Chief among those exciting the people was Tompkins, the head of the "Knights of the Golden Circle." He raged through the streets, defying all authority. Fred looked on the growing excitement with the blood swiftly coursing through his veins. His eyes blazed with fury when he saw the stars and stripes trailed in the dust of the street. He trembled with suppressed rage when he saw Union men reviled, insulted.

"It is true," he said, bitterly, to himself, "that Union men are cowards, miserable cowards, or they would resent these insults." But Fred was mistaken; braver men never lived than the Union men of Louisville, who endured the taunts and insults of that day, rather than provoke a conflict, the end of which no man could tell.

After a time Fred found himself on a residence street where there was a break in the mob, and the street was comparatively quiet. During this quiet a young lady came out of a house, and hurriedly passed down the street. Suddenly a fragment of the mob drifted through the street, and she was caught in the vortex. On her bosom was pinned a small Union flag. A burly ruffian in the mob espied it, and rushing up to her, shouted: "Off with that dirty rag, you she-Lincolnite!"

"Never," she exclaimed, with a pale face but flashing eye.

"Then I will take it," he exclaimed, with a coarse oath, and snatched at the flag so roughly as to tear her dress, exposing her pure white bosom to the gaze of the brutal mob.

There was a howl of delight, and the wretch made bolder, cried: "Now for a kiss, my beauty," and attempted to catch her in his smutty arms. But the avenger was at hand. Fred had seen the outrage, and picking up a brick that happened to lie loose on the pavement, he sprang forward and dealt the ruffian such a blow on the side of the head that he fell like a log, striking the pavement with such force that the blood gushed from his nose and mouth.

"Kill the young devil of a Lincolnite!" was the cry, and the crowd surged towards Fred. But those in advance drew back, for they looked into the muzzle of a revolver held by a hand that did not tremble, and gazed into young eyes that did not waver.

"The first man that attempts to touch her or me, dies," said Fred, in a clear, firm voice. The mob shrank back; then a fierce cry arose of "Kill him! kill him!"

"Take the young lady to a place of safety," said a low voice by Fred's side; then to the mob, "Back! back! or come on at your peril."

Fred looked, and by his side stood a stalwart policeman, a glistening revolver in his hand. Near him stood other determined men, ready to assist.

"Come," said Fred, taking the young lady's arm, and the two quickly made their way out of the mob, which, balked of its prey, howled in futile rage.

"I live here," said the young lady, stopping before a palatial residence. "My name is Mabel Vaughn. You must come in and let my mother thank you. How brave you were, and Policeman

Green, too. How can I thank you both enough for what you did!"

"You must excuse me now," replied Fred, politely raising his hat; "but to-morrow, if possible, I will call, and see if you have experienced any ill effects from the rough treatment you have received. But I must go now, for I may be of some further use," and with a bow, Fred was gone.

"If he were only older, I would have a mind to throw Bob overboard," said the young lady to herself, as she entered the house.

Going back to the scene of his adventure, Fred found that a great crowd had gathered around the place where he had knocked the ruffian down.

"What is this?" yelled Tompkins, coming up at the head of a multitude of followers.

"Shure," cried an Irish voice, "Big Jim is kilt intoirely, intoirely."

"Who did it?" demanded Tompkins, with an oath. No one knew. By this time Big Jim, with the aid of two companions, had staggered to his feet, and was looking around in a dazed condition.

"He will come around all right," said Tompkins. "To the City Hall, boys. Down with the rag floating there! Down with the city officials; let's throw them into the Ohio," and with frightful cries, the mob started for the city hall.

But the brave, loyal policeman, G. A. Green, the one who had assisted Fred, was before them. "Stop," he cried, "the first man

who tries to enter this building dies."

With a curse, Tompkins rushed on with the cry, "Down with the Lincolnites!"

There was the sharp crack of a revolver, and Tompkins staggered and fell dead. His followers stood dumfounded. Before they could rally there stood around the brave policeman a company of armed men. This was not all; as if by magic, armed Home Guards appeared everywhere. The mob stood amazed. Then a prominent officer of the Home Guard came forward and said:

"We do not wish to shed more blood, but the first blow struck at the city government, and these streets will run red with the blood of Secessionists. We are fully prepared."

Cowed, muttering, cursing, the mob began to melt away. The crisis was passed. The sun went down on one of the most exciting days Louisville ever saw – a day that those who were there will never forget.

The city was saved to the Union, and never afterward was it in grave danger.

CHAPTER IV.
THE TRIP TO NASHVILLE

"Quite an adventure," said Mrs. Spear, to whom Fred had been relating his experience. "I am proud of you. Why, you are a regular hero."

"Hardly that," replied Fred, blushing.

"I am so glad it has ended well," continued Mrs. Spear; "you ran a terrible danger, and I should never have forgiven myself for letting you go out, if any evil had befallen you."

"I should never have forgiven myself if I had not been there to protect that brave young lady," answered Fred, firmly.

"Of course, a true knight must protect a fair lady," said Mrs. Spear. "And you were fortunate, Sir Knight, for Mabel Vaughn is one of the fairest of Louisville's daughters. It was just like her to brave any danger rather than conceal her colors. She is loyal to the core."

"She seems to be a very nice young lady," replied Fred, "and she is extremely pretty, too."

"What a pity you are not older," said Mrs. Spear, "so you could fall in love with each other and get married, just as they do in well-regulated novels."

"How do you know that I am not in love with her now?" answered Fred, his eyes sparkling with merriment; "and as for

my youth, I will grow."

"Oh! in that case, I am really sorry," replied Mrs. Spear, "for I think she is spoken for."

Fred assumed a tragic air, and said in bloodcurdling tones: "Where was the recreant lover that he did not protect her? Never shall my good sword rest until it drinks his craven blood."

Mrs. Spear laughed until she cried. "You will call on your lady love before you return?" she queried.

"Most assuredly, and it must be an early morning call, for I leave for home at ten o'clock."

The warmth of welcome given Fred by the Vaughns surprised him, and, to his astonishment, he found himself a hero in their eyes.

Miss Mabel Vaughn was a most charming young lady of eighteen, and when she grasped Fred's hand, and, with tears in her eyes, poured out her thanks, he felt a curious sensation about his heart, and as he looked into her beautiful face, he could not help echoing the wish of Mrs. Spear, "Oh, that I were older."

But this fancy received a rude shock when a fine looking young man, introduced as Mr. Robert Marsden, grasped his hand, and thanked him for what he had done for his betrothed.

"And to think," said Marsden, "that Mabel was in danger, and that you, instead of me, protected her, makes me insanely envious of you."

"As for that, Bob," archly said Miss Mabel, "I am glad you were not there. I dare say Mr. Shackelford did far better than you

would have done."

Marsden flushed and said nothing. Seeing he looked hurt, Miss Vaughn continued: "I mean you would have been so rash you might have been killed."

"Which would have been far worse than if I had been killed," said Fred, meekly.

"Oh! I didn't mean that, I didn't mean that!" cried Miss Vaughn, bursting into tears.

"Which means I ought to be kicked for uttering a silly joke," answered Fred, greatly distressed. "Please, Miss Vaughn, let us change the subject. How did you happen to be on the street?"

"I had been calling on a sick friend a few doors away, and I thought I could reach home in safety during the few moments of quiet. My friend wanted me to remove the little flag from the bosom of my dress before I ventured out, but I refused, saying, 'I would never conceal my colors,' and I was caught in the mob, as you saw."

"And I shall consider it the happiest day of my life I was there," gallantly answered Fred. "And we must not forget the brave policeman."

"That I will not," replied Miss Vaughn.

"There is one good thing it has brought about, anyway," said Marsden. "Mabel has at length consented that I shall enter the army. She would never give her consent before. I shall wear this little flag that she wore yesterday on my breast, and it will ever be an incentive to deeds of glory, and it shall never be disgraced,"

and the young man's eyes kindled as he said it.

"Oh! Robert, if you should be killed!" and the girl sobbed piteously. Had a shadow of the future floated before her? Months afterward that little flag was returned to her bloodstained and torn.

"Come, come!" said Mrs. Vaughn, "this will never do, rather let us rejoice that we are all alive and happy this morning. Mabel, give us some music."

Two or three lively airs dispelled all the clouds, and Fred took his leave with the promise that he would never come to Louisville without calling.

Fred's return to Nicholasville was without adventure. He wondered what had become of Captain Conway, and laughed when he imagined the meeting between the captain and Major Hockoday. He found Prince none the worse for his fast riding, and jumping gaily on his back, started for home, returning by way of Camp Dick Robinson. Here he met Lieutenant Nelson, who warmly grasped his hand, and thanked him for his services in delivering his message.

"But," continued Nelson, "I have heard rumors of your performing a still more important part, and securing papers of the greatest value to us. Tell me about it."

When Fred related his meeting with Major Hockoday and Morgan, and how he had wrung the dispatch from Captain Conway, Nelson nearly went into an apoplectic fit from laughter. Then he stood up and looked at the boy admiringly.

"Fred," he said, "you have done what one man in a hundred thousand could not have done. The government shall know of this. Not only this; but if you will enter my service, not as a spy, but as a special messenger and scout, I will see that you are enrolled as such with good pay."

Fred shook his head. "You must remember, sir, I am but a boy still under the control of my father. I accepted the mission from you, which I did, on the impulse of the moment; and I fear when I return home, I shall find my father very much offended."

"Is your father a Union man?" asked Nelson.

"I do not know. My mother died but a few weeks ago, and since her death father has taken no interest in the events going on around him. I have never heard him express any opinion since the war really began. Before that he was in hopes it could be settled peaceably."

"Well, my boy, whatever happens, remember you have a friend in me. Not only this, but if you can arrange it amicably with your father, I may call on you, if at any time I have a very delicate mission I wish to have performed."

Fred thanked him, and rode on to his home. He found his father in very earnest conversation with his uncle, Judge Pennington, and Colonel Humphrey Marshall, a well-known Kentuckian. The trio were earnestly discussing the war, Judge Pennington and Colonel Marshall trying to convince Mr. Shackelford that it was his duty to come out boldly for the South, instead of occupying his position of indifference.

When Mr. Shackelford saw Fred, he excused himself a moment, and calling him, said: "Where in the world have you been, Fred? I thought you were with your Cousin Calhoun, and therefore borrowed no trouble on account of your absence. But when your uncle came a few moments ago, and informed me you had not been there for three days, I became greatly alarmed, and as soon as I could dismiss my visitors I was going to institute a search for you."

"I am all right, father," answered Fred. "I have been to Louisville. I will tell you all about it when you are at leisure."

"Very well," replied Mr. Shackelford, and went back and resumed the conversation with his guests.

In the evening, when father and son were alone, Fred told where he had been, and who sent him. Mr. Shackelford looked grave, and said:

"Fred, this is a bad business. Since the death of your mother, I have taken but little interest in passing events. I have just awakened to the fact that there is a great war in progress."

"Yes, father," said Fred in a low tone, "war on the old flag. Which side should one be on?"

Mr. Shackelford did not answer for a moment, and then he said, with a troubled countenance: "I had almost as soon lose my right arm as to raise it against the flag for which my fathers fought. On the other side, how can I, a man Southern born, raise my hand against my kindred? Kentucky is a sovereign State; as such she has resolved to be neutral. The South is observing this

neutrality, the North is not. Even now the Federal government is raising and arming troops right in our midst. This Lieutenant Nelson, to whom you have rendered such valuable services, is foremost in this defiance of the wishes of Kentucky. The raising and arming of Federal troops must be stopped, or the whole State will be in the throes of a fratricidal strife. Your uncle and Colonel Marshall are for Kentucky's seceding and joining the South. For this I am not prepared, for it would make the State the battleground of the contending armies. But the neutrality of Kentucky must be respected. Let me hear no more of your aiding Nelson, or you are no son of mine."

"Father, you say Kentucky is a sovereign State. Is it right then for those who favor the South to try and force Kentucky into the Southern Confederacy against the will of a majority of her people?"

Mr. Shackelford hesitated, and then said: "As much right as the Unionists have to force her to stay in. But I do not ask you to aid the South, neither must you aid Nelson."

Mr. Shackelford drew a deep sigh, and then continued: "Your mother being a Northern woman, I suppose you have imbibed some of her peculiar ideas. This war is a terrible thing, Fred. Oh, God! why must the two sections fight?" And he turned away to hide his feelings.

Under the circumstances, Fred thought it best not to say anything about his adventure with Captain Conway, or what happened in Louisville. But he readily promised his father he

would do nothing to aid either side without consulting him.

"Now, Fred," said Mr. Shackelford, "this business being settled, I have another matter I wish to talk about. My business is in such shape it is of the utmost importance that I get some papers to your Uncle Charles in Nashville for him to sign. Mail, you know, is now prohibited between the two sections. To travel between the two States is becoming nearly impossible. It will soon become entirely so. Even now, the journey may be attended with great danger; and I would not think of asking you if it was not so important for your Uncle Charles to sign the papers. But as much as I would like to have you make the journey, I shall not command you, but let you exercise your own pleasure."

"Just the thing!" shouted Fred, his boyish enthusiasm and love of adventure aroused. "I shall enjoy it. You know a spice of danger adds enjoyment to one's journey."

"Well," said his father, "it is all settled, then, but be very careful, for they tell me the whole country is in a state of fearful ferment. One thing more, Fred; if you have any Union sentiment, suppress it entirely while you are gone. It will not do in Middle Tennessee; there are no Union men there."

The next morning, after kissing his little sister good-bye, and promising his father to be very careful, Fred started on his journey. Nashville was about one hundred and sixty miles away, and he calculated he could reach it in three days. From Danville he took the main road to Liberty, thence to Columbia, where he stopped for the night. His next day's ride took him to Glasgow,

then south to Scottsville. He found the whole country in a state of the greatest excitement; and passed numerous companies of Kentuckians going south to join the Confederate army. After leaving Columbia, he saw nothing but the Confederate flag displayed. If there were any Unionists, they did not let the fact be known.

Just over on the Tennessee side, as he passed into that State, was a large encampment of Confederate troops; and Fred was repeatedly asked to enlist, while many a covetous eye was cast on his horse. It was afternoon before he reached Gallatin, where he stopped for refreshments for himself and horse.

He found the little city a perfect hotbed of excitement. The people were still rejoicing over the victory at Bull Run, and looking every day for Washington to fall. To them the war was nearly over, and there was joy on every countenance. When it became known at the hotel that Fred was from Kentucky, he was surrounded by an eager crowd to learn the news from that State.

In reply to his eager questioners, Fred said:

"Gentlemen, I do not know that I can give you anything new. You know that Kentucky has voted to remain neutral, but that does not prevent our people from being pretty evenly divided. Many of our most prominent men are advocating the cause of the South, but as yet they have failed to overcome the Union sentiment. The day after the battle of Bull Run there was a riot in Louisville, and it was thought that the friends of the South might be able to seize the city government, but the movement failed."

"Where did you say you were from?" asked one of the bystanders.

"From Danville," answered Fred.

"You are all right in that section of the country, are you not?"

"On the contrary," replied Fred, "a Lieutenant Nelson has organized a camp at Dick Robinson, but a few miles from where I live, and is engaged in raising ten regiments of Kentucky troops for the Federal army."

The news was astounding, and a murmur of surprise ran through the crowd, which became a burst of indignation, and a big red-faced man shouted:

"It's a lie, youngster; Kentuckians are not all cowards and Abolitionists. You are nothing but a Lincolnite in disguise. Hang him, boys! hang him!"

"You are right," said Fred, advancing on the man, "when you say all Kentuckians are not cowards. Some of them still have courage to resent an insult, especially when it is offered by a cur," and he dealt the man a blow across the face with his riding-whip with such force as to leave an angry, red mark.

The man howled with pain and rage, and attempted to draw a revolver, but stout hands laid hold of him, and he was dragged blaspheming away.

Meanwhile it looked as if there might be a riot. Some were hurrahing for the boy; others were shaking their heads and demanding that Fred further give an account of himself. He had been called a Lincolnite, and that was enough to damn him in

the eyes of many.

"What is all this fuss about?" cried a commanding looking young man, dressed in the uniform of a lieutenant of the Confederate army, pushing his way through the crowd.

"Oh, this hyear young feller struck Bill Pearson across the face with his ridin'-whip for callin' him a Lincolnite and a liah," volunteered a seedy, lank looking individual.

"Which seems full enough provocation for a blow. Bill is fortunate he hasn't got a hole through him," responded the young lieutenant.

"But maybe he is a Lincolnite," persisted the seedy individual. "He said Kentuck wouldn't 'cede, and that they was raisin' sogers to help whip we 'uns."

"How is it, my boy?" asked the lieutenant, turning to Fred. "Who are you, and where did you come from?"

Fred explained what had happened; how he had been asked for news from Kentucky, and that he had told them only the truth. He then gave his name, and said he was on his way to Nashville to visit his uncle, Charles Shackelford.

"Fellow-citizens," said the young officer in a voice that at once commanded attention, "this young man informs me that he is a nephew of Major Charles Shackelford of Nashville, who is now engaged in raising a regiment for the Confederate service. No nephew of his can be a Lincolnite. (Here Fred winced.) As for the news he told, unfortunately it's true. Kentucky, although thousands of her gallant sons have joined us, still clings to her

neutrality, or is openly hostile to us. It is true, that a renegade Kentuckian by the name of Nelson is enlisting troops for the Yankees right in the heart of Kentucky. But I believe, almost know, the day is not distant, when the brave men of Kentucky who are true to their traditions and the South will arise in their might, and place Kentucky where she belongs, as one of the brightest stars in the galaxy of Confederate States. In your name, fellow-citizens, I want to apologize to this gallant young Kentuckian for the insult offered him."

The young lieutenant ceased speaking, but as with one voice, the multitude began to cry, "Go on! go on! A speech, Bailie, a speech!"

Thus abjured, Lieutenant Bailie Peyton, for it was he, mounted a dry-goods box, and for half an hour poured forth such a torrent of eloquence that he swayed the vast audience, which had gathered, as the leaves of the forest are swayed by the winds of heaven.

He first spoke of the glorious Southland; her sunny skies, her sweeping rivers, her brave people. He pictured to them the home of their childhood, the old plantation, where slept in peaceful graves the loved ones gone before.

Strong men stood with tears running down their cheeks; women sobbed convulsively. "Is there one present that will not die for such a land?" he cried in a voice as clear as a trumpet, and there went up a mighty shout of "No, not one!"

He then spoke of the North; how the South would fain live in

peace with her, but had been spurned, reviled, traduced. Faces began to darken, hands to clench. Then the speaker launched into a terrific philippic against the North. He told of its strength, its arrogance, its insolence. Lincoln was now marshaling his hireling hosts to invade their country, to devastate their land, to desecrate their homes, to let loose their slaves, to ravish and burn. "Are we men," he cried, "and refuse to protect our homes, our wives, our mothers, our sisters!"

The effect was indescribable. Men wept and cried like children, then raved and yelled like madmen. With clenched hands raised towards heaven, they swore no Yankee invader would ever leave the South alive. Women, with hysterical cries, beseeched their loved ones to enlist. They denounced as cowards those who refused. The recruiting officers present reaped a rich harvest. As for Fred, he stood as one in a trance. Like the others, he had been carried along, as on a mighty river, by the fiery stream of eloquence he had heard. He saw the Southland invaded by a mighty host, leaving wreck and ruin in its wake. He heard helpless women praying to be delivered from the lust of brutal slaves, and raising his hand to heaven he swore that such things should never be.

Then came the reaction. His breast was torn with conflicting emotions, he knew not what to think. In a daze he sought his horse. A pleasant voice sounded in his ear.

"I think you told me you were going to Nashville." It was Bailie Peyton who spoke.

"Yes, sir."

"It is getting late. Will you not go with me to my father's and stay all night, and I will ride with you to Nashville in the morning?"

Fred readily consented, for he was weary, and he also wanted to see more of this wonderful young orator.

Colonel Peyton, the father of Bailie Peyton, resided some three miles out of Gallatin on the Nashville pike, and was one of the distinguished men of Tennessee. He opposed secession to the last, and when the State seceded he retired to his plantation, and all during the war was a non-combatant. So grand was his character, such confidence did both sides have in his integrity, that he was honored and trusted by both. He never faltered in his love for the Union, yet did everything possible to save his friends and neighbors from the wrath of the Federal authorities. It was common report that more than once he saved Gallatin from being burned to the ground for its many acts of hostility to the Union forces. War laid a heavy hand on Colonel Peyton; and his son the apple of his eye was brought home a corpse. Even then Colonel Peyton did not complain. He bound up his broken heart, and did what he could to soothe others who had been stricken the same as he.

Fred was given a genuine Southern welcome at the hospitable mansion of Colonel Peyton. As for Bailie, the younger members of the household went wild over him, even the servants wore a happier smile now "dat Massa Bailie had cum."

After supper the family assembled on the old-fashioned porch to enjoy the cool evening air, and the conversation, as all conversations were in those days, was on the war. Bailie was overflowing with the exuberance of his spirits. He believed that the victory at Bull Run was the beginning of the end, that Washington was destined to fall, and that President Davis would dictate peace from that city. He saw arise before him a great nation, the admiration of the whole world; and as he spoke of the glory that would come to the South, his whole soul seemed to light up his countenance.

Throughout Bailie's discourse, Colonel Peyton sat silent and listened. Sometimes a sad smile would come over his features at some of his son's witty sallies or extravagant expressions.

Bailie seeing his father' dejection, turned to him and said:

"Cheer up, father; I shall soon be back in Nashville practicing my profession, the war over; and in the greatness and grandeur of the South you will forget your love for the old Union."

The colonel shook his head, and turning to Fred, began to ask him questions concerning Kentucky and the situation there. Fred answered him truthfully and fully to the best of his knowledge. Colonel Peyton then said to his son:

"Bailie, you know how dear you are to me, and how much I regret the course you are taking; yet I will not chide you, for it is but natural for you to go with the people you love. It is not only you, it is the entire South that has made a terrible mistake. That the South had grievances, we all know; but secession was

not the cure. Bailie, you are mistaken about the war being nearly over; it has hardly begun. If Beauregard ever had a chance to capture Washington, that chance is now lost by his tardiness. The North has men and money; it will spare neither. You have heard what this young man has said about Kentucky. He has told the truth. The State is hopelessly divided. Neither side will keep up the farce of neutrality longer than it thinks it an advantage to do so. When the time comes, the Federal armies will sweep through Kentucky and invade Tennessee. Their banners will be seen waving along this road; Nashville will fall."

"What!" cried Bailie, springing to his feet, "Nashville in the hands of the Lincolnites. Never! May I die before I see the accursed flag of the North waving over the proud capitol of my beloved Tennessee."

He looked like a young god, as he stood there, proud, defiant, his eye flashing, his breast heaving with emotion.

His father gazed on him a moment in silence. A look of pride, love, tenderness, passed over his face; then his eyes filled with tears, and he turned away trembling with emotion. Had he a dim realization that the prayer of his son would be granted, and that he would not live to see the Union flag floating over Nashville?

That night Frederic Shackelford knelt by his bedside with a trembling heart. Bailie Peyton's speech, his enthusiasm, his earnestness had had a powerful influence on him. After all, was the North wrong? Was the South fighting, as Bailie claimed, for one of the holiest causes for which a patriotic people ever

combated; and that their homes, the honor of their wives and daughters were at stake?

"Oh, Lord, show me the right way!" was Fred's prayer.

Then there came to him, as if whispered in his ear by the sweetest of voices, the words of his mother, "*God will never permit a nation to be founded whose chief corner-stone is human slavery.*" He arose, strong, comforted; the way was clear; there would be no more doubt.

The next morning the young men journeyed to Nashville together. On the way Bailie poured out his whole soul to his young companion. He saw nothing in the future but success. In no possible way could the North subjugate the South. But the silver tones no longer influenced Fred; there was no more wavering in his heart. But he ever said that Bailie Peyton was one of the most fascinating young men he ever met, and that the remembrance of that ride was one of the sweetest of his life.

When a few months afterward, he wept over Peyton's lifeless body stretched on the battlefield, he breathed a prayer for the noble soul that had gone so early to its Creator.

Fred found Nashville a seething sea of excitement. Nothing was thought of, talked of, but the war. There was no thought of the hardships, the suffering, the agony, the death that it would bring – nothing but vain boasting, and how soon the North would get enough of it. The people acted as though they were about to engage in the festivities of some gala day, instead of one of the most gigantic wars of modern times. It was the case of not one,

but of a whole people gone mad.

Although Fred's uncle and family were greatly surprised to see him, he was received with open arms. Mr. Shackelford was busily engaged in raising a regiment for the Confederate service, and as Bailie Peyton had said, had been commissioned as major. Fred's cousin, George Shackelford, although but two years older than he, was to be adjutant, and Fred found the young man a little too conceited for comfort.

Not so with his cousin Kate, a most beautiful girl the same age as himself, and they were soon the closest of friends. But Kate was a terrible fire-eater. She fretted and pouted because Fred would not abuse the Yankees with the same vehemence that she did.

"What if they should come here?" asked Fred.

"Come here!" echoed Kate, with the utmost scorn. "We women would turn out and beat them back with broomsticks."

Fred laughed, and then little Bess came toddling up to him, with "Tousin Fed, do 'ankees eat 'ittle girls?"

"Bless you, Bessie, I am afraid they would eat you, you are so sweet," cried Fred, catching her in his arms and covering her face with kisses.

"No danger," tartly responded Kate; "they will never reach here to get a chance."

"Don't be too sure, my pretty cousin; I may yet live to see you flirting with a Yankee officer."

"You will see me dead first," answered Kate, with flashing

eye.

It was a very pleasant visit that Fred had, and he was sorry when the four days, the limit of his visit, were up. The papers that he had brought were all signed, and in addition he took numerous letters and messages back with him.

When leaving, his uncle handed him a pass signed by the Governor of the State.

"There will be no getting through our lines into Kentucky without this," said his uncle. "Tennessee is like a rat-trap; it is much easier to get in than to get out."

Fred met with no adventure going back, until he approached the Kentucky line south of Scottsville. Here he found the road strongly guarded by soldiers.

"Where are you going?" asked the officer in charge.

"To my home near Danville, Kentucky," answered Fred.

"No, you don't," said the officer; "we have orders to let no one pass."

"But I have permission from the Governor," replied Fred, handing out his pass.

The officer looked at it carefully, then looked Fred over, for he was fully described in the document, and handed it back with, "I reckon it's all right; you can go." And Fred was about to ride on, when a man came running up with a fearful oath, and shouting: "That's you, is it, my fine gentleman? Now you will settle with Bill Pearson for striking him like a nigger!" and there stood the man he had struck at Gallatin, with the fiery red mark still

showing across his face.

As quick as a flash Fred snatched a revolver from the holster. "Up with your hands," said he coolly but firmly. Pearson was taken by surprise, and his hands went slowly up. The officer looked from one to the other, and then asked what it meant.

Bill, in a whining tone, told him how on the day he had enlisted, Fred had struck him "just like a nigger." Fred, in a few words, told his side of the story.

"And Bailie Peyton said ye were all right, and Bill here called ye a coward and a liah?" asked the officer.

"Yes, sir."

"Well, Bill, I reckon you got what you deserved. Let the gentleman pass."

With a muttered curse, Pearson fell back, and Fred rode on, but had gone but a few yards when there was the sharp report of a pistol, and a ball cut through his hat rim. He looked back just in time to see Bill Pearson felled like an ox by a blow from the butt of a revolver in the hands of the angry officer.

Once in Kentucky Fred breathed freer, but he was stopped several times and closely questioned, and once or twice the fleetness of his horse saved him from unpleasant companions. It was with a glad heart that he found himself once more at home.

CHAPTER V.
FATHER AND SON

Fred's journey to Nashville and back had consumed eleven days. It was now August, a month of intense excitement throughout Kentucky. It was a month of plot and counterplot. The great question as to whether Kentucky would be Union or Confederate trembled in the balance. Fred found conditions changed. Those who had been neutral were becoming outspoken for one side or the other. Thus it was with Mr. Shackelford. He was fast becoming a partisan of the South. Letters which Fred brought him from his brother in Nashville confirmed him in his opinion. In these letters his brother begged him not to disgrace the name of Shackelford by siding with the Lincolnites.

He heard from Fred a full account of his journey, commended him for his bravery, and said that he did what every true Kentuckian should do, resent an insult; but he should not have sent him had he known he would have been exposed to such grave dangers.

"Now, Fred," he continued; "you and your horse need rest. Do not leave home for a few days."

To this Fred readily assented. His cousin Calhoun came to see him, and when he told him how he had served the fellow in Gallatin who called him a liar, Calhoun's enthusiasm knew no

bounds. He jumped up and down and yelled, and clapped Fred on the back, and called him a true Kentuckian, even if he didn't favor the South.

"It seems to me, Fred, you are having all the fun, while I am staying here humdrumming around home. I can't stand it much longer."

"It isn't all fun, Cal. I might have been killed. Look at that hole through my hat."

"That's what I envy, Fred; I must be a soldier. I long to hear the singing of bullets, the wild cheering of men, to be in the headlong charge," and the boy's face glowed with enthusiasm.

"I reckon, Cal, you will get there, if this racket keeps up much longer," answered Fred.

"Speed the day," shouted Cal, as he jumped on his horse and rode away, waving back a farewell.

During these days, Fred noticed that quite a number of gentlemen, all prominent Southern sympathizers, called on his father. It seemed to him that his father was drifting away, and that a great gulf was growing between them; and he resolved to open his whole heart and tell his father just how he felt. The opportunity came sooner than he expected.

One evening his uncle, Judge Pennington, came out from Danville, accompanied by no less distinguished gentlemen than John C. Breckinridge, Humphrey Marshall, John A. Morgan and Major Hockoday. Breckinridge was the idol of Kentucky, a knightly man in every respect.

They had come to discuss the situation with Mr. Shackelford. Ten thousand rifles had been shipped to Cincinnati, to be forwarded to Camp Dick Robinson, for the purpose of arming the troops there; and the question was should they allow these arms to be sent. The consultation was held in the room directly below the one Fred occupied, and through a friendly ventilator he heard the whole conversation.

Morgan and Major Hockoday were for calling out the State Guards, capturing Camp Dick Robinson, then march on Frankfort, drive out the Legislature, and declare the State out of the Union.

This was vigorously opposed by Breckinridge. "You must remember," said he, "that State sovereignty is the underlying principle of the Southern Confederacy. If the States are not sovereign, the South had no right to secede, and every man in arms against the Federal government is a traitor. Kentucky, by more than a two-thirds vote, declined to go out of the Union. But she has declared for neutrality; let us see that neutrality is enforced."

"Breckinridge," said Morgan, "your logic is good, but your position is weak. What about those arms?"

"Their shipment in the State would be a violation of our neutrality; the whole power of the State should be used to prevent it," answered Breckinridge.

"Oh! that General Buckner were here!" exclaimed Major Hockoday. "Now that he is gone, the State Guard is virtually

without a head."

"Where is General Buckner?" asked Mr. Shackelford.

"Hobnobbing with President Lincoln in Washington, or with President Davis in Richmond, I don't know which," answered Marshall, with a laugh.

"Oh! Buckner is all right," responded Breckinridge; "but he ought to be here now."

It was finally agreed that a meeting should be called at Georgetown, in Scott county, on the 17th, at which meeting decisive steps should be taken to prevent the shipment of the arms.

All of this Fred heard, and then, to his consternation, he heard his father say:

"Gentlemen, before you go, I want to introduce my son to you. I am afraid he is a little inclined to be for the Union, and I think a meeting with you gentlemen may serve to make him see things in a different light."

So Fred was called, and nerving himself for the interview, he went down. As he entered the room, Major Hockoday stared at him a moment in surprise, and then exclaimed:

"Great God! Shackelford, that is not your son; that is the young villain who stole my dispatch from Conway!"

"The very same," said Fred, smiling. "How do you do, Major; I am glad to see you looking so well. I see that the loss of that dispatch didn't worry you so much as to make you sick."

"W-h-y why!" stammered the major, choking with rage, "you

– you impudent young – " here the major did choke. He could say no more.

Fred rather enjoyed it, and he continued: "And how is my friend Captain Conway? I trust that he was not injured in his hurried exit from the cars the other night."

All the rest of the company looked nonplused, but Morgan, who roared with laughter.

"What does this mean?" sternly asked Mr. Shackelford of Fred.

"It means," answered Fred, "that I got the major's dispatches away from Captain Conway, and thus saved Louisville from a scene of bloodshed and horror. And, Major, you should thank me, for your scheme would have failed anyway. The Union men were too well prepared. I really saved any number of your friends from being killed, and there you sit choking with rage, instead of calling me a good boy."

"Leave the room, Fred," commanded Mr. Shackelford; "that you should insult a guest here in my own house is more than I can imagine."

Bowing, Fred retired, and the company turned to Major Hockoday for an explanation of the extraordinary scene. The major told the story and ended with saying: "I am sorry, Shackelford, that he is your boy. If I were you, I should get him out of the country as soon as possible; he will make you trouble."

"I will settle with him, never fear," replied Mr. Shackelford, grimly.

"Look here, Major," spoke up Morgan; "you are sore because that boy outwitted you, and he did you a good turn, as he said. If your program had been carried out, Louisville would be occupied by Federal troops to-day. Thank him because he pulled the wool over Conway's eyes. Ha! ha! two old duffers fooled by a boy!" and Morgan enjoyed a hearty laugh, in which all but Major Hockoday and Mr. Shackelford joined.

"And, Shackelford," continued Morgan, after he had enjoyed his laugh, "I want you to let that boy alone; he is the smartest boy in Kentucky. I want him with me when I organize my cavalry brigade."

"I am afraid, Morgan," said Breckinridge, "that you will be disappointed in that, though I hope not for Mr. Shackelford's sake. The boy looks to me as if he had a will of his own."

"Oh, he will come around all right," responded Morgan.

After making full arrangements for the meeting to be held in Scott county on the 17th, the company dispersed.

Hours after they had gone Fred heard his father restlessly pacing the floor.

"Poor father!" thought he, "like me, he cannot sleep. I wonder what he will say to me in the morning; but come what may, I must and shall be for the Union."

At the breakfast table Mr. Shackelford was silent until the close of the meal, when he simply said, "Fred, I would like to see you in the library."

Fred bowed, and replied, "I will be there in a few moments,

father."

When Fred entered the library, his father was seated at the table writing. There was a look of care on his face, and Fred was startled to see how pale he was.

Pushing aside his writing, he sat for some moments looking at his son in silence. At last he said:

"Fred, you can hardly realize how pained I was last night to hear what I did. I would not have thought it of you. But the past is gone. You are old enough to realize something of the desperate nature of the struggle in which the two sections of the country are engaged. For the past two weeks I have thought much of what was the right thing to do. I love my country; I love and revere the old flag. As long as the slightest hope remained of restoring it as it was, I was for the Union. But this is now hopeless; too much blood has been shed. Neither would the South, if granted her own terms, now go back to a Union she not only hates, but loathes. The North has no lawful right to use coercion. Kentucky, in her sovereign right as a State, has declared for neutrality; and it has been contemptuously ignored by the North. Nelson, a man to be despised by every patriot, has not only organized troops in our midst, but now seeks to have the Federal government arm them. Such true men as Breckinridge, Marshall, Buckner, Morgan, and a host of other loyal Kentuckians have sworn that this shall never be. General Buckner is now in Washington. If he ascertains that the Lincoln government will not respect the neutrality of the State by withdrawing every Federal officer and soldier, he

is going to proceed to Richmond and offer his services to the Confederate Government. Once accepted, he will immediately form the State Guards into an army, and turn them over to the Confederacy. Regiments must be formed, and I have been offered the colonelcy of one of these regiments."

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.