

HIS WORD OF HONOR.

A Tale of the Blue and the Gray.
BY E. WERNER.

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CHAPTER XI.—(Continued.)

Maxwell remained behind; as a physician he was too familiar with death to be awed by that of a man who had been almost a stranger to him and had never possessed his sympathies. Scarcely had the immediate relatives left the room, when, to the magistrate's horror, he took a seat close beside him.

"Let me give you our warmest thanks," he said, in the friendliest tone. "Now pray order the rest of the dinner to be served. I'll call the waiter at once."

"No, thank you," replied the old gentleman, uneasily. "I prefer to leave at once. Mr. Roland promised to let us return to the city."

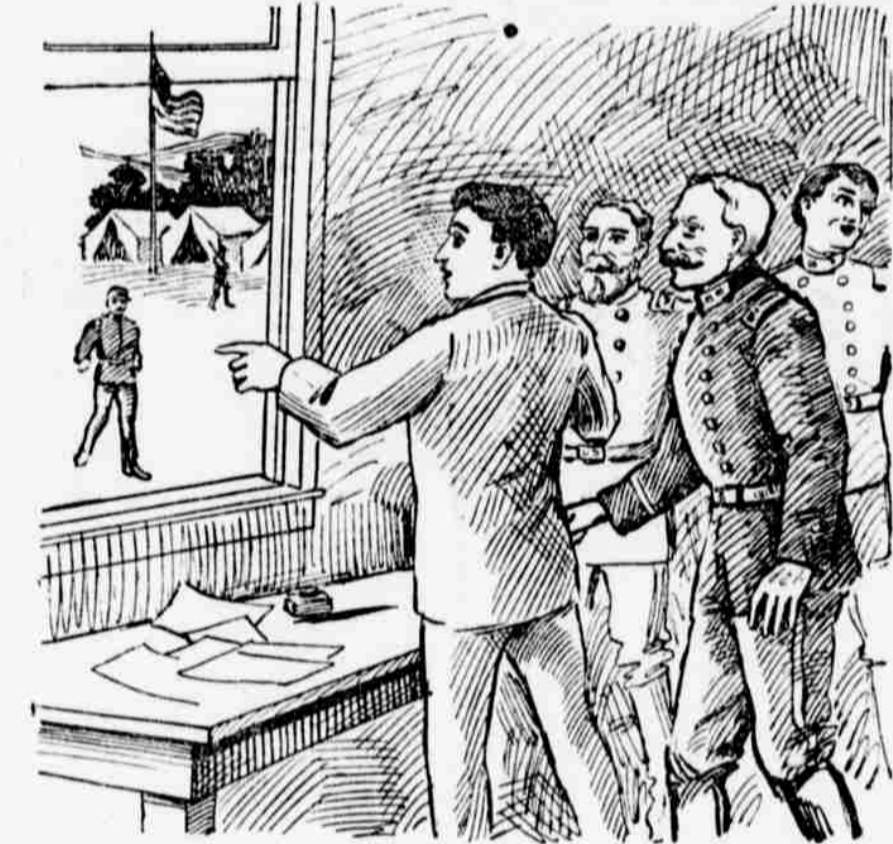
"Yes, the carriage will be at your disposal in half an hour at latest. The young couple, to whom you will doubtless be ready to yield precedence, start first; and until then I shall have the honor of entertaining you."

Mr. Thompson glanced timidly at his neighbor's coat-pocket, where he knew that the revolver was concealed, but did not venture to decline the offered entertainment and yielded to his fate. Fortunately he was not subjected to too long a trial.

Meanwhile a short but touching scene had occurred in the sick room, where Florence, amid burning tears, saw her father draw his last breath. He passed away in sleep, without regaining consciousness. Harrison's death broke the chain which bound his daughter.

Weak and irresolute as Florence had seemed, the inevitable found her calm, and the consciousness of the peril which every moment's delay increased for her husband sustained her strength. She knelt to kiss the dead

man's brow and bid him farewell; nothing now held her to Springfield.



"AH, THERE COMES WILLIAM."

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Meanwhile William, in a low tone, gave the old servant the necessary orders.

"Ralph, we shall leave the care of your dead master in your hands. You will render him the last services and remain here until the funeral is over. Then seek us at the place I have described to you. Escape is not difficult now, and the road is not long. See that Edward Harrison is not found and released before an hour has passed. He is gagged and bound, but there is no danger concerning his life. The longer you can prevent his being discovered the greater will be our chance of safety. If you are questioned, you know no more than the other servants and had the best intentions in bringing the message. They cannot help believing you, and in three days we shall expect you."

Florence had also risen and held out her hand to the old man.

"Farewell till we meet again, Ralph! I cannot even attend my father to the grave, and must leave the last offices to be rendered by the hands of strangers; but he will forgive me; he knows that my husband's life is at stake. Farewell."

The carriage had rolled up to the terrace outside. They avoided the way through the ante-room, where all the servants had assembled. William led his wife through the drawing-room, where Maxwell joined them, after taking a friendly leave of Mr. Thompson and assuring him of his high regard. The young couple entered. John took the reins from the driver's hands, ordered him to remain and sprang on the box himself. The carriage dashed off at the horses' utmost speed.

Five minutes later, the magistrate's face appeared in the open doorway, and behind him the tall figure of his clerk. Both gazed curiously and timidly after the carriage, which was no longer visible. Only a cloud of dust in the distance showed that the spirited animals were doing their duty.

"There they go!" said the justice, drawing a long breath. "Thank heaven! That Doctor Maxwell is Satan incarnate!"

"A horrible fellow!" echoed the

CHAPTER XII.

It was sunset at the Union camp. Colonel Burney had summoned all the officers of the regiment to one of the little festivities which are often improvised on the march or in camp.

A certain feeling of anxiety pervaded the group. Lieutenant Roland, though expected every minute, had not yet arrived. The colonel had no reason to conceal the fact that he had given the young officer a leave of absence or its purpose. True, dangers and risks were everyday occurrences in this war; people regarded them as matters of course and wasted few words over them, but Roland was, as his friend expressed it, "the darling of the regiment."

"I ought to have refused the leave," said Colonel Burney, angrily. "I fear the matter will end badly. He ought to have been here long ago, had the adventure proved successful."

"We often reconnoiter within the enemy's lines," one of the officers remarked. "True, Roland is alone, but he is less likely to attract attention on that account. The dangers which threaten him on way—"

"Are the least," interrupted the colonel. "What I fear is treachery within the house where he believes himself safe. He would listen to no counsel, but I had a presentiment of evil from the beginning."

"We won't anticipate the worst at

mentioned that I attended the wedding."

The words sounded so plain and positive that doubt was no longer possible. But Maxwell was now assailed with questions from all sides. Everybody pressed forward, and he found himself compelled to relate briefly what had happened.

"Our return was accomplished without the least danger," he said, in conclusion. "In an elegant carriage and accompanied by a lady, we were beyond the pale of suspicion and reached the outposts safely, where Lieutenant Davis received us with the utmost courtesy and went into raptures over Mrs. Roland. But he is right. William is a dare-devil and incorrigibly obstinate, but we must admit that he has good taste. His wife is charming."

The last remark seemed to interest the younger officers extremely. They wanted to learn all sorts of particulars about Mrs. Roland and were greatly disappointed when informed that the young bride was very much agitated by her father's death and probably would see little of her husband's comrades for some time.

"Ah, there comes William!" he exclaimed, interrupting himself. "Congratulations! He wears his new dignity somewhat timidly."

It was really William, who had come to report his return. He was warmly greeted by all. The colonel especially received him with great cordiality.

"Welcome, Lieutenant Roland! Here you are at last! Doctor Maxwell was already told us the whole adventure of which you were the hero."

"Not I but John Maxwell was the hero," said William, holding out his hand to his friend with ill-repressed emotion. "Had it not been for him, I should have lost happiness and life. I shall never forget what he did to-day."

Maxwell laughingly refused his thanks.

"Let that pass, Will; we shall wrangle again at the very next opportunity. Germans and Americans always quarrel, and our armistice won't last long. Today I risked my life for you; tomorrow you will, perhaps, peril yours for me; so we shall be quits. At any rate, you returned punctually—at sunset!"

He pointed toward the window. The sun was just sinking below the horizon, and its last beams were fading.

"Yes, I gave my word of honor that I would do so," said William, with the deepest earnestness. "But that I kept it—was able to keep it—I owe to you alone."

THE END.

STORY OF A STAMP.

Worth a Quarter, Then \$1,500, Th Went Up in Smoke.

In the year 1851 a 12-penny black Canadian postage stamp was printed by the government at Ottawa. The public did not regard this somber issue with favor, and few were issued. One of these stamps was sent to the Hamilton postoffice, where it was sold to an old man, who said it was a shame to print the queen's picture on a stamp that might be handled by profane hands. Tenderly the man put it on a parcel, sending it to a friend in the United States. Here, in the waste basket, it lay for many a day, till an errand boy found it and quickly transferred it to his album. Despairing of getting a good collection, and his fever somewhat abating, he sold them to a dealer. The new dealer, on looking at the catalogue, found that what he had paid \$5 for was worth \$25. Accidentally this stamp was slipped into a 25-cent packet and sent to a dealer residing in Hamilton. When the latter opened the packet he was astonished to find such a valuable stamp, and being honest, wrote his friend to inform him of what had happened, offering him \$1,200 for it. The offer was accepted, and the stamp again changed hands. By this time the stamp had increased in value, and not a few came from a distance to look at the treasure. One day an English nobleman, who, through a friend, had heard of the stamp, offered \$1,500, which offer was accepted. The English lord, falling in love with an American heiress, and wishing to gain the favor of her brother, presented him with the stamp as a token of his esteem. Here, in its new and luxurious home, it came to a sad end, for one day the maid by mistake swept the stamp, which had accidentally fallen out of the album, into the fire. In an instant the stamp, which thousands had heard of and longed for, went up in smoke to the broad, blue sky, leaving not a trace behind.

Li Hung Chang's Grandsons.

The two grandsons of the Chinese statesman Li Hung Chang visited the University of California by invitation of Prof. Fryer, who was acquainted with them in China. They arrived on the steamer China on Monday, but were not able to land until Tuesday afternoon. They went to the Occidental hotel, and are staying there with Mr. Walter Lambuth, who is escorting them to Nashville, where they will perhaps enter Vanderbilt university. The young men will at first live in a private family near the university and take a course to fit them for entering. They dress in American style and have discarded their queues. Although well educated from a Chinese point of view they have been studying only English two years with a private tutor at their home in Nanking and Yangchow. They have pleasing and unassuming manners.—Oakland (Cal.) special New York World.

A woman never can understand why her dog doesn't seem as cute to others as to herself.

WIDOW'S VALENTINE.

By J. L. Harbour.

The widow Darby, fair, plump and looking far younger than her 45 years, had ridden into town with Jared Kent because her horse had lamed himself that morning, and Jared "happened to be going in," and had asked the widow to ride with him.

Jared was what some of the people of the neighborhood called a "regular born old bach." He had flouted and scorned womankind most of the fifty years of his life, and had openly set forth his conviction that men were "better off without 'em than with 'em," particularly when it came to "marrying 'em." He had held to this conviction so long and had proclaimed it so boldly and so constantly that all of the match-makers in the rural neighborhood in which he lived had given him up a hopeless case beyond the pale of their schemes for making a benedict of him.

Jared was not, like most avowed women haters, a crabbed, cross-grained, sneeringly cynical man, which made his celtic all the more unpardonable in the eyes of the match-makers.

"He'd make a real good husband if



I'VE FORGOTTEN SOMETHING.

he'd try," they said. "Then he has the nicest farm in the neighborhood, with one of the best houses on it and money out at interest, although he's not a bit mean and stingy. He'll do his full share always for a neighbor in distress. It isn't because he's too stinky to support her that Jared doesn't get a wife."

It was a clear, crisp morning in February when Jared rode to the village with the widow Darby seated beside him in his neat little cutter. The sleighing was fine and the air keen and exhilarating. It gave the widow's plump cheeks a beautiful crimson glow and made her black eyes sparkle. She was in high spirits and her laugh rang out frequently as merry and rippling as the laugh of a child.

But then the widow Darby was proverbially cheery. She had suffered keenly the loss of her husband and both of her children, but time had softened her grief, and she was too wise to spend her life in gloom and grief over the loss of those who were beyond all care and sorrow.

She had a comfortable little home and a few acres of land adjoining Jared Kent's. She had known Jared all of her life, but not once had she thought of him as a possible successor to Joel Darby.

"Jared will never marry anyone," she had said. "He isn't of a marrying disposition. Some men are that way. It's all they lack to make 'em what God intended they should be. My husband and I used to talk Jared over a good deal, and we did our full share to get him settled for life with a good wife. We used to invite lots of nice girls, young and elderly both, to our house and then have Jared come over to tea and to play croquet with him. He'd be nice and pleasant and all that, but he never came any ways near falling into any of the traps we set for him. We thought once that he did take a kind of a shine to a nice, sweet, real good looking girl of about 20 named Janet Deane from over Shelby way, who was visiting us. She'd of made him an awful good wife, and I sung her praises all the time, but nothing came of it."

"It's an elegant morning, isn't it?" said Jared, as he and the widow flew along over the hills and through long lanes in which the snow was drifted almost to the top rails of the fences.

"Oh, it's lovely!" replied the widow. "I like snow."

"So do I. You got much to do in town?"

"No; I'll be through with all of my errands in an hour. I can let something go if you don't want to stay in town that long."

"Oh, that'll be none too long for me. Where shall I meet you?"

"I'll be at Smith & Henderson's dry goods store any time you say."

"We'll call it 11 o'clock, then."

It was three minutes after 11 when Jared drove up to the appointed place of meeting. The widow had stepped into the sleigh and he was tucking the robes in around her when she said:

"There, Jared, I'm just like other women; I've forgotten something."

"What is it?"

"I forgot to go around to the post-office. I know that there's nothing there for me, because one of the Stone boys brought my mail out last night, and there's no mail trains in until noon; but poor old Jane Carr came over just before I left and wanted me to be sure and see if there was a letter for her. Her daughter is very sick out west, and she hasn't had a letter for a week, and she's half wild. I couldn't bear to tell her I'd forgotten to go to the office."

"I'll drive 'round that way," said Jared. "It won't be three blocks out of the way."

Two or three boys stood idling in front of the postoffice and Jared said to one of them he chanced to know:

"Say, Jimmie, run into the office and see if there's any letter for Mrs. Jane Carr. You needn't ask for me, for I've been around and got my mail."

"You might look in box 184," said Mrs. Darby. "Mebbe there's a drop letter for me."

The boy came out a moment later with a very large square white envelope in one hand and a small blue envelope in the other. He grinned as he handed them to Mrs. Darby. She glanced at the blue envelope and said joyfully:

"Here's a letter for Jane, and it's from her daughter, I know by the post-mark. How glad Jane will be! And here—well, I declare!"

She burst into a merry laugh as she looked at the big white, embossed envelope. The boy had told the truth when he had gone back to his comrades and said with a titter:

"She's got a valentine!"

"Who in the land ever sent me that thing?" said Mrs. Darby, holding the envelope out at arm's length. "I didn't even know it was Valentine's Day. If it isn't the greatest idea that I should get a valentine."

"I don't know why you shouldn't," said Jared.

"Oh, because I—but I guess some child sent it."

"Maybe not."

"No one else could have had so little gumption!" said the widow with another laugh. "Maybe there's one of these comic valentines inside of it—some ridiculous thing about a widow likely."

"Why don't you open it and see?"

"I will."

She burst into another laugh as she drew forth a dainty creation of lace paper, tinsel and bright-colored embossed pictures.

"How perfectly ridiculous!" she said. "The idea of anyone being ninny enough to send an old woman like me a thing like that!"

"You're not an old woman."

"I'm forty-five!"

"Well, I'm older than that, and I don't call myself an old man. Many a woman around here would be glad to get a valentine like that if the sender really meant it."

"Yes, and if you were the sender."

"I'm not vain enough to think that and not foolish enough to say it if I did think it."

"No, I don't think that you are, Jared. But I wonder who could have sent me this. The writing on the envelope is evidently disguised, and—O, here is something inside! Let's see what it says."

"O wilt thou be my valentine Forever and forever ay, And wilt thou take this heart of mine, And give me thine today?"

There was another verse but before she had read it, the widow Darby cried out: "Jared Kent, that's your handwriting and you need not try to deny it!"

"I'm not trying to deny it. You'll find my name signed in full to the next verse on the other page." This was the next verse:

"If 'ye', my answer is to be, My heart with joy will fill, If 'no', I yet shall be your friend And I shall love you still."

They had reached the outskirts of the town now. Jared brought the horse to a standstill, and said:

"Is it yes or no, Lucy?"

She looked at him with shining eyes, and laughing face for a moment. Then she laid one of her mittened hands on the sleeve of the great fur coat he wore, and said:

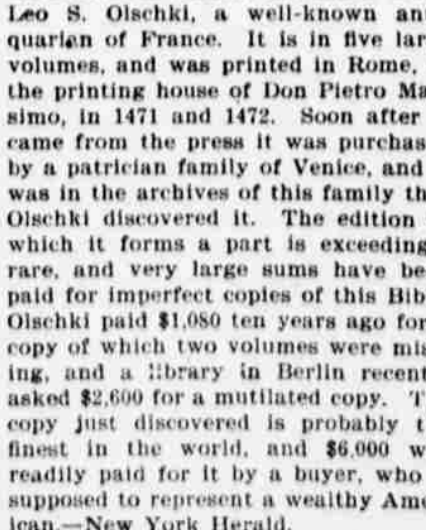
"I think it is yes, Jared."

He turned his horse's head toward the town.

"Where are you going?" she asked.

"Back to the minister's. It's Valentine's Day, you know, and if you are to be my valentine, I want you today."

An hour later they stopped at Jane Carr's gate. She came skurrying out



STRUGGLE WITH A PYTHON.

An Experience He Had No Wish to Repeat.
From "Wild Animals in Captivity," by Edward Bartlett. Some few years since I was invited to the house of a surgeon who had just returned from Ceylon, to see a freshly imported serpent of this species. Upon arriving at the house I found that the doctor was absent and that his wife and maid-servant were the only inmates.

Upon mentioning the nature of my visit I was told that the serpent was in a large box in the greenhouse. I was handed the key of the box and informed that there was no danger in opening it because the serpent was below wire netting and therefore I would be able to see it without the chance of it making its escape. I accordingly proceeded to the greenhouse, unlocked the box and opened the lid. To my utter astonishment the snake was coiled up on the top of the wire netting, and with the quickness of lightning darted at me. I had just time enough to seize it by the neck, when it instantly wound itself around my right arm, and I had not the power to disengage myself from the grip this serpent had upon me. The two women were horrified, and nothing would induce them to come to my assistance. My only chance of getting rid of this powerful brute was by trying to strangle him, to do which with both hands I strove my utmost. It appeared to me at the time that I should not be able to accomplish my efforts to squeeze his life out. The constant increase of the pressure he put upon my arm caused me to fear that I should entirely lose the power of my right hand, as I was grasping the brute just below the head with all my strength. The time appeared to pass very slowly without any visible diminution of its extraordinary grip. However, I felt some relief on finding after a time that it was slowly relaxing the pressure, and presently it gradually slid off my arm until its tail touched the ground. So soon as I found the snake sufficiently disengaged from my arm I dropped it into the box, apparently more dead than alive. After this I did not consider it worth while to purchase the reptile, although I heard from the owner that it was none the worse for the squeezing I had given it.

POOR LO IN DECORATIVE ART.

A Late Fad for a T Divan Coroner.

It is no longer customary to cry "Lo! the poor Indian," but lo! the fine, dashing, decorative Indian, superb in war paint and feathers, who suddenly burst upon us in vividly colored prints not many weeks ago and took the town by storm. They now hang in "dens," snuggeries, bachelor girls' apartments, studios, and have even ventured into semi-Oriental cozy corners, which seemingly require that bit of tribal savagery to strike a healthy balance, says the New York Commercial Advertiser. These prints have found their way in single copies, in several framed together, or have been turned into a wall frieze, where sporting tastes were uppermost. They may be bought for the small sum of \$1. As they were originally drawn from life, the reproductions are worth the money. Far more interesting are Calthorp's series of reproduced Indian portraits, dating from 1836 to 1838, and ordered at that time to be painted for the United States government. A fine reproduction of the originals may be purchased singly, or in sets, at \$1.50 each. The southern Indian tribes figure in these prominently, their handsome faces and half-civilized costumes presenting a fascinating picturesque quality in strong contrast to the northern bloodthirstiness more familiar to us. A late fad, for Turkish divan corners, is to have queer porcelain men-monsters, with small smoking tube attachments at their backs and in front a receptacle for a cigarette, which is smoked through the tube mentioned, as one smokes a Turkish pipe. They sell for \$2 and \$2.50 each, and go off like hot cakes," because of the novelty.

A Visit to a Prison.

Many years ago the queen paid a visit to Parkhurst Female Convict prison. As soon as she entered the women's great ward, accompanied by Mrs. Gilson, the then handsome and stately superintendent, a great silence fell upon the vast assemblage of her suffering and erring sisters. Her majesty was greatly affected. And then an indescribable scene ensued. "The queen!" cried the poor convicts; "it's the queen herself! She'll pardon us; she'll set us free!" And, screaming and crying, they prostrated themselves at her feet. For a few moments the queen lost her nerve, and begged the attendants to clear a way for her to an adjoining room. Half an hour elapsed. Suddenly the door of the great room was thrown open again, and her majesty, with supreme dignity, with an unutterable fascinatingness about her, and every inch a queen, walked through the women, now hushed into awed silence.—Mainly About People.

"I guess," said the sad-eyed editor, "we'd better take a few days' vacation. His assistant was surprised out of a week's growth. 'I expect the Rev. Dr. Thirdly's congregation will mob us if we don't,' the editor continued. 'That personal' you wrote about him in connection with the water question appears in the paper thus: 'The Rev. Dr. Thirdly of Bethel is an expert on flirtation.'—Philadelphia Press.

The man who trusts to luck seldom pays his bills promptly.