

The RED MIST

A TALE OF CIVIL STRIFE
By RANDALL PARRISH
ILLUSTRATIONS By C. D. RHODES

COPYRIGHT
A. C. McCLURG & CO.

CHAPTER XXII—Continued.

It was a single sheet, very formal in expression, as though the writer merely performed a duty which he considered unpleasant, but necessary. He acknowledged receipt of a communication reaching him at Ramsay's headquarters, apparently an application for pardon, and a pledge to unite with the Federal forces, and stated that the writer would be at the Minor house near Hot Springs at a certain date, where he would be glad to confer further regarding the matter. He agreed to come unattended, and suggested that his visitor use the name of Taylor so as to prevent any suspicion. The closing paragraph referred to a former misunderstanding between them and expressed a kindly desire to blot out all memory of what had occurred. My hands trembled as I read the lines, and the girl at my side cried softly, her eyes so filled with tears I doubt if she could distinguish the words. Scarcely aware of the action, I held her with my arm, the letter crumpled between my fingers.

"It's all clear enough now, little girl," I whispered, my voice trembling from sympathy. "Your father met his death at the hands of a treacherous scoundrel. It was a plot carefully conceived, and now Cowan has paid the penalty. I am glad we have learned the truth; but Major Harwood would never wish you to mourn here in the midst of all this danger—you are listening?"

"Yes; I will do just as you say."

"It will be best to go; safer, I think, also."

Her hands clung to me, but she was no longer crying, although unshed tears dimmed her eyes.

"I thank God," she faltered, "that he sent you to me. I could not bear all this alone."

"I am glad you care to have me here," I answered eagerly. "I was half afraid you did not."

"Oh, but I do; I cannot tell you all it means. I—I think I have never felt more helpless, or—discouraged."

"It is the strain of so much occurring at once, and you are worn out. We will get away from here, somewhere back into the hills, where we can feel safe from discovery. Then we can rest all day, and you will be all right again. We need sleep and food."

I released her hands gently, began a swift search, and found all we required. I left Cowan lying just as he had fallen. Both of us were glad enough when we closed the door of the shack and returned to our horses. We rode on steadily for an hour, only occasionally exchanging a word. The road was rough and mountainous, so rocky underfoot our horses left no trail. At last we came to a narrow ravine down which a brook plunged over a stony bed. There was no trail visible, but it was possible to advance some distance by keeping close to the bank. I dismounted, and, holding to the rein, led my horse carefully forward.

"Follow as closely as you can," I called back to her, "and keep at the rock edge so as to leave no trail."

A safer place surely could not have been found. We were in a narrow defile, scarcely fifty feet across, and guarded on either side by high rock walls, precipitous, and exhibiting no sign of a trail. I picketed the horses close to the stream and spread blankets for the lady to lie on at the foot of the bluff, where she would be well screened by a thicket of underbrush. Then I came back to where she sat silently against the hole of a large tree, watching my movements.

"No doubt we are safe enough here," I said, opening the pack. "But I'll not risk a fire; you can eat, I suppose?"

"I hardly know," wearily. "Perhaps I can choke a little food down; but really I am not hungry. How far have we come?"

"As a mere guess I should say nearly ten miles since leaving the cabin. By the sun it must be nine o'clock. Eat what you can, and then lie down on the blankets and rest. We will not wave here until just before dark."

"And you?"

"Oh, I may doze later if there is no alarm; I shall never be far away."

She ate of the coarse food daintily, apparently without appetite, but I did not justice to the meal, satisfied, for the time being at least, that we were securely hidden. There was a strange constraint between us, and, finally, toying to make her feel more at ease, ventured to broach the subject which now must be the uppermost in her mind.

"It is an odd situation in which we find ourselves," I began awkwardly, my eyes on the ground, "but I hope you will not feel embarrassed."

"Or fail to have complete confidence in me. I—I have no wish to take any advantage; or—assume any authority."

I stopped, unable to express the thing I desired to say, and the silence seemed long. I lifted my eyes, and she was looking at me.

"May I ask you one question?"

"A dozen."

"No, the one is all. You really believed those who attacked us were Cowan's men?"

"I had no other thought, Miss Noreen."

"Then your proposal was merely made in the hope of thus protecting me from insult?"

"That was my sole thought at the time," I replied soberly. "It was a desperate chance, yet the only one apparently left us. That is what I wanted to say, to explain, I went on hastily, before she could interrupt. 'I realize the serious mistake made, and how embarrassing it must all be to you. But you must believe me a gentleman. I would never have spoken one word; never have made any claim upon you. Miss Noreen, I realize that I have no right.'"

"You may call me Noreen," she said simply. "We have been friends, and I think we will always be. I do trust you, and believe in you; only I wanted to understand fully your motive. I do not blame you, nor myself; and what seemed best at the time, and now we must meet the issue as we best can. Perhaps I should not have said what I did back there in Lewisburg. I had no time in which to consider, and my only thought then was to justify my action in aiding your escape. My—my being your—your wife was the only excuse I could urge for such disloyalty."

"And now you are sorry?"

"I do not know," hesitatingly. "I cannot decide. Where do you take me?"

"Noreen," I said soberly, struggling to keep my head from touching her own, where it rested on the grass, "it is too late now to go back; to think of going back. We cannot deny or conceal our marriage, since you have openly acknowledged it, and we have gone away together. There is only one straight path left for us now—across the mountains to old Virginia."

"I—I know—and then?"

"You must trust my honor, my discretion. We are friends, you say, and I mean to prove worthy. My orders will take me to Richmond; have you either friends or relatives there?"

"I am not sure, the war has made such changes—but I hardly think any in whom I could confide."

"Then we will find a way for you to join my mother; she is in North Carolina, out of the track of armies. You will consent to go to her?"

"If you think it best. I—I have never met your mother; perhaps—"

"You will be just as welcome; and she will be rejoiced to shelter you. The only trouble is the necessary delay involved by the war; the impossibility of your venturing to return to Green Briar until the conflict is over."

She was silent a long while, her eyes cast down, her breathing noticeably rapid. I waited, not knowing what else to add, and was about to propose her lying down, when she spoke suddenly:

"You mean our—our separation?"

"Certainly. That can be easily arranged as soon as the courts are again in session. Possibly the ceremony was not even legal without witnesses, but, under the circumstances, it had better be dissolved in court. Such action would remove all doubt from your mind."

"Yes—I suppose so; you—you make it very clear. And that would have to be done in Green Briar?—the—the action for divorce?"

"At Lewisburg; not necessarily, of course, but I supposed you would rather have the facts made known there, so that your friends can realize all the conditions—the cause, I mean. Possibly you may not need to do this."

"Not need! Why?"

"A soldier never knows what another minute means; I am a soldier."

She did not look at me, or move, although I thought the hand resting on the grass trembled.

"I believe I will lie down," she said finally. "Is that the place you have chosen, beyond those trees?"

"Yes; let me help you up; the blankets are both yours. I shall not need any."

I stood and watched her move across through the mingled shade and sun, until her slender form finally disappeared behind the screen of undergrowth. Once she had glanced about, pausing as though some thought had occurred suddenly, but she did not speak. I was left alone.

CHAPTER XXIII.

The Cane Ridge Meeting House.

The spot where Noreen lay was not fifty feet distant, but my position gave me no glimpse of her through the tangled brush. I must have dozed, for the sun was high overhead when I finally aroused myself, and arose to my feet. I watered the animals, and seated myself again, this time on a flat stone beside the stream. Surely I had never been here before, even in the days of my boyhood's vagrant tramping, and yet that tormented crest, with the huge rock chimney rising conspicuous at its center, revived a recollection that would not be entirely

denied. I had seen it before, out from another angle—from the south; from that hillside, perhaps, where the creek headed. Why, that was Cane Ridge!

I do not know why I laughed, but I did—perhaps it was from sudden relief at thus discovering exactly where we were, and seeing clearly the easier way out. The sound of a foot stepping on a round stone caused me to face about. Noreen was within a few feet of me, higher up on the bank, one hand holding back the bough of a tree.

"Why were you laughing?" she asked. "I thought you had gone until I heard that sound."

"I had to laugh when the truth finally came to me; that is Cane Ridge."

"Where—where the Baptist church is?"

"Exactly; where Parson Nichols points out to his congregation the straight and narrow way. There is a bridge path yonder leading up from the valley, which will save us a five-mile detour. But it means we are still in Cowan's country, and to climb there with horses will require the use of daylight."

"You think Anse—"

"Is probably back before this, and doing his best to trail us. Even if he does not discover the body of old Ned, he will naturally conclude we will head east. My only hope is that, not having seen us last night he may imagine we chose the southern route, and ride there first. But if he did, doubtless he would send some one of his men scouting this way."

"You have heard—seen nothing?"

"No, we are too far back; the noise of an army passing along the pike would not reach here. If we get to Cane Ridge church before dark, we must trust to luck, and the night for the next thirty miles."

"You fear Cowan's gang more than the troops? Surely they will pursue?"

"No doubt; Pickney will be raving, and Raymond crazy to get hand on me. Ah! there will be some galloping of troopers. I should have liked to see Fox's face when he heard the news. By heavens! they are like enough to charge him with conspiracy, for he was officer of the day. However, I do not greatly fear them; they will make noise enough to warn us, and couldn't track a bear. It is the mountain men we must guard against; they are wolves. You slept well?"

"After the first half hour. I am rested, and strong. Shall we go now?"

"When we have eaten. There may be no other opportunity, and there is ample time."

We sat over the poor meal a long while, talking like old friends, laughing over revived memories, almost forgetting that we were fugitives, our very lives at stake. Twice we heard guns, but the reports were but distant echoes, sounding afar off to the westward. Yet these made me nervous to get away, and when a number sounded together—almost a volley, distinctly audible, I hastened to pack what little remained of food on our horses, and led the way, fording the shallow stream, and guiding my horse up the opposite bank into the deep shadow of the woods beyond. The summit of

the hill was open, except for a considerable grove to the rear of the church. That edifice appeared, as I remembered it, unchanged in any respect—a fairly large building, constructed solidly of logs, with square, clapboarded tower in front, four windows on each side, containing small panes of glass, a number of them broken. We were at the rear, which showed a larger window, and a narrow door at one corner, protected by a porch. It appeared desolate and deserted, the loneliness accentuated by the empty hitching racks on either side.

We advanced side by side along what was once a well-trodden path, making no attempt at concealment. Indeed, any such effort would have been useless, as the crest of the ridge lay open, and bare of vegetation, but I was so fully convinced we were unobserved that I took no precaution—my entire thought, indeed, centered upon the girl at my side.

The heavy latch of the front door lifted easily to the pressure of my hand, and we stepped into a narrow vestibule, Noreen grasping my arm nervously, as she faced the shadowed interior of the deserted building. Some instinct of caution caused me to close the door behind us, and then I drew her forward, laughing at her fears.

until we obtained glimpse of the larger room, already becoming obscured by the approaching night. It was a rather shabby-looking place, not overly clean even in that merciful dimness. Rude benches, without backs, stretched almost from wall to wall, a narrow aisle leading to the pulpit, set within an alcove, and scarcely discernible except in barest outlines. I recognized a big Bible, lying open on the gaudy pulpit stand. A book of some kind, dog-eared and coverless, lay on the floor at my feet, and I bent to pick it up. As I came upright again, a man stepped from the shadow of a corner, and the steel barrel of a revolver flashed before my eyes. I felt Noreen cry against me, uttering a muffled cry.

"Stand as you are, Yank," said a rather pleasant voice. "Pardon me, lady."

He was a young fellow, with bold, black eyes, a little jaunty mustache, and a mouth inclined to laugh, but what I stared at in open-eyed astonishment, was his broad-brimmed hat and natty gray cavalry jacket.

"Some surprise party, I reckon," he chuckled grimly. "Here, Wharton, kindly relieve the gentleman of his arsenal; take the lady's gun, also. It's all right, boys."

To my unbounded amazement, up from the floor, where they had been lying concealed beneath the benches a number of men came scrambling to their feet. Those nearest me were gray clad troopers, with carbines in their hands.

"Who, in heaven's name, are you?" I asked, at last finding my voice. "Confederates here?"

"Your first guess is an excellent one," he answered lightly, evidently enjoying the scene. "You have the honor of being prisoner to the Third Kentucky cavalry. Wharton."

"Yes, sir," the sergeant advanced. "Conduct the lady and gentleman to the sanctity of the pulpit, sergeant, where they may commune with the presiding genius of this house of worship erected in the wilderness."

"You mean you hold prisoner Parson Nichols?" I asked.

"No doubt 'tis he. We discovered the party alone here, and held him for the pleasure of his company."

"Just a moment, lieutenant," and I faced him squarely, ignoring the grip of Wharton's hand on my arm.

"There is no reason to hold us prisoners; all there is Yankee about me is this uniform. I have just escaped from the Federal guard at Lewisburg."

His eyes, laughing, yet suspicious, swept our faces.

"I'm not easily fooled," he said, "but ready enough to learn. Who are you?"

"Thomas Wyatt, sergeant, Staunton horse artillery."

"By all the gods, it soundeth strange. How came you here?"

"On Jackson's orders. I was born in this county, and because of that he chose me to find out the numbers and disposition of the Federal troops in this neighborhood, together with some other facts he wished to know. I was captured in Federal uniform, and held under death sentence as a spy. I escaped last night."

"And the woman?"

She threw back the cape which had partially concealed her face, revealing her bright eyes and flushed cheeks.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

BUILT TO WITHSTAND SHOCK

Architecture of Old Peruvian City Adapted to the Needs of the Locality.

The most characteristic phase of Peruvian architecture is found to be in the old city of Arequipa, which more than any other west coast city should be regarded as a home of culture in general, and therefore especially a center from which control and direction of the fine arts has proceeded.

The Peruvian "Tarrytown," we may call it, since the name Arequipa signifies in the Indian tongue "Yes; rest here." But orderly processes of architectural development were rendered impossible in Arequipa, even more infeasible there than in other populous cities, mountain-built or on the Andean littoral.

Repeated and very violent earthquake shocks forbade such edifices as would have been stable enough in other lands to "rest here," or in security anywhere near the geosynclinal that follows the Andean coast line.

The cathedral at Arequipa, formerly more imposing than it is at present, is built of volcanic stone "in a style adopted," as a famous traveler writes, "after the earthquake of 1821, which laid most of the city in ruins, as a security against similar catastrophes."

Better than any other large building it represents the earthquake phase. It is an expedient complying with, while bravely protesting against, imperative demands of the plutonic forces; not towered and domed, like the cathedral and the Compania at Cuzco, but capped with spires in the fashion of the church of San Pedro in Lima.

Military Wedding Cake.

The very latest British war fashion is the military wedding cake. So largely has this become a feature of weddings associated with military and naval men that the wholesale manufacturers are specializing in toy ornaments of a warlike character to decorate the cakes.

These are mostly ornamental cannon guns and rifles, with battleships for naval men and very well executed models of aeroplanes for bridegrooms connected with the flying corps. Armored cars and flags of all nations also figure. Sugared Capids and harps are at a discount.

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

By E. O. SELLERS, Acting Director of Sunday School Course of Moody Bible Institute of Chicago. (Copyright, 1918, Western Newspaper Union.)

LESSON FOR DECEMBER 19

FALL AND CAPTIVITY OF ISRAEL.

LESSON TEXT—II Kings 17: 7, 14, 18 (2).

GOLDEN TEXT—He that after being reproved hardeneth his neck shall suddenly be destroyed.—Prov. 29:1.

In the sweep of our six years' cycle of study we prefer to consider this lesson first and use the Christmas story (Luke 2:1-20) to illustrate the love of God which Israel (the last ten tribes) so basely outraged ere it passed into oblivion.

I. The Stiff-Necked People, vv. 6-13. The fact (v. 6) of Israel's captivity has always appealed to the interest and the imaginations of men. The cause of the captivity was threefold (1) They "had sinned" (v. 7). It was not a single offense but a course of action which was performed (a) openly, "walked" (v. 8). For 215 years following Solomon's reign they had been openly idolatrous and trespassed upon God's grace. (b) "Secretly" (v. 9). Hosea's reign was the same as that of his 18 predecessors. Doubtless he was a good diplomat and politician, though his vacillation between Egypt and Assyria brought ruin, but in God's sight the secret acts and practices of the people were open and known (Ps. 139:1-12; Heb. 5:13). Many today do in secret things "that were (are) not right." A clearer line of demarcation between the church and the world is sadly needed. (2) They were consecrated to evil (vv. 10, 11). To cover our sins is not to prosper (Prov. 28:13), but if we confess our sins God's Son will cover them by the forgiveness of his atonement (Ps. 32:1-5; I John 1:9). Israel cared not, however, for his forgiveness, despite the fact it was he that "brought them up out of the land of Egypt." It is passing strange that Israel should so fully violate the express commands of God (Lev. 26:1; Deut. 26:21; Ex. 20:3-5, etc.). Some claim they did not possess the law, it being of a later date, a self-evidently foolish proposition, but even so, how can men of our time violate so many of the plain precepts of the word of God? Does this prove that the Bible does not exist? The answer to this query is a sufficient answer to the destructive critics. Israel "sets up idols" (v. 10) and "burnt sacrifice" (see Deut. 12:31) which things they did "to provoke the Lord to anger." (3) They abandoned themselves to evil. As though to remove all possibility of reformation they not alone "served idols" (v. 12) but they sold themselves to do that which was evil" (v. 17).

II. The Sovereign God, vv. 14-18. God's character and will had been fully set before the nation (Ex. 20:3-6). Repeated warnings (v. 13) had been given by faithful prophets, also repeated forgivings, yet Israel is (1) willful, they "would not hear" (v. 14), but deliberately followed in their fathers' footsteps. (2) Proud and vain (vv. 14, 15) and (3) utterly abandoned (v. 17), and hence must receive the judgment of God's righteous anger (see Ex. 20), or else God is not righteous. He repeatedly sought to turn them aside, but they slew his faithful prophets (Matt. 21:33-39). God is calling in mercy with long suffering in this present evil age; unbelief in God and his word is still prevalent; skepticism and loose morals everywhere abound, and shall God go on and call forever? (Prov. 29:1; I Pet. 3:9-10).

III. The Savior of Men, Luke 2:1-20. God's love for Israel was manifested (made plain) through his loving acts and the messages of warning proclaimed by his prophets. But we have a more marvelous revelation of his love in the person of his Son whose birthday we are about to observe. Samaria lost its "crown of pride," but we may receive a crown of righteousness as the "sons of God" (John 1:12; II Tim. 4:8), but not so unless we obey (John 14:23) his word.

Let us therefore take up the angelic praise (1) "Glory to God in the highest," highest heavens, highest degree and quality of praise of him who is infinitely wise and loving.

(2) "On earth peace" with God, with man, in the individual heart and among the nations.

Peace of conscience because of sins forgiven, in fact, all blessings, happiness and prosperity because of peace due to victory over sin which is the destroyer of peace.

(3) "Good will toward men," those with whom God is well pleased, and God has good will only toward all men.

He loved sinful Israel and he loves us so that he "gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth need not perish but have everlasting life." Even as the shepherds "found" the Savior (v. 16) so may all men who truly seek him (Heb. 11:6; Luke 19:10).

What better can we do on Christmas Sunday than openly to give God our best gift, our hearts' supreme love and devotion in return for his greatest gift to men?

Let us remember that to ignore grace will not set aside nor violate the judgment of sin.

WESTERN CANADA'S WONDERFUL YIELD

Wheat Yields Reports Extraordinarily Heavy.

When one hears of individual wheat yields of thirty-five to forty bushels per acre, there is considerable incredulity, but when yields, in whole townships extending into districts covering three and four and five hundred square miles in area, of upwards of fifty and some as high as sixty-five bushels per acre are reported, one is led to put his ear to the ground to listen for further rumblings. The writer having heard of these wonderful yields made a trip through the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, to ascertain first hand their truthfulness. It was remarkable to discover that Dame Rumor was no rumorer after all, that modesty was her mantle, that all that had been said of these yields was true, and that yields of over seventy bushels per acre were told of. These were so high that the truthfulness of the story was doubtful and very little was said of them. But such there were, and not in one instance, but in several, not in one locality but scattered in places hundreds of miles apart. Leaving these out altogether, there were large areas in which the average was over fifty bushels per acre, which in all common sense ought to satisfy most people. One hundred and thirty threshers in Alberta have made their returns to the local government as required by an act of the Legislature, and the average of the wheat threshed was fifty three bushels to the acre. So immense was the yield that official verification was required before giving it out to the public. Sitting in the smoking compartment of a day coach, where on passing through a farming community, there may be gathered the gossip yarns of the neighborhood, one hears also a lot of news. Just now, the sole topic is that of the crops. A man with more or less of a hirsute appendage, smock, clothes and hands giving the appearance of one working in the field, was asked as to the crops. He had got on at Warner, Alberta. Taking out his pipe, lighting it and then crossing his knees, holding his chin in his hands, possessing an air of supreme contentment, and with an intelligent face, he looked the man who could give some information. And he was just the man. He was a thresher and on his way to Milk River to secure some more help. He was requisitioned for information. "Yes, a good season. I've made a lot of money. As for yields, let's see," and then he began to string them off. "Peterson had 63 bushels of wheat per acre on his five hundred acre farm; from 380 acres Roland got 65 bushels per acre; Bugler had one hundred and ten acres that went 63 bushels; Carr had 65 bushels per acre off an eight hundred acre field." And he gave others running from 58 to 66 bushels per acre. All these people lived east of Warner, Alberta. Looking out of the window and seeing immense fields, still covered with stocks he was asked why they were not threshed, he replied that there were not enough "rigs" in the district, and that they would not get through before Christmas.

An American writing of a trip he made through Western Canada says: "I went as far west as Saskatoon, back to Regina, Moose Jaw, and down on the Soo line, and I must say that I never saw such crops, or ever heard of anything to compare with it in any country on earth. The country is over the hill, and certainly the farmers have a lot to be thankful for. There are very few of them that have done their work and done it properly but what have their debts paid and have bank accounts left."

And he only traveled the skirt of the country. The same story could be written of any part of any of three Provinces.—Advertisement.

Going Some.

"How did King Solomon get such a reputation for wisdom?"

"Well, he seems to have been able to make his thousand wives believe that his affection for the Queen of Sheba was purely platonic. It takes a wise guy to pull a stunt like that."

EZEMAS AND RASHES

Itching and Burning Soothed by Cuticura. Trial Free.

The Soap to cleanse and purify, the Ointment to soothe and heal. Relief, rest and sleep follow the use of these supercreamy emollients and indicate speedy and complete healing in most cases of young and old, even when the usual remedies have utterly failed.

Sample each free by mail with Book. Address postcard, Cuticura, Dept. XY, Boston. Sold everywhere.—Adv.

The Reason.

"Did you have a monkey dinner this season?"

"No; I didn't care to ape that fad."

Not Gray Hair but Tired Eyes make us look older than we are. Keep your eyes young and you will look young. After the Movies Murine Your Eyes. Don't tell your age. Murine Eye Remedy Co., Chicago, Sends Eye Book on request.

When it comes to stepping into a fortune no man objects to putting his foot in it.



Noreen Was Within a Few Feet of Me Higher Up On the Bank.