

Chickamauga.

By Captain F. A. MITCHEL.

(Copyright, 1894, by American Press Association.)

CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK.

CHAPTER XV.

TRIED.

When Corporal Ratigan left Miss Baggs with the general, to whom he had unwillingly conducted her, he was in such a condition of mind that he forgot all about his horse and started to walk toward his camp.

"O Lord, O Lord," he moaned, "if they'd organized corps of lovely women to be attached to each division of the army and the enemy, there'd be no more fighting for either cause.

"Corporal Ratigan, I say." Still the corporal would not hear. He knew that some one was approaching, for whether he would or not he could not help hearing his name called, each time more distinctly.

"What's that for?" asked the corporal without changing his position. "Witness for court martial."

"Why will people ask questions explanatory of disagreeable events or misfortunes, the answers to which they know well enough already? And why, when the information comes, will they deny its truth?"

"If ye say that again, Conover, Oi'll break every bone in yer body."

"What's the mather wid ye, corporal?" Ratigan by this time had got up from the ground, where he was lying, and approached his tormentor.

"Don't ask me, Conover, me boy."

"Why, Rats, yer lookin as if ye were goin to be tried yerself."

"Tried? Oi'm to suffer on the rack as one of me ancestors did once in the old Tower in Lannon."

"How's that?" "Oh, don't ask me, don't ask me. Oi can niver endure this trial. Oi'll do, Oi'll do."

"Come, brace yerself, me boy. Yer in no condition to be goin before a court. What is it all anyway?"

"What is it all? A woman to be tried for her life. And I caught her. Oi'm to bear witness against her. O God, if they'd let me off by tyin me up by the thumbs, buckin and gaggin, carryin a log on me shoulders, drummed out of camp with shaved head and feathers behind me ears. O Lord, O Lord, Oi'll do, Oi'll do!"

The corporal mounted his horse and was soon jogging along at a snail's pace toward Colonel Maynard's headquarters. There he was directed to where the court was sitting.

"Corporal Ratigan, yer late," said the president sternly.

The corporal saluted, but said nothing. He was directed to wait till some preliminaries had been disposed of, and he took position in a corner. It needed all the strength of which he was possessed to maintain himself on his legs, and he tried to keep his eyes from looking about the courtroom. He feared that if they rested on the prisoner, even for a moment, he would sink down on the floor, a heap of blue uniform and boots. Nevertheless the eyes will not always be controlled. Despite his efforts, Ratigan's gaze involuntarily glanced here and there until suddenly they rested on the object they were expected to avoid, sitting opposite, surrounded by guards, pale, but self possessed, and a pair of glorious eyes looking at him with such sympathy and encouragement that the poor man felt as if the windows of heaven had been opened and an angel was looking out to give him strength. Once his eyes were riveted on hers there was no getting them away until he was suddenly aroused by a voice.

"Corporal Ratigan!" Mechanically he staggered to a place designated as a witness stand, and holding on to the back of a chair steadied himself to give his testimony.

"State how you first saw the prisoner tampering with the telegraph line on yesterday morning, Sept. —," said the judge advocate, an officer very tall, very slender and very serious looking.

"Oi didn't see her at all."

"What?" "It was too dark to see anything."

"Well, state what you did see."

"I only thought I saw something."

"Come, come," said the president sternly, "we have no time to waste. Tell the story of the capture."

"There was somethin black in the road or by the side of it. Oi stopped to listen. Then Oi thought some one might be tamperin with the line—mind ye, Oi only thought it—and Oi called on whoever it was to surrender. Then Oi heard a 'get up,' and whatever it was dashed off. Oi followed it as fast as iver Oi could, callin on 'em to stop and frin me Colt. Divil a bit did any one stop."

The corporal paused again. It looked as if he were not going to get any further.

"Go on, my man."

"Well, then we came to the camp of General —'s division, and I was halted by the guards, while what Oi had seen got ahead. So Oi lost sight of it entirely."

"Proceed."

"Well, wasn't it the fault of the guards stoppin me and lettin the other go on, and no fault of mine?"

"Go on."

"What's the use of goin on? Oi lost sight of what was tamperin with the wires."

"But you overtook it."

"How can Oi swear it was the same?" There was a smile on the faces of those present. The questioner seemed puzzled at the corporal's device to avoid testifying against the prisoner.

"Did you not ride on and overtake what you had seen?"

"Divil a bit."

"I know better. You went on and found something in the road. What did you find?"

"Oi didn't find what Oi'd seen."

"What had you seen?"

"Didn't Oi tell ye it was so dark that Oi couldn't see anything?"

"That won't do, corporal. You certainly followed something. Now, on coming up with it, what did you find it to be?"

"It wasn't what Oi followed. That, whatever it was, had gone out with the mornin light. Oi reckon it was something ghostly."

"Nonsense. Did you not find the prisoner lying in the grass?"

"Oi did," replied the witness, as if his heart would break, and he again showed signs of collapse.

"And you had reason to believe it was the person driving the buggy you followed?"

"Oi didn't see any buggy. It was so dark."

"Well"—impatiently—"the person driving whatever it was you saw."

"How could Oi know that?"

"It was natural to infer that, there being a horse and buggy near, the prisoner had been driving it."

"There was no buggy."

"Well, the pieces."

"Now Oi would ask the court," said Ratigan, steadying himself to impress the members with the probability of his position, "if the person or whatever it was Oi saw tamperin with the wire might have turned off on another road and Oi suddenly lighted on this one?"

"That'll do, corporal. You may step out and give the next witness your place."

The next witness was an officer from the camp to which the prisoner had first been taken after her capture. He testified that upon a proposition to search her she had voluntarily produced the dispatches, which were shown to him in court, and he identified them as the same as those she had given up.

A reading of these dispatches was called for, and they were read.

In addition to those Miss Baggs deciphered when at the Fain plantation were two others, which were as follows:

the punishment there was a great diversity of opinion. Some thought that imprisonment in a northern penitentiary would be a sufficient atonement. There were those who argued that this would not have any effect to deter others from similar acts at a time when the army was in so critical a situation. Then the importance of the dispatches Miss Baggs was attempting to deliver to the enemy, the fact that their deliv-



Ratigan addresses the court.

ery would have given any general prompt to take advantage of an army's weakness an opportunity to destroy the Army of the Cumberland, acted seriously upon those who were disposed toward clemency. Some members of the court argued that the prisoner had acted as a man and must take the consequences, the same as if she were a man. There was none but knew that in this view of the case she would be immediately hanged. The disputants soon ranged themselves on opposite sides, the one in favor of an extreme course, the other of a life imprisonment. But the critical position of the army and the enormity of the offense finally won over the latter, and the case was compromised by the convicted woman being sentenced to be shot at sunrise the next morning. The verdict and sentence were approved within two hours of the finding, and Colonel Mark Maynard was ordered to see that the sentence was duly carried out.

CHAPTER XVI.

"YOU SHALL NOT DIE."

Scarcely had the court martial brought in a verdict when an order came to Colonel Maynard to move his brigade across the Chickamauga creek by way of Dyers' bridge, to be ready early the following day to make a reconnaissance beyond the Pigeon mountains. He ordered an ambulance for his prisoner to ride in, since he had no option but to take her with him. The distance to be traversed was but a few miles, and although it was nearly sunset before the command broke camp it was barely dark when the tents were pitched in the new situation. Luckily a house was found for the reception of the prisoner, and the headquarters of the colonel commanding were established near it.

As soon as Maynard's tent was pitched he went inside and shut himself up from every one. The matter of the life in his keeping, his desire to save his prisoner, the impossibility of his doing so except by betraying his trust and committing at her escape, were weighing terribly upon him. A desperate struggle between his duty as an officer and his repulsion at carrying out a sentence upon a woman which had once been passed upon himself was driving him well nigh distracted. One thing was certain—he could not save Miss Baggs without sacrificing himself. He was ready to sacrifice himself if he could do so honorably. He might even consider the matter of doing that which he had no right to do, but since the devil may care days of his scouting a new world had opened to him, which made the struggle more complicated than it would then have been. He had a wife whom he loved devotedly, and any obloquy he might take upon himself must be shared by her and his son. He knew that if he could conceive it to be his duty, or if he could make up his mind without the approval of his conscience to connive at the prisoner's escape, he would have a fair chance of success. He was charged with the execution, and this would give him power over her person. On the other hand, such a violation of trust was too horrible even for consideration, and if he did not so regard it the penalty he must suffer—disgrace, if not death—would well nigh kill his wife. For a long while he revolved these considerations in his mind and at last came to a decision. He would suffer the torture of carrying out the sentence. He would do his duty to his country, his wife and his son.

He had scarcely arrived at this decision when a message came from the prisoner asking to see him.

The racking of his whole nature, which had been partially allayed by his decision, came back to him with the summons. He dreaded an interview. He felt that the resolution he had formed was of too little inherent strength to warrant placing himself under so great a temptation. But his memory took him back to the jail in which he had been confined on the eve of his own intended execution at Chattanooga, and he thought how he would have regarded any one who would refuse him such a request at such a time. He got up and walked over to the house where the prisoner was confined.

He paused a few moments before entering, in order to collect himself, then walked slowly up the steps. The guard stood at attention and brought his piece to a "present," but Maynard did not see him, did not return his salute. He opened the door, entered the house and in a few minutes was in a room in which the prisoner was confined. She was standing by a window. As he entered she turned and stood with her hands hanging clasped before her, her sorrowful eyes fixed steadily upon him.

"Colonel Maynard," she said, "I have sent for you to ask you to deliver my last messages. I once met you in the house of one who is dear to you. There I received shelter from the storm which raged without, but which was nothing to me beside another evil that threatened me. I was sore pressed and

in great danger of capture. The women in that house—an elderly lady, a young girl who visited there and your wife—took me in at a great risk to themselves. Your wife certainly had much at stake, for your honor might be involved. I have sent for you now to ask you to say to them that I have treasured their remembrance and their kindness to me."

She waited a moment for him to accept the trust. She might have waited till the crack of doom without a reply. He had no power to utter a word. He simply bowed.

"I desire also to intrust this keepsake to you, to be sent to my brother."

She took a locket from about her neck and held it up before him. On it was painted a miniature of a young man in the uniform of a Confederate officer. Maynard looked at it and started back, with a cry, as if pierced with a red-hot iron.

"He—he is"— "My brother."

"Oh, God!" He staggered to the wall and leaned against it, shivering.

"You know him, colonel. There is no necessity for deceit now. I have long known the singular circumstances that surround you and him—that you both loved the same woman; that you won."

"And that twice—twice he gave me—my life?"

"That he never told me."

"Ah, he never told you that?" replied Maynard, a kind of wonder in his tones.

"When at Mrs. Fain's plantation, I discovered under whose roof I was sheltered. Your wife had never seen me, and I determined that it would be best for all that I should not make myself known."

Maynard stood in amazement at these developments, in horror at the situation as he now knew it to be.

"And you are the sister of Cameron Fitz Hugh?"

"I am. I am Caroline Fitz Hugh."

"You shall not die."

When Colonel Maynard spoke these words, there was a grandeur in his tone, his figure, the lines of his countenance, the light in his eye, strangely inconsistent with a resolution he had made the moment before they were uttered. He had on the instant reversed his decision made not ten minutes before to do his duty, in the ordinary acceptance of what that duty was. He had determined to save the woman before him, even if it were necessary to take upon himself far greater ignominy than the death to which she was sentenced. There was silence between them, during which Miss Fitz Hugh stood looking at him in admiration, mingled with inquiry. She knew that some secret charm was at work within, but she did not know what it was.

"How can my death be prevented?"

"I am charged with your execution. I will take you to your lines myself this night."

What was that subtle influence, far stronger than battalions of infantry or batteries of artillery, which gave it to one not present, unconscious of his power, to hold Mark Maynard over a precipice and to cast him into a black gulch below? Was it circumstances that had a year before led Fitz Hugh to accept the very part Maynard was now called upon to play? Was it love that had given Maynard the bride Fitz Hugh was to have possessed? Was it some invisible fiend that had made Maynard a robber of that bride from the man to whom he twice owed his life and was now bringing on his punishment? These were indirect causes, but they cannot explain that inexplicable, intangible sense of honor which will lead a man, to speak paradoxically, to commit a crime and sacrifice himself at the same time for another.

The expression on Miss Fitz Hugh's face as she heard Maynard speak words which would save her from death and give her liberty underwent a change. For a moment after they were spoken there was a delighted look, but as she realized what they meant to the man who would save her it was transformed into an expression which can only be described as bordering on the confines of angel land. There was a holy look in her eyes, a radiance of purity from the soul expressed in every feature. There was the superhuman attribute of choosing death before life and liberty at the price of wrong.

"No, colonel, we Fitz Hughes cannot accept sacrifice, and especially wrong, from others. We give; we are not accustomed to receive."

Maynard stood gazing at her with a look as if in refusing the sacrifice she had stabbed him.

"What then," he said at last, "can I do?"

"Send the news of my condition, of my expected"—she shuddered at pronouncing the word—"execution to our lines. Knowing that I am condemned, they can bring what influence they may be able to save me."

"It will avail nothing."

"Try it. Fate, luck, Providence works strangely at times. Let us push on and leave the rest to a higher power."

The colonel looked at his watch. "It is now half past 9. We are but a few miles from the Confederate lines. Your brother is"—

"In —'s cavalry division and on the Confederate right. I heard from him only a few days ago. He was then at Ringold."

"That is not far from here."

"There may be time," she said hopefully.

"Some one must steal through the lines. If not shot, he may accomplish something. In half an hour I shall be—"

TAKE NOTICE!

Book and Job Printing

In all its branches.

County Printing and Supplies

Lithographing . . .

Book Binding

From the simplest style to the most elaborate.

Engraving

Of all kinds.

Blank Books

In every style.

Legal Blanks

The Red Line Series, the handsomest Blank in the country, printed on Bond Paper at less expense than other houses furnish them on ordinary flat paper.

Stereotyping

From superior hard metal.

Printers' Rollers

Made by an expert from the best and most durable material.

Country Printers

Having county or other work, which they cannot themselves handle, would make money by writing us for terms.

WEALTH MAKERS PUB. CO.

Lincoln, Neb.

GOLD CROWNS

Let him bear the message. "He?" The colonel looked at her a moment, as if to question why this man should be so trusted, but her eyes were lowered. He knew there was a secret which it did not become him to pry into.

"I will send him, if he can be found at once. If not, I will go myself. And if the mission fails"—

The words were not finished, for he well knew how precious time was, and turning from the room and the house strode rapidly toward his tent.

He had gone but a dozen paces before he heard some one call. "Colonel!"

He did not hear. The call was repeated. "Colonel!"

A man approached him, whom in the darkness he did not recognize.

"Is there no hope, colonel?" the man asked in a choked voice.

"Who are you?" "The man who captured her," pointing to the house. "Oi'll never draw a-ber again."

"Corporal Ratigan?" "The same."

"This is fortunate. Come with me." The two started together to a thicket wherein they would neither be observed nor heard.

"Oi'm hangin round, ye see, colonel. Oi'm away from camp without leave. Oi hope they'll shoot me for a deserter."

Colonel Maynard did not speak till they reached the thicket. Then, turning and facing Ratigan, he said earnestly: "You would like to save her, would you not?"

"God knows I would."

"Then go to the picket line and get through unobserved if possible. Go to Ringold and find a Confederate officer—Cameron Fitz Hugh, if he is there. Tell him that his sister is condemned to be shot at sunrise tomorrow morning. Say that Colonel Mark Maynard sends him this information, that he may use whatever influence he possesses—take any measures he may consider honorable—to save her. Tell him," the colonel lowered his voice, "that I offered to attempt to do so, taking ruin upon myself, but she would not accept the sacrifice. Go; there is no time to lose. When the sun rises, it will be too late."

"Oh, colonel," cried the man in agony, "there is so little time!" "Go! It is not yet 10 o'clock. We have six hours."

The corporal was moving away when the colonel stopped him. "You will need the countersign."

Ratigan returned, and the colonel whispered it in his ear, "Carnifax Ferrv."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Education...

...OF VOTERS... Should be the watchword of every Populist from now until after election 1896. The

Farmers Tribune

Published at Des Moines, Iowa, has made a special rate giving that large eight-page paper for FIFTY CENTS per year. This rate is good only until May 1st, so all should take advantage of it at once.

The Tribune is an educator and stands squarely on the Omaha platform. It has a department of general news as well as Populist news. It has a large list of correspondents and its editorials are able and instructive. It is a vote-maker.

While the price of this able paper is FIFTY CENTS all should become subscribers. Remember, this rate is for April only. Samples sent on application. Send in at once. Send a club if possible. Address

Farmers Tribune, Des Moines, Iowa.

Hot Springs Special

This is the title of the new train to Hot Springs, Arkansas, inaugurated by the Missouri Pacific from St. Louis and which affords passengers perfect service from Lincoln.

These Hot Springs are not situated in the polar regions but passes a climate in January as mild as South Dakota climate in June.

Illustrated and descriptive books furnished free on application. City ticket office 1201 O St.

F. D. CORNELL, C. P. & T. A.

FROM LINCOLN

is the SHORT 2, (operating its own tracks, to Marshalltown, Cedar Rapids, Clinton, Chicago, Milwaukee, Madison, Oshkosh, Fond du Lac, St. Louis City, St. Paul, Minneapolis, Duluth. In Chicago connections are made with 28 diverging lines. In St. Paul, Union depot—with 10 lines—unsurpassed time made to eastern and northeastern cities. For tickets, etc., call at city office 117 So. 10th St., or depot corner S and 8th Sts.

MIXED Paints.

At WHOLESALE PRICES, Delivered Free. For Houses, Barns, Roofs, all colors, and SAVE Middlemen's profits. In use 51 years. Endorsed by druggists and Farmers' Alliance. Low prices will surprise you. Write for samples. O. W. INGERSOLL, 233 Plymouth St., Brooklyn, N. Y.