

HIS WORD OF HONOR.

A Tale of the Blue and the Gray.

BY E. WERNER.

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CHAPTER I. A Soldier's Honor.

The rays of the noonday sun were beating down with the scorching glow known only to the South. In the hot, quivering air every object seemed steeped in radiant light, and even the forest afforded no coolness, for it, too, was pervaded by the sultry atmosphere, and beneath the huge trees the burning breath of noon was still felt.

Under one of these trees, whose branches, heavy with foliage, extended a long distance, two young men had flung themselves on the ground, apparently for a short rest.

Both wore the uniform of the Union army, one being a lieutenant and the other a surgeon. The latter, who had a slender figure somewhat below the middle height, expressive features and dark hair, lay in a comfortable attitude on the turf, listening calmly to his companion, who had started up and was pacing hurriedly to and fro. The powerful form, thick, fair hair and blue eyes unmistakably revealed German ancestry; but a cloud shadowed the frank, youthful face, and the voice trembled with passionate emotion.

"I must go, cost what it may! Since I knew that Harrison and his daughter were on the plantation, I have had no rest. Say what you please, John, I am going!"

"My dear William, you are on the eve of doing a very foolish thing," said the surgeon, without changing his comfortable position. "I advise you, as a friend, to drop it; the affair may be your death."

"What do I care for that! Certainly I will have at any cost. A brisk ride will bring me there in two hours, and I can return before sunset. I'll venture it at any peril."

"And risk a bullet through your

wild ride into the enemy's country? You don't even know whether Miss Harrison wishes to see you—whether she did not agree when her father dismissed you so unceremoniously."

"No, no!" William impetuously retorted. "Florence has been deceived—forced; she has not received any of my letters, as I have not had a single line from her. Her father was always opposed to our engagement; we fairly extorted his consent. He gave it reluctantly, and promptly availed himself of the excuse afforded by the war to recall his promise."

John Maxwell shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, you can hardly blame him! He, a secessionist and slave-baron, and you with your humanistic ideas! You harmonize like fire and water, and you were always a thorn in the flesh of his nephew, the charming Edward. You stole from under his very eyes the wife on whom he had set his heart. He'll never forgive you. Conditions were imposed at the outbreak of the war?"

"Yes—shameful ones! I was to deny my convictions, desert and betray the cause I serve and fight in the ranks of the enemy against our army. I rejected the dishonorable demand as it deserved."

"With the most reckless bluntness to the millionaire and future father-in-law. The Harrisons really are not so very much to blame. You would be an extremely troublesome son-in-law. I should have considered the matter a little. Where a bride and a fortune are at stake—"

"You would have practiced treason? John, don't make yourself worse than you are. Even you would have been incapable of it."

"Who talks of treason? You merely

"Certainly. I am especially anxious to have reliable information concerning the nature of the disease. The outbreak of an epidemic would be extremely inconvenient just now. When do you expect to be back?"

"In three hours, if necessary. But I had intended to ask leave of absence until evening on account of another matter, which I should like to attend to at the same time."

"Of course, if you wish," said Burney, absently. "Only send me some good news."

"The best in my power. At any rate, there is no time to lose. I will go at once."

The colonel nodded assent, and the other officers now joined in the conversation. The subject was discussed in all its bearings. If these cases were really the first in an impending epidemic, the matter was very serious.

At last Maxwell took his leave; but, in the act of going, approached his friend, who was standing silently at the window.

"Do you still persist in your resolve?" he asked, under his breath.

"Certainly. As soon as I get my leave I shall ride over."

"And perhaps be shot on the way! Good luck to you!"

"Thanks for the kind wish," said William, angrily. "Perhaps it will be fulfilled."

"Hardly. Men who, like you, are forever butting their heads against a wall, generally have uncommonly good fortune. Where the rest of us crack our skulls, they push the stone apart. Farewell, Will!"

He left the room. Doctor Maxwell did not spoil his friend by pretty speeches; that was evident. He took leave of the young officer who might "perhaps be shot on the way" as carelessly as if there was nothing in prospect save an ordinary ride. William scarcely heeded it; his mind was filled with other thoughts, and he availed himself of the first pause in the conversation to approach the colonel and request a brief private interview.

Burney opened the door of a small room adjoining, and the two men entered.

"Well, Lieutenant Roland, have you anything important to ask?" said the colonel, when they were alone.

"I merely wished to request a short leave of absence," replied the young man, with apparent calmness. "There is a family matter to be arranged which is of the utmost importance to me."

"And which you can arrange while on the march?"

"At least I hope so. I intend to visit relatives who live on a plantation only a few miles from here. I have just learned that I was in their immediate neighborhood."

The request was not singular, and was easily granted, yet something in the young man's face attracted the colonel's attention, and he inquired:

"What is the name of the plantation you desire to visit?"

William hesitated a moment, then slowly answered:

"Springfield."

"Springfield? That is beyond our outposts. Are you not aware that it is in the enemy's country?"

"I know it."

"And yet you wish to go there? It won't do. I cannot permit it."

"I took a similar and far more dangerous ride a week ago on staff duty," replied William.

"That was in the service; duty required it; but this is a private affair, and I cannot permit one of my officers to risk his life for such a matter. No, Lieutenant Roland."

(To be continued.)

WHEN MEN MISS SUCCESS.

Idleness and Incompetency Keep the Business Novice Down.

Walter P. Phillips, the founder of the national newsgathering corporation known as the United Press, and the inventor of Phillips' telegraphic code, a typical, energetic American, who has put many young men in the newsgathering business, believes that the cause of failure everywhere among young business beginners lies in incompetence. Nine-tenths of the young men who are struggling for a name and place in the world are unfitted for the callings they have picked out for themselves. Besides an unlimited supply of energy and whole-heartedness in the work before him, the successful man of the future must know his business from A to Z. The next greatest drawback to success is idleness. Nothing worth while is accomplished without work, and plenty of it. Things do not happen without a cause, and behind every great life there are years of concentrated energy and tireless industry. Idleness will make any man a failure; intelligent work will land any man among the successful. It is all so simple and so true that one hesitates to put the fact down in cold blood, and yet how few men recognize or, recognizing, live up to the axiom, that labor conquers all things! Idleness and the consciousness of incompetency should make any man ashamed of himself and drive him to do something that is worth the doing. It is within the grasp of every one to learn some one thing that will yield both pleasure and profit. Success comes only to those who seek it. The young man who is really in earnest will not have to be advised how to succeed. He may learn much by studying the failures of others, however, and he will always find, after a survey of the great legion of the unsuccessful, that two causes have brought them to their present misery—idleness and incompetency.—Saturday Evening Post.

THE RIBBON GIRL.

Back in Two Rivers Millie Duncan had had a pleasant home and the expectation that her lines would fall in pleasant places. But a bolt came out of the blue. Millie's father died suddenly, and just at the wrong time, not only for himself, but for his family. She faced the necessity for earning her own living, and, leaving the younger children and her mother to depend upon the small income that remained to them, she made a bold entrance into Chicago—which cared nothing about her boldness, but only bellowed at her like an angry bull. If Millie was frightened she did not show it. She found an ugly little room, made it as attractive as she could, cooked her own coffee mornings, contented herself with ten-cent luncheons, and indulged in a hearty meal at dinner time. For this function—for such it was to Millie—she made a careful toilet and entered the dining room of the rather fashionable boarding house with the air of a princess who was amusing herself by an experience among the common people. This was her one luxury—it was in this fashion that she kept a hold upon sociability. This gave her cheer for her work and sustained her vivacity. It amounted in fact to a necessity.

Now one of the greatest afflictions that had come to her at a time when afflictions seemed to be pouring thick and fast upon her was leaving the vicinity where Allen Darrow lived. They were not sweethearts; they had not seen much of each other. But it had been his presence that had made a party seem really festive to her. It was the meeting with him casually on the quiet streets of Two Rivers that had caused her heart to leap. It was he she thought of when she put on a new gown. Or, if she did anything unworthy of her best self, it was he she remembered, blushing at her own baseness. If she was generous or courageous in an unusual way she turned to thoughts of him with joy, thinking that he would be pleased if he knew. She had not said good-by to him when she left home. She had not the desire to burden him with the details of her misfortune. How could he understand, who had always lived an easy, luxurious life, what responsibilities she had been called upon to face? How could he appreciate the sinking of the heart which she felt in leaving the refined, easy life, the books, the lazy hours at



THEY WANT IT FOR A WEDDING. the piano, the charming circle of friends, for the work and friendliness that a poor girl must know in Chicago? She put her dreams bravely behind her, therefore, and left without a word of farewell.

She was rather glad when she found that her work in the great dry goods house, where the influence of friends had secured her a position, was to be among the ribbons. She rioted in the color about her, and, making up her mind that anything that was worth doing at all was worth doing well, she not only studied to be most assiduous in her service to those who came to purchase, but she took the greatest pride in arranging her stock attractively. So original were the fashions in which she put forth the bolts of gleaming satin ribbons that it was much noticed. A gruff floorwalker ventured to compliment her. The other girls at the ribbon counters were profuse in their praise. And Millie began to show the satisfaction that comes from work well done, though the task be insignificant. She began to look at life from a different point of view and to rejoice that she was among the workers and that work was a pleasure to her. In short, being a wholesome young woman, she put her regret behind her and rose to meet the emergency with all the gallantry in her nature.

One day she was putting her patience to its full test with a trying customer, who could not be suited and who would not go away, when a young man and woman entered and took chairs side by side, and began looking at white satin ribbon.

"They want it for a wedding, I'll wager," thought Millie to herself, looking behind the nodding plumes of the fretful customer to where the two sat and laughed together. "I suppose they mean it to run up the aisles of the church. I wish this tiresome old thing would go and let me wait on them."

But the tiresome old thing would not go. She staid on asking for things she did not want, and Millie, with a politeness which continually grew more frigid, continued to supply her demands. But, meantime, she kept glancing in the direction of the laughing pair, and feasting her eyes on the gay attire and the happy face of the girl who sat partly facing her. Golden hair and blue eyes, a brilliant golf cape, and a nonchalant little air, made up a pleasing whole. Millie

hoped the young man was as good looking, and made up her mind that she would get a glimpse of his face before he left. Just then he turned and looked at her, and she perceived with a poignant blending of pain and delight that it was Allen Darrow.

She had no desire then to wait upon the pretty girl or upon her laughing companion. Her one thought was to get away. But Allen Darrow had recognized her, and, with a word of apology to the girl by his side, he hastened to Millie, holding out his hand for a hearty greeting.

"Will you not let me introduce Miss Ferguson?" he inquired. Millie gave consent, and the two girls chatted together with every outward appearance of cordiality—a cordiality which was no doubt genuine with Miss Ferguson.

"You were looking at the white satin ribbon," ventured Millie at length, with a sort of obstinate pride in her vocation. "Did you wish to purchase some?"

A covert smile fluttered about the young man's lips, and then Millie blushed at the knowledge of the transparency of her motives. As usual, Allen Darrow understood her perfectly. Formerly this had been a pleasure; now she would have preferred to indulge in reserve.

"Yes," Miss Ferguson replied to Millie's question. "We want some white satin ribbon—for a wedding. Don't we, Mr. Darrow?"

"Indeed, we do," he responded, laughing. "A wedding in which one or the other of us is much interested. 'I won't say which one.'"

"I should hope both of us were interested in it," cried Miss Ferguson, saucily.

They got the ribbon and went away, and after they had gone the sense of her poverty and loneliness and need for monotonous work rushed over Millie, and swallowed up all her cheer and youth for the time being, as a cold storm of the night seems suddenly to extinguish the summer, and to leave only brown leaves and dead fields behind it. That night she could not bring herself to dress for dinner, and to indulge in her usual little dissipation in the way of conversation with the young men she met at the boarding house. She got a dismal little meal on her oil stove, and went to bed early, to toss till dawn, and so, arising late, was behindhand at the store. The work had never before seemed so repulsive. She fancied herself getting horrid little tricks of manner like those of some of the old clerks, and imagined that she was already growing plain and dull.

In the midst of this deep depression, when all the store looked gray and confusing, and the words of her fellow-workers sounded strange and foreign to her ear, she heard some one inquiring for her. It was an American District Telegraph boy, with a package. A sudden shaft of anticipation pierced Millie's leaden heart. She signed the book with trembling fingers, and broke open the strings on the box. Within were exposed to view the most glorious American beauty roses she had ever seen. They were not like other roses. They were glorified flowers, and in the midst of them was a little white note.

"My dear Miss Duncan," it read, "am I not to have the great pleasure of calling upon you? I confess I have not tried to find where you were because I was really hurt and offended that you left Two Rivers without saying good-by to me, or letting me know that you were going away. But now that I have seen you I can feel no offense. I think I understand the motives that led you to do as you did. I do not know how to be sufficiently thankful that I went with Miss Ferguson to buy those wedding bands. I am to be best man at her wedding, which is to occur next Saturday. She is to marry one of my best friends, and I am fond of her and glad that you met me. But how I am running on! You see I want so much to talk with you that I cannot stop. Kindly let me know where and when I may call. And I will be frank and confess that my call is not to be one of ordinary importance to myself. It will be the most important visit I ever made to any one. I am filled at once with anticipation and dread. But I will not let the dread get uppermost. I insist that my heart shall sing. I insist that my fate is to be fortunate, and that after the visit I shall be even happier than I am now—and I am happy, for I have found you again. Yours always, Allen Darrow."

When Millie looked up from reading the letter the store was no longer gray. A sort of golden glory rested over everything, and she turned with eagerness to a customer.

"Burnt orange ribbon No. 5? Yes, ma'am, we have a fine piece I should like to show you."—Chicago Tribune.

Lincoln as an Inventor.

According to the Baltimore Patent Record, Abraham Lincoln was an inventor. But it was long before he ever dreamed that he would one day give a million human beings their freedom by a single stroke of his pen. The freak invention of Lincoln was an "unsinkable steamship," which was never considered feasible enough even for a practicable trial. It was patented in 1849, and consisted of an ordinary steamship with rubber airbags attached to the sides. Under normal conditions these airbags were suspended five feet clear of the water, but the moment the ship sprung a leak or was in danger of sinking from any other cause these airbags were at once lowered into the water, "where they will keep the ship afloat," wrote Lincoln in the specification which accompanied his application for a patent. It was supposed also that the appliance would be of special value in the navigation of big vessels in shallow water.

AN ALASKAN HOME.

How the Family Gathers After the Day's Work Is Over.

An Alaskan hut is not the worst place in the world—far from it, says Self-Culture. Its interior consists of a square floor of earth flanked on all sides by two wide ledges rising one above the other like a terrace. On the lower one rest the cooking, weaving and fishing utensils, the knives and needles, pots and pans. On the upper ledge, with much display of wonderfully woven blankets, are the beds. In the center of the room glows the fire, the smoke groping its way out of a hole in the roof. After the day's work is done and the stomachs of both people and dogs are full, the family gathers around the fire. Facing the door sits the father, next to him the mother; on one hand the sons and on the other the daughters, even to the third and fourth generation, it may be. Beyond these are the servants or slaves. Each has his place, and takes it as a matter of course. Without, in the darkness, the dogs cluster about the door and howl. The mysterious and implacable sea keeps up its thunder. The snow-capped mountains, with their illimitable glaciers, lie just beyond. The shafts of the northern lights dart through the sky like the harpoons of a Titan, with incredible celerity. Is it strange that, amid scenes so wild and fearful, superstitions, also wild and fearful, spring into existence? Or can one be surprised that in an unlettered country, the storytellers are of mighty power, and tell tales that affright the children till they scramble to the safe shelter of their mothers' arms? When the family sings in strange, broken, yet rhythmic measures, the dogs howl louder than before, and the women sway their squat bodies back and forth unceasingly, keeping their hands occupied meanwhile at their tasks of weaving or braiding. The men carve their spoons or cut curious figures from the black slate. The sutor for the hand of one of the daughters enters slyly and takes a seat with the sons. No protest is made. The father and mother go on with their little tasks, the young girls giggle after the fashion of girls the world over. And the sutor, thus unrepulsed, contents himself, thinking his case won. The oldest among them chants some old folk song, and the father rises. It is the signal for good-nights. The ashes are spread over the fire, and by the light of a few fishes' tails, dried for the lighting, the family goes to bed, forgetful of crashing bergs, or the mysterious aurora, of the mountains where the snow lies forever and away. So is home made anywhere, where the spirit of home exists.

NUTS AND DATES.

The culture of the pistache nut is likely to prove of very considerable value in California, Arizona and New Mexico. With the exception of the hime-consumed product of a few isolated trees, the entire quantity now used in this country is imported and its use is limited almost exclusively to ice cream and confection flavoring, says the Scientific American.

Along the Mediterranean, where the choicest walnuts and almonds are raised, the pistache is considered the very best of all nuts for table use. It is very nutritious and fattening and of a delicious flavor of its own, and should soon come to be a leading article of its kind in our markets. Mr. Swingle, who has been investigating foreign plants and fruits, perfected arrangements by which some choice grafts will reach this country next spring.

While able to withstand considerable frost in winter, the date palm must have a very dry and exceedingly hot climate at the time of the ripening of the dates. The sandiest and, generally speaking, the poorest soils produce the best dates; while it will yield in any soil, it takes most kindly to otherwise almost worthless land, even that which is white with alkali suiting it. Still, an abundance of water is at certain periods of its maturing quite necessary. Arizona is thought to be a good field for date-growing.

A Boer Christening.

London newspapers just now are filled with incidents of the Boers, most of them far from flattering. One of the best relates that in a Dutch church in Pretoria not long ago there appeared a very stolid-looking farmer's wife, who had brought her baby into town to be christened. Before leaving home her "lord" had written the names it was intended to give the infant on one slip of paper and the list of the household requirements on another, and both were carefully folded and put in the great leather purse she carried. When the proper time arrived the fond mother handed up a slip of paper to the minister, who read and reread it, and then remarked that Koffie Rijkst Suiker Gember Komfijt were rather odd names for the child, and ones which might prove embarrassing to the possessor at some future time. Then the other slip of paper was produced and explanations followed.

A Hundred.

"An Irish counsel," says the Green Flag, "having lost a case which had been tried before three judges, one of whom was esteemed a very able lawyer and the other two but indifferent, some of the other counsel chafed him a good deal. 'Well, now,' says he, 'who the devil could help it when there were a hundred judges on the bench?' 'A hundred!' said a by-stander. 'There were but three.' 'By St. Patrick,' replied the counsel, 'there was one and two ciphers.'"



"WILL YOU ACCOMPANY ME?"

brain. You have probably forgotten that we are engaged in a war and that it is desertion for an officer to be absent from his regiment without leave. Court-martials are sometimes disagreeable in such cases, and it would be unfortunate if Lieutenant Roland should go out of the world by lynch-law."

The sarcasm of these words succeeded in producing an impression where sensible arguments might have failed. William Roland started and answered more quietly:

"What fancy have you taken into your head? Of course, I don't mean to go without leave. The colonel will not refuse it; we are doing nothing here. I must see and speak to Florence once more, even though I hazard my life to do it!"

"You lovers are always ready to risk your lives," said the young surgeon, carelessly. "Your feelings are forever at the boiling point. A strange condition of affairs. Let me feel your pulse!"

"Cease this jesting!" cried William, furiously. "Can't you curb your spirit of mockery even here? But how could I expect sympathy or appreciation from you where affairs of the heart are concerned!"

"From the heartless American!" retorted John. "Of course, heart and feeling are the prerogatives of the German. You have taken out a patent on them, and consider yourselves actually insulted if other people claim a little of the article, too. Here we are back again at the old point of dispute, over which we wrangled sufficiently as boys—the honor of our different nationalities."

"In which you usually came off worst."

"Yes; you had an abominable way of cutting German supremacy into me; and as you were the stronger, I generally yielded to your palpable arguments. But when there was anything which required brains and reflection, John Maxwell was summoned. Then you submitted to my authority, and, at the utmost, appeared on the scene when there was a drubbing to be given. Don't look so gloomy, Will; let us discuss the matter sensibly. What do you really expect to accomplish by this

needed to have remained passive and not fought at all, either for or against the Union; that would have been the wisest course."

"And a cowardly, pitiful one into the bargain! Am I alone to lag behind, when every one springs to arms? Let us drop the subject. Our views on this point are very widely sundered."

"They are on all points," said Maxwell, dryly. "I stick to it—this visit to the plantation is as useless as it is dangerous, but I don't flatter myself in the least with the hope of detaining you. You'll have your own way under all circumstances."

"Of course, I shall. I'm going to the colonel at once to ask for leave of absence. Will you accompany me?"

The young surgeon sighed. He was probably loath to resign his comfortable resting place, yet he rose slowly.

"I wish Colonel Burney would put you under arrest for three days, instead of giving you leave of absence," he said, emphatically. "But unfortunately, you are a favorite, and besides, it's an established fact that, if a man wants to commit a folly, everybody hastens to help him. So let us go!"

The regiment to which the young men belonged was stationed in the next village. After severe battles and arduous marches a short respite had been granted, but the men were to move in a few days. Constant bustle pervaded the usually quiet hamlet and was specially noticeable around the colonel's quarters. When Roland and Maxwell entered, they found several officers there. The commander himself, a man advanced in years, with a grave but kindly face, stood among a group of his subordinates, apparently discussing something with them.

"I am glad you have come, doctor!" he said to the surgeon. "I was just going to send for you. Lieutenant Davis has reported that two of his men are ill, and the symptoms appear very grave; he fears fever, and begs to have medical assistance as soon as possible. You will ride over to the outposts."

"I'll go at once," replied Maxwell. "I hope it will prove a false alarm, as has happened several times, but we'll soon ascertain."