*DOWN IN TENNESSEE.. VII.

BY EDMUND KIRKE

Author of "Among the Pines."

"It is not much of a story," said the Captain, drawing his chair away from the table, and lighting a huge cigar; "and, besides, I have n't the Parson's handy way of dressing up a common incident so as to make it fit for good society; but, such as it is, it is true."

"But, Captain, as it's Sunday," said the Preacher, smiling, "suppose you leave out some of your favorite ornamental phrases; truth unadorned, you know, is adorned the most."

"Yes, but if you strip it stark naked, you shock modest people. Why, Sir, if I used as many oaths in my talk as the Parson does in his sermons, I should expect the earth to open and swallow me, as in ancient times it did that old Secessionist, Korah."

"Come, come, you'll make your story like the parsonage my folks in Illinois built for me—all porch and front-door. Get into it, and be brief, for life is short—and I want Mr. —— to hear some of Jule's psalm-singing before he goes."

The Captain handed me a cigar, took a long whiff from his own, and without noticing the Preacher's remark, began his story:

"It was before the great foot-race between Bragg and Buell, when old "Slow-coach" won the stakes—two States and—a court-martial; and we soldiers immortalized ourselves by using our legs instead of our muskets. I was stationed at Gallatin in defense of the railway, and, being short of fodder, took a squad of a dozen men one day, and went out on a foraging expedition. I had sent six or seven wagon loads back to camp, and, while the remaining wagons, was scouring the district around Hartsville, when, just after we had set our pickets for the night, about 200 of Forrest's cavalry came suddenly on us, and surrounded and made us prisoners before we had even time to run. A small party took us in charge, and striking a course due east, made for the Knoxville Railroad. Nothing worth mention occurred during the first two days. At the close of the second we reached a small village called Crossvill—consisting of two houses, a barn, and a nigger shanty—just in the edge of Hickman County, and halted for the night. We took supper at the house of a well-to-do planter, of the name of Boylan, who gave us a good meal, and was very courteous to the Confederate officer, but, in my presence, cursed and swore at the Union, and the "Linkum hirelin's," hard enough to have shocked—the Parson. The Lieutenant, who was a social fellow, and a gentleman, pressed me to share his bed at the house, but I declined, asserting—not very mildly—that I wouldn't sleep under the roof of such an old reprobate as the planter. The Rebel officer appreciated my feeling, and lending me an extra blanket—for the night was cool—consented to my camping out with my men—which meant sleeping in a corn-field, on the plowed ground, with the sky for a bed-quilt. The boys had made a roasing fire of pine-knots, and were eating their suppers near it when I joined them. Spreading a blanket on the ground, and seating myself before the roaring blaze, I lit my last cigar, and fell to studying "Ayer's Cherry Pectoral Almanac," a copy of which delightful work had somehow lodged in the pocket of my overcoat. I was pondering its astrological predictions, when a long, loose-jointed native came up to me, and said:

"Well, stranger, yer takin' it powerful cool, bein's yer in a party close fix."

"Not a very *close* fix," I answered; "there's lots of room round here."

"Yas, lots uv it; but ye hein't the run o' the ground—though I 'spect ye would *ses ef* ye had the chance."

"I *reckon* I would."

"Whot's thet yer readin' thar."

"An almanac."

"Almyrac! Whot's thet?"

"A book that tells all about the weather; when it will rain and when it won't. A man that carries one does n't need an umbrella."

"An' do it tell when it will be fair for shootin' snipe an' kotchin eels?"

"Oh, yes, it tells all that, and when husbands may look out for squalls." If you're a wife you ought to have one."

"I hain't morrid. Number one ar 'bout so much as I kin find in vittles. But thet mus' be a monstrous nice book; ef I could spell, I'd spill a quart o' humin grease ter git one."

"I would be worth that; but here, I'll give you this. You can learn to 'spell' it somehow."

With a look of stupid surprise he took the almanac, but in a moment handed it back, saying. "I doan't mean ter 'pose on ye, stranger, kease yer hotched in the tedders (tethers). I hain't no sech sort o' man, nohow."

"You'll not impose on me; you're welcome to it. Make your preacher learn you how to read it."

"Lord bless ye, the parson doun't know how no more'n I does. Ye see we hain't no schules round yere; an' ef we hed, pore men hain't pay no fifty dollar a yar ter guv ther childering larnin'. Ded an' I, 'fore them dinged Fed'rate rags got so thick in the kentry, nuver seed five dollar from 'un yar cend ter 'tother. But, I say, would n't ye larn me?"

"Yes, I'd be glad to; but I go off in the morning."

"But, 'spose we gwoed off tergedder," and he sunk his voice to a whisper; "ter night—fru the bush—up thar—plumb ter Nashville."

I looked steadily at him. There was truth in his face, and in a low tone I asked: "To the death?"

"Ter the death, stranger," and he gave me his hand; "I'll draw a jug uv Knock-em-stiff on the roger, an' ye kin mosey off 'fore the moon ar up. The boss 'll help us."

"Who is the 'boss?'"

"The old man thar," pointing to the house.

"Why, he's a red-hot Rebel."

"Ha! ha! He do come the Rebel powerful strong, but thet's put on. He'd guv ole Gingaration consarn a dose of collermy an' jellerp thet would clean out thar hull innards, ef he could; but he durn't do it open. He's afeard o' pullin' hemp, an' kingdom come. Now, of whot's said 'bout the kingdom is true, I'd a durned sight rather take my chance thar, nur yere, fur, ye see, yers a pore man haint no sort o' showin, but ther he'll hev a right smart chance uv gittin' to be somebody."

"No doubt he will. All the promises of the Bible are to the poor man." (That was n't original; I had it from the Parson.)

He then went to the planter's house, and returned in a short time with a gallon jug of whisky. Coming directly to me, he said in a loud tone: "I say, Leftenant" (I wore only one bar on my shoulder strap then), "take a swig ter warm yer innards."

As I poured out the liquor, he whispered:

"The old 'un say you mus' put plumb for the branch; it's 'bout half a mile frum yere—measured with a coon-skin, an' the tail throw'd in. Follor it up 'bout as far—the water's low, an' ye mus' gwo inter it, case they moight git the dogs onter yer trail—an' ye'll come to a dade tree whot bends over the run. It's holler, an' ye kin git inter it an' stay thar agin I come, as snug as a bar in a snow-bank. I'll prime the guard with knock-em-stiff—ye be along—an' when I shouts 'Glory, glory,' twice, as of the raal camp-meetin' power war on me, ye put for the bushes on yer han's an' feet, like a wurrum; an' when ye gits thar, pike off like lightnin' chasin' a whiriygust" (hurricane).

"I understand; but be cool and steady."

"Cool? I'll be cooler nur Parson Plewit when death jerked him; an' they say he war so cool he frez the whole grave-yard so tight they hed ter thaw it oout with light 'ood."

Our camp was guarded by about a dozen sentinels, who relieved each other every six hours. The one whose station was nearest the bushes that lined the northern side of the corn-field, had built a fire of pine-knots, and every now and then halted before it as he walked to and fro on his round. My way of escape lay through those bushes, and to enable me to reach them unobserved my new friend would have to engage this sentry at the fire long enough to "prime" him so "tight" that he would be oblivious to my movements. This seemed no ordinary undertaking, for, aside from the difficulty of luring him from his duty on the beat, the sentinel was a tough, raw-boned Kentuckian, who looked whisky-proof, and capable of "totein' a peck of licker." But no time could be lost. It was already 9 o'clock, and guard would be relieved at 12; so the native set himself at once about his spiritual labors.

Approaching the fellow, with the jug in his hand, he asked him to drink, and in an incredibly short time had so worked on his affection for "knock-em-stiff," that the Kentuckian was seated coolly fraternizing with him on a log before the fire. A greasy pack of cards was soon brought out, and they went into euchre, seven-up, and high-low-jack, every now and then relieving the card playing with a horse, and one of the loudest yarns that mortal man ever listened to. For a long time it seemed doubtful which would conquer in this keen encounter of wits, for though Long Tom—that is the name he goes by—is an incorrigible wag, and "immense" at telling a story, the Kentuckian was no green hand at the business. They each seemed to own a patent for lying, and to be running their inventive machines with no regard to probability, credibility or possibility. At last, when Tom had told of killing a "serpent" whose body was as large round as a "whisky keg," and stretched across a bridge thirty feet wide, with "ten foot lappin' onter the road," the Kentuckian shook his head, and rather sadly exclaimed: "Jewhittiker! That war the most oncommoonest, rantankerous snake I ever yered on. I guv it up."

"Ye mought as well," said Tom, with infinite composure, "fur he war a most outdacious serpent."

But all this time little progress had been made in getting the sentinel boozy. Mug after mug of clear "blue rain" had gone down his throat (and Tom's shirt-collar), with no more apparent effect on him than if his stomach had been of cast-iron. At last 12 o'clock came, and with it the relief guard. When I saw him—another tough, raw-boned Kentuckian—approach, hope fled, and a heavier feeling came at my heart than was ever there before. I had caught a glimpse of liberty, and captivity seemed the drearier for it. However, hiding my disappointment, I turned to go to where the boys were sleeping, when Tom shouted out:

"Mr. Leftenant, doun't ye be a mosyin' off; we'ze the hull night afore us. The world warn't made in one day, it tuck six. I'll git some more licker, an' make ye *as snug as a bar in a snow-bank*, yit."

Giving the last of its contents to the new-comer, he then took the jug under his arm and "moseyed off" to the house, while the relieved sentry again quietly seated himself on the log. The latter evidently meant to levy on the fresh supply of "sperrets," and I saw with consternation that my undaunted friend would have to perform the almost impossible exploit of "flooring" two "double-lined," "fireproof," Kentucky "whisky-swillers" at once.

Tom soon reappeared with the jug and three extra mugs—the previous drinking had been done from one—and filling them to the brim, said, looking very hard at me: "Now, let me guv ye a toast. Yere's ter Jeff. Davis, an' may he live so long as the Lord 'll let him."

"I can't drink to that," I said, setting down my mug.

"No more'n ye kan't. Leftenant! I nuver thort o' thet, so no 'fence. But, bein's the toast's cout, 'spose ye drink ter the next."

I took his meaning at once. He had drugged the liquor.

The cards were again brought out, but what "knock-em-stiff" could not do, laudanum soon began to accomplish. The new-comer was the first to show its effects. He played somewhat wildly for a time, then, swaying unsteadily on the log, rolled heavily off to the ground. The other kept his seat a while longer, but when Tom, plying him with a second "swig," swung his mug around his head and cried, "Glory! glory!" he followed his "departed friend," and sunk into a sleep that "knows no waking" for at least a half dozen hours.

Giving me a strong grasp of the hand, the native pointed to the bushes, and wrapping the blankets about me (the Lieutenant's, I confiscated), and taking a last look at the boys—it came awful hard to leave them—I lowered myself on my hands and knees, and crawled to the fence. I reached it without detection, and soon arrived at the branch, up which I waded as directed by the native.

The moon was just rising when I came upon the hollow tree, and I had no difficulty in finding its opening. Its interior was fully eight feet in diameter, the trunk being a mere shell, and was covered with a thick flooring of decayed wood. On this I spread one of the blankets, and wrapping myself in the other, laid down to rest. The excitement of the escape, and the long ride of the previous day, had so fatigued me that I soon sank into a deep slumber. How long I slept I do not know, but when I awoke the day was "about an hour by sun," and a small army of men and dogs were howling outside of my retreat, as if a legion of infernal devils had been let loose about me.

"I tell you he has waded either up or down the run," said a voice I recognized at once as that of the Rebel Lieutenant; "the dogs don't track him over there. He must have hid somewhere near the stream."

"Lord bless ye, Leftenant, them dogs hain't wuth a tetoicune d—o. They nuver need nuthin more'n thier dinners. A man as wus pikein for the Union lines, 'ed run streter nur a scared wolf. I'd plank salvation agin a jack-knife thet his legs is a dancin' a hurricane up thar, on Jim Potter's deedmin' (clearing) beyont the mounting, at this perticlar minet."

I held my breath in torture. I have heard a thousand bullets whistling about me without feeling the agony of suspense I endured during the next five minutes. Soon, however, the voices died away, and before many hours I heard the faint baying of the hounds miles off upon the "mounting." Tom had saved me!

When the danger was over I lay down, and, overcome with the excitement, again fell asleep. It was dark when my shoulder was touched lightly, and Tom whispered in my ear: "It ar time ter be a mosyin' off, Leftenant. H—ll mought be tell lodgin's of the fire war out, but it ar too hot for us jest now."

I rose and partaking of a hearty meal and fortifying myself with a liberal glass of brandy—the planter had furnished us with a gallon jug of genuine "Otard,"—sallied from my place of concealment. We struck directly for a wood, half a mile distant, and worked our toilsome way over rocks and through underbrush and laurel bushes all the night. In the morning we lay down by the side of a fallen tree and went to sleep. Tom had brought provisions enough to last for two or three days, by which time he hoped we should be clear of the neighborhood in which he was known, and where the danger of detection was greatest. Traveling by the woods, however, was slow and if we kept to them, our stock of provisions would be exhausted before we reached the safer district of country. That night, therefore, we took to the high road. We walked till the sun rose without meeting any one, and then "camped out" in the bushes. For two more days and nights we did the same, and then had arrived within twenty miles of Nashville. Our provisions having given out, Tom, in the small hours of the morning, made a descent on a planter's smoke-house and supplied our larder with two enormous hams. As he threw them into the thicket where I lay, he said to me:

"Won't them infernal Nigs kotch it fur stealin' these critters. It'll serve 'em right; they orten't ter b'long ter no sech durned hide-bound Secesh."

"How do you know he is a Secessionist?"

"By the taste o' the bacon. Ye nuver know'd no sech hog's-flesh as thet ter be curn by a honest Union man. Why, it's strong 'neff ter knock ye down, an' tough—it's tougher nor the yarns dad used ter tell us boys uv cold nights, in the old shanty on the dead'nin'."

In the impatience of his hunger he had cut a slice from one of the hams with his jack-knife, and eaten it raw on his way to "camp." A fire would have betrayed us, so I drew out my knife, and followed his example. The meat was rather rancid and very tough, but I never before tasted anything half so palatable. Hunger is a wonderful condiment. It has made me think a sirloin of mule superior to the finest steak ever broiled.

We lay close through the following day, but the next evening, before the sun was well down—we were within twenty miles of *freedom*, and impatient to get to it—carrying the hams under our arms, we resumed our journey. We took to the highroad, but had not proceeded a mile before we met six men coming briskly towards us. One was dressed as a Confederate Sergeant, and had a gun on his shoulder; the others were the ordinary homespun of the district, and, having no arms, seemed fresh recruits. Avoiding them was out of the question, so cocking our pistols in our pockets, (Tom had confiscated the revolvers of the two sentinels while they lay senseless on the ground) we went boldly forward. They eyed my uniform very closely, but merely saying, "Good evenin'," passed us quickly. They had not gone two hundred yards however, before I heard the report of a musket, and felt a sharp, burning sensation in my right side, near the shoulder. The infernal Sergeant had shot me! His ball entered at my back, and, making a half circle, lodged in my breastbone.

Tom turned like an wounded panther, and sprang down the road after them, firing his revolver as he ran. He overtook one, and brained him with his pistol-stock, but the rest escaped. In the mean time I was bleeding profusely. I took out my handkerchief and attempted to stanch the blood, but could not. I sat down on a stone by the road-side, and tried to look death in the face, but somehow death would n't be looked in the face. I was bleeding at a rate that in a few hours would drain every drop of blood from my body, but I could not realize that I was to die—then—there—only twenty miles from FREEDOM!

Tom, returning in a few minutes, said to me:

"Them follers will raise the deestrict, Leftenant, an' all Secesh wull be after us in no time. We mus' take ter the woods, and feed on hope an' tough ham till the whirlygust ar over."

"Tom," I said, "I'm badly hurt; too badly, I fear, to go any farther. You take care of yourself. You can escape; leave me here; they'll take me prisoner, but it will be my best chance to get at a doctor."

"Hurt! Blisters and blamsnation, so ye is!" he exclaimed, as he tore open my coat, and beheld the wound. "Quick, Leftenant! guv me yer wiper—I haint nary one, I allers does thet blamed the nat'ral way. We must stop thet ter oust—ter oust."

Taking my handkerchief, he saturated it with the brandy, and bound it tightly about my side. Then, squatting on his hands and knees, he said: "Git up on thar, back uppermos', and lay flat as a slapjack. It'll help the bleedin'."

I submitted myself quietly to him, and in a moment he was coursing over the open ground which lay between the road and the thick belting of woods we had recently left, with a gait as firm and easy, and almost as fast, as that of my mare Bess. As he went along, he every now and then broke out with some exclamation like the following: "Whot d—n tetocious villins ter hit a man in the back. D—n 'um! They wus burned in tophet, an' they'll git thar agin, yit. I'll help 'em on the way. I will! Leave ye, Leftenant! Ye doan't 'spose Tom's a Secesh? A dinged, rottin-souled, blue blasted, sou uv a Rebel, does ye? No! He's wuth ye, Leftenant—ter the death—YER THE DEATH. Didn't he say it, an' d'ye nuver known' Tom ter guv his word an' broke it? Then as he paused to draw breath, he added: "Yer more 'n a yarlin' baby, but nuver ye fear, I hain't gin out; I kin outrun creation yit, an' guv it two mile the start."

And I think he could have done it, for in an incredibly short time he set me down at our camping-ground of the previous night. Gathering some dried leaves for a mattress, and covering me with a blanket, he looked again at my wound. The bleeding had sensibly diminished, and, when more brandy had been applied, and I had rested a while in a horizontal position, it ceased altogether. When he was satisfied I was out of immediate danger, he said to me:

"I leff thet ar bacon an' the 'tother blankets 'side the road, an' I mus' git 'em, Leftenant, or we's some speed could n't gwo it twice ter one smoke-house, 'tho old coon 'll be a watchin' on it ter night."

"But wait till it *is* fully dark. It won't be safe to go now."

"Safe now as ever; an' 'sides, I'se afeard o' the dogs. If the varmints shud nose them traps, we might as wul say our pray'rs ter oust. An' bein's ther hain't more'n 'un chance in a thousan' uv ther not hev'n done it 'spose ye be gittin' a pray'r a'ready, Leftenant—a right smart long 'un, thet 'll do fur both on us, fur I's 'mazin' pore at thet sort o' business."

"But, Tom, if we're in such danger—go; secure your own safety while there's time. You can do no more for me; so—go, at once."

"Gwo, Leftenant! Tom nuver flinched, or showed his back ter a friend. If the thing ar up with us, we'll see it out, tergedder, lolike men. I hain't no way petticular 'bout gwine ter kingdom come jest yit, bein's I'd lolike ter guv them ar rantankerous rebels a leetle h—ll fust, but of my time ar come; ef the Lord's callin' fur me, as the parsons say—why I'm a ready; an' I know His went ar me in ter the rere door, fur, though I'se pore, an' ignorant, an' no sort o' account ter nary one in all creation, He knows I nuver hed no showin'—thet's I done the best I could."

As he said this his voice was as low and soft as a woman's, with an inexpressible sadness in it which brought the tears to my eyes. I grasped his two hands, as I replied:

"God bless you, my *friend*. You're the noblest man I ever knew. If I die, my last breath shall be a prayer for you."

He made no reply, but, turning away, dashed off through the bushes.

With his voice choking with emotion, the Captain paused at this point in his narrative, and the Parson remarked:

"He *is* a noble fellow, Mr. ——, and I don't wonder at the Captain's attachment to him; but Tom's affection for the Captain is something not often seen in this work-day world. I believe no mortal ever felt such devotion for another as he feels for him."

"Oh yas, dey hab, Massa Parson; *I'se seed it*," exclaimed the old black, who had resumed his seat on the ground; "My young massa, he got morrid, an' de foes munfh he feel like he'd eat his wife up; but de second munfh—he wish ter de Lord he hed."

"Speak when you're spoken to, Jule;" said the Parson, restraining his inclination to laugh, and trying to look stern.

"And give me a mug of whisky toddy, you old joker," added the Captain, laughing heartily.

"Dar haint anudder drap, Massa Cap'n," replied the negro, with a demure face. "You's drunk ebery drap, ebery bressed drap, Massa Cap'n."

"I have had but two mugs, you old toper. You have drunk it yourself. How much have you had?"

"Not more'n six, Massa Cap'n; an' dat haint nuffin ob sech stuff as dis; you knows dat, Massa Cap'n."

"No, not for you; but get some more at once. This black Christian," he added, turning to me, "can stand liquor enough to float a ship."

"But he isn't to blame for the habit," I said, laughing. "It's 'one of the results of Slavery,' eh, Parson?"

"I reckon it is," replied the preacher, joining in the general merriment; "but Jule never gets drunk. However, his ha' it is a little expensive to us, as the rapacious sutlers make us pay $5 a bottle for decent whisky. But, Captain, go on with your story, or you'll not get through to-night."

"The next hour," resumed the Captain, "was the longest I ever knew; but it came to an end at last, and Tom reappeared with the blankets and bacon. A party of a dozen men, evidently in pursuit of us, were passing down the road, when on his hands and knees, he reached it; but they did not perceive him, and having no dogs, did not detect our 'camp equipage.'

"Again dressing my wound, and wrapping the remaining blankets about me—for the air grew very chilly as the night wore on—my companion sat down on the fallen log, in the lee of which I was lying, and appeared to fall asleep. My wound had grown very painful, and I was tossing uneasily about, unable to rest, when, at the end of several hours, he raised his head, and said to me:

"Leftenant, I lock'd round a leetle when I went for the traps, an' thar haint no house'n nigher'n three mile, 'cept that durned Secesher's thet I stole the bacon from. Ye'll die if ye doan't git under kiver. What shill we do?

"*Pray*, Tom; I know the Lord will lead us out of this, if we ask Him aright."

"Then, 'spose ye tries yer hand at it, Leftenant; we's more 'n min', an' *ses* a better man nur me."

"Learning is not needed in asking of God. He sees the faintest wish of the heart, and he grants it to his children."

("Preaching is not my profession," said the Captain, parenthetically; "but, now as I then was to death, I felt very solemn, and I've no doubt I could have beaten the Parson at his own trade, and given him—as Tom would say—two in the game.")

"Well, of wishin' ar prayin', Leftenant," replied Tom, "I've bin a prayin' this whole blessed night—aver sence I seed ye'd got sho'e inter ye thet moight let the life out. But the Lord doan't yere me—I doesn't see no way out o' this but gwine ter that durned hide-bound Secesher's, an' thet 'ud nuver do, nohow."

"But you don't know that he is a Secessionist."

"Yes I does. I'd swar ter it on the bacon;" and, heaving a deep sigh, he went to mosing again.

The night, though I thought it would never end, at last were away, and the sun came in through the trees. It had been up about two hours, and was warming even my cold bed under the laurel leaves, when a voice directly over me suddenly exclaimed: "Wh—wh—whoo'm—you doin' down dar?"

It was a tall, stalwart negro man, who had come upon us from the side to which Tom's back was turned. The latter was in a gentle doze, and did not hear his approach, but the moment the black spoke he sprang to his feet, and, seizing him by the collar, cried out: "Ye black thunderclout! whot does ye want yere?"

The negro made no reply, but, drawing back, aimed a heavy blow at the native's face. Tom caught it on his arm, and stepping aside, and making no effort to return it, said with amazing coolness:

"Come, none o' thet, or I'll lay ye out without ben'fit o' clergy. We's friends ter all sech black devils like ye; so sot down yere an' tell us who ye is. Sot ye down," he added, as the black showed a disposition to disregard his injunction: "Sot ye down! or I'll lamm ye till yer whitor nur Squire Robins' old mar, an' she war so white ye could n't see har by daylight, fur the fust wus—she war dead."

The negro sat down. "Thet 's a sensible feller," said Tom. "Now, whar d' ye b'long?"

"Ter Squire Gibbon, over thar," replied the black, pointing sullkily in the direction of the planter's.

"An' did n't ye lose two hams frum the smoke-house las' night? an' did n't the Squire guv it ter ye nigs' like blazes this mornin' for a steelin' on 'em?"

"Yas, he done dat, Massa."

"Sarved ye right. It'll larn ye better'n ter steal agin. Haint yer Massa a durned old Secesh?"

"He am dat, Massa, nuffin' else nur dat," replied the negro, grinning.

"Did n't I tell ye, Leftenant?" cried Tom, in a triumphant tone, giving one of the hams a contemptuous kick, "Did n't I tell ye I know'd it by the taste o' the bacon?"

The darky looked at the hams; and a sudden light seemed to break upon him, for he shouted out, "Yah! yah! an' did you stole de bacon, Massa? Did you done dat, Massa? Yah! yah!"

"No, we did n't *stole* it; white men doant steel; on'y yer cussed nigs does thet. We *kerafiscated* it."

The black looked at us as if he did n't know the exact difference between stealing and confiscating; but he said nothing. Tom rested his head on his hand for a moment, then, looking up, said to the negro:

"I say, thundergust, which'll ye take—death or yer freedom?"

"I doant 'zactly understand, Massa," replied the black, with more coolness than he could have been expected to exhibit under Tom's eye, which startled even me with its fierceness.

"I mean thet we is Union men, 'scapin ter the lines; an' thet we'll take ye 'long, an' guv ye yer freedom, ef ye'll help us; an' *kill ye if ye wount*. Thet's all."

"I'll help you, Massa. If you's Union, I'd do it widout any freedom, but, ob course, Massa, I'd rudder hab dat."

"Uv coorse ye w'ud; ony fool w'ud. Whot der ye think, Leftenant? Kin we trust him?"

"I think so; I like his face," I replied.

"So does I. But, my black beauty, ye jest 'count on it, ef ye come the varmint over us, ye'll kotch fryin' pans on a hot fre; ye well. Well ye 'member thet?"

"Oh, yas, Massa. But nebber you fear, Massa, I'll be true. Shore, Massa."

"I'll trust ye," said Tom, at once proceeding to talk affairs over with him. We ascertained from him that the district was filled with Union men, who would gladly aid us, but that they all lived at too great a distance to be safely reached in my wounded condition. A poor white man, however, who could be trusted, had a small "deadnin'" about a mile from where we were, and to him we made up our minds to apply. The negro set off at once for his house—which stood on a narrow wagon track running through the woods—and in about an hour returned with the native.

He was an odd-looking specimen of humanity, with a lean, gaunt frame, round, stooping shoulders, short, stubby stature, long, bony arms, and knees that seemed to love each another. His eyes were small and restless; his nose long, thin, and hooked at the end; and his ears large enough to have been intended for a quadruped renowned for braying. He wore a pair of pants made of butternut linsey, a coat and shirt of the same material, and an old, broad-brimmed slouched hat, turned up in front, and falling over his shoulders like the cape of a Mackintosh.

He at once consented to receive me into his house, and to keep me until my wound was sufficiently healed to allow of my again setting out for Nashville. "I'se mighty pore fixins, stranger," he said; "but whot I has is yours, ter komand."

My wound had grown extremely painful, so that the least motion gave me excruciating pain, and attempting to rise, I found myself too weak to stand. Perceiving this, Tom and the negro, making a seat of their arms, took me up and carried me to the native's. His cabin was of the meanest sort, and, for effectual concealment, my bed had to be made in one corner of a half floored attic; but his kindness, and that of his tidy, tender-hearted wife, with Tom's never-ceasing attention, made my mean lodgings as pleasant as quarters under a much more pretentious roof.

As soon as I could bear the pain, Tom extracted the ball with his jack-knife; but my strength returned slowly. It was ten days before I could sit up. Then I gave Tom his first lessons in the alphabet, putting no doubt Ayer's Almanac to a much better use, than it was ever put to before.

At the end of a fortnight we held a general consultation over affairs, and decided, as it might be weeks before I was able to travel, that Tom should attempt to make his way to Nashville, with letters to my Colonel. They would probably induce him to send a party of cavalry to my rescue.

Tom reached Nashville safely, and just after dark one evening, about a week afterward, I was gladdened by the sound of his voice entering the cabin. In a moment more his good-looking face, lit up by the blaze of the roaring light-wood fire on the hearth below stairs, shone out at the top of the rickety ladder which led to my lodging place. "I'se done it, Leftenant," he cried. "They's over ter Squire Gibbon's, kornfiscatin' Jake an' a fass hoss an' kerridge. They'll be yere in a liffin, so ye be up an' ready."

I soon dressed myself, and mounting Tom's back, descended to terra-firma. In half an hour I heard the clatter of horses' hoofs, and turning to my kind friends, said: "I have been a prisoner, you know, and therefore have no money by me; but I shall not forget you—you shall not go unrewarded."

"Nuver tork in thet kow, Cunnel," said the native. (He persisted in calling me Colonel, though he knew my rank.) "Yor guvin' yer life ter the kentry, an' it war a rantankerous shame of we couldn't guv ye whot leetle ye's hed."

I said no more, but grasping him by the hand, and kissing his wife—she was a young and pretty woman—I walked to the door and took a seat by the side of Jake, the colored man, in the "kornfiscated" buggy. A "kornfiscated" horse, ready saddled, stood beside it. Tom mounted him and we rode off toward Freedom. We reached Nashville before daybreak, and—that is the end of my story."

"Give the Captain some punch, Jule," said the Parson; "he must be dry after spinning so long a yarn."

As the Captain took the toddy I said to him: "And you say Tom is in your company now?"

"Yes, he enlisted with me as soon as I recovered from the wound. At Stone River he fought like a hero, and when they promoted me, they gave *him* a shoulder-strap."

"Then, he's an officer now."

"Second Lieutenant in my company. His tent is n't half a dozen rods from here."

"Indeed, I should very much like to know him. He is a character."

"And a wag of the first water," said the Parson; "if you talk with him, and don't keep your wits about you, he'll 'sell' you, sure."

"I'll look out for that. Pray let me see him."

The Captain rose, and in a few moments returned with the "native." My interview with him, and some of the yarns he spun, I will narrate in my next paper.

*Entered according to act of Congress by Samuel Sinclair, in the office of the District Court of the Southern District of New-York, 1862.

To the Representatives of the People in France.

At the moment when my country is on the eve of engaging in a war the scope of which it cannot understand, a war as unjust as it will be disastrous, allow me to supply you with the proper information, that you may show to France the fatal route along which the Bonapartist policy is dragging her to ruin. It is not only my personal advice, but also that of a large number of Frenchmen, our political friends, that I transmit to you.

Nearly a century ago, a Bourbon, claiming to reign by divine right, owing no account of his actions but to God, held to no kind of regard for the aspirations of his people, yet obeying political interests of the first order, as well as the general sentiment of the French nation, cooperated in the enfranchisement of the United States of America. History, the faithful echo of popular gratitude, has preserved for the respect of posterity the names of Lafayette and Rochambeau.

Twenty-five years later, a man sprung from the people, who had been made, through the fortune of battles, great among all others, who cared very little for liberty, the loss of which he compensated by glory, although he could not, like his predecessor, intrench himself behind the Divine right of giving his accounts only to God instead of to the people, was obliged, from the same motives as the monarch, to complete the latter's work. It was with this difference, however, that what the Bourbon had given a Bonaparte sold. The United States of America enlarged their territorial limits in consideration of sixty millions paid to France.

This great work of the French policy—the enfranchisement of America—has carried with it its reward. We have acquired the most powerful and useful ally against England; for the navies of France and America will always preserve the preponderance on the seas.

During 72 years, from 1777 to 1849, the date of the advent of Mr. Louis Napoleon, France has never ceased to be the vanguard of freedom, preaching the enfranchisement of the people by action, speech and example; placing her sword in the balance in America, in Greece, in Belgium, &c., preaching by example in the liberation of her slaves and her immortal revolutions; or preaching the holy crusade through the powerful voice of her orators when there was a tribune in France. During more than half a century this constant effort, sustained in favor of freedom, earned for us from the gratitude of the peoples the title of the "Great Nation." And it may be said that for the first time perhaps sentiment was found to agree with policy; it is the only policy which has made France really great, and whose liberal features have gained her that title.

Bonaparte, having become Emperor, abandoned this policy, eminently French, to adopt a policy purely dynastic. The commencement was brilliant. Never did victory raise higher the destinies of a people; but never also, did the fate of arms show us more bitterly the nothingness of such successes. The remembrance of all those barbarian hordes from the North—Russians, English, Prussians, Austrians, Hungarians, Croats—encamped on our public squares, insulting our women, and dictating to us insolent laws when victorious, must have taught us what the ambition of a man and a dream of glory may cost a people.

This dynastic policy, which could not be maintained by victory when inaugurated by the greatest captain of modern times, had exceptional chances of success. We are about seeing it applied anew, although on a smaller scale, by the nephew of the man who is generally called Napoleon the Great.

Mr. Louis Napoleon, breaking off with all these French traditions, has inaugurated a policy that consists in destroying all appearances of liberalism. An enemy of liberty under whatever form it may present itself, press, tribune, or form of government; after having assassinated liberty in France, and having caused us to envy the fate of the Russian and Austrian subjects, he has inflicted the same fate on Rome and Mexico. There remain but two more Republics to be assassinated, in order that the avenging phantom of the French Republic, succumbing under perjury, may no longer trouble the dynastic dreams of the despot—Switzerland and America.

(The small Spanish Republics of Central America are, on account of their precarious state, a good example; they constitute a specious argument against the republican form. Mr. Louis Napoleon will *perhaps* leave them in peace for a moment.)

The affair of the Valley of the Dappes served as a feeler with Switzerland; but Europe was attentive, and this little republican people in no wise frightened. The desired sacrifice had to be postponed to a more propitious occasion.

Mexico was further distant, less known, and less observed. There was, besides, a direct personal interest in recovering the debt of Jecker. It was decided that the soldiers of France would on this occasion fulfill the office of bailiffs. Had they not been used as cutthroats on the 2d of December? Mexico was invaded, property confiscated, and, to leave nothing of superiority to the Haynaus and the Radetzkys, a Marshal of France caused two hundred lashes to be administered to a Mexican lady who had had the bad taste not to want to receive a French officer in her house; then, a hundred rascals, decorated with the name of notables, notable at least for their infamy, declared in the name of the nation, without consulting her, that the Republic had ceased to exist, and that the Empire was proclaimed.

The American republic remains, the great and strong republic of which our ancestors have rocked the first years, sustained the first steps; behind this last rampart of freedom in the world we wait, calm and strong; and, like the eloquent Senator from Massachusetts, we say to Mr. Bonaparte: "Trampler upon the republic in France, trampler upon the republic in Mexico, it remains to be seen if the French Emperor can prevail as trampler upon this republic."

Has France reflected on all the consequences of such enterprises? Is she conscious of her wounded dignity, oppressed by the caprices or the ambitious dreams of a despot who does not even consult her, and who says, in speaking of the empire restored in Mexico, of the expenses occasioned by the occupation, and of the arrangements to be made with the new sovereign: *These are family affairs which do not concern the nations.*

Have we then fallen so low, we the sons of '89 and '93, that we are called upon only to furnish our blood and our money to the caprices of the master? From that, to heating the water of the ponds in order to prevent the frogs from troubling his sleep, is not a great stride. Are we destined to see again this beautiful epoch of shame and vassalage?

We drove away in three days a dynasty of eight centuries for having dared to touch the liberty of the press; and, eighteen years later, in still less time, another royal family, the only wrong done by which was to restrain the rights of the people to national representation, had likewise to follow the road to exile. Whence this strange patience in the presence of repeated attempts against the rights and the liberties of the nation, against the most ancient, the dearest, and the most venerated traditions of national policy?

We reproached the Government of Louis Philippe with having lowered us in the eyes of foreign nations by a system of peace at any price. We are now odious to all the people by our system of war and unjustifiable aggression. Have we gained anything either in consideration or prosperity? Paris and the large cities have responded to this question by the significant vote of the 1st of June. For my part, I shall answer for the counties in which I have lived. In England, in Belgium, in Italy, as in America, the docility with which we tolerate our yoke, the worse than easy abandonment that we have made of our liberties, and our constant meddling in affairs that do not concern us, have rendered us the object of universal pity and hatred. Such feelings which France was not habituated to inspire!

The intervention in Mexico, in so far as it was limited to satisfaction and a guarantee to be required, might have been justifiable. But the violent overthrow of an established government, the substitution of a form of government antipathetic to the people of Mexico as well as to the neighboring nations, is not only a work in itself illegitimate, but it injures the tranquillity of the neighboring republics, all born out of their hate and revolt against the monarchical form, and which, on seeing this form of government reappear on the American continent, cannot help remembering an abhorred past and conceiving fears for the future. The Empire reconstituted in Mexico is a challenge given by Mr. Louis Napoleon to the New World.

He is not satisfied with this first attack on international right and good faith. There are now frequent rumors about reclaiming Texas and recognizing the South. Does the French nation comprehend fully what is the recognition of an *Empire* founded upon Slavery? (I say Empire and not Republic, because Slavery is incompatible with the Republican form on the one hand, and because on the other Mr. Louis Napoleon will never recognize a Republic, except for the purpose of transforming it into a Monarchy).

Has France fixed her thoughts upon this monstrous institution, where there is neither family, morals, right, nor laws; where the owner sells sons without their fathers, daughters without their mothers, where the daughters are violated under the eye of their own mothers, who can neither weep for nor avenge them, where the wives are without husbands, husbands without wives, where the supreme law is the caprice, the passion or the sordid interest of the master, and where justice is blind to the hideous traffic of the father who augments his fortune by selling his children as slaves. Two many voices more powerful and eloquent than mine, have already treated this subject which would be exhausted if it ever could be. Besides, war has brought out thousands of men eye-witnesses of this horrible social disease. I will not close, however, without citing two recent facts, one public, the other personal; they are an answer to the late apology for the peculiar institution which the partisans of the South have thought it their duty to make in Europe.

In Louisiana, the colored conscripts chosen among the most able-bodied slaves have given to the Council of Revision one able-bodied man in ten. The nine others, in consequence of the bad treatment inflicted by their masters, had contracted infirmities which rendered them unfit for duty. What do the apologists of Slavery think of that—they who affirm incessantly that the bad treatment inflicted upon the slaves exists only in the imagination of the Abolitionists, and that the owner is not stupid enough to deteriorate his own property? Let them consult the inbors of the Councils of Revision.

Last year, being at Madison Court-House, County of Madison, Virginia, six or seven miles south-west of that town I found a *human stud*. There were about thirty young girls of mixed blood, and from eight to ten colored men admirably adapted to the required service. The books of the house, kept in perfect order, did not leave any doubt of the kind of commerce carried on by the owner, whom I arrested and sent to headquarters.

Defenders of order, religion and family in France, that is the