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TERMS.

The WILMINGTON EXPOSITOR will be published weekly on a Super Royal sheet, at Two Dollars per year in advance; or Three Dollars at the end of the year. No paper will be discontinued, until all arrearages are paid, except at the option of the publisher—and a failure to notify a discontinuance will be considered a new engagement. Advertisements not exceeding one square, will be conspicuously inserted three times for One Dollar, and for every subsequent insertion Twenty Cents. Those exceeding a square in the same proportion. All communications relating to the business of the establishment, if sent by mail, to ensure attention, must be post paid.

MISCELLANEOUS.

REVOLUTIONARY ADVENTURE.

The leading events of the War of Independence are familiar to every American; but many incidents, full of interest and adventure, yet remain to be disclosed. There are those yet living who remember the following story.

The American authorities found much difficulty in disposing of their prisoners. They had no post regularly fitted for the purpose; and they could suggest no better means for securing them, than to place them under guard in a thickly settled part of the country, where the inhabitants were most decidedly hostile to the English. The town of Lancaster, in Pennsylvania, was of those selected for this purpose. The prisoners were confined in barracks, enclosed with a stockade and vigilantly guarded. But in spite of all precautions, they often disappeared in an unaccountable manner, and nothing was heard of them till they had resumed their place in the British Army. Many and various were the conjectures as to the means of their escape; the officers inquired and investigated in vain: the country was explored to no purpose; the soldiers shook their heads, and told of fortune-tellers, pedlars and such characters, who had been seen at intervals; and sundry of the more credulous could think of nothing but supernatural agency; but whether man or spirit was the conspirator, the mystery was unbroken.

When this became known to Washington, he sent General Hazen to take the responsible charge. This energetic officer, after exhausting all resources, resorted to stratagem. He was convinced that, as the nearest British post was more than a hundred miles distant, the prisoners must be aided by Americans, but where the suspicion should fall, he could not even conjecture; the reproach of Toryism being almost unknown in that region. Having been trained to meet exigencies of this kind in a distinguished career, as colonel in the British army, his plan was formed at once, and communicated to an officer of his own, upon whose talent he relied for its successful execution. This was Captain Lee, whose courage and ability fully justified the selection.

The secret plan concerted between them was this. It was to be given out that Lee was absent on furlough or command. He, meantime, was to assume the dress of a British prisoner, and, having provided himself with information and a story of his capture, was to be thrown into the barracks, where he might gain the confidence of the soldiers, and join them in a plan of escape. How well Captain Lee sustained his part may be inferred from the fact that when he had disappeared and placed himself among the prisoners, his own officers and soldiers saw him every day without the least suspicion. The person to whom I am indebted for most of these particulars was the Intendant of the prisoners, and familiar with Lee; but, though compelled to see him often in the discharge of his duty, he never penetrated the disguise. Well it was for Lee that his disguise was so complete. Had his associates suspected his purpose to betray them, his history would have been embraced in the proverb, "dead men tell no tales."

For many days he remained in this situation, making no discoveries whatever. He thought he perceived at times, signs of intelligence between the prisoners and an old woman, who was allowed to bring fruit for sale within the enclosure. She was known to be deaf and half-witted, and was therefore no object of suspicion. It was known that her son had been disgraced and punished in the American army, but she had never betrayed any malice on that account, and no one dreamed that she could have had the power to do injury if she possessed the will. Lee watched her closely, but saw nothing to confirm his suspicions. Her dwelling was about a mile distant, in a wild retreat, where she shared her miserable quarters with a dog and cat, the former of which mounted guard over her mansion, while the latter encouraged superstitious fears which were equally effectual in keeping visitors away.

One dark, stormy night in autumn, he was lying awake at midnight, meditating on the enterprise he had undertaken, which, though in the beginning it had recommended itself to his romantic disposition, had now lost all its charms. It was one of those tempests, which

in our climate so often hang upon the path of the departing year. His companions slept soundly, but the wind, which shook the building to its foundation and threw heavy splashes of rain against the window, conspired with the state of his mind, to keep him wakeful. All at once the door was gently opened, and a figure moved silently into the room. It was too dark to observe its motions narrowly, but he could see that it stooped towards one of the sleepers who immediately rose; next it approached him and touched him on the shoulder. Lee immediately started up; the figure then allowed a slight gleam from a dark lantern to pass over his face, and as it did so, whispered impatiently, "not the man—but come!" It then occurred to Lee that this was the opportunity he desired. The unknown whispered to him to keep his place till another man was called; but just at that moment, some noise disturbed him, and making a sign to Lee to follow, he moved silently out of the room.

They found the door of the house unbarred, and a small part of the fence removed, where they passed out without molestation; the sentry had retired to a shelter where he thought he could guard his post without suffering from the rain; but Lee saw that his conductors put themselves in preparation to silence him if he should happen to address them. Just without the fence appeared a stooping figure, wrapped in a red cloak, and supporting itself with a large stick, which Lee at once perceived could be no other than the old fruit woman. But the most profound silence was observed; a man came out from a thicket, at a little distance and joined them, and the whole party moved onward under the guidance of the old woman. At first they frequently stopped to listen, but having heard the sentinel's cry, "all's well," they seemed reassured, and moved with more confidence than before.

They soon came near to her cottage, under an overhanging bank, where a bright light was shining out from a little window upon the wet and drooping boughs that hung near it. The dog received them graciously, and they entered. A table was spread, with some coarse provisions upon it, and a large jug, which one of the soldiers was about to seize, when the child, who conducted them withheld him. "No," said he, "we must first proceed to business." He then went to a small closet from which he returned with what seemed to have been, originally, a Bible, though now it was worn to a mahogany color and a spherical form. While they were doing this, Lee had time to examine his companions; one of whom was a large quiet looking soldier, the other, a short stout man, with much the aspect of a villain. They examined him in turn, and as Lee had been obliged formerly to punish the shortest soldier severely, he felt some misgivings when the fellow's eye rested upon him. Their conductor was a middle-aged, harsh-looking man, whom Lee had never seen before.

As no time was to be lost, their guide explained to them in few words, that before he should undertake his dangerous enterprise, he should require of them to swear upon the Scriptures, not to make the least attempt to escape, and never to reveal the circumstances or agents in the proceeding, whatever might befall them. The soldiers, however, insisted on deferring this measure, till they had formed some slight acquaintance with the contents of the jug, and expressed their sentiments on the subject rather by action than words. In this they were joined by Lee, who by this time had begun to contemplate the danger of his enterprise in a new and unpleasant point of view. If he were to be compelled to accompany his party to New York, his disguise would at once be detected, and it was certain that he would be hanged as a spy. He had supposed, beforehand, that he should find no difficulty in escaping at any moment; but he saw that their conductor had prepared arms for them, which they were to use in taking the life of any one who should attempt to leave them—and then the oath. He might possibly have released himself from his obligations, when it became necessary for the interests of his country; but no honorable man can well bear to be driven to an emergency, in which he must violate an oath, however reluctantly it was taken. He felt that there was no retreating, when there came a heavy shock, as if something falling against the sides of the house; they practised ear at once detected the alarm gun; and their conductor, throwing down the old Bible, which he had held all the while impatiently in his hand, directed the party to follow him in close order and immediately quitted the house, taking with him his dark lantern.

They went on with great despatch, but not without difficulty. Sometimes their footing would give way on some sandy bank or slippery field; and when their path led through the woods, the wet boughs dashes heavily in their faces. Lee felt that he might have deserted his precious companions while they were in this hurry and alarm; but he felt, that, yet, he had made no discoveries; and however dangerous his situation was, he could not bear to confess that he had not nerve to carry it through. On he went, therefore, for two or

three hours, and was beginning to sink with fatigue, when the barking of a dog, brought the party to a stand. Their conductor gave a low whistle, which was answered at no great distance, and a figure came forward in the darkness, who whispered to their guide, and then led the way up to a building, which seemed by the shadowy outline, to be a large stone barn. They entered it, and were severally placed in small nooks where they could feel that the hay was all around them, except on the side of the wall. Shortly after, some provisions were brought to them with the same silence, and it was signified to them that they were to remain concealed through the whole of the coming day.

Through a crevice in the wall Lee could discover, as the day came on, that the barn was attached to a small farm-house. He was so near the house that he could overhear the conversation which was carried on about the door. The morning rose clear, and it was evident from the enquiries of horsemen who occasionally galloped up to the door, that the country was alarmed. The farmer gave short and surly replies, as if unwilling to be taken off from his labour; but the other inmates of the house were eager in their questions, and, from the answers, Lee gathered that the means by which he and his companions had escaped were as mysterious as ever.

The next night, when all was quiet, they resumed their march, and explained to Lee that, as he was not with them in their conspiracy, and was accidentally associated with them in their escape, they should take the precaution to keep him before them, just behind the guide. He submitted without opposition, though the arrangement considerably lessened the chances in favor of his escape. He observed from the direction of the stars, that they did not move in a direct line toward the Delaware, but they changed their course so often that he could not conjecture at what point they intended to strike the river. He endeavoured, whenever any peculiar object appeared, to fix it in his memory as well as the darkness would permit, and succeeded better than could have been expected, considering the agitated state in which he travelled.

For several nights they went on in this manner, being delivered over to different persons, from time to time; and as Lee could gather from their whispering conversation, they were regularly employed on occasions like the present, and well rewarded by the British for their services. Their employment was full of danger; and though they seemed like desperate men, he could observe that they never remitted their precautions. They were concealed by day in barns—cellars—caves made for the purpose, and similar retreats, and one day was passed in a tomb, the dimensions of which had been enlarged, and the inmates, if there had been any, banished to make room for the living. The burying grounds were a favorite retreat, and on more occasions than one they were obliged to resort to superstitious alarms to remove intruders upon their path; their success fully justified the experiment, and, unpleasantly situated as he was, in the prospect of soon being a ghost himself, he could not avoid laughing at the expedition with which old and young fled from the fancied apparitions under clouds of night, wishing to meet such enemies, like Ajax, in the face of day.

Though the distance to the Delaware was not great, they had now been twelve days on the road, and such was the vigilance and superstition prevailing throughout the country, that they almost despaired of effecting their object. The conductor grew impatient, and Lee's companions, at least one of them became ferocious. There was, as we have said something unpleasant to him in the glances of this fellow toward him, which became more and more fierce as they went on; but it did not appear whether it were owing to circumstances or actual suspicion. It so happened that, on the twelfth night, Lee was placed in a barn, whilst the rest of the party sheltered themselves in the cellar of a little stone church, where they could talk and act with more freedom, both because the solitude of the church was not often disturbed even on the sabbath—and because even the proprietors did not know that illegal hands had added a cellar to the conveniences of the building.

The party were seated here as the day broke and the light, which struggled in through crevices opened for the purpose, showed a low room about twelve feet square, with a damp floor and large patches of white mould upon the walls. Finding, probably, that the pavement afforded no accommodations for sleeping, the worthies were seated each upon a little cask which seemed like those used for gunpowder. Here they were a smoking pipe with great diligence, and, at the intervals not distant, applying a huge canteen to their mouths, from which they drank with upturned faces expressive of solemn satisfaction. While they were thus engaged, the short soldier asked them in a careless way, if they knew whom they had in their party. The others started, and took their pipes from their mouths to ask him what he meant. "I mean," said he, "that we are hon-

ored with the company of Captain Lee, of the rebel army. The racial once punished me, and I never mistook my man when I had a debt of that kind to pay. Now I shall have my revenge."

The others hastened to express their disgust at his ferocity, saying, that if, as he said, their companion was an American officer, all they had to do was to watch him closely. They said that, as he had come among them uninvited, he must go with them to New York and take the consequences; but meantime, it was their interest not to seem to suspect him, otherwise he might give an alarm, whereas it was evidently his intention to go with them till they were ready to embark for New York. The other persisted in saying that the man would have his revenge with his own hand, upon which the conductor, drawing a pistol declared to him that if he saw the least attempt to injure Captain Lee, or any conduct which would lead him to suspect that his disguise was discovered, he would that moment shoot him through the head. The soldier put his hand upon his knife with an ominous scowl upon his conductor, but seeing that he had to do with one who was likely to be as good as his word, he restrained himself, and began to arrange some rubbish to serve him for a bed. Another soldier followed his example, and their guide withdrew, locking the door after him.

The next night they went on as usual, but the manner of their conductor showed that there was more danger than before; in fact, he explained to the party that they were now not far from the Delaware, and hoped to reach it before midnight. They occasionally heard the report of a musket, which seemed to indicate that some movement was going on in the country. Thus warned, they quickened their steps, and it was not long before they saw a gleam of broad clear light before them, such as is reflected from calm water, even in the darkest night. They moved up to it with deep silence; there were various emotions in their breasts; Lee was hoping for an opportunity to escape from an enterprise which was growing too serious, and the principal objects of which were already attained; the others were anxious lest some accident might have happened to the boat on which they depended for crossing the stream.

When they came to the bank there were no traces of a boat on the waters. Their conductor stood still for a moment in dismay; but, recollecting himself, he said it was possible it might have been secured lower down the stream, and, forgetting every thing else, he directed the larger soldier to accompany him, and, giving a pistol to the other, he whispered, "if the rebel officer attempts to betray us, shoot him; if not, you will not, for your own sake, make any noise to show where we are." In the same instant they departed, and Lee was left alone with the ruffian.

He had before suspected that the fellow knew him, and now doubts were changed into certainty at once. Dark as it was, it seemed as if five flashes from his eye, now he felt that revenge was in his power. Lee was as brave as any officer in the army, but he was unarmed, and though he was strong, his adversary was still more powerful. While he stood, uncertain what to do, the fellow seemed enjoying the prospect of revenge, as he looked upon him with a steady eye. Though the officer stood to appearance unmoved, the sweat rolled in heavy drops down his brow. He took his resolution, and sprang upon his adversary, with the intention of wresting the pistol from him; but the other was upon his guard, and aimed with such precision, that had the pistol been charged with a bullet, that moment would have been his last. But it seemed that the conductor had trusted in the quantity of his weapons to render the use of them unnecessary, and had therefore loaded them only with powder; as it was, the shock threw Lee to the ground; but fortunately, the fellow dropped the pistol, it could reach it, and as his adversary stood and gave drawing his knife from his bosom, Lee was able to give him a stunning blow. He immediately threw himself upon the assassin, and a long and bloody struggle began; they were so nearly matched in strength, and so determined that neither dared unloose his hold for the sake of grasping the knife; the blood gushed from their mouths, and the combat would probably have ended in favor of the assassin, when steps and voices were heard advancing, and they found themselves in the hands of a party of countrymen, who were armed for the occasion, and were scouring the banks of the river. They were forcibly torn apart, their arms exhausted, and breathless, that neither could make any explanation, and they submitted quietly to the disposal of their captors.

The party of armed countrymen, though they had succeeded in their attempt, and were superior in number, on the occasion, were sorely perplexed to determine how to dispose of their prisoners. After some discussion, one of them proposed to throw the decision upon the wisdom of the nearest magistrate. They accordingly proceeded with their prisoners to his mansion, about two miles distant, and called on him to rise and attend to business. A window was hastily thrown up, and the justice put forth his night cap and coat, and, with more wrath than became his dignity, ordered them off; and, in requital for their calling him out of bed in the cold, generously wished them in the warmest place which then occurred to his imagination. However, resistance was vain; he was compelled to rise; and, as soon as the prisoners were brought before him, he ordered them to be taken in irons to the prison in Philadelphia. Lee improved the opportunity to take the old gentleman aside, and told him who he was, and why he was thus disgraced; the justice only interrupted him with the occasional inquiry, "most done?" When he had finished, the magistrate told him that his story was very well made, and told to him in a manner very creditable to his address, and that he should give it all the weight which it seemed to require. All Lee's remonstrances were unavailing.

As soon as they were fairly lodged in prison, Lee prevailed on the jailor to carry a more suitable linen, informing him of his condition. The General received it as he was dressing in the morning, and immediately sent one of his aids to the jail. That officer could not believe his eyes when he saw the General in a uniform worn out when he assumed it, was now hanging in rags about him, and he had not been shaved for a fortnight; he wished, very naturally, to improve his appearance before presenting himself before the Secretary of War; but the orders were peremptory to bring him as he was. The General loved a joke full well; his laughter was hardly excited by the report of his cannon; and long and loud did he laugh that day.

When Captain Lee returned to Lancaster, he immediately attempted to retrace the ground; and so accurate, under all the favorable circumstances, had been his investigation, that he brought to justice persons, who had aided the escape of British prisoners. It is hardly necessary to say to those who know the fate of revolutionary officers, that he received, for his hazardous and effectual service, no reward whatever.—N. E. Magazine for September.