IN DIXIE'S LAND

BEFORE THE WAR.

BY JAS. FRANKLIN FITTS.

CHAPTER XXV.

BROKEN FETTERS.

As he came forward, he seemed not to see me nor Coralie. The judge greeted him cordially, by name, and it was evident that they were old friends.

"When did you arrive in town?" he asked.

"Within an hour, by rail from Vicksburg. I was on my way to Donaldsonville and beyond, and was amazed to learn on the street of the death of the man I was going to see and the nature of the case you are investigating. Here is a paper which I fancy will be of great importance."

He took a folded paper from a long pocketbook and laid it before the judge. While the latter was reading it, Mr. Dorion stepped down and heartily greeted us. My lawyer had caught the name and, leaning over, whispered:

"What's your evidence, sir?"

"Wait a moment," was the reply, given with a peculiar smile. "I reckon you'll be satisfied with it."

The judge finished reading the paper, and called to Mr. Dorion. They had a brief whispered conversation. Then the lawyers were called up to-

MR. DORION HEARTILY GREETED US.

gether and permitted to read the paper, the judge adding some comments in a low voice. As they returned to their seats, I saw Mr. Garnett's face wreathed with smiles.

"You're safe," he whispered.

I looked at Conrad. The face of the fiend never shone out more plainly in a human countenance than in his, as his lawyer communicated to him the startling news.

"I have been made acquainted with such additional and surprising disclosures," said the judge, in a voice which the whole room heard, "as make it, in my judgment, both proper and necessary to end this case here, so far as relates to the charge of abduction of a slave. The gentleman who has just come into court is the owner and occupant of the plantation in Mississippi formerly occupied by the deceased, Pierce Bostock. In a secret drawer of an old bureau left in that house when he returned to Louisiana; Mr. Dorion, only a few days since, found this paper. It purports to be the last will and testament of Pierce Bostock, executed by him December 9, 1853. It frees and manumits the person described in it as 'my beloved daughter Coralie, child of the late Louise Boufant,' and then proceeds to devise and bequeath to her all his estate, real and personal, wherever situated. He names his 'unworthy son, Conrad,' only to declare that he has by his unfilial conduct and his long confirmed evil courses forfeited all right to any part of the testator's property more than he has already received."

"That instrument has never been established," Conrad's lawyer interrupted.

"I am aware of that; and it cannot be, in this court. But there is reason to think that it can be legally established in the proper tribunal. Mr. Dorion pronounces the signature of Pierce Bostock genuine. There are three witnesses, as the law of Mississippi requires—all of whom, strangely enough, are also dead, as Mr. Dorion informs me. But he pronounces all these signatures genuine, and he says that numerous witnesses in that vicinity will swear to them.

"If this instrument is the legal act of the late Mr. Bostock, not only is Coralie Bonfaut named in it a free woman, but she is at this moment the rightful owner of her father's immense estate.

"Whether it will stand in law, or not, I have no authority to decide. Other courts must settle that question. And it would be improper and absurd for me to attempt to pass upon the charge brought here against Dorr Jewett until this instrument has been legally examined and pronounced upon.

"I have examined it and considered it far enough to see that a very strong case can be made for its legality, with all that would result from it. The charge that is here made is premature, to say the least; nor do I think that, in any event, the defendant has been guilty of anything more than a technical violation of the statute. He is discharged; also the lady."

The judge smiled graciously upon us. Mr. Garnett capered about the bar, and Mr. Dorion renewed his greetings, mingled with congratulations. The popular anger had now turned upon Conrad Bostock, and he and his friends withdrew by a rear door, to escape being hustled. The fickle multitude proposed to give me a triumphant ride on their shoulders, and it was with some difficulty that I escaped their attentions. We sadly needed rest, quiet and the company of friends after the tremendous excitement of the last few days; and these we found at the hotel with Mr. Dorion and his eldest daughter.

CHAPTER XXVI.

LAST WORDS.

That Pierce Bostock executed the will and article of manumission before leaving Mississippi, that he secreted it in his house, forgot to take it with him, apparently forgot the fact that he had done it, and never mentioned it to anybody, were things that, to my mind, were perfectly consistent with his condition of mind after the deed. The witnesses, Mr. Dorion said, were obscure white men of the vicinity. It was not necessary for them to know, and they doubtless were not informed as to the character of the instrument, any more than that it was a last will and testament. They were not men much given to gossip, and Mr. Bostock could easily satisfy them not to mention the circumstance. His extreme caution in secreting the paper was a natural part of the terror and dread of disclosures about Coralie which possessed him after the duel. That the will was his deliberate act appeared when it was seen that he, not being a lawyer, had informed himself as to how to execute it legally. The proof was very strong that his mind failed sadly after his removal to La Fourche, and when, the evening before he died, he was full of anxiety to execute another paper, it is not at all strange to me that he had forgotten the one secreted in the old Mississippi home.

This is my theory. But I should add that lawyers have argued long and learnedly over this branch of the case, and that judges have written opinions sustaining it.

I take from my closet a file of the New Orleans Daily Picayune for the years 1859-60. In those feverish times little else but heated politics and the alarming condition of the nation was seriously talked or read about, but among the things of local interest most often mentioned by the press of the southern metropolis was the great suit at law of Coralie Jewett against Conrad Bostock, involving the novel preliminary question as to whether the plaintiff was a free woman and entitled to sue—and, after that, the title to the La Fourche plantation, its slaves and belongings and all other property left by the late Pierce Bostock.

Could man give higher proof than I did of faith in the justice of his cause? Before the suit was begun I married the woman who by the decision *might be* declared a slave!

I have said that the law of Louisiana was cruel to such as she. Let me hasten to add that in the end it gave her a full measure of justice.

The fight was a bitter one and prolonged for more than two years. The defendant was in possession and was ably represented. And brisk little Mr. Garnett, on our side, had an opportunity to become acquainted with the "best lawyers of Louisiana."

The reader will not require me to give the details of this great legal contest. He can find them in the Mississippi and Louisiana reports of the time.

So large a public interest is rarely excited in a civil cause. Sympathy was largely in our favor, the exceptions being of that class which could not bear the thought that a woman born a slave should become the owner of one of the finest plantations in the state. But Coralie's romantic story had won the ardent people of that section to her support, and frequent proffers of material help in the struggle were made to us. The generous friendship of Mr. Dorion enabled us to thankfully decline them.

In the last days of 1860 we were entirely successful. Courts and juries were with us. Possession was given to my wife the day before Christmas of that year; and such a holiday carnival as was given to our overjoyed and affectionate "people" upon the occasion, I think the whole state could not elsewhere show. The Dorion family came down to enjoy the festivities, Miss Celeste bringing Mr. Simon Barnet along, whom she had given (as she expressed it) the legal right to abuse her.

Conrad Bostock disappeared; where, it can only be conjectured. Rumors of men shot in gambling affrays at Matamoras reached us in such a way that we supposed him to be among them; but his fate, or whether he is yet alive, are matters of the greatest uncertainty.

The happiness of Coralie and I was rudely broken by the storm of civil war. To few was the situation more painful than to me. Of northern birth, attached to the union by habit and early education, all my interests, my ties and associations were at the south. I did as others did. I "went with my state." Heavily, indeed, was the ruthless hand of war laid upon us. Hostile parties met upon our lands, buildings were destroyed, crops trampled down, stock driven off. Those years were years of desolation and terror.

And all this, thank God, has passed away. Peace smiles again; sectional hate and passion are disappearing; the union is supreme, and the old flag is venerated at the south. Slavery has perished, with all in it that was good, and all that was bad. As I look upon the new order of things, much that I have written seems like a dream.

Here is our happy home, under the florid sun, upon the teeming soil of southern Louisiana. Yet I love to tell my children of the glory of our whole vast land. I love to take them up to rocky New Hampshire, to show them where their father lived and dreamed in his youth, and to make them acquainted with the rugged character and simple virtues of the people among whom he was reared. I teach them at least the spirit of the New England poet's noble verse:

"The pine must whisper to the palm,
The north wind break the tropic calm,
And with the dreamy languor of the tine
The north's keen virtue blend, and strength to beauty join."

[THE END.]

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOR.

Topic For the Week Beginning Jan. 14. Comment by Rev. S. H. Doyle.

TOPIC.—Our temptations, and how to avoid them. Math. iv, 1-11.

The Scriptural lesson illustrating our topic tells the story of the temptation of Jesus by satan. "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil" (Math. iv, 1). This story is very familiar to us all, and from it we may draw many useful lessons concerning our temptations and how we may avoid them. We may learn from this temptation of Christ:

1. When we may expect to be tempted. The temptation of Jesus took place immediately after His baptism. Before the multitude He had been proclaimed and baptized as the coming Messiah, and even God had claimed Him as His Son, and the Spirit had descended upon Him. It was a moment of triumph and success. Heaven and earth joined in honoring Him, and just then He was tempted. Satan often attacks us at the same moment. It is in the flush of victory as often as in the discouragement of defeat that the tempter whispers words to us to which we should turn a deaf ear. Then we are in a fair way to be easily overcome, for many who can bear up under defeat and failure cannot stand success and prosperity, but in such times fall easy victims to sin. In time of prosperity and success let us watch and pray against temptation and thus avoid it.

2. Where we may expect to be tempted. When Christ was hungry, satan tempted Him with bread. When he saw the glory and splendor of the world at a glance, he tempted Him with power and influence. This fact has an important lesson for us. Just at these times, these points, if we may use the expression, were the weakest and most vulnerable places in Christ's character. Satan always strikes at the weakest point in a man's character. He attacks one man in adversity and another in prosperity, one by drink and another by sensuality, one through wealth and another through promise of power and prominence among men. To avoid him we should study our characters, learn what are our weak points and strengthen them.

3. How we may avoid or overcome our temptations. Jesus used but one weapon in His defense, and that was the word of God—it was the sword of the Spirit. "It is written again," was His thrice repeated answer to satan's quotations from the Scriptures. A thorough knowledge and judicious use of them is a great safeguard against and a powerful agent in overcoming temptation.

Bible Readings—I Chron. xxi, 1; Prov. i, 10; xvi, 29; xxviii, 20; xxx, 9; John xvi, 33; Rom. xiv, 13; Math. xxvi, 41; Gal. vi, 1; I Cor. x, 13; Jas. i, 2-4, 12; Heb. iv, 15; I Pet. v, 9.

A Junior Flower Salute.

The "Chautauqua" salute has made a name for itself and has been universally adopted at Endeavor conventions. Its variations, as arising and waving, or as waving during the singing of "Blest be the tie that binds," make it doubly effective and interesting.

But a "combination" flower and handkerchief salute may not be quite as well known, although fully as pretty and effective. It was used by the Juniors at the New Jersey state convention a few weeks ago and is commended to all Juniors as a Junior salute.

The children stand facing the audience, with small bouquets in right hand and handkerchiefs in left. The signals are given by the piano and are the ordinary four chords of any key and the octave chord. The salute is as follows:

First Chord—Flowers to lips.

Second Chord—Flowers extended in right hand as if kiss thrown, and at the same time step forward on right foot.

Third Chord—Handkerchiefs waved briskly with left hand, flowers and position same as preceding.

Fourth Chord—Resume erect position, flowers and handkerchiefs at side.

Octave Chord—All seated.

Why not a universal "flower salute" for the Juniors? The flowers at the close can be distributed among the sick or hospitals and thus serve a double purpose.—Golden Rule.

Christian Endeavor Notes.

At a recent Maine convention it was suggested, after Miss Jones had told the story of the Floating Society of Christian Endeavor, that Christian Endeavorers should have a tramp steamer, manned by Christian Endeavorers from captain to messboy, and that this tramp steamer should go about from ship to ship, carrying Christian Endeavor to the world's navies.

The Methodist Endeavorers of Bristol, Conn., are taking up temperance work in a very vigorous fashion.

At Santee Agency, Neb., is one of the finest and most useful Indian schools of the whole country. This school, supported by the American Missionary society, has frequently been helped by generous gifts from the Christian Endeavor societies.

Rev. W. F. McCauley, president of the Ohio union, will this year deliver a course of lectures on the Christian Endeavor movement at the Lane Theological seminary at Cincinnati.

"Christian Endeavor church, No. 2," built by Reformed Endeavorers and situated at Wakonda, S. D., has just formed a Christian Endeavor society.

The duties of the treasurer do not end with receiving and paying out money, but he should be able to devise some good plan of raising money.

Said a speaker at the Portland Christian Endeavor convention, "We need the pledge in the Junior society, else our work for the children will all ravel out, and we cannot catch up the stitches."

The Kirksville presbytery of Missouri, a division of the Cumberland Presbyterian church, has recently organized nine new Christian Endeavor societies.

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION.

Of Cleopatra Lodge, No. 43, of United Brothers of Friendship

Know All Men By These Presents, that we, Joseph S. Reid, D. C. Jackman, Abe Shanks, Scott Buckner, Walker Sutton, James Carpenter, Jerry Wade Frank Adkins, Miller Broadus, W. D. Tardiff, Green Helm, John Helm, Hugh Baker, John Cook, Smith Embry, Wm. Jones and Robt. Lytle, all residents of Lincoln county, Kentucky, hereby associate ourselves together and become incorporated under the laws of the State of Kentucky, for the purpose hereinafter expressed and adopt the following articles of incorporation, to-wit:

I. The name of the corporation shall be Cleopatra Lodge, No. 43, of the United Brothers of Friendship.

II. The principal place of business at Stanford, Kentucky.

III. The general nature of the business to be transacted shall be the giving of aid to members who are sick or distressed; the providing of funds therefor and for the burial of the dead and the relief of the membership generally, who are indigent and needy, and to co-operate with the Grand Lodge of the Order in its charitable undertakings, and to do such things as come within the scope of charity and benevolence.

IV. The corporation being organized for charitable purposes only it is to have no capital stock or stockholders; but each person who contributes to the corporation the sum of seven dollars shall be deemed a member and entitled to all the benefits as such, so long as he shall comply with the rules of the corporation and pay such dues, fines and assessments as shall be made against the members from time to time for its support.

V. The corporation shall commence from the filing of these articles in the proper office for record and terminate at the expiration of twenty-five (25) years.

VI. The affairs of the corporation are to be conducted by a Board of five (5) Directors, to be elected annually, from and by the lawful members of the corporation, at their first meeting in December of each year. And at the same time there shall be elected a Master, a Deputy Master, a Secretary and an Assistant Secretary and a Treasurer, which last named officers shall be the executive officers of the corporation, and shall fill the various chairs at the stated meetings, and all of which officers shall hold office for one year and until their successors are elected and qualified. The Treasurer shall be required to give bond for the faithful performance of duty, in such sum as shall be fixed by the constitution and by laws. The corporation shall at once fill said offices and hold same until the election in December. The said officers and Board shall have such duties and powers as shall be assigned them by the rules and by-laws to be adopted.

VII. The private property of the members is to be exempt from corporate debts.

VII. The indebtedness of the corporation shall not exceed five thousand dollars.

IX. The said corporation shall have perpetual succession, the right to sue and be sued in its corporate name to have a common seal, to make contracts, to acquire property and transfer same at its pleasure as as a private individual. To establish by-laws and rules and regulations for the government of its members and shall possess all the powers of a body corporate.

X. The corporation shall have the right to receive as members the present members of the voluntary association, from which this is formed, without the payment of the membership fee, as it succeeds to all of the property of said association.

In testimony whereof, witness our signatures this 21st day of November, 1893.

J. S. Reid,	Abe Shanks
W. M. Jones,	D. C. Jackman,
Scott Buckner,	J. M. Broadus,
J. M. Wade	W. F. Atkins,
Lillard Fisher,	Henry Salter,
John Cook, Sr.,	Smith Embry,
Wm. D. Tardiff, Jr.,	James Carpenter,
Robert Lytle,	Green Helm,
John Helm,	Walker Sutton
James Green,	Hugh Baker.