

Federals poured into the Shenvalley and regained lost ground extermaster and commissary it by Jackson under the guard we reove men at Harrisonburg made ready to be forwarded to While Royal Kenton fully that his being left behind was her move in the conspiracy to im, he allowed no one to unthe real state of his feelings. work to do, and plenty of it. ok hold so-willingly that only had passed before he was bol for his zeal by the major in

it of the post, tod difficulties arose about transportation, and though rea Federal advance were daily the unior hung on in hopes of be stores. One morning at sunselects were driven in by troopand 10 minutes later he resummons from General Custer er. He had only about 200 d, while it was plain to be he was fairly surrounded by ensider and at the end of e-turned a refusal. His little et to a man had agreed to the last. Three or four earthand been thrown up to protect e depot, but they were withry. The force was divided so an them all, and Royal Kenton Brayton found themselves 20 other men in a work witha noncommissioned officer m. As they were already un-Kenton was by common consent Drawers.

mes is gone up this time fur rved Stove as Custer posted ale and then opened fire with a "but I reckon we might sorter



or for awalle and let 'em see we Vesterday I forcered that erate could lick about seven buttons If things don't look

stiework sheltered them from and shell of the artillery, and the little band to be the dash he knew would sooner - made. The Federals could emounting just outside of times and as a force of about witnesset to charge the fort is major be reised a white the surrender. The other two bound by his action, but le in was charged with cheerand engineed after firing a

Yank, what's the word now?' Kenten's men as all real-

" was the brief reply.

ing knowed he un was game. " for Kenton!" shouted Steve

m given with a will, but be had died away Custer's tery was turned against the a hundred dismounted men an rate shot and opened a fire at the defenders to remain Kepton knew that the fire at a charge was about to This, owing to the nature of could only be made from m and by a small body of I will came, and under cover 200 dismounted men of in Michigan dashed forward. precived by a volley which and checked them, and while

> little band had time to remore volley sent the troopto cover, and Steve Brayton but into the air and shouted - has just licked the bull Trush ent of its butes and toutch on Washington!" pected another charge with-. but instead of that Custlag of truce and a demand . lie sinted that an atd timpesition after all the sen taken was simply a te of human life. He knew member and knew they had nor water. They had proved

tave men, and he trusted I now realize the situation it as brave men should. the note aloud, so that all and when he had finished it

ht stop another charge, but than to capture us in the - surrender."

" a few dissenters, but 15 the the 22 men had marched Troubled their arms in token like a coon fallin from a limb?"

of surrender. Their captors were mer who could appreciate bravery, no matter by whom displayed. As the surrender was made 4,000 troopers waved their hats and cheered.

"I am not an officer, and I therefore have no sword to surrender," said Kenton as General Custer rode to the head of the short line and seemed somewhat astonished to find only private soldiers.

"But who commanded in there?" asked the general.

"I gave what orders were given, sir." "Well, the southern confederacy made a miss of it in not making you a captain long ago. Had the other forts held out as pluckily as you did we should have had a hard fight to get at the stores."

While a list of the prisoners was being made out and the arms collected the troopers turned their attention to the stores. The idea was not to remove but to destroy them. The quickest way to do it was to apply the torch, and in the course of an hour everything was in flames. The Confederate major had, as stated, surrendered the fort he occupied with about 80 of the men without firing opposed. He asked for 15 a shot. A court martial would have promptly exonerated him from the charge of cowardice had it been made, for the situation was almost hopeless. That one of the forts should have held out and that the high private in command of it should have been complimented for his bravery rankled in the major's heart. He received permission to enter the field where the rank and file were surrounded by a Federal guard. and scarching out Reyal Kenton he angrily demanded:

By what autho My d you presume to hold that fort airc. Any surrender of

"We did not know that your surrender included more than the fort you were holding," replied Kenton.

"Captain Wyle told me something about you before he left," continued the major. "He regarded you with the greatest suspicion. It would not have surprised me had you surrendered first of all.

"I believe that bonor was left to you, quietly replied Kenton.

"Heoray fur the Yank-three cheers fur Kenton!" shouted the excitable Steve. And they were given by the whole force of Confederates with great enthusiasm.

"I fully understand your motive, sir!" exclaimed the major when the cheering had ceased. "You simply wanted to reap a little glory-to stand well in the estimation of your friends. You have accomplished it, but there will be a hereafter. The minute I am exchanged I shall prefer charges and have you court martialed. If you don't conclude to remain among your Yankee friends, I shall"-

"Hear he un talk like a fool!" interrute could lick about seven rupted Steve, treading army discipline campfires. It was a distance of about any sort of scrimmage, but under foot in his excitement. "If the 30 rods to the edge of the woods and major hadn't surrendered befo' a man was hit, these Yanks couldn't 'a' got us

> "That's so! That's so!" shouted a hundred men. And the entire lot began cheering for Steve Brayton.
> "And who are you, str?" demanded

> the major, now pale with passion. "Private Steve Brayton, sir, of Captain Wyle's critter company, and I was left behind here because I was a friend

of Kenton's. "Oh, I see! Well, I'll see to your case at the same time.

"Yes, and tell 'em thar's 15 dead and wounded men to show what we uns did befo' we surrendered," replied Steve. "Rush him! Rush him!" shouted the crowd, overcome by excitement and torgetting the respect due an officer.

The major backed away, but in an instant he was carried off his feet and rushed to the sentry line, and when he picked himself up off the grass he was bruised and battered and his uniform in a very dilapidated condition. Grouns and hisses followed him as he walked away, and the laughter of the Federal troopers was in no sense a balm for his

ruffled pride. It was noon before the stores were destroyed and the list of prisoners completed. Then came an alarm. Colonel Mosby, who has been dubbed "The Bandit of the Potomac," but who was as regularly commissioned as any officer in the Confederate army, appeared in the neighborhood with about 200 men. and before he was driven off and the prisoners were ready to start down the valley under guard it was midafter-

"Yank, I've been thinkin this thing over," said Steve Brayton to Kenton as they moved off, "and I jest tell yo' we ar' in a fix. We hain't neither Federals per Confeds any mo"!"

"How do you mean?" "Why, if we uns stay yere, we'll be held prisoners fur goodness knows how long, and if we git back to the Confederacy the major will make it hot fur us. Say, yo'! I don't know what yo're thinkin of jest this very minit, but I want to ask yo' a straight question."

"Go ahead." "Yo' won't git mad?"

"No. "Waal, then, don't yo' come purty nigh bein soft in the head? We uns don't want yo' on our side, and the Yanks hanker to shoot at yo' every show they git. If we uns don't want yo', what do yo' want to stay fur? If yo' don't want to fight agin us, why don't yo' sorter drop out of the hull bizness and let go CHAPTER XX.

Kenton made no reply to Steve Brayton's inquiry, but the latter noticed a look on the young man's face he had never seen there before. The Virginian by adoption had pursued the course be thought was right. He had done his duty under all circumstances and had been thoroughly loyal to the cause which he espoused. Those beside whom he fought had made every attempt to degrade and disgrace him and drive him out of the service. If he had not enlisted, he would have been called a traiter and driven away from his home with bodily injury. He had joined the ranks to be suspected and denounced. As the case now stood he could not leave the southern cause without being returned on the rolls as a deserter. If exchanged, he would be put on trial, and he realized that enough influence could be brought to bear to further disgrace

"Look yere, Yank, what's botherin yo'r head?" asked Steve after a few minutes of silence.

"A good many things," was the re-"I've been figgerin a bit. Both Captain Wyle and the major are now down

on yo'. If ye' ever gits back to the Confederacy, they'll shet yo' up or shoot yo'. Can't yo' see it?"
"It looks that way to me."

"The Yanks may keep us six months, and doorin that time thar's goin to be a heap of lyin about yo' to that gal. She'll be told that yo' deserted or mebbe that yo' are dead. Yo' kin bet Captain Wyle won't let no grass grow under his feet. I've hearn that she was over in the mountains."

· Yes "And I was told that Captain Wyle and his critter company had bin sent back yere to help held the Yankees,

"Yes, but I can't act."

"Why not? It's comin on dark, and it's goin to rain. See how the line has straggled! Them bluecoats hain't got more'n one eye open. Tell yo' what my plan is. Let's make a dash fur it! It hain't over 20 miles to whar yo'r gal is. Go'n see her. She's powerful level headed, and I reckon she may give yo some good advice. Yo'll hev a show to explain things anyway, and that will make dough of the captain's cake.' "And what about you?" asked Ken-

"Waal, I'd just as lief run up than with yo'. I ain't jest exactly satisfied about all this thing. Mebbe I'll surrender to the Yanks agin, and mebbe I'll go back to the company and let the major pile it on and be hanged to him! I want a day or two to think it over. What do vo' sav?"

"I'm agreed," replied Kenton after a moment's thought.

"That's bizness! Jest about 40 rods down yere I'll give yo' the word. We uns will brenk for them woods to the right. We'll be fired on and mebbe killed, but we've got to take chances. Once we reach the woods we are safe

The afternoon was rapidly fading into dusk, and a fine rain had begun to fall. The cavalrymen were strung out so that there were gaps of several feet between horses, and us the prisoners were singing songs and seemed in good spirits the vigilance of the capters was naturally relaxed. The wall which inclosed the field on the right suddenly ended, and then came a field which was open because the fencing had been used by soldiers from one side or the other for their 30 rods to the edge of the woods, and it was likely they would not only be fired on, but pursued by some of the troopers. Brayton stepped into the road ahead of Kenton, increased his pace to reach the center of a gap between two horsemen and suddenly threw up his hand as a signal.

Both men were well into the field and running at the top of their speed before an alarm was raised. Three or four of the troopers on that side opened fire with their carbines, but pursuit was prevented by a dozen other prisoners evincing a disposition to also make a bolt. Some of the half dozen bullets came unpleasantly near, but not one struck the fugitives, and in two or three minutes they were safe in the woods. With darkness already at hand, there was no fear of pursuit.

"Yank, we uns did that as neat as a b'ar backin down a bee tree!" said Steve as they stopped to recover their breath and shake bands.

'And now what?' asked Kenton. "Now for the mountains. Reckon ve'd best put on steam and git out o' this locality as soon as possible. I know this ground and will lead the way."

Stopping to rest for a few minutes every hour or so, the pair held their course for the Alleghanies and about 3 o'clock in the morning turned into a thicket among the footbills to rest and sleep. It was still raining, and the night was raw and cold, but they crept



Both men were running at the top of their speed before an alarm was raised.

into the thick bushes and were soon fast asleep. It was 8 o'clock before they opened their eyes and then only because disturbed by a great clatter on the highway only a few yards distant. Brayton was the first to move forward and make an investigation. He returned in four

or five minutes to say: "I can't jest make 'em out. Thar's about a hundred men, and all on critters, and the hull heap are southerners, but only a few are in uniform, They

can't be recruits goin to the army, pecause they are goin the wrong way. "It may be a Confederate raiding or

couting party," suggested Kenton.
"Mebbe so, but we uns don't want nothin to do with 'em. Hang me if they hain't a bilious lookin lot!'

The fugitives waited for a quarter of an hour after the last boof beats had died away and then stole out into the highway. The rain had ceased, but it was a lowering morning, and they were sharp set for breakfast. The log house of a farmer was plain to view a quarter of a mile down the road, and they made sure they would find something to eat there. In a few words they agreed on the story they were to tell if questioned, and 10 minutes later they were at the door of the house. It was opened to them by the farmer's wife. She was a strong advocate of the southern cause. and the sight of their Confederate uniforms brought a cheerful invitation to enter and sit down to breakfast.

"Don't you uns belong with that crowd which jest passed up the road?" she asked as they fell to eating. Steve Brayton took it upon himself to

answer in the negative and then asked what crowd it was. "It's Kurnel Mosby and his gang. They hain't much on the fight, I reckon, but they do pester the Yankees like all git out. Most of 'em are farmers, and

did you uns cum from?" Steve told her of the fight with Caster and their escape the night before. and she lifted her hands and cried out: "Then you uns dun seen the Yan-

some of 'em live around yere. Whar

"Reg'lar live Yankee sogers?"

"Yes'm." "And yo' got away alive?"

"Of co'se. "Wanl, I wouldn't 'a' believed it! Mrs. Sam Duncan dun tole me them Yankees killed everybody with tomahawks as soon as they got holt of 'em!

Yo' uns must hev bin powerful cute to git away . Breakf been finished when there can - nock at the door, and next moment a man in the uniform of a Confederate cavalry sergeant entered the cabin. He had been sent back by Colonel Mosby, he said, to ask for the loan of a horse and equipments. He used the term "loan," but it was pretty plain that he meant to take no refusal. The weman replied that her husband

had set out for Woodstock the night before on horseback, and therefore it was impossible to grant the colonel's request. The sergeant was going away without a word to our two friends, but after reaching his horse he returned and asked:

"What command do you fellers belong to? "To Captain Wyle's cavalry com-

pany," replied Kenton. "Where is it?" "I den't know." "Humph! Whar yo' goin?"

"None of yo'r bizness!" answered Steve, who had been roiled by the sergent's supercilious airs and lofty tone. "Oh, it hain', eh? Mebbe yo've got a pass in ye'r pocket to allow of yo'r rambling around the kentry! If so, I'll

"Yo' hain't big enough!" "What! Now you uns either show a pass, or I'll take yo' along to Kurnel

Mosby! He'll mighty soon find out whar vo' belong!" 'You see," began Kenton, who, realized that it was foolish to arouse man's anger and suspicion, "we were guarding the stores at Harrisonburg.

and the Federal cavalry came in yesterday and" "Whar's yo'r pass?" interrupted the sergant.

"Whar's yo'rs?" demanded Steve. "Show yo'r pass, or I'll take yo' to the kurnel!

"I should like to explain the case to you," said Kenton, motioning to Steve not to interrupt him. "We are Confederate soldiers. We were captured at Harrisonburg by the Federals yesterday forenoon, but escaped at dark last night. Therefore we have no pass and do not need a pass."

"Yo' may be all right, and yo' may be a couple of Yankee spies!" replied the sergeant. "If yo' are straight, yo'll come along with me and explain to the kurnel. 'Deed, but yo've got to come, straight or crooked!"

He had left his revolver and carbine on the saddle. He started for his horse, but Steve was there before him. He had stepped softly out while Kenton was explaining and was now in possession of both firearms and a supply of ammunition. Even as the trooper reached the gate Steve gave his horse a slap and sent him galloping away and then turned and asked:

Who's takin anybody to see the kurnel? Sorter 'pears to me that yo've dun stubbed yo'r toe and fell down!"

The sergeant very quietly asked what he was going to do, and his manner betrayed his anxiety.
"Goil, to git shet of yo' about the

fust thing!" answered Steve. "Left face! Forward march! Keep goin right down the road till yo' find the kurnel and then give him our love!"

The trooper marched awy without a backward look, and when he was lost to sight by a turn in the road Kenton said:

"Steve, you did a bad thing for us. That whole crowd will be after us inside of a hour."

"Don't holler befo' yo'r hit, Yank!" laughed Steve. "If we uns hadn't tooken him, he'd hev tooken us, and besides that it suddenly occurred to me that we'd got to hev something to shoot with. Now, then, let's be a-gettin straight up the mountain.

CHAPTER XXI.

We have made no note of time. A year of war seems to fly more swiftly by than a month of peace. The minutes of war are made up of its dead, its hours of burials, its days of battles, its weeks months of black figures relating the

tens of millions of dollars expended, its ever. There was but one thing for him years of despair and desolation crying

Winter bad fallen upon mountain and valley, upon the blackened ruins of once happy homes, upon blood spot and burial ground. While things had gone very quietly at Rest Haven they had not gone well. Now and then a detachment of Federals or Confederates had galloped past on the stony road, but they had left the family in peace. Letters no longer came and went. The country was in the hands of the Federals, and many of the inhabitants had fled away. The Percys would have gone before winter set in but for the state of the mother's health. They were waiting and hoping that she would so mend that she could be moved, but she did not.

One autumn night a party of raiders

had taken away the horses, and after that Uncle Ben had to make his trips on foot as he scoured the country in search of provisions to keep the family going. In spite of the high prices and general scarcity of all necessaries he managed so well that nearly every want was supplied in some way. On two occasions beyond the one mentioned Federal reconnoitering parties left supplies at the house, and once Captain Wyle sent a store of articles which could have only been gathered at considerable cost and trouble. Both sides pitied the unhappy and defenseless situation of the family, which was only one of hundreds. The sufferings of the southern women during the war have found no historian, and the heroism displayed by them in the face of peril and adversity has not gone down to their children on printed pages. Who could write it? Where would be begin or end? In no epoch of history were mothers, wives and daughters called upon for greater sacrifices, nor were sacrifices ever so cheerfully made. Brave, patriotic, enduring, and yet no state or community has reared a marble shaft on which is engraved the words of praise and commendation so justly their due. When Marian became convinced that

if Mrs. Baxter had any plan afoot it was to play the spy and forward the cause of Captain Wyle, she did not let the matter worry her. A sort of truce was declared between the woman and Uncle Ben, and yet he did not cease to suspect and to watch her. He found out that Ike had been exchanged and had rejoined his company, and on two occasions he had good reasons to believe that the man secretly met her in the neighborhood of the house. Owing to the interruption of the mails, it was only at long intervals that Marian heard from Royal Kenton. For a month previous to the battle in which he was captured she had heard no word from him. When news came, it was from Captain Wyle himself on his second visit to the Haven. His company was acting as a guard for a wagon train of forage gathered in the valley, and his stay was brief. While his welcome was fairly cordial, he realized that circumstances were not propitious for any approach to the subject nearest his heart, and he forced himself to be content with generalities. Incidentally, as if the matter was of little or no moment to her, he mentioned the fact of General Jackson having become suspicious of Kenton and suggesting the detail which was made and of his having heard only a day or two before that the Federals had descended on the post and captured the entire Confederate command. What he added was both false and cruel-viz, that it was rumored that Kenton was among the Confederate killed.

If the captain hoped that Marian would betray her real feeling, he was not disappointed. As she received his information every vestige of color fled from her face, and she seemed about to

she gasped.

"Only rumored, but"-"But you believe the rumor will be confirmed?

"I must say that I do. Mr. Kenton was, I believe, a friend of yours, and of course the news of his death will shock and grieve you. He and I would also have been friends but for his, to say the least, disloyal conduct toward the cause be for some reason best known to himself esponsed."

"Captain Wyle, you wrong him, living or dead" exclaimed Marian as she braced herself against the shock caused by report of the rumors. "He enlisted ecause he was imbaed with the same feeling I hope you were—a feeling that he owed allegiance to Virginia first of

"He has acted very strangely for a Virginia patriot, I must declare," said the captain.

"How strangely?" she demanded as the color began to return to her cheeks and her eyes to flash.

"Every one in my company firmly believes he joined us that the Yankees tnight have a spy within our lines."

"And who made them believe ft? Royal Kenton has periled his life in the break our hearts to have you go, slave cause oftener than any man in your though you are and always have been company or regiment! Tell me of one single instance where an honest, un- be rewarded, Uncle Ben. Only bring biased man could have questioned his loyalty!"

Why was he left behind, detailed to guard stores, and that at General Jackson's suggestion?" asked the cap-

"You are already possessed of that knowledge!" she scathingly replied. "There has been a conspiracy against him from the very outset, and it is not the fault of the conspirators that he was not assassinated before a battle had been

"Private Kenton, if alive, should feel grateful for such championship!" 'It is my duty to champion him! am his promised wife!"

While Captain Wyle felt pretty certain that there was more than friendship between them he had hoped that things had not gone that far. As she stood before him and looked into his eyes and spoke the words which made his heart of campaigns which move a nation, its fall like lead he was dumb for a moment. Her face was set and hard, and number of widows and or hans and the be realized that his fate was sealed for. Hartz & Ullemeyer.

to do, and he did it. Though rage and despair filled his heart, he did not forget the fact that he was a born southern It required all his nerve to take his leave gracefully, but he accomplished the feat, and it was only when he was in the saddle that curses passed his lips and his smiles were replaced by wicked

frowns. "Southern chivalry" has been held up to ridicule and scorn, but only by the ignorant or by those who had a purpose to accomplish. Chivalry was born in the heart of the true southerner; it came down to him legitimately in the blood. Now and then he may forget himself in the presence of a man, but never in the presence of a woman.

Had all been well at Rest Haven, Marian Percy would have given way to her grief and mourned as women do. But the mother's condition was still regarded as dangerous, and she must not even suspect the sad blow which bad fallen on the daughter. Uncle Ben suspected some calamity from the grief in Marian's face, and from the fact that Mrs. Baxter dodged out and had a word with Captain Wyle at the gate before he rode away. He must have repeated the canard about the death of Kenton, for the woman's face betrayed great satisfaction as she returned to the house. There was a smaller house to lodge the "help," but just then Uncle Ben had it all to himself. About an hour after the captain's departure Marian appeared in the old man's quarters to find him cobbling one of his brogans.

"Look yere, honey," he began as she entered and before she could say a word, 'I knowed when I saw yo' at de doah an hour ago dat sunthin had don happened. Am de good missus gwine to die, or did dat Captain Wyle say sunthin to make yo' feel bad?"

"Uncle Ben, I have heard sorrowful



"Captain Wyle told me be had heard that Mr. Kenton was deadkilled over at Harrisonburg a day or two ago.

"I shall nebber dun believe it!" he exclaimed. "Dat Mars Kenton be doan" write no mo', but dat hain't 'cause he was dead. It's 'cause de possoffis was all turned upside down."

"But they had a battle a day or two ago, Uncle Ben, and Mr. Kenton was killed then.'

"Whar was dat battle?"

"Near Harrisonburg." "Dat's a right smart step from yere an we didn't heah de guns. Mebbe des dun had a battle, but dat doan' disqualify dat Mars Kenton was killed. Shoo, now, honey, but doan' yo' believe any

sich story!" "But I'm-I'm afraid it's true!" she

sobbed, breaking down at last. "See yere, chile," said the old man after a bit, with tears in his own eyes, "yo' jiss keep quiet till we find out all about it. I'll hev dis shoe fixed in 'bout 10 minutes, an den I'll start fur Harrisonburg. When I git dar, I kin find out if Mars Kenton was killed." "But it's almost dark now, Uncle

Ben." "Makes no difference, honey. I know de road an am feelin purty good. By dis time tomorrer I'll be back wid de

"But what if you should discover that-that"

"Dat Mars Kenton was railly killed? Nobody can't diskiber what hain't so, kin dey? I'ze gwine ober dar jest to prove dat he wasn't dun killed."

"Uncle Ben," said Marian as she placed a hand on either shoulder and looked into his eyes, "if you can bring me news that Mr. Kenton is alive, I'll make you a free man before the week is out!

"Hu! What I want to leave yo' an de missus an becum free nigger fur? Reckon I wants to go to de porchouse or jail? Hain't I alius bin like one o' de family? Could de family git along widont Uncle Ben? Whar would yo' be right now but fur me?"

"That's true, Uncle Ben. You were born on the place, and you know how much we all think of you. It would in the eyes of the law. But you shall me good news, and your reward shall be great!

"Hush up dat noise, honey!" he chided as he made ready to depart. "If yo'll let de ole man lib right on in de family, dat'll be reward 'nuff. I'll be back by foah o'clock tomorrer, and I'll bring yo' de news dat Mars Kenton am all right."

Marian watched him as he strode bravely down the frozen highway and vanished into the dusk of evening. and as she turned away fresh tears came to

her eyes, and she murmured: "Brave and unselfish old slave! God grant that he may bring a message to relieve my anxieties!" (To be continued.)

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