

PLUCK AND LUCK

COMPLETE STORIES OF ADVENTURE.

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SLIPPERY BEN: OR, THE BOY SPY OF THE REVOLUTION. AND OTHER STORIES BY GEN'L JAS. A. GORDON.



Just then Ben saw his chance, and before they could rally, he, with his own hand, fired the cannon so fatally charged and so fatally aimed, sending death and destruction into that heroic band of veteran grenadiers.

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—OR—

THE BOY SPY OF THE REVOLUTION

By GEN. JAS. A. GORDON

CHAPTER I.

"THE DAYS THAT TRIED MEN'S SOULS."

Our story opens in the spring of 1777, in the little town of Poughkeepsie, situated on the banks of the beautiful Hudson.

The American Revolution was at its height, and every one of the original thirteen States was alive with the fires of patriotism and determination to drive the hated British from the country.

The battles of Lexington, Bunker Hill, Bennington, etc., had been fought. American valor had proven itself a match for English combination. Washington had assumed command of our army; had driven the enemy from Boston; had been defeated and harassed himself, and the theater of war was being shifted from New England to New York and the other Middle States.

In those days, a hundred years ago, what are large towns and cities now, were only small villages or hamlets then. There were no such things as railroads, steamboats, or telegraphs, and only a poor apology for postal service.

But the Americans were in earnest and meant to fight until they in reality were as free as they had sworn to be in their Declaration of Independence.

Every town or village sent forth its hardy sons to swell the Continental army, while the English, under General Howe, whose headquarters were in New York, were everywhere alive, seeing that it required speedy and resolute work to crush out the determined rebellion that had taken such firm root.

The story of the many struggles, adventures, death and daring connected with that long and terrible war will never be written, probably; although hundreds of families have handed down the records of what their ancestors did, and only when they see fit to publish these records will these patriotic stories ever be told.

This story is founded upon one of those family histories that has never before been published, and is now given to our readers to encourage them in that very courage and daring that is here recorded.

We said that the whole country was up in arms against the British, but this was not entirely the case, for one of the greatest obstacles which the patriots had to contend with was the Tory element to be found in every locality.

These Tories, as they were called, were people who did not believe in the revolt, who wished England to tyrannize over and rule the country as they saw fit, and they proved even worse enemies than did her soldiers, since they generally were rich, influential men and used their power without mercy. History tells us that the war of the revolution would not have lasted so long by two years had it not been for these detestable Tories.

They kept very shady, as a general thing in the absence of the British troops, for the patriots would have squelched them very quickly had they dared to utter their sentiments and do their rascally work in their midst, and many of them

were severely punished simply because they were suspected of being in sympathy with the enemy.

The news of the evacuation of Boston by the British was good news for the patriots of New York, for they were eager to cross swords with them, and it was also good news for the Tories who had been punished so severely and forced to be silent so long.

The little town of Poughkeepsie had sent her best sons to swell the army of General Gates, who was trying to check Burgoyne, who was marching through the State with fire and sword, and only the old men and boys remained, with the exception of the dozen or more Tories who lived there.

But there were a large number of boys, all the way from ten to twenty years of age, who were anxious to do something for their struggling country.

They were true grit, and true as steel, and foremost among them was Benjamin Parkhurst, known more generally as "Slippery Ben," on account of the easy way he had of getting out of the many scrapes he had a faculty of getting into.

He was about seventeen years of age, of medium size, black hair and eyes, and, to speak of him as the good people of Poughkeepsie used to do, "he was as smart as a chip."

He was the only son of a widow, who had, besides him, four girls. Her husband had left her moderately well off at his death, and Ben had the usual advantages of school and home influence. He was a sort of a leader of the boys, and beyond an aptness for scrapes and a quiet love for fun, he was regarded as the most likely boy in town.

The war news had interested him greatly, and as his mother used to get a newspaper from New York every few weeks (a great thing to do in those days), Ben kept perfectly posted regarding affairs, and used to repeat the news to his comrades whenever they met, and by his comment she at length worked them up to the same pitch of patriotism that he felt himself.

"I only wish I was a man," he used to say; "I would show them what I would do."

Boy though he was, he would have joined the ranks of the patriot army had it not been for his mother, who could not bear to part with her only son, although she said she would do so, and even go to the war herself, rather than see her countrymen subdued.

Ben, like most boys of those times, was a first-rate horseman, and he owned a horse that was as fleet as a bird, and seemed to know as much as half the men. He always said that Blazes knew more than a Tory, anyway.

A year before the time of which we write, Ben and three or four of his companions managed to make it so hot for an old Tory, that he moved to New York to escape the indignant patriots, and for this, and because he was known to be a fiery young patriot, he was held in high esteem by the Federals and hated cordially by the Tories.

One morning a man rode into town bringing the news that Burgoyne and his army of hirelings were confronting the patriot army under General Gates and Arnold, near Saratoga, and that the prospect of a battle was very imminent.

Of course the news created great excitement, and the people hurriedly assembled around the Liberty-pole to comment on the situation.

Ben was one of the first to hear the news, and in an instant his mind was made up. Flying back to his mother, he said:

"Mother, the time has come. Give me your blessing and I am off to the war!"

"Why, Benjamin, what has happened now?" she asked, in some alarm.

"I will tell you what has happened, mother. After being worsted nearly everywhere but at Bennington, after suffering all sorts of outrages and abuses at the hands of the British, they are gathered now at Saratoga under the hated Burgoyne, and are confronted by Gates and his plucky little army. That army is sorely in need of recruits. If we are beaten there, then the whole State will be overrun, and you and my sisters, with thousands of others, may suffer the fate of Miss McCrea. I cannot remain idle here, knowing all this, for I am as good as a man and can render my country some service."

"But would you leave us all alone?" said she.

"Would you have me stay when perhaps the little I can do will turn the tide of battle? Would you not feel prouder of me even should I get killed in a cause so holy as this, than you would be to know that I remained behind because I was only seventeen years of age? No, no, mother; I am certain that you would not. Say I may take Blazes and go," said he, seizing her hand and kneeling before her.

"Yes, Benjamin. Heaven bless and spare you to me, but go," said she, raising him to his feet and folding him in her arms.

"Thanks, thanks, good, noble mother! I will never disgrace you or my father's name!"

"Are you going, Ben?" asked his beautiful sisters, gathering around him anxiously.

"Yes, girls, I am going. Be good to mother and help her along, and you shall all yet be proud of me," said he, shaking each of their hands and receiving a kiss in return. "Come, now, hurry around and get my accoutrements; father's sword and pistols, my little rifle, and everything there in the old saddle-bags; and, mother, put me up provisions enough for a couple of days, while I go and saddle Blazes and tell him the good news," said he, starting for the barn at a bound.

His noble mother and sisters did not hesitate, for they possessed the same spirit that he did, and the same that led their father and husband to give his life to his country four years before.

In a few minutes Ben had his noble horse at the hitch-post before the door, where he stood champing his bit and pawing as though he knew all about it and had imbibed some of the patriotic spirit of his young master.

The parting between the patriot boy and his mother and sisters was painful, although not one of them would have called him back.

"Good-by. Heaven bless you all," said he, as he threw himself into the saddle.

"Heaven help you!" was the prayer that was wafted after him as he wheeled away and waved his hat back to them.

They watched him out of sight as he rode toward the Liberty-pole where the citizens were assembled, and then with tearful eyes and swelling hearts they returned to their deserted house.

As they went from sight a man about twenty-five years of age rose up cautiously from a clump of bushes near by and stole out into the road.

"So, so; the little rascal is going to join the rebels, is he? Now, then, the way is clear. He has stood between me and his sister for the last time. The commission I have from General Howe will be of use to me now!" and taking a short cut he hurried away to meet his companions and fellow-Tories.

This character, so hurriedly introduced, was Hart Marble, a wealthy young Tory who had for a long time sought the hand of Mabel Parkhurst, and had been defeated by her brother Ben, who knew his feelings toward the patriots too well to allow of the alliance.

CHAPTER II.

THE YOUNG CAVALRYMAN.

While the old men and boys, and even the maids and matrons were standing around the Liberty-pole discussing the war-like news that had been brought from up the river,

Ben Parkhurst rode into their midst on his mettled horse, fully armed and equipped.

A dozen or so of his companions saw at a glance that he was off for the war, and they sent up a loud cheer, while the old men and maidens looked at him in amazement.

"Off for the war?" asked one.

"Yes, Blazes and I are off. Who will go with me?" he asked, with spirit.

"Stay to home, you rash fool!" said an old man, shaking his cane at him.

"Bah! Any patriot that will stay at home is worse than a Tory," replied Ben.

"Hurrah for Slippery Ben!" said another young fellow, and the cheer that went up convinced the dozen or more Tories standing around that it would not be safe to express their sentiments.

"How many of you have got horses?" he asked of the group of his young friends who stood around him.

"I have," said young Dan Schuyler.

"So have I," said Frank Clinton, one of the smartest young fellows in town.

"And I!"

"And I!" said two others, and, in fact, a dozen or more of them replied that they had horses and waited eagerly to learn what Ben proposed.

"And how many of you will volunteer to go with me to join Gates?" he asked, in a clear, ringing voice.

For a moment there was a strange hush in that crowd. Old men looked at each other in surprise, Tories sneered in silence, and the maidens held their breath at the very boldness of the question.

The young fellows looked at each other as if to see if each understood what had been said, and then one glance at the noble-spirited boy who gazed at them decided the matter.

"I will!" shouted young Schuyler.

"And I!" said young Livingstone.

"And I!" put in Frank Clinton, and so said Tom Putnam, Harry Crocker, James Baldwin, Albert Bleecker, and three or four others, whereat there was a great commotion.

"Nonsense! Folly!" shouted several whose sympathies were for the mother country.

"Come on, my boys!" shouted Ben, drawing his sword and waving it over his head.

A wild hurrah greeted him, and even the young girls crowded around and raised their voices in the cheer.

"Away with you and equip at once, for there is no time to be lost. Arm yourselves the best you can, and take provisions for a day or two in your saddle-bags. Hurry, and meet me here without loss of time!"

"We will!" was the response, as the young patriots scampered away.

"What rashness!"

"The young scamps!"

"Boys going to war!"

"Take them home and spank them!" and other such exclamations greeted Ben on every side.

But he took no notice of them, but sat there like a young king, armed for the fray, and buoyed up by a noble enthusiasm.

Meanwhile Hart Marble had gathered his friends, and formed his plans for the squelching of the young patriots, and the working out of his own revenge.

About twenty Tories met at his house in an hour from the time the people first began to gather, and it was agreed to follow this band of rude boys; punish them for their disloyalty, and after taking them prisoners, to hand them over to General Burgoyne.

This was the general plan agreed upon, although Hart Marble resolved that Ben Parkhurst should never live to be made a prisoner of or interfere in his plans any more.

This band of Tories were not to be despised, for it was composed of some of the wealthiest young men in the neighborhood, and Hart Marble, as their acknowledged leader, had obtained a commission from the British commander that allowed him to commit all the mischief on the rebels that he, in his judgment, thought proper.

They were superbly mounted and armed, and taken altogether they were no mean company, so far as physical strength was concerned.

While Ben was conversing with some patriot friends, old

men who encouraged him in the step he was taking, a negro boy, Pete Sunflower, well known to everybody in town, came up to him.

Pete was a character. He was a genuine, old-fashioned ducky, belonging to nobody in particular, but a chore-boy for anybody who would employ him. He was about eighteen years of age, full of life and fun, and greatly devoted to Ben Parkhurst, although it was notorious that he had played more tricks on him than all the other boys in town put together.

"Marser Ben, be you gwine to de war?" he asked pathetically, looking up at the brave young man in the saddle.

"Yes, Pete, I'm going to the war," said Ben, looking at the comical ducky with a smile.

"By gosh! Marser Ben, I wish dat I were a-gwine 'long wid yer!" said he.

"What! You want to go, Pete?"

"Nigger jus' good's anybody ter shoot at."

"That's so, Pete; but you have no horse."

"Gohermigty, I'll ride a cow if you let me go 'long wid yer, Marser Ben."

Ben laughed heartily.

"I wish you had a horse, Pete, for we want somebody like you along with us to cook and make a little fun now and then."

"He shall have my old horse," said an old man who stood in the crowd.

"Breßs de heavens for dat ole hoss!" yelled Pete.

"He isn't much on looks, but he's a proper good critter on speed an' ugliness," added he.

"Dat's all I want, Marser Stiles," said Pete.

"Well, away with you and get him. You'll find the harness in the barn."

"Oh, oh! hee!" exclaimed Pete, as he bounded away for his charger.

"Ben, you are a good boy, and so are the others who are going with you. I am old and lame, or I would have been at the front long ago. But I give my horse and harness to the cause, and pray heaven it may prosper."

"Good for Daddy Stiles," shouted several.

"And I will give Pete my pistol," said another.

"And he may have my old sword," said another old man.

"And I will give a blanket," put in an old lady who stood near.

"Thank you all. Bring here, all of you, such things as you can spare and we shall need, and we will render you a good account of them," said Ben.

"We will! we will!" said they, and several started for their dwellings just as young Livingstone, Clinton, Schuyler and several others rode up.

They were well mounted and equipped, and were followed and surrounded by a large crowd of anxious friends and acquaintances.

But Ben Parkhurst was the center of all attraction, and the others drew up their horses and formed a circle around him, since he was their natural leader.

"Are you all ready?" he asked.

"Yes, all ready," was the reply.

Just then there was a commotion in the crowd, and Pete Sunflower, mounted on a large horse, homelier than he was himself, rode up to the group of horsemen.

As soon as he was recognized by the crowd a cheer and a laugh was sent up, and as he rode close up to Ben the young man extended his hand.

"Good for you, Pete! Welcome. Why, you look like a regular knight."

"Dat's 'cause I'se dark, I s'pose," replied Pete, with a grin that reached from ear to ear, almost.

"'Rah for Pete Sunflower!" said a fellow in the crowd, and another laugh was the result.

"Boys, Pete is going along with us as our servant, if you are all agreed," said Ben, turning to his comrades.

"Yes, yes, by all means let him go along," was the verdict, and Pete plumed himself like a peacock, sitting back so straight in his saddle that he leaned over backward.

He was indeed a comical-looking warrior. The horse he was mounted on was a tall, angular, raw-boned specimen of animation, with little neck and a big, homely head, little spindle legs and big hoofs, and so far as color was concerned, he was almost anything but black or white.

Pete was a fit rider for such a horse. On his head he wore a beaver-skin cap, with the tail of the animal hanging behind for an ornament, while his coat was blue and his

knee-breeches the same ones he was born in, and taken altogether he was a character.

But to still further heighten the ludicrousness of his personal make-up, the old man who had offered to give him his sword came up and girded it on. It was a long, old-fashioned cavalry sword, and the way it dangled around the ribs and legs of his horse threatened trouble for both.

Then he was given a pistol and blanket, and by the time the merry dozen were ready to set off Pete was fully equipped and looked both comical and war-like.

"Well, boys, are we all ready?" asked Ben, guiding his horse to the front and heading him down the turnpike road.

"All ready!" was the response.

"And you, Pete?"

"All ready, Marser Ben."

"Then, good-by, all!" said he, drawing his sword and waving it to the crowd.

"Good-by. Heaven bless you all!" was the ringing response by the crowd.

"Forward, march!" cried Ben.

In an instant a dozen spurs tickled the flanks of as many horses and away they flew down the road, followed by younger boys and girls on a run and the ringing cheers of those who were left behind.

Pete Sunflower followed along behind, but his sword caused him much trouble; it was so long that it swung around, this way and that, banging his horse on the legs and ribs and causing him to prance around in a most ungainly manner, nearly throwing the poor ducky to the ground.

But he was a very good rider and held his seat in spite of the old horse's capers.

"Whoa, dar! quit yer nonsense, will yer?" he yelled. "What kind ob a war hoss am you, I'd like for ter know. 'fraid ob a little t'ing like a sword. Go 'long dar or I'll broke ebery bone in yer body!"

The youngsters who were following him caused the horse to act worse than he otherwise would, by yelling at him, and now and then hitting him with a stone or something.

"Better look out, dar, you young uns, or I'll go for to shoot some ob yer, see if I don't!" he said, shaking his fist at them.

"Wallop him!" they shouted.

"Where's your spurs?"

"Sharpen your heels, Pete!" said one, referring to the ducky's bare feet and legs.

"Give him some pepper!"

"Shoot him!"

"Shoot yourself!"

"Hang a bag of oats in front of him!" and various other calls greeted the unhappy horseman as his animal wheeled and pranced around without going ahead any.

"Put a chestnut burr under his tail, Pete!"

By this time quite a crowd of boys and girls had gathered around the discomfited ducky, and were blackguarding him in various ways.

"Wha' yer doin' dar, Pete?" asked an old negro who came up at that moment.

"Tryin' for to make dis yer hoss git up!" replied Pete.

"Den why yer don't stop foolin'?"

"Who fool?"

"You fool."

"How dat?"

"Wid dat big sword a-danglin' ag'in him de old hoss don't know what fo' to make on it, nohow. Whar yer gwine?"

"To de war."

"To de debbil more like."

"Well, jes' you watch me. I'se gwine wid der boys ter join Marser Gates."

"Go 'long wid yer. Niggers can't fight," said the old man, with much emphasis.

"What de reason niggers can't fight?"

"Cos dey arn't made ob de right stuff."

"Oh, you go home ter Aunt Dinah an' tell her dat you is a fool! I'll show you whedder niggers can fight or not—see if I don't!" saying which he took the big cavalry sword up across his lap and again spoke to his horse.

This time there seemed to be no unwillingness on his part, and away he went after the other horsemen at a rattling gallop; in fact, the old rawbones had lots of speed in him, and lots of mettle, too.

The young horsemen had held up their anxious beasts to learn the cause of Pete's delay, and soon he overtook them, going at such a rate of speed that the beaver's tail on his

cap was streaming out behind like the stiff, straight tail of the old nag he rode.

"What's the matter, Pete?" asked Clinton.

"Dis yere blarsted ole nag wanted ter stop an' say good-by to de boys, I guess," replied he.

"Well, are you all right now?" asked Ben.

"All nice, Marser Ben."

"Then away we go. But keep your eyes wide open, for you must remember that we are out in the country now and may be caught by the enemy at any moment."

"We are ready," was the firm response.

CHAPTER III.

PUTTING THEIR METTLE TO THE TEST.

The young patriots galloped along for nearly ten miles, chatting about the new life they were entering upon, and renewing their pledges to each other and their country, all the while keeping a sharp lookout on all sides, knowing that the country swarmed with Tories and sympathizers of the English.

Pete's old horse was behaving himself very well, except when he felt extraordinarily patriotic, and allowed his big sword to hang down and dangle against his shins.

"Goshdurn such a tickler hoss as you are! Can't understand war nowadays, 'peers to me," he growled, as he found himself obliged to pick up and carry his sword in order to keep his horse quiet.

By much trouble he managed to get along and keep up with the others, but it required much patience and coaxing on his part.

The party were now passing through a narrow road which led through a rocky and heavily wooded ravine. They had just passed the forks of the old roads and were now on the turnpike leading directly to the town of Hudson, some twenty miles ahead, and where they were calculating to rest for the night.

The curious silence of the woods, broken only by the echoes of their horses' hoofs, or the singing of birds, was all that attracted their attention, when suddenly the report of a gun and the whiz of a bullet through the cocked hat of Slippery Ben startled them to a dead halt in the middle of the wooded ravine.

"What was that?" asked Livingstone, drawing his pistol from its holster.

"Enemies, you may well believe," said Ben, calmly, as he got down and picked up his hat that had been knocked from his head.

In an instant he was in the saddle, but scarcely had he seated himself than a party of horsemen rode out of the woods a few rods ahead of them and completely blocked the way.

"They are not soldiers," said Clinton.

"No, they are Tories," said Ben. "Let's at them."

In a moment the horses were formed in a line and moved forward to meet the enemy.

"Halt!" shouted the leader, who was disguised.

"Who are you?" asked Ben.

"Friends of the king," replied Hart Marble, for it was he, at the head of his Tory troop.

"That decides it!" replied Ben. "Forward, boys, let us show them our mettle."

With a wild huzzah the gallant horsemen drew their swords or pistols and charged upon the enemy, who resolutely blocked the way.

"Git up, dar!" shouted Pete, drawing his big sword and slapping his old horse with it.

The Tories fired a volley as our boys advanced. It produced no serious damage, and before they had time to draw their swords they were on them at full tilt, breaking their line and throwing them into momentary confusion.

Ben and his horse Blazer led the way, and the noble beast seemed to understand it all, for in an instant he rode upon the horse on which Marble was seated and bore him to the ground, while Ben slashed him with his sword and gave him a wound from which the blood flowed freely.

The others were soon engaged, and a wild hand-to-hand fight followed. Ben, as soon as he had recovered himself after his first successful encounter, wheeled his fiery charger and rode at full speed upon a large, powerful man who was engaged with George Livingstone, about to overcome

him, owing partially to his horse, who was greatly frightened.

One blow from Ben's good sword cut the enemy's arm and his sabre fell clanking to the earth.

"Give it to them, boys!" shouted Ben. "Now we have them! Never surrender!"

"That we won't!" was the plucky response.

"May I fight, Marser Ben?" asked Pete, who had as yet taken no part in the fray.

"Yes, go in, Pete!"

"All right, Marser Ben. Look out fo' me dar, fo' I'se bad!" he yelled, drawing his sword and slapping his old horse on the flanks with it. "Go on, dar!"

He rode to where three of the enemy had surrounded young Clinton, and were forcing him and his horse back over a ravine, and was just in time to knock one of them out of his saddle, and to pop over another with a shot from his pistol, thereby rescuing Clinton, who spurred his horse out of the dangerous position, joining again in the fray like a young lion, for he was a powerful youth and his blood was up.

Blazes seemed to be possessed of a demon's spirit after he got a smell of blood, and had his young rider been less an expert horseman than he was he would have been thrown. His eyes shone like balls of fire; his nostrils were widely distended, and every sinew of his frame stood out like whipcords as he charged upon the enemy, horse and rider, throwing himself upon them, biting, kicking and in various ways terrifying all who came in contact with him. The horses rode by Livingstone, Clinton and Crocker imitated his example, and did almost as much toward the victory as their riders did.

Nor must Pete's horse be forgotten. He was a huge, powerful animal, and after getting fully roused managed to disable two horses with his terrible teeth and heavy heels.

"Quarter!" shouted one of the troop.

"Never!" replied Ben. "At them again, the bloody Tories!"

"Quarter!" cried three or four others, for four of their number were either killed or disabled, and, as yet, neither of the boy horsemen had been unseated or wounded to any serious extent.

"Throw down your arms, then!" cried Ben, as each of his comrades presented a pistol or musket.

"We surrender!" was the reply; and pistols and swords were thrown to the ground.

"Pete, get down and bring them to us," said Ben.

"Yu! yu! yu! I do dat putty quick, Marser Ben," replied the nimble ducky, throwing himself from his saddle.

Going to where the discomfited Tories had thrown down their arms, he picked up the swords and pistols and brought them to the victors, giving each the arms of the enemy.

When this was done he girded another sword upon his own waist, making one each side, and again mounted his horse.

"Now, then, let us see who is wounded and who is dead," said Ben. "But, first of all, who of our party is harmed?"

"I have an ugly cut on my shoulder," said Harry Crocker.

"And I have one here that is something," said Livingstone, pointing to his leg, that had received a severe thrust and was bleeding freely.

"Well, I guess mine is not bad," said Ben, taking off his hat and feeling a wound on his head that was also bleeding.

"But Marser Baldwin!" said Pete, pointing to the young man who had received a severe wound on his neck.

"Pete, tie a handkerchief around it right away. And, boys, load up your pieces before moving, for we have got a treacherous foe to deal with, and we must keep them in hand," said Ben.

Pete rode up beside young Baldwin and tied a handkerchief around his neck, while the others proceeded to load their guns and pistols, without stirring from their positions.

The vanquished and astonished Tories sat on their horses without moving. That they had been beaten by an equal number of boys, they being all men, was something they could hardly comprehend, and they looked at each other for an explanation.

"What are you going to do with us?" asked one of them as Ben rode proudly toward them.

"Consider yourselves as prisoners of war, and we will decide what to do with you," replied Ben.

"But you cannot make us prisoners of war," said another, a young farmer whom Ben knew well.

"Oh, we can't, can't we, Tom Collin? Well, we have taken you prisoners, and we will deliver you to General Arnold. So you see we can, now that we have the advantage."

"You are a rebel cur!" replied Collin.

"Take that back or I'll fill a Tory grave with you!" said Ben, covering him with his horse-pistol.

"I—I do. I—I ask your pardon," said he.

"All right; but let me hear no more of what you have to say. Cover them, boys, while I see who are fallen," said he, turning to his comrades.

"We will," said they, and Ben rode to where Hart Marble lay, some three rods away.

"So, so, our good Tory friend, Hart Marble!" said he, tearing a black mask from the face of the severely wounded man.

"Your bitterest foe, Ben Parkhurst!" hissed he.

"All right; you are wounded now, and although I suspect that you are the leader of this attack, you are now safe from further harm at my hands. Let me bind up your wounds."

"Never! I'd sooner die!" replied Marble.

"All right," said Ben, taking away his sword and pistol.

"Let me bind them up," said Livingstone, getting down from his horse.

Marble and Livingstone were cousins, and he made no objections to having him dress his wound, although he pleaded hard to be sent back home again.

"No; our relationship does not come deep enough for that," replied young Livingstone, with much spirit. "You are an enemy of our cause, and my voice shall not be raised against giving you just what you would have given us had we been captured at your hands."

"Curse the unsteady hand that made me miss that rascal, Ben Parkhurst!" he hissed, as he writhed with the pain of his wound.

Clark Morton and Thomas Borgi were the only ones killed.

The wounds of the others were soon dressed, and these two worthless fellows, halfbreed Indians, and without home or friends, were buried by the roadside, after which everybody was mounted again and the line of march taken up for Hudson.

The gallant Ben rode in advance, followed by the disarmed prisoners, after which rode his faithful and brave companions.

It was now about four o'clock in the afternoon, and under favorable circumstances it would have been a sharp ride to the town of Hudson, and after going on for two or three miles they came upon a farmhouse.

The farmer and his family stood in the door as they approached, wondering what was afoot, and to which party the cavalcade belonged, to the patriot or to the British.

Ben rode up in advance and questioned him:

"Whig or Tory?" was his first salutation.

"Who are you?" asked the farmer timidly, for he had suffered much for his opinions and inclinations, and was cautious about declaring himself.

"Patriot soldiers!" replied Ben proudly, while the others rode up and halted.

"Be precious careful, Jedediah," put in his wife, who stood tremblingly by. "You can't tell who's who in these days."

"Ah, Mr. Filley, is that you?" asked young Livingstone, riding up closer.

"Why, George Livingstone, is that you?" asked the old man, in astonishment.

"To be sure it is."

"And is this your party?"

"Yes, this is my party, and these are our Tory prisoners," said the young man, pointing to the crestfallen horsemen who accompanied them.

"Great Jericho! You don't say so?"

"Yes, indeed. We started to join General Gates, and these fellows thought to capture us and hand us over to the British."

"Great guns, wife, shout! Bring the gals all out an' make 'em holler. They are really friends. I'd take young George Livingstone's word for my life. Bring out the gals!"

In a few moments six buxom girls, ranging from twelve to twenty-two, swarmed out of the farmhouse and gave the young troops a right earnest Yankee welcome, while the old farmer and his wife flew around in great excitement, hardly knowing which way to turn or what to do.

They shook the hands of the patriot troop and pressed them to dismount and partake of their hospitality, and have

their wounds dressed, and after a moment's consultation it was decided to accept of the invitations.

The beautiful daughters of the honest old farmer spared no pains, and with tender hands they dressed the wounds of both friend and foe, after which a hearty meal was prepared and the story of the fight told over.

"By the greatest gosh!" said the old farmer, taking the hand of our hero, Ben, "I never was so glad in my life. I have only two sons and they are with Putnam, and here is my heart and hand to help you on in your good cause."

Ben related over again the particulars of the encounter in which they had come off victors, and then asked the old man's advice regarding the disposition of their prisoners.

"I would like to get them to West Point and into the hands of General Arnold," said Ben.

"He is the man to take care of them," replied the old man firmly, for at that time General Benedict Arnold was the idol of the patriots. "But you are mistaken; General Putnam is in command of West Point."

"Ah, so he is. I forgot. Well, how can we get them there?"

"I hardly know, young man. Things are mighty skeery hereabouts these times. We don't know the day or the hour that we may not be pounced upon by the enemy. Both friends and foes march past our house and we are kept in a continual state of excitement. But there is a chance."

"When? Who? What?" asked Ben quickly.

"Old Cap'n Sol Smith has his sloop just below here, and if he can be persuaded——"

"Where is he? Take me to him at once."

"All right; we'll go and see him. He is a true blue," replied the old farmer.

In a few moments they were in the saddle and galloping through a by-way toward the banks of the river.

Farmer Filley rode in advance, and when he had reached a bald hill that stood up over the river, he gave a peculiar whistle that was instantly answered from the deck of the sloop that was anchored near the shore.

In a few moments a small boat put out from her toward the shore, and the farmer got down and went close to the beach.

The boat contained but a single person—the renowned Captain Sol Smith, the patriot river spy.

The conversation between the two patriots was earnest and subdued; but after talking for ten or fifteen minutes the farmer returned to where Ben sat in his saddle waiting for him.

"It is all right. Get your prisoners down here as quickly as possible, and Cap'n Sol says he will run 'em down to West Point to-night."

"Good enough," said Ben, and back they galloped to the farmhouse.

It was now nearly dark, and as soon as the shades of night settled around the prisoners were taken down to the edge of the river and placed on board the sloop, with their hands firmly bound, and a bandage placed over their mouths so that no outcry could alarm the lurking enemy.

On board the sloop were about a dozen patriots, who, under their indomitable captain, were acting the double part of smugglers and patriots.

After all were on board, the tide and wind serving, the prisoners were placed under the hatch and the sails hoisted.

Silently as a ghost did the sloop steal away, and after watching her out of sight, the boy horsemen returned to the house of the patriot farmer.

Being relieved of their prisoners, the young men had a better opportunity to attend to themselves and their horses; but after a long consultation, regarding the dangers to be encountered on the road, it was resolved to remain at the farmhouse all night and take an early start the next morning.

And a merry evening they had of it; the old farmer and his lovely daughters doing all in their power to make them happy and comfortable, to soothe the pain of their wounds, and to preserve their courage and daring in this their first encounter with the enemy.

Ben was greatly taken with one of the daughters, Evelina, as were the others with the beautiful sisters.

After supper, and after the horses had been all seen to for the night, the party gathered in the "best room" of the farmhouse and indulged in games and animated conversation, while Pete was recounting his adventures to Dinah, the colored servant, in the kitchen, and convincing her that he was the greatest man since Pompey.

It was nearly ten o'clock when the girls brought out each a different colored ribbon and tied it into the button-hole of the boys' coats.

These were to be their colors—to be fought for and preserved until they again met, and the young men accepted them with enthusiasm, and kissed the givers.

Pete was decorated with a piece of Dinah's old red garter; but nothing could have made him prouder, and he swore to defend and bring it back to her again.

While the festivities were at their height, the old farmer rushed hurriedly into the room.

"Hush!" said he.

"What is it?" asked several.

"The enemy, I fear! Quick!"

"This way, boys, to the barn! Secure your horses in spite of everything!" said Ben, stealing cautiously out of the back door.

"Put out the candles!"

"Courage, boys!"

"Remember us!" said the girls, and in an instant the lights were extinguished and the company dispersed.

CHAPTER IV.

A DARK NIGHT'S ENCOUNTER.

Slippery Ben was the first to reach the barn where their horses were feeding. Those of their prisoners had been turned into a pasture adjoining the barn.

Blazes recognized him with a friendly whinny.

In an instant, dark as it was, Ben had adjusted the bridle and stood with the bit in his hand. Livingstone, Clinton and the others stole quietly into the barn, and finding their horses bridled them without scarcely exchanging a word or making any unseemly noise.

"Where is Pete?" asked Ben, in a whisper.

"I don't know," replied Crocker.

"Never mind; keep perfectly still and listen."

Some stood outside of the barn and others grasped the bridles of their horses inside of it, while feeling to make sure that their arms were ready for instant use.

At length a figure approached Ben. The keen eyes and ears of his horse, Blazes, detected it, or Ben might never have lived to bestride him again.

"Who goes there?" demanded Ben quickly. "Speak or I'll fire," said he, seizing his pistol.

The reply was the report of a musket and the whir of a bullet in close proximity to our hero's head.

But Ben's shot was not an instant behind, and with a wild yell the figure threw up his arms and started for the turnpike. Three more shots from the pistols of the other boys flew after the fleeing figure, at one of which the same wild yell replied, showing that he had again been hit.

The old farmer crept softly out to where Ben stood.

"It was an Indian," said he, in a whisper.

"An Indian! Are you sure?"

"Yes; I know that cry from all others."

"But what was he lurking around here for?"

"I suspect that he is a spy."

"For who?"

"The British, I suspect, for they employ them for such devilish work."

Just then Pete approached from the cross lots, although they could not recognize him in the darkness.

"Stand!" shouted Clinton, leveling his pistol at the approaching figure. "Who goes there?"

"Dis yer am me," replied Pete.

"It's Pete," said Ben. "Come here, Pete."

The faithful darky approached.

"Where have you been?"

"Jus' down de road heah, an', gracious golly——"

"Hush! Speak lower," said Farmer Filley.

"What is it?"

"Dat yer red debbil am down heah in de road, chawin' de dirt, shua, Marser Ben," replied Pete, in an excited whisper.

"Are you sure?"

"Shua as wax. I jus' seed him fall."

"Killed?"

"Dat yer las' shot wur more dan he could carry, an' he tumbled down wid it, shua."

"Stop!" said Ben as two or three of the boys started as though to go and see for themselves. "Never mind him; let us look to ourselves. He is undoubtedly a spy sent out by some British soldiers who are lurking in the neighborhood, and they may attack us. Pete, you steal cautiously

down the road. Keep your eyes and ears wide open and see what you can learn. In case you find out anything, come back and report to us right away. If you are surprised, fire your gun and when you approach this place where we shall remain until we hear from you, answer 'Beavertail' whenever any of our party challenges you."

"So I will, Marser Ben."

"Be careful and watch the dead Indian."

"Goshermighty! I ken get de best ob him, anyway," replied Pete, grinning all over himself.

"That is not the point. If he is a spy, those who employed him are not far away and they will most likely come to see what has happened to him."

"By gosh! I s'peck he done gone so dat he can't tell nuffin' 'bout it. But away I go!" said he, starting for the farmhouse, where he somehow knew that Dinah was waiting for him.

"Stop a moment."

"Yes, Marser Ben."

"If anybody approaches you too near, you say, 'Who goes there?' and if they say 'Beavertail,' all right. Do you understand?"

"Yes, Marser Ben."

"Well, go ahead," and Pete started toward the house.

The moment he was gone Ben and the others held a consultation.

"What shall we do now?" he asked of Mr. Filley. "Is there any place where we can secrete our horses?"

"There is a thick chestnut grove down here a few rods," replied the farmer.

"Where? How is it situated?"

"On a knoll."

"Good. Lead us to it."

"Hush! This way," said the old man, raising his hand to abjure silence and starting across lots to a pasture back of his barn.

The young cavalymen led their horses after him, and in a few moments they reached a wooded knoll, a hill almost, and going around gained it from the rear.

It was indeed a splendid place for concealment, for the trees were large and grew close together, and a thick underbrush, as high as a horse's head, grew up so that nothing could be seen from the turnpike.

In this copse the horses were quickly tethered and for a time all danger averted.

"Now," said Ben, "we must throw out pickets. You, Frank, go up the road and I will go down to assist Pete. Remember the password, 'Beavertail,' and mind that you are not surprised."

"All right, Ben," said young Clinton, preparing to obey orders.

"And the rest of you remain here and see to the horses," added Ben, starting away.

He had gone scarcely a rod when the report of a musket greeted their ears.

"That was Pete's old gun. I know its report as well as I do my mother's voice. On second thought, we had better leave the horses here and take up a position in Farmer Filley's house, as that will be attacked, if anything. The horses are out of sight and safe. Come."

Without a word they followed Ben to the farmhouse and disappeared within.

"I'll go and see what that shot meant. Two shots in rapid succession from my rifle and pistol will be a signal for you to come. Otherwise you remain here out of sight and put out all lights," said he, as parting instructions to Livingstone.

Darting into the shade of some shrubbery, which made the darkness all the more intense, he started along the inside of the fence that bordered the turnpike, and was soon out of sight in the shadows of the dangerous midnight.

The arms that had been taken from the party of Tories under the lead of Hart Marble were loaded, and each one of the farmer's brave daughters grasped one and stood ready to die if needs be by the side of the young patriots.

Ben had proceeded but a short distance before the smell of powder convinced him that he was not far from where the last shot was fired.

Creeping behind a tree, he peered cautiously around and listened with acute ears for some sound that would guide his next move.

For a long time he waited, but not a sound was heard to disturb the stillness of the awful suspense.

The thought flashed over his mind that it might have been

Pete who fell by the last shot instead of firing it, and the suspicious nerved him to move farther down the road to take observations.

Softly as a mouse and as slyly as a fox did he creep along on his hands and knees until he reached another clump of trees, where the darkness was more dense.

Here he waited for five or ten minutes, and hearing nothing but the chirp of the crickets or the monotonous song of the tree-toads, he ventured to reach still another clump of shrubbery a few yards farther down the turnpike.

Just as he was on the point of concealing himself a deep voice spoke:

"Who go dar?"

"Ben," was the reply.

"Oh, by gosh! Am dat you, Marser Ben?"

"Yes, Pete, it's me. Who fired the last shot?"

"I did, Marser Ben."

"What for?"

"Anoder one of dem yer pesky red devils come a-smellin' aroun' dat oder one, an' I couldn't help pilin' him on top ob him, dat's all."

"And you have done so?"

"Goshermighty, Marser Ben, I draw'd a bead on him wid dis yer ole musket, an' he lay right down widout sayin' nuffin, an' I gues she arn't got nuffin to say."

"Gracious!"

"Did I do wrong, Marser Ben?" he asked, in a tone almost pathetic.

"No, Pete; but let us listen."

"Golly, Marser Ben, I'se got ears big as a coon skin ter-night," said Pete.

"That's right. Hark! Isn't that the sound of horses' hoofs?" he asked suddenly.

"Whist! By golly, yes, an' dar am mo' dan one set of hoofs, too," replied Pete, placing his ear to the ground.

"Are you sure?"

"As shua as wax, Marser Ben."

"Where are the dead Indians?"

"Down dar in de road, 'bout free rods," said he, pointing down the turnpike.

"Hark! They approach!"

The clatter of hoofs sounded nearer and nearer as the riders came galloping up the dark turnpike.

Arriving at the fallen bodies of the Indian spies, their horses gave loud snorts of fright and stopped suddenly, refusing to proceed farther.

Just beyond there was a clearing, and as they came in front of it Ben had no trouble in making out that they were not Indians but a troop of British cavalry, fifteen or twenty of them, most likely out on a foraging raid.

As they all drew rein close by where their spies lay dead, Ben could catch their voices plainly enough to understand that they were British soldiers, and that they were greatly surprised at the fate which had overtaken the Indians.

"Caution!" he heard their leader say, "we may be right in the midst of the rascals. Sergeant Bolliver, proceed slowly and cautiously up the road and reconnoitre."

The horseman indicated spurred his horse past the dead bodies, at which he was so frightened, and came slowly toward our friends.

"Shall I pink him, Marser Ben?" asked Pete.

"No, no; I am not certain yet who they are. Let us return to the farmhouse."

"All right, Marser Ben, but if yer jes' lieves I can fetch him down out ob dat saddle."

"No, no; hush! Follow me."

Pete crouched down and crept after his leader.

CHAPTER V.

FACE TO FACE WITH THE ENEMY.

The horseman was almost abreast of them, walking his horse along the road and peering into the darkness on either side.

Ben and Pete were obliged to pass an opening which betrayed them against the light horizon. The picket caught sight of them instantly.

"Stand! Who goes there?" he cried.

"Keep down your gun, Pete; don't you fire until I tell you to," said Ben, in a whisper.

"Speak, or I'll fire!" added the horseman.

"I'll get the first shot," said Ben, turning with his little rifle.

The next instant a crack rang out upon the silent air and that rider reeled and fell from his saddle.

"Quick! regain the farmhouse!" said Ben, leading the way.

"Gosh, but dis yer am gettin' numerous!" muttered Pete, as he followed his captain.

Close behind them they could hear the quick clatter of hoofs, and knowing that the alarmed cavalymen were following at high speed, they flew over the space intervening between them and the farmhouse like deers.

They regained it, gave the countersign, and were being admitted just as the troop of horsemen came in front of the house.

"Who are you in there? Speak!" demanded the captain of the troop, reining up his horse in front of the house, which sat back about two rods from the road.

"American soldiers!" replied Ben, from an open window. "Who are you?"

"Soldiers of the king. Surrender at once!"

A volley of musketry greeted his demand, fired from every window of the house. The captain fell, pierced by half a dozen bullets—and just then the remainder of the troop came up.

"Form!" shouted the next in command. "Ready—fire!"

The command was instantly obeyed, and a dozen bullets were lodged in the house, but without injuring any one—and the next moment a reply was made from the mouths of a dozen pistols, muskets and guns, which toppled four riders out of their saddles.

Confusion would have seized less soldierly men than the British were, but they were veterans and knew no such word as fail.

"Draw sabres—charge!" was the next order, and the quick clank of swords, followed by the urging of horses, convinced the patriots that the supreme moment had arrived.

Over the fence the horses leaped, but before they reached the house another volley killed or wounded one-half of them, and the horses of the remainder became panic-stricken and refused to follow.

"Surrender or we will fire again!" shouted Ben.

"We surrender!" replied three or four of the survivors.

"Throw down your arms!"

The command was obeyed. Pete and Livingstone sprang out to secure them.

"Dismount!"

With a growl the command was complied with, after which the candles were lighted in the farmhouse and the prisoners marched in.

The leader was a tall, battle-scarred grenadier, who had seen years of service, and as he gazed around on the company of boys and girls to whom he had been obliged to surrender, he could scarcely restrain his wrath.

"Where are your soldiers?" he asked in a sneering tone as Ben demanded his sword.

"We are all here, sir," was the proud reply.

"Only boys and girls?"

"That is all. But isn't that enough?"

"It seems so. Young man, consider me a prisoner of war, but I had much rather you would kill me than to have the story get abroad that I was taken by a lot of boys."

"And girls, if you please, for these brave girls have done a full share toward it," said Ben, waving his hand toward them.

"Shoot me and I will thank you," said the humbled grenadier bitterly.

"Oh, no; for that would belittle us. But we will leave you here in charge of these young ladies while we attend to your dead and wounded," said Ben.

"Good heavens; and is there only five of us left?" he exclaimed, looking around.

"We will see," replied Ben, going from the room.

The farmer and several of the boys had already begun to minister to the wounded soldiers, and those still alive were soon removed to the farmhouse, while the dead were taken to the barn and placed upon the floor.

The wounded numbered eight; the dead, six, which, with the prisoners, made up the number of the scouting troop of nineteen who started away from the main army of Burgoyne the day before, both for the purpose of foraging upon the patriots and intercepting any recruits that might be sent to join Gates' army.

The farmer's daughters moved about like ministering angels, and soon the wounded were made as comfortable as they could be without the services of a surgeon.

But before anything was satisfactorily arranged the first streaks of morning began to flicker up the East, heralding the approach of day.

The five surviving cavalymen, who were held as prisoners, chafed and fumed at being captured and detained by a company of boys. Had there been only boys in the party it would not have galled them so much; but the fear of its becoming known that they were captured by a band of boys and girls made them almost wild.

This was especially the case with Corporal Bunce, the one who had led the last charge. He had been a soldier for more than twenty years, and had won much renown for bravery and daring in the face of obstinate enemies, and this turn in affairs chafed him greatly.

"Well, young man, what are you going to do with us?" he said, after his wounded had all been taken care of.

"Sir!" said Ben, glaring at him.

"I trust you understood me," said he.

"No, sir, I did not understand you."

"Did I not speak plainly enough?"

"You spoke disrespectfully," said Evelina Filley, who stood leaning on Ben's arm at the moment.

"How so?"

"This is Captain Parkhurst," said she.

"Oh! ha! Captain Parkhurst, hey?" said the grenadier, looking down upon the boy hero.

"Yes, sir; and if you have any questions to ask you will please address me properly," said Ben, with much spirit.

"Oh, well, I suppose I must submit to it; and assuming that—"

"Assuming nothing, sir. I am captain of your captors, and if you wish any information you will please address me properly."

"Well, Captain Parkhurst, what do you propose doing with us?" said he reluctantly.

"Well, Corporal Bunce, I propose to take you to General Gates. Have you any objections?"

"Well, no; provided you will promise me one thing."

"What is that?"

"That it shall not become known that we were taken by a company of boys and girls," said the corporal, with bitter emphasis.

"No, sir, that I cannot promise. These young ladies have taken a heroic part in this fight and they shall have the honor of it. But you need not blush, Corporal Bunce, for I will at the same time report that you fought to the very last, and under difficulties."

"Well, as you say; but it is very hard."

"Is it?" said Evelina, placing her hand on the arm of the brave soldier.

"I have only to submit, my dear girl."

"Be good enough to address her as 'my dear lady,'" said Ben.

"My dear lady," replied the corporal, half mockingly.

While this conversation was going on the other boys had taken the horses from the copse on the knoll and brought them down to the farmhouse.

A hasty breakfast was provided and partaken of by friend and foe, and as the first rays of the sun peeped over the hills the whole company was ready for the saddle and stood waiting for a start.

The prisoners were mounted on their own horses, although they were entirely unarmed, and the leave-taking between the boy horsemen and the farmer and his daughters was of the most emotional character.

In a few moments, and just as the sun graced the fair face of nature, the whole troop, consisting of both prisoners and victors, were under way toward Hudson, leaving the dead and wounded in the hands of Farmer Filley and his family, to be buried and cared for as he and his neighbor should elect.

CHAPTER VI.

AT THE SEAT OF WAR.

Captain Ben Parkhurst (for he bravely won the title which his comrades were glad to bestow upon him) led the way toward Hudson, then only a little hamlet.

They arrived there early in the morning, and after reporting to the provincial agent, and finding the way partially clear, they pushed on with their prisoners toward Albany.

The way was beset with Tories, and in one or two instances with regular troops, but with the maneuvering of Slippery Ben the whole troop managed to pass on without serious difficulty, and reached the outskirts of Albany without another fight.

But from Albany to Saratoga, where General Gates' army was encamped, it required the utmost skill and the most unblushing strategy to get through.

Ben Parkhurst proved himself equal to the emergency, however, and at the end of the third day after leaving Poughkeepsie, he had the honor of reporting to General Gates and of turning over his prisoners.

The enthusiasm and wonder, as the boy troop of horsemen rode into camp, was great, and as their story was retold from company to company, they speedily became heroes.

General Arnold was one of the first to be introduced to hero Ben, and as the boy and veteran exchanged sentiments the hero of a dozen fights took off his hat and acknowledged Ben as his peer in dash and bravery.

General Gates was much taken with the brave boy troop, as was General Morgan, the commander of the then celebrated rifle corps, known as Morgan's Brigade.

All through the camp the fame of the boy troop spread and wherever both him and General Gates were they actively engaged in studying each other's tactics and maneuvers.

Spies were employed on both sides to learn each other's movements, and General Gates was surrounded by a band of daring spirits ready to do his bidding and take any chance for their country's sake.

Ben and his troops were encamped close to the headquarters and during the two or three days that intervened between their arrival and the first battle of Bemis Heights, they enjoyed themselves in the face of anything new and exciting.

Especially was this the case with the negro, Pete. His brave deeds had been told, and he was looked upon as a shady hero throughout the entire camp. This of course, puffed him up until he felt as big as an elephant.

But he kept everybody in good humor with his quaint sayings, and in this way served as good a purpose as the fame of a dozen victories could have done.

The next day the battle of Bemis Heights was fought, and Arnold, with Ben Parkhurst and his brave boys as followers, achieved prodigies of valor, and forced the enemy back to the position he had occupied before in the morning.

"Arnold and his devils have snatched a brilliant victory from me," said Burgoyne, after the battle of the day was over. "If he and those dare-devil boys were out of the way I could ride straight over Gates."

At the close of the day both armies occupied the same positions they had occupied in the morning, the prestige of victory resting on the American army, since they had been attacked and forced the enemy back into the camp from which they started, confident of an easy victory.

That night, after all was over, General Gates called a council of war, and on account of the bravery he had displayed during the day's fight, and the former fame he had won by capturing the band of Tories and the foraging troop of regulars, Ben Parkhurst was admitted to it.

The general position of the enemy was understood, but the sentries had reported since sundown that the grenadiers, under Ackland, had changed their position, and as they were the most effective portion of the enemy's army, it was necessary to find out what new position they had taken up in order to pit Arnold and Morgan against them.

"The danger is great," said General Gates, after listening to the reports of his officers, "for the very center, almost, of the enemy's position must be penetrated in order to find out what I wish to learn. Now, who will volunteer to go?" he added.

A moment of intense silence followed, and each veteran looked in the other's face.

"Who will take his life in his hands and penetrate the enemy's line?" again asked General Gates.

"I will," said Ben, coming forward.

"You, Captain Parkhurst?"

"Yes, I will go."

"But you know the danger?"

"I do. I wouldn't go at all if there wasn't danger enough connected with it to make it interesting. Give me but my horse, Blazes, and my servant, Pete Sunflower, and I will undertake the task," said he bravely.

A generous cheer went up from that band of patriot officers.

"I am only a boy, and if I am lost it will not be so much as it would if a man were taken."

"That may be questioned, my brave young hero; but if you will undertake to find out where Major Ackland's brigade of grenadiers have moved to it will enable me to prepare for the morrow," said General Gates, rising and taking him by the hand.

"I will give my energy and my life to it, General," replied Ben.

"That is enough. Set out at once."

"I will do so, general."

In a few moments Blazes was before the general's tent, together with Pete and his astonishing old rack-a-bones, and after receiving his final instructions and being provided with the password, Ben and Pete started out into the darkness toward the enemy's lines.

CHAPTER VII.

WITHIN THE ENEMY'S LINES.

Being provided with the password, our hero, Ben Parkhurst, otherwise known as "Slippery Ben," accompanied by his faithful servant, Pete Sunflower, started out on his dangerous mission.

"Pete, do you know the mission we are on?" he asked, after they had passed the outer pickets of the American army.

"Specs it's somefins dat habn't much fun in it," replied the faithful negro.

"You are right, Pete, and I want you to swear to me that you will follow me through thick and thin," said he.

"I swar, Marser Ben, dat I'll be made a sieve ob by British bullets afore I'll leave you," said Pete.

"That is sufficient, I take you at your word; now come on. Remember the color that Dinah placed in your buttonhole."

"Next to you, Master Ben, I'll fight for dat until I can't open an eye."

"I believe you. Hark!"

They both stopped and listened.

They were by this time nearly half a mile from the American lines, and just bordering on the British.

"Caution, Pete! Here, come this way; there is a road leading off here somewhere, and we had better be found upon the highway than elsewhere," saying which Ben led the way along the road.

They rode cautiously along for about a quarter of a mile, almost at right angles with the course they had first taken, and at length they approached a farmhouse.

A solitary light was burning near the kitchen window Ben reined up in front of the house and listened. All was silent as the grave. Not a soul seemed to be about.

"Take my bridle, Pete," said he at length.

The negro obeyed, and Ben threw himself from the saddle and approached the house.

He rapped smartly on the kitchen door where the light was burning by the window.

Twice he rapped but there was no response.

"Better bus' in de door, I guess," said Pete.

Again he rapped and listened.

This time he heard a movement within, and soon a woman's face appeared at the window.

"Who is there?" she asked.

"A friend," replied Ben.

"What do you wish?"

"Only a drink of water."

"But you are a spy," said the woman.

"For whom?"

"I know not. But I have been fooled by so many subterfuges that I cannot trust anybody. My husband and two sons have been carried away by the British, who claimed at first to be our friends, and am I left here alone."

"You need have no fear, madam, we are not British."

"I do not know that."

"But will you tell me one thing?"

"I don't know; what may it be?"

"Has Major Ackland's grenadiers passed this way?"

"I do not know."

"What division was it that took your husband and sons?"

"I cannot tell."

"But they were British troops?"

"Yes, that I am sure of."

"But why did they take them?"

"Because they suspected them of being Sons of Liberty."

"I will not ask you whether they were or not, but simply ask you for a drink of water."

The woman hesitated.

"A little water for myself and servant, and our horses. You surely would not refuse that?"

"No; for be you friend or foe, you can do me no further harm," said the woman, coming to the door and opening it.

"Madam, I thank you in the name of a good American mother," said Ben as he entered and followed her toward the well.

"An American mother?" she asked, with considerable emphasis in her words.

"The best one in America, and one would give shelter, any time, to a man who was fighting for Liberty."

"She must be very good."

"Heaven never made a better one."

"And her name is?"

"Aurelia Parkhurst."

"What! Aurelia Parkhurst of Poughkeepsie?" asked the woman, with much earnestness.

"The same. Do you know her?"

"Why should I not! The same mother gave us birth."

"What! Are you my mother's sister?"

"And are you the son of Aurelia Parkhurst?"

"I am, thank heaven."

"Then you are my nephew. Come back closer to the light," said she, taking him by the arm and leading him back. "Yes, I see you now; and I know you, although you have grown wonderfully since I saw you last," and in the excess of her delight she folded him in her arms, lovingly.

"Then we have no further cause for fear between us. I am a spy, sent out by General Gates to find the location of Major Ackland's division, and it is very fortunate that we have thus met."

"So it is, Benjamin. Tell me first, is your mother and sister well?"

"All well, and they bade me God-speed in this enterprise of being a soldier in the cause of American Independence."

"As I would have done myself."

"But you do not know, Aunt Ruth, what division it was that last marched by here, do you?"

"No, Ben. Some of them called at the house, and after stripping it of everything they could eat or drink they hurried on, taking your uncle and cousins with them."

"What time was this?"

"Just before dark."

"And which way did they go?"

"By the main turnpike toward Saratoga."

"How many of them were there, do you think?"

"I cannot tell. But I should say two thousand, horse and afoot."

"Well, Aunt Ruth, I must learn just where they are encamped. How can you help me in the matter?"

"I do not know, Ben," said she.

"Have you a farm wagon?"

"Yes, it stands out there by the barn."

"And have you any vegetables?"

"Ben, they took everything but about a bushel of potatoes and a few onions that lay out in the woodshed. Why?"

"But you have hay and straw in the barn, have you not?"

"They took all the hay; but I think there is some straw out in the barn."

"And can I make use of it?"

"Why, yes, Ben, do anything you like."

"Thanks. Show me the way to the barn, please."

"This way," said she, taking him fondly by the hand and leading him out across the road to where the barn was.

Pete followed, wonderingly.

"I wonder if there is a harness here?" said Ben.

"Yes, if they have not stolen it. No, here it is, although they have taken the horse."

"All right. Lead the horses this way, Pete."

"I'se coming, Marser Ben."

"Take the saddle off your horse and let us harness him to this wagon," said he.

In a few moments Pete's old rack-a-bones was harnessed into the shafts of the quaint old farm wagon. Blazes was placed in the stall lately occupied by the farmer's stolen horse, and when all was in readiness they filled up the wagon-body with straw, piling it up good and high.

"Now what?" asked his aunt.

"I must look as much like a farmer as possible."

"How will you do it?"

"If I had some of my cousin's clothes, for if I mistake not he is about my age."

"Two years older, Ben."

"Well, his clothes will fit me pretty well, I guess."

"Yes, only they will be a trifle large."

"And that is just as I could wish. Come, show me to them at once. Pete, lead the horse up to the house," said he.

"Yes, shua, Marser Ben," said the darky, taking the old horse by the head and starting along, or rather attempting to do so.

"Come 'long hea, you ole fool," said he, jerking at the bit, for the horse was not inclined to move at first to go in such a rig. "Come 'long dah! Maybe you're too proud fo' to go in dis yer style. Come 'long, or I'll cave in some o' yer ribs wid a butt in yer belly. Come 'long!"

It required much urging on Pete's part to get his horse along, although he finally succeeded in coaxing him up to the farmhouse.

By this time Ben had assumed the dress of a rough farmer and had received all the instructions that his aunt could give him.

"Here we are, Pete," said he, cheerily.

"Ya, hea we is."

"Be very careful, Ben," said his aunt as he leaped into the wagon.

"I will. Be good to Blazes until I return."

"Yes, yes, Ben; but will you ever return?" said she, with much emotion.

"Oh, I guess so. Have you got your pistol, Pete?" he asked, turning to the darky who had taken a seat by his side.

"All loaded an' primed, Marser Ben."

"Good. Yes, Aunt Ruth, I will be careful."

"Do, for your poor mother's sake."

"God bless you!"

"Good-by," said Ben, and giving the old horse a slap, he started away at a wild pace, leaving his aunt standing there, looking like one who was in a dream.

"Good for old rack-a-bones!" said Ben, as the horse sped along.

"Got some good stuff in him, if he be so mighty homely," suggested Pete.

"That is so. Beauty is not alone virtuous, Pete. But now we must be on our guard, and whatever happens, pass ourselves off for farmers, bent on selling our load of straw. Do you understand?"

"Yes, Marser Ben, we's staw merchants."

"Now remember it. We came from a farm near Balston; understand?"

"Yes; jes' so I lived in Balston all my life."

"Good gracious! how the old horse is going!" said he, pulling hard on the reins.

"Stand!" shouted a voice just ahead of them, and the next instant a sentry walked out into the middle of the road, presenting his musket.

Ben, with Pete's assistance, pulled up the old nag and brought him to a standstill.

"Who goes there?" shouted the sentry.

"Friends, I guess. Who are you?" he asked in a voice that was a good imitation of the green farmer.

"Advance!"

Ben chirruped up the horse until he stood within a few feet of the sentry.

"Who are you, and where are you going?" demanded the sentry, savagely.

"Farmers, mister, that's all."

"Where are you going?"

"Goin' ter the army."

"What army?"

"Major Ackland's, I guess. Leastways I hear he's 'round here somewhere."

"What have you in your wagon?"

"Nice, clean straw for beds."

"Bah!" said the sentry, who was evidently disappointed at not finding something to eat.

"I hearn tell as how the major wanted straw for beds, an' so I thought as how I'd bring along a load. How far is it to his headquarters?"

"None of your business."

"But I tell you, I hearn tell as how he wanted some nice, clean straw," said Ben, with a fine, nasal twang.

"Well, go inside of the lines," said the sentry, turning away with evident disgust.

"But I say, where away moight his camp be, mister soldier?"

"Oh, go find out!" replied the sentry gruffly.

"But I say, Mister Soldier, hold on a bit, I've got something here in this ere jug as will kinder make yer feel good."

"What is it?" he asked, quickly.

"Good rum."

"Ah, give us a drink," said he, turning back quickly to the wagon.

"Of course I will. It's just the stuff a soldier wants," said he, handing out a jug he had thoughtfully provided himself with.

The sentry did not stand on ceremony, but tipping it up to his lips he drank heartily, as long as he could hold his breath.

"Ah, good!" said he, as he took it away from his mouth.

"I bet it is. Got a bottle?"

"Yes, here," said he, producing one.

Sentries always carry bottles, whether full or empty.

"I'll just leave you some of it." Saying which he proceeded to fill it. "Now, which way must I go to reach Major Ackland's headquarters?"

"Cut across lots and go straight ahead in this direction," said the sentry, whose tongue and manners had grown wonderfully limbered.

"Thank ye, mister soldier. I'll go an' see if I can sell my straw."

"You'd sell your rum much quicker."

"I guess so. How far is it?"

"Half a mile."

"Sure you ain't foolin' me now, be you?"

"What do you mean, fellow?"

"Sure you ain't showin' me inter the Yankee army?"

"Darn the Yankees! No. Major Ackland's corps is just over yonder encamped. Do you hear?"

"Oh, yes. Thank you, Mister Soldier. Good-night," said Ben, chirruping up his old nag.

In a few moments he was out of sight of the sentry and again pulled up.

"I have learned all I wanted," said he. "Now, how shall we get back again, that's the question?"

"Guess we hab ter go back, Marser Ben," said Pete.

"Yes; but how? We are now inside the enemy's lines, and may experience trouble in getting out."

"Let's ride inter de camp an' sell dis yer straw, an' den come back."

"Ah, but they may take it into their heads not to let us come back; or, at all events, not until it is too late to make our information valuable. No, we must make our way back again through the lines, for the great battle will undoubtedly be fought to-morrow, and General Gates may be taken at a disadvantage, not knowing where Ackland's corps is stationed. We must get back and reach the American lines in spite of everything," said he, resolutely, at the same time starting his horse to the right, leading back toward his uncle's farmhouse.

"Stand!" cried a voice just before them.

"Oh, Lord!" moaned Pete.

"Hush! Be brave to the last!" said he, placing his hand on Pete's shoulder.

"Dat's me, Marser Ben."

"Be sure of it. Who calls?" said he, aloud.

"Who goes there?" again demanded the sentry.

"A friend of the king."

"Advance, friend, and give the countersign."

Here was an ugly dilemma.

"Give the countersign—or surrender!" said the sentry, advancing with his musket at "charge."

"We have no countersign; we only be poor, honest farmer lads, with straw to sell," replied Ben.

"How came you within the lines?"

"The sentry just over here bid us go on."

"Bah! you may be spies. Come along with me to the quarters of the officer of the night, and if you make yourselves all right with him, go in peace; but I have my duty to perform."

"The other sentry he passed us, an' we gi' him some prime rum to cheer him a bit, an'—"

"No rum can bribe me—come along!"

"Well, all right, mister soldier-man—you be takin' us just where we war goin', ter the headquarters of Major Ackland."

"Well, come along; now drive!" said he, getting into the cart and directing them.

In a few moments they reached the quarters of the sergeant of the guard, and all around were camp-fires of the corps burning brightly.

Ben saw it all, and even forgot his own danger in his anxiety to learn all he could, while Pete, though brave and devoted, trembled a trifle at the situation.

They were handed over to the sergeant's guard; and in spite of the plausible story which Ben told of his being a farmer boy, and having his wagon-load of straw to sell, he was suspected and taken to Major Ackland's tent for further examination.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN THE JAWS OF A DEADLY PERIL.

Major Ackland was one of the bravest and best officers in the king's army, but he was also a severe man and a great disciplinarian.

Ben and Pete were brought before him and he listened to their story.

"This may be true, lad, and it may not be. Take off your clothing," said he.

At this command Ben hesitated and turned a trifle pale; as for Pete he was half frightened out of his skin, but he couldn't turn pale any more than a piece of coal could.

The major eyed them closely.

"Do you refuse?" he asked at length.

"We be poor, honest farmer lads, come in to sell our load of straw, your honor."

"Strip them, soldiers. We will see if what they say is true."

The soldiers at once sprang to obey the order.

As for Pete, all the stripping in the world would have failed to produce any evidence of guilt, for he had only a coat and pair of short breeches, besides his waistcoat and cap; and after he had been reduced to his hide they found nothing but a comical negro.

Not so with Ben, however, for in his hurry and excitement at the house of his aunt he had neglected to make his dress conform, and beneath his old smock-frock they found the elegant attire of a well-to-do gentleman, and when his face and hands had been washed, much against his will, there was not the slightest trace of a farmer boy about him.

"By gosh!" thought Pete. "Dat's what a boy gets fo' bein white."

"Young man, you are a traitorous rascal and a spy!" said Major Ackland.

"You are mistaken, major," replied Ben, calmly.

"Circumstances are against you. Take him away. Place them both under guard and have them hung at sunrise!" said the major.

They were marched some distance from the tent of Major Ackland and placed in a barn that was being used for a guardhouse.

"Condemned to death!" mused Ben. "Well, I shall never be able to die in a better cause, if I live a thousand years. Then why should I murmur? But our army—the cause of American Independence; that must not be hindered. Banish self; let me be as good, brave and disinterested as Washington is."

Pete had seated himself upon the beam and was resting his head in his hands.

"Pete, these fellows are asleep; go around the barn, and by looking through the cracks in the boarding see how the land lays."

"So I will, Marser Ben."

Both Ben and Pete set themselves at the task of noting their surroundings through the cracks in the barn, this being their only means of seeing out into outside surroundings.

By this means they were enabled to make sure that there was only one guard standing watch over the barn, and at twelve o'clock they saw him exchange his place with another who came to his relief.

This new guard appeared to be either tired, stupid or sleepy, and after receiving the countersign from his comrade, he grunted and began his dreary walk up and down before the barn doors.

Soon after his coming, old Bones, as Pete called his horse.

began to kick around and to manifest his presence in a most unmistakable way.

Ben had not been idle during this time, and having secured a crowbar he worked it in between the boards and the sill of the barn, and whenever Bones would make a racket he would pry away until at length he forced a board from its fastenings, leaving a hole large enough for a man to pass through.

Bones kept at it until he managed to free himself from the old wagon; and then, with a portion of the harness still attached to him he sauntered out into the field to get a bite.

Ben and Pete were watching carefully every move that was made on all sides. As for the guard he appeared to be more pleased than otherwise that the old horse had escaped, and paid no further attention to him for several minutes. Then he approached the wagon.

"What is here, I wonder?" he mused as he began rummaging in the straw.

After a few moments' search he drew forth the rum jug. Glancing around to make sure that he was not observed, he lifted the jug to his lips and drank as long as he could hold his breath.

"Wonderful," said he, as he placed it back among the straw. "If anything would tempt me to desert it would be this Yankee rum," and he walked in an unsteady way back and forth upon his beat.

Then he seemed to be taken with the genius of song, and he began, low at first and then louder, until at last he drowned his own senses:

"Oh, he that wears a regimental suit,
Oft is poor as a raw recruit,
But what of that!
The girls will follow at the sound of the drum
To view the tassel or the waving plume—
That falls around his hat.
Huzza, huzza, huzza!
Cigars and cognac;
Huzza, huzza, huzza!
With these we'll bivouac!"

The chorus appeared to have particular charms for him, for he kept on repeating it as he paced back and forth, until he became very muddled and mixed.

"Now then, Pete! Follow me, and don't surrender unless you wish to die!" said Ben, when he thought the way was clear.

"By gosh, Marser Ben, if we only hed our weepins!" whispered Pete.

"I know. But we have got to fight our way out of this the best way we can. Come!"

"I say, Marser Ben."

"What?"

"If we could only get at ole Bones!"

"That's so. Where is he?"

"Jus' out hea. Hole on; lemme go fus'."

"Careful. Hark!" and he pushed aside the board he had pried from its fastenings.

"Dar's Bones! Wait till I cotch him."

"But you may catch something else."

"Wait a bit," said he, and giving a peculiar chirrup, he crouched down and waited events.

Bones had become greatly attached to the negro boy, Pete, because he had used him kindly, and had also provided him with provender that he had been entirely unused to up to that time, and hearing the familiar call the old rack-a-bones at once pricked up his ears and walked in the direction whence it came.

"Whoa. Bones, whoa!" said Pete, loud enough to make the horse hear.

The sagacious creature pricked up his ears and came even closer.

"Now then, mount," said Ben.

"You fust, Marser Ben."

"No, he knows you best. Head him as near as you can back to my uncle's."

"By gosh, I will!" said he, leaping upon the back of the waiting beast.

"Hush! What was that?"

"I don't hear nuffin'."

"Hark!" and after listening a moment Ben caught Pete's hand and bounded astride of the horse. It was dim moonlight.

Pete spoke to Bones and away he went at a fast gallop

in the direction of where they had been overhauled by the last sentry, only they took a course that would naturally lay between that and the ground covered by the sentry whose round lay next beyond.

Once fairly under way both Ben and Pete beat the sides of the old horse and urged him on to his utmost speed.

But they had miscalculated, and instead of going between the two sentries they rode at full speed right upon the two.

In an instant there came a challenge.

"Who goes there?"

The only response was another welt on the sides of old Bones.

The next moment the report of two muskets rang out upon the air and two bullets whizzed past them in uncomfortable closeness to their heads.

"On! on!" shouted Ben.

Two more shots followed the first.

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Ben.

"Is you hit, Marser Ben?" asked Pete, pulling at the bridle as though he would stop the wild flight of the horse.

"Yes, I am hit; but not much, I guess. Spur the old nag to his very best and ride to my uncle's house."

Old Bones was performing wonders in the way of speed, and, in spite of the fact that he was carrying two persons, he seemed to understand that the case was one of life or death.

Panting and flecked with foam he brought them safely to the farmhouse.

Pete threw himself from the saddle and stood ready to assist his brave comrade to alight, but he was weak from loss of blood.

His aunt ran out to interview them.

"He hab been shot," said Pete, as he assisted him down.

"Shot! Ben, are you hurt?" she asked, taking him in her arms.

"Not much, I guess, Aunt Ruth. But I have been bleeding from this wound here in my shoulder, and am just a little faint. Have you any rum?"

Instantly the good lady flew back to the house and soon returned with a flask of rum and some bandages.

"Here, Ben, quick! Throw off that old frock and let me dress your wound."

"Give me the rum, Aunt Ruth, for I have no time to tarry," said he, seizing the flask and taking a long draught. "Bring out Blazes," he added, turning to Pete.

"Here is your own coat, Ben; put it on."

"As you say, good aunt, but I must reach the American army at once," saying which he threw off the old smock-frock and was on the point of putting on his own coat.

But his aunt insisted, and by the time his horse was brought to the spot she had bandaged his shoulder quite skillfully.

"Ah, Blazes, I need you," he said, faintly, patting the horse on his neck.

Blazes whinnied as though he understood all about it, and, with an effort Ben vaulted into the saddle.

"Just a taste more of the rum, Ben," said his aunt, handing him the flask.

"Thanks. Mount, Pete. Now, then, we must away. Farewell, Aunt Ruth!" said Ben.

"Farewell. God bless and keep you!"

"Hark! The sound of horses' hoofs!"

"We are being pursued. Come, Blazes, now or never!" and putting spurs to his horse he waved his hand back to his aunt and the next moment was lost in the darkness.

CHAPTER IX.

THE BATTLE OF SARATOGA.

Hardly had Slippery Ben and his boy, Pete Sunflower, fairly escaped from the house of his aunt when four mounted soldiers rode up in hot haste.

"Where have you secreted the spies?" demanded the foremost, who rode up to the door and broke it open with the butt of his musket.

"Were they mounted?" she asked.

"Yes. Have you seen them?"

"Two men, not long ago, rode up and demanded water for their horses."

"And they obtained water?"

"Yes."

"And then rode away?"

"Yes."

"Whither?"

"In this way, I think," said she, pointing in the opposite direction to the one they had taken.

"Nonsense. Comrades, this woman is evidently a rebel, and when she says they went this way, we will go in search of the rascals in the opposite. Come!" and putting spurs to their horses they rode away.

But Ben and Pete had by this time secured headway enough to put them outside of all danger, and although Ben was so weak from loss of blood that he could hardly sit upright in his saddle, yet the faithful and sagacious Blazes plunged onward like an arrow from the bow, and soon took him within the American lines.

Of course, he was instantly challenged, but having the password he was admitted with scarcely a question.

Pete rode up at this juncture.

"Give the word," said the sentry.

Pete gave it after a fashion, but it would scarcely have passed had he not been in the company of hero Ben.

A ride of fifteen minutes brought them to the headquarters of General Gates.

It was by this time two o'clock in the morning, and the whole army was asleep, with the exception of the sentries.

"Quick, General Gates!" said Ben as he rode up to the general's tent.

The council of war had been in session until twelve o'clock, when the members of his staff had retired, fully convinced that if the spy, Ben, should fail the chances of the next battle would be against them.

Ben rode right up to the tent occupied by the general, and being too weak to dismount, he bowed his head upon the neck of his horse and waited for Gates to approach.

But he did not have to wait long, for with the tremendous anxiety resting upon him the general had but little inclination to sleep.

"Who is this?" he asked, as he came from his tent at the summons of one of his bodyguard.

"Dis yer am Marser Ben Parkhurst," said Pete, "an' he hab been badly shot at."

"Wounded! Guard, take him from his horse and bring him to my tent, then summon a surgeon and call General Arnold!"

The command was instantly obeyed and Ben was placed on a cot and the surgeon at once proceeded to dress his wounds.

But he had by this time become unconscious, and lay like one dead.

"This is Captain Parkhurst," said Gates, as General Arnold came into the tent.

"Wounded?" asked the dashing soldier, anxiously.

"Yes. Is it dangerous, Mr. Miles?" asked Gates, addressing the surgeon.

"No. He has succumbed to a loss of blood. It is an ugly flesh wound, that's all."

General Arnold stood a few feet away, gazing with a look of admiration upon the pale youth, while the faithful Pete knelt by his side and mournfully watched the operation of the surgeon.

At length he drew a heavy sigh and slowly opened his eyes.

"Where am I?" he asked, after a moment's silence.

"With friends," said Arnold.

"What time is it?"

"Three o'clock, and already the god of day has his advance guards dancing on yon misty mountain tops."

"Ah, then there is no time to be lost. Give me a swallow of rum, please."

The surgeon placed a glass to his lips and he drank it eagerly.

"General, come near, please. I am better—stronger now, I—I managed to reach Major Ackland's headquarters."

"You did? Are you sure?"

"Positive. We were taken prisoners while disguised as simple farmers, and my underdress betrayed me. We were taken before Ackland, and by him condemned to be hung at sunrise."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed the entire party.

"Yes. Placed in an old barn, under guard, we managed to effect our escape, and this wound I received at the hands of the sentry while doing so, in company with Pete, here."

"Very well. Where is he posted?"

"On Thurman's farm."

"So, so!" said Arnold. "A vantage ground, indeed. I feared as much."

"Is there any other division near him?"

"None. He is encamped alone on the level ground beyond the cross roads."

"The turnpike cross?"

"Yes, sir, right there," replied Ben.

"God bless you, young man; if our army does not win in this day's fight it will not be your fault. Washington shall hear of your brave exploits," said Gates, pressing his hand.

"But can I do nothing further, general?" he asked with much earnestness.

"No. Remain in the surgeon's care until you are able to ride again, and then come to me."

Arnold also pressed Ben's hand warmly and congratulated him on his achievement, after which he withdrew, leaving him and Pete with the surgeon.

"Where are the boys, Pete?" he asked.

"Donno, Marser Ben."

"Find them, Pete, and bring them here."

"All right, Marser Ben," said the faithful negro, hurrying from the place.

A council of war was at once called, and, after debating a few moments, it was concluded to send for Ben for the purpose of getting more minute particulars from him.

He was weak from the loss of blood, but by the aid of the surgeon he was enabled to satisfy them regarding the information he had obtained, and it was found, upon comparison, that it accorded exactly with what Colonel Wilkinson had learned at the head of a scouting party.

After he had been examined to a great length, and all of General Gates' officers were satisfied with his information, orders were at once issued to the different commanders, and all haste secretly made to oppose the enemy's strong points.

Ben was consigned to the hospital, and before any particular movement had been made he was visited by his friends, who had been attached to a meagre cavalry division, and he was strong enough to tell them to fight bravely and give a good account of Poughkeepsie in the coming struggle, and that he would meet them after it was over and share the glory.

It is hardly worth while to add that they all promised to comply, and that they, one and all, kept their word.

The sun had hardly risen over the hills before symptoms of the coming contest began to manifest themselves.

Orderlies were coming and going from Gates' headquarters, and a general movement was observable on all sides.

Colonel Wilkinson was sent out with a select company to reconnoitre, and he soon reported that several columns of the British were on the move and had advanced to within half a mile of the American lines.

Still other officers who had been sent out reported that the enemy seemed to offer battle.

After this had been ascertained, Colonel Morgan, reinforced by our band of mounted heroes from Poughkeepsie, was immediately despatched to commence the attack.

General Poor, of the New Hampshire brigade, was ordered to commence on the flank and front of the British grenadiers, and as these two heroes opened fire in wild earnest, they soon sent the wildest consternation into the enemy's ranks, and they were soon compelled to retire in confusion.

The Earl of Balcarras, an officer of great bravery, soon rallied them, and after much trouble drew them up again within a short distance of the first position.

But by this time Arnold, with the main division of the American army, attacked them in front and flank, with so much vigor that they retreated in the greatest confusion.

The British grenadiers, under Major Ackland, fought with desperation that seemed determined to yield only with life.

Arnold and his corps were outgeneraled, and Ackland was bearing down upon the centre of the American line, threatening not only the tide of battle that until then seemed favorable to the cause of Liberty, but the very headquarters of General Gates himself, left almost unprotected.

Gates was mounted on a fleet horse and rode backward and forward from point to point, encouraging his soldiers to their utmost, but this new turn of events completely bewildered him.

Ben Parkhurst, wounded though he was, was not an idle spectator of this tremendous fight. Arnold and the rest were doing wonders in various parts of the field, but Ben's quick eye saw at a glance that unless this onslaught of the grenadiers could be stopped that the centre would be turned and all eventually lost.

Hundreds of wounded had been brought in, some of them only slightly hurt, and springing to his feet he grasped his sword and called to them:

"Quick! Every man who can fire one charge, form, form! The enemy is coming! One charge will turn them back. Come!"

A wild hurrah greeted the young hero, and a hundred wounded and bleeding men grasped their muskets and sprang to his side.

General Gates saw the advantage just as Ben had rallied the patriots, and riding up with brandishing sword, he shouted:

"Twenty men to man this cannon!"

"Yes, I will see to it, General, if you will direct this fire," said Ben.

Pete had in the meantime brought Blazes, Ben's horse, to him, and mounting it and forgetting his wound in the excitement, he rode a few rods to the right, where a cannon had been abandoned, owing to the fierce rain of fire that had killed all but one of those who had been working it, and being followed by a dozen brave hearts, they soon had the piece loaded with a hundred musket bullets rammed home instead of a single ball or shell.

On came the grenadiers, headed by the intrepid Ackland, cheering wildly, feeling that they were about to win the day.

The wounded patriots, under the personal command of General Gates, waited patiently until the columns advanced to within fifty yards, and then rising up from behind some bundles of hay and wagons, they delivered a fatal fire which staggered the advancing column and threw it back to the right in some confusion.

Just then Ben saw his chance, and before they could rally, he, with his own hand, fired the cannon so fatally charged and so fatally aimed, sending death and destruction into that heroic band of veteran grenadiers, wounding Major Ackland, who was made a prisoner, sending his whole corps backward in a confused, panic-stricken mass.

Another volley from the little band under Gates added still further to the demoralization and before a rally could be effected the cannon was again loaded and ready for another belch.

A sickly attempt was made, but when that murderous cannon was again discharged the remnants of that veteran band turned and fled in wild dismay, leaving the centre entirely intact, and in fifteen minutes afterward the whole of Burgoyne's army was in active retreat.

And thus was the victory won. It would be encroaching on the domain of history to single out each particular man who helped to win that bloody fight. Arnold, the incarnate spirit of battle, was wounded and covered with glory which afterward shone through the blackness of his treachery, and it is but just to say that all did their duty nobly; and that all, from General Gates down to the humblest private, accorded one-half of the victory to our friend, Slippery Ben.

CHAPTER X.

BEN A PRISONER.

One evening, a few days after this event, and while the army was encamped at Sandy Beach, Arnold suddenly appeared in camp with an order from General Washington for Ben's company to join him at West Point, and at sunset he was on the road. On the way the entire company was captured by a band of Indians, but they were rescued the next day by a party belonging to the Sons of Liberty, and with whom they remained until the next morning, when they continued on their way.

Ben rode with the command directly to Washington's headquarters, after partaking of the hospitalities of the Sons of Liberty, and reported at once to the great general.

Washington greeted Ben very cordially, and attached him to Wayne's command.

During the next few months Ben and his friends were fully engaged, in company with brave, good Wayne, in harassing the enemy, in scouting and foraging. In all of these encounters they acquitted themselves nobly.

When the spring campaign opened Ben and his company were again detached from Wayne's command and ordered on spy and scout duty up the Hudson River, as the enemy gave evidences of again renewing the struggle for the supremacy of that waterway.

Ben's orders were to act independently, and to collect as large a force as he could in the American cause, and to report only to General Washington himself.

Thus was our hero made a free lance, as it were, and as there was no regular command in this part of the country, with the exception of Arnold at West Point, he was placed in a position of great responsibility, almost equaling that of the renowned Arnold himself.

Ben lost no time in putting himself in quick correspondence with Captain Noble and all the Sons of Liberty along the river. This secret organization (which is continued even to the present day) was very strong along the Hudson, and was composed mostly of farmers who would not leave their farms to join the Continental army, but who were ever watchful and proved themselves good friends to the cause of American liberty.

In a few weeks Ben had everything all arranged, and the most complete brotherhood of spies existed that ever cursed an enemy or favored a country.

Ben's fame brought a large number of young Americans and a few warm-hearted Irish boys to his ranks, and before he had been in command a month he could rally five hundred of the truest hearts that ever leaped to the shout of liberty.

But, of course, in the face of so many Tories, the existence of such a power could not be kept from the enemy, and while Arnold was contriving with the enemy, the existence of Ben's secret and open force gave him much annoyance, and for a long time staved off the disgraceful consummation.

One day, just at sunset, Ben halted at a little cabin near West Point, for he had been patrolling the river and in communication with the Sons of Liberty, and asked for shelter for himself and horse. He was alone, and at this time it was hard to distinguish friend from foe.

He had been initiated into the wild mysteries of the Order of the Sons of Liberty, and the grips and passwords that he had received had enabled him to find friends on many an occasion when without these gifts he might have been betrayed to the enemy.

In this humble habitation there was only an old man and his wife, but not until Ben had given him a sign which convinced the old man that he was one of the right sort did he give him and his horse food and shelter.

At night, after the evening meal, Ben and the old man exchanged news and sentiments regarding the situation, and it was then that the old cotter confessed that he could scarcely distinguish friend from foe, so completely had the enemy penetrated the secrets of the Sons of Liberty.

He had two sons with Washington, and it was only by the keenest maneuvering on his part that he kept from being sacrificed on one side or the other. But the fame of Slippery Ben had reached him, and he gave him the most cordial welcome, although his humble home offered but a poor one.

Ben retired early, for he had ridden far and was tired, and the old man and his wife soon after sought their own bed.

It was nearly midnight when a loud rapping at the door aroused everybody in the house.

The old man went boldly to the door and demanded the business of the disturbers. He found there a solitary man, while at his gate sat another on a horse and holding the horse of the other.

"Who lives here?" demanded the man.

"An honest man," replied the cotter.

"Who?"

"Charles Brown."

"Ah! A Son of Liberty?"

"Perhaps; try him."

The stranger gave him a password, and taking his hand gave him the grip that was recognized all along the river. It was satisfactory.

"Who rests beneath your roof?"

"Myself and wife."

"'Tis well. I am General Arnold. Provide a place for me and my companion."

"To sleep?"

"Well, give us a room by ourselves."

"That I may do; but I have no beds for you to sleep upon," said the cotter.

"We want none. Show us a room," said Arnold, with much bravado.

Ben had been awakened, and was listening to what was transpiring below.

"There is hay for your horses," said the old man, pointing to a stack, "and here is a room for you."

"That is well. Retire. We will see to all the rest," said Arnold, turning away.

In fifteen minutes from that time Arnold and the stranger sat alone together in a room just below where Ben stood listening.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PIVOT OF A NATION'S EXISTENCE.

The stranger who accompanied Arnold was a very fine looking gentleman, and, so far as the eye could determine, a soldier.

On entering the room, after their horses had been provided for at the haystack, they both glanced anxiously around, as though wishing to be sure that they were strictly alone.

Arnold closed and bolted each door, and then took a seat by the table at which the stranger sat, and the solitary candle threw its light upon them, bringing out two strong faces, one full of cunning and duplicity, and the other full of generous emotions and soldierly honor.

"Are we all alone?" asked the stranger.

"Yes, Major Andre, there is no one to molest our meeting," said Arnold.

Wasn't there, though?

"You know these old people?"

"Yes; or, at least, I have found out that the old man is a Son of Liberty, and, as he knows me, he will not molest us so long as he believes that this conference is for the good of the rebellion."

"It is well. Now, what papers have you to show me?" said Major Andre, of the British army.

"Only these; the plans of the fortifications at West Point, the schedule of its force, and how it can be attacked the most successfully, together with all the particulars of the fortifications up and down the river."

"Let me see them," said Andre, taking the documents.

"This is a plan of Fort Putnam at West Point, and these are the papers accompanying it. This is a plan of the other works around there, and these papers give all the required information respecting them," said Arnold, arranging and pointing out the documents.

Major Andre examined them carefully for a long time without speaking.

"Is it all plain?" asked Arnold.

"It is, and in return for these I am to fill out this order on His Majesty's Quartermaster for ten thousand pounds sterling, and deliver you this commission creating you a brigadier-general in the king's army?"

"Yes. Is there anything more?" asked Arnold.

"Nothing but the final consummation," said Andre, rousing from a reverie.

"Here is pen and ink."

Andre again took the documents and examined them, as though to make sure that all was right.

"And when do you propose to follow me?"

"Ah, don't you understand, Major? I must be taken prisoner; it is so arranged in our correspondence, for then it will have a better look both for me and your general."

"Yes, I forgot. Well, all being understood, I may as well sign these documents—but it is a good price, General Arnold, ten thousand pounds and a brigadier-generalship in his majesty's service."

"But think what I am giving in return—the key of the Hudson River, for West Point is the pivot of the nation's existence."

"You may be right. But supposing the colonists under Washington achieve their independence?"

"You certainly cannot believe they will do so, Major Andre?" asked Arnold anxiously.

"I do not think they will, of course; but supposing they should, how would you be regarded?"

"What is that?" he asked sharply.

"How would history regard this act of yours?"

"I care not. We did not come here to speculate or to moralize."

"True; but somehow these thoughts force themselves upon me," replied Andre.

"I have weighed my chances and measured my risks, and I had rather live in history as a Brutus, or a Judas Iscariot, than not to live at all. I burn to be known in the hereafter, and when I am balked by circumstances and prevented by jealousy from making a lasting mark on the bloody page of rebellion, then I will take other risks, even though it consigns me to infamy."

"Yours is a bold spirit, Arnold, and I trust we may be yoked together in the future."

How little did he know how closely they would be yoked together in the future.

"I ask nothing better, Major Andre."

"Thanks. Well, I will sign and deliver these papers and hasten again on board the Vulture, as she rides at anchor only a short distance away."

"Yes; and will you communicate with Sir Henry Clinton on your way down?"

"No; I shall sail directly to New York; but you will hear from Sir Henry without delay; that you may depend upon, for he is even now waiting orders."

"Good! The sooner the better, for Washington will soon return from Connecticut, and there might be danger there."

"Never fear; with or without him, with this key, we will unlock the rebellion right speedily."

"Good."

Major Andre took up the pen and dipped it in the ink horn. Just then a distant roll of thunder reached their ears.

"What was that?" asked Andre.

"Thunder. There must be a shower coming up."

"This will detain me," said Andre.

"But it will soon pass away. It is nothing. We often have such exhibitions in the highlands here. Sit down and wait."

Andre obeyed, but he was ill at ease, as was Arnold. For several moments neither spoke, but lividly listened to the thunder king.

"Were I superstitious I should tremble before this wild demonstration of nature."

"That would be foolish," replied Arnold, although his very looks showed that he was influenced much more than he cared to acknowledge.

"Hark! What was that?"

"I heard nothing strange."

"Some movement overhead."

"Some of the family startled by the storm, most likely," said Arnold, gathering up the papers.

Andre strode hastily to the table, and took up the documents belonging to him.

Neither spoke a word. The movement overhead, which had attracted Andre's attention, was explained by Arnold; but he was within the enemy's lines, and the terror occasioned by the storm, which seemed to be increasing in fury, added to this fact, gave him much alarm.

"Would to heaven the storm had passed, for I shall be uneasy until I am once more on board the Vulture."

"But it is too late now. Better wait until early morning," said Arnold.

"And you are sure there is no danger in doing so?"

"None whatever."

"But these Sons of Liberty?"

"They will not molest you with my pass. That I know."

Lulled by this assurance, the soldier spread his cloak upon the floor and lay down to get a few hours' sleep.

Arnold followed his example, but he could not sleep. How could the betrayer of a nation's existence sleep, especially when it seemed that the fiends of the earth and air were rampant in their indignation?

CHAPTER XII.

SOME STARTLING EVENTS.

The reader has probably guessed ere this that the movement overhead in the house where Arnold and Andre were sheltered was our friend Slippery Ben, or, as he was now known everywhere, young Captain Parkhurst.

In truth, such was the case. He had listened to the infamous compact, and seeing it consummated he had taken advantage of the noise made by the storm to escape from the window of his chamber.

Dropping lightly to the ground, and guided only by the blinding flashes of lightning, he made his way to the shelter where he had tied his horse Blazes, and secured him without loss of time.

At first he thought of riding to West Point, but what should he do there where Arnold was in command? So he resolved to ride at once to the residence of some of the Sons of Liberty and rouse them to action.

To make matters worse for the enemies of his country, he unfastened the horses belonging to Arnold and Andre, and

taking their bridles in his hand, he mounted his own steed and galloped away with his prize, guided by the lightning flashes.

The first streaks of morning came glimmering up the east, and Arnold, who had not slept at all, roused Andre, for he was anxious to have him get on board the sloop-of-war that lay in waiting for him.

"Is it morning?" asked the Briton.

"The first glow of it is just now coming up along the eastern sky. The storm has passed, and nature is smiling once more."

"Is everything secure?"

"Yes; you have your papers and I have mine. Come," said he, opening the door and leading the way from the house.

By this time it was light enough to see, and without loss of time they made their way to the shelter where they had left their horses.

But they were not there. Both men were startled, and looked in each other's face.

"Where are they?" asked Andre.

"They must be hereabouts," and Arnold searched around the sheds.

"But this is passing strange."

"No, major; they were undoubtedly frightened by the storm, and have broken away. We may find them."

"Call up the host."

"I will," and he started towards the house.

"Hark! That was a gun," said Andre, as the dull boom of a cannon echoed through the hills not far away.

"Perhaps a signal from the Vulture," suggested Arnold, turning pale.

"Heavens! And it may be something else! Hark! There it is again."

Arnold could give no explanation; but turning to continue his way to the house he met the old farmer coming out.

"Where are our horses?" he demanded.

"I do not know. Where did you put them?"

"Just here by this shelter."

"They must have become frightened and broken away," and the old man went to see if Ben's horse was also gone.

Finding that it was he was greatly puzzled, and tried to collect his thoughts without betraying the fact of Ben's being there that night.

"Yes," he added, "they must have broken away."

"But we must find them, sir."

"I will go with you."

While this conversation was going on Major Andre had gone to a hill just in front of the house, and from it he could see up and down the river for miles.

Boom! Boom! sounded the cannons as they echoed and re-echoed among the hills and from shore to shore of the river; and when Andre got to a point commanding a view, he saw the Vulture making her way downstream as fast as wind and tide could take her, while shot after shot from a battery concealed on the river bank went tearing through her rigging.

"Arnold, for heaven's sake, come here!" cried Andre wildly.

Turning from the farmer, bewildered and confused, he climbed to where the agitated officer stood.

"What is it?" he asked excitedly.

"Look there!"

Arnold gazed at the picture of the Vulture being driven downstream by a battery manned by the Sons of Liberty.

"What does it mean?" demanded Andre.

Arnold watched a moment longer, the cannon meanwhile punctuating the silence with dread import. Finally he spoke:

"The Sons of Liberty have discovered her character and are firing upon her."

"Yes; but see what a position it places me in. How am I to get on board of her?"

"It would be unsafe to attempt it; besides, she seems to have no notion of stopping," said Arnold, gazing intently at the fleeing sloop-of-war.

"Well, how then?"

"We will cross over the river to my headquarters. There I will provide you with a disguise and a fleet horse, which will enable you to reach New York by land, which you can do quite as quickly as you could had you got on board the Vulture. Come."

Reluctantly, almost, it seemed, did Andre leave the hill where he had witnessed his disappointment and followed Arnold back to the farmer's house. A settled melancholy appeared to have fallen upon him, and he scarcely spoke.

"Old man, have you a boat?" demanded Arnold.

"Yes, your excellency."

"Quick, take us across the river, rowing well up the stream so as to land us as near my headquarters as possible."

The old farmer hesitated.

"Quick; do you hear?"

"What are those guns, General?"

"A British gunboat has attacked one of our batteries, and I must reach headquarters at once."

"Oh, in that case, your excellency, I am yours to command," said he, starting for the river.

Arnold had it on his tongue to tell him that he was his to command under any circumstances, but he refrained, and taking Andre's arm followed the old man through the garden.

The boat lay moored at the foot of the garden in a little creek which made up into the land. The honest old farmer untied it, and leaping in ran out the oars on either side.

Arnold assisted Andre into it, and himself took a seat in the stern. It was at once shoved from the shore, and the hardy old man beat himself to the oars with a will, that sent the boat along cheerily over the waters.

"Harder on your left; keep well up the stream," said Arnold.

"Aye, aye, your excellency."

Andre gazed with a painful expression down the river, and saw the Vulture still sailing away, while the patriot battery poured shot after shot after her as she retreated. There was no color in his face, and his wretched appearance did not fail to attract Arnold's attention.

"Have no fear, Major," he said reassuringly, but the Briton made no reply. His eyes were riveted on the receding ship, and his brain was full of wild emotions.

CHAPTER XIII.

SLIPPERY BEN SAVES HIS COUNTRY.

The old farmer landed Arnold and Andre near the old Robinson house, opposite West Point. Arnold's headquarters, after which he put back and rowed briskly towards his home.

By this time the cannonading had ceased, and all was still again, but what an ominous stillness it was.

As his boat touched its moorings again Captain Ben Parkhurst and his troop dashed up to the farmhouse.

"Quick!" said he. "Guard every side, and allow none to escape!" saying which he threw himself from his horse, and, followed by half a dozen of his companions, entered the house.

"Where are they?" he demanded of the old lady, who shrank into a corner. "Are they here?"

She pointed to her husband, who just then came into the room.

"Speak, sir, where is Arnold and Andre?" said Ben, addressing him.

"I have just returned from rowing them across the river," said the old man in alarm.

"Good heavens!"

"What is it, my boy?" he asked trembling.

"And do you not know?"

"I know General Arnold."

"But you heard nothing of the conference which they held in this room last night?"

"Nothing. What was it?"

"Treason, old man, treason. The fate of the Hudson River—of our country—hangs on a single thread. Where did you land them?"

"Near his headquarters."

"Ah! Andre has abandoned the idea of returning by water, and probably will go by land. This must be prevented. Comrades, there is work for us now. The fate of the colonies rests in our hands. Pete, come here."

"Yes, Marser Ben," said the darky, hurrying forward and saluting.

"You have all the passwords?"

"Yes, Marser Ben."

"And the grips of the Sons of Liberty?"

"Yes, Marser Ben, sure."

"I'll vouch for him," said Livingstone.

"And your horse is fresh?"

"Bones am like a daisy, Marser Ben."

"Mount him and ride—ride as far as Tappan Zee. There

you may find some Sons. If not, get a boat and cross over to Tarrytown, and there you will be sure to find some. Tell them to throw out their scouts in all directions, and examine every person who attempts to pass down the river, for there is treachery abroad. Tell them you come from me, and that any other pass they must not honor. Do you understand?"

"Yes, Marser Ben."

"Then mount and ride. Crocker will follow you with the same instructions to make sure that they reach the Sons of Liberty somewhere along the river."

"Away I goes, Marser Ben," said the faithful darky, bounding from the house.

"Report to me, both of you, at the battery we just left."

Pete leaped into his saddle and waving his hand, both as a saluting farewell and a signal to bones, he galloped up the road.

"Comrade Harry Crocker, you follow Pete with the same instructions."

"Cheerfully, Captain Ben," said he, shaking hands with his friends and hurrying away.

"Lieutenant Livingstone, follow with the same instructions, but find some means of crossing the river this side of Tarrytown, and put the Sons on their guard. Assume command wherever you find a body of them. Stop everybody whom you do not personally know to be all right."

"I will do so, Captain."

"And, Sergeant Clinton, be yours the command of this side of the river, taking all the troop, and observe the same orders that I have given them."

"Depend upon me, Captain," said young Clinton, saluting proudly.

"I know I can. I will ride to Colonel Jameson and place the faithful officers under Arnold on their guard. Farewell. Remember that the fate of our country hangs upon the result of our actions."

Ben shook them all hurriedly by the hand, and mounting his horse Blazes, he waved his hat and rode away amid a wild huzza, heading up the river towards West Point.

A word right here, as we hurry along with these tremendously dramatic events, will explain why Ben failed to meet Colonel Jameson where he expected to. Arnold suspected this sturdy patriot of having no particular love for him, as, in fact, he did not have; and so, just prior to carrying out his divilish treachery, he removed him to a command further down the river, so that he should be out of the way.

Ben was thoroughly disappointed, for he was on terms of patriotic intimacy with Jameson, and on him he relied for assistance; but when he learned that he had been transferred further down the river he at once made up his mind to trust all to his companions in arms whom he had sent out to warn the Sons of Liberty; and after conferring with several leaders of the patriotic order, he resolved to push on and meet General Washington, who was on his return from New Haven, where he had been to welcome and confer with the two French commanders who had espoused the cause of American liberty.

After giving his horse a rest, during which he wrote letters to several commanders, including the intrepid Putnam, he afterwards started on his journey, full of anxiety and alarm for the cause he had so near at heart. He met Washington some twenty miles out, and imparted to him the startling intelligence.

It was a dreadful blow to the great man, for at that time the condition of his army, and finances of his country, had bowed him almost to the verge of despair.

"And had nothing been done to stop this terrible treachery?" he asked.

"General Washington, you know how hard I pleaded for Arnold, because I believed him true; but Providence was kind enough to open my eyes, and I have done what I have just related."

"And you done well; but the traitor?"

"I think he cannot escape, for I have sent messengers down the river to alarm the scouts and Sons of Liberty to allow no one to pass without they knew them to be fair and true. I rode to co-operate with Colonel Jameson, but finding that he had been sent further down the river I spurred my horse to meet your excellency."

"Thank heaven!" said the great patriot fervently. "Let us spur on, for I shall not feel at ease until I know that Arnold is in chains."

Putting spurs to their horses, they rode with all speed towards West Point.

CHAPTER XIV.

THREE SONS OF LIBERTY TO THE RESCUE.

After arriving at Arnold's headquarters a good breakfast and some generous wine made Major Andre forget his forebodings. Arnold also forgot his nervousness, and he became at once a host and an entertaining gentleman, while his wife, whom Andre had met on many pleasant occasions in Philadelphia, seemed to be more earnest than ever to put the handsome and chivalrous Briton at his ease.

After breakfast Arnold and Andre withdrew to a private room, where the English officer was provided with an unsuspecting disguise, which completely concealed his uniform, and provided with a pass under the assumed name of John Anderson.

Everything being in readiness, the Englishman saluted Mrs. Arnold, shook hands with the general, and mounting his horse sat ready for a start.

"We shall soon meet again," said Arnold.

"I trust so," said Andre.

"And in the future may our friendship grow stronger and brighter," said Mrs. Arnold.

"Amen!"

"Farewell. Have no fear," said Arnold.

"I will not. Farewell," and lifting his hat with a grace that was in strange contrast to his plebeian appearance he rode away.

Arnold watched him out of sight, and then, without a word, turned and locked himself into the privacy of his room.

The pass enabled Andre to go unsuspected through the American lines out in neutral ground, and as his name was respected even there, he found no trouble in moving along at his ease and convenience.

The chill forebodings that he had lately experienced were gradually driven away as he rode along through the beautiful country whose fate he held in his possession.

He was congratulating himself on his good fortune, and thinking of the speedy termination of the rebellion; he imagined himself in his native England, and standing at the altar with his lovely bride.

He was lost in the reverie which his rich imagination produced, and as his horse cantered gracefully along all thoughts of danger were far from him.

Just then his horse came to a sudden halt, and looking up he found himself confronted by three sturdy yeomen.

"Halt!" said one of them—John Paulding.

"Who are you?" demanded Andre.

"That is for you to find out. Who are you?" asked David Williams, another of the trio.

"Ah! I see your mistake; you are loyalists," said Andre, smiling.

"Well, supposing we are. Who are you?"

"Here is my pass," said he, handing it to Paulding. "It is all right."

The sturdy Son of Liberty read it carefully, and then turning to his companions, he said:

"It does not come from young Captain Ben Parkhurst, neither is it countersigned by him."

"That decides us," said Van Vert.

"Of course you recognize General Arnold's passport?" said Andre cheerfully.

"Well, maybe not," said Paulding.

"Oh, then I was not mistaken; you are loyalists."

"But if so, who are you?"

"A British officer," said he boldly.

"Oh, you are, eh?" said the three men.

"Yes; and, of course, you will allow me to pass."

"Of course we shall not."

"What?"

"You are our prisoner."

"Good heavens! What is that you say?" said Andre, involuntarily placing his hand on his pistol.

"Beware!" said Williams, bringing his musket to bear upon him.

"But I do not understand you, gentlemen. I am a British officer."

"And we are Sons of Liberty."

"Great heavens!" gasped Andre.

"And you are our prisoner."

"But there is a mistake."

"None at all. Dismount."

"Gentlemen, be good enough to allow me to pass."

"No," came from the three patriots.

"I acknowledge that I am in disguise; but I am a friend to the colonies."

"We do not know that. Dismount."

"Hold! Here is my purse, well filled with gold, and here is my watch. Take them and allow me to pass."

"Never! Dismount, if you still care for your life," said Williams, cocking his piece.

"But consider."

"We have. Dismount."

Reluctantly did the haughty British officer get down from his horse and submit to be searched by those three honest sons of toil.

But the search resulted in nothing, and Andre stood with nothing on but his underclothing.

"You see, my friends, that I am above suspicion," he said, with forced cheerfulness, which they all noticed.

"You may be; but remove your boots," said Paulding.

Andre, who had supposed that the search was over, turned as white as a sheet, and stood entirely speechless.

"Remove your boots, sir."

"They are very tight, gentlemen, and I trust you will excuse me for not complying with your request," said Andre.

"Take them off, sir, or we shall apply force to remove them," said Williams.

"You are taking an unfair advantage of a gentleman; do you know that?"

"And you may be taking an unfair advantage of our country; do you know that?"

Andre was by this time completely broken down, and seating himself despondingly upon a rock, he submitted to having his boots pulled off.

The first one revealed nothing.

"You see you are mistaken," said he faintly.

Paulding pulled off the other, and turning it up, a lot of papers dropped out.

"Perhaps we are not," said Paulding, taking up the papers.

"Great heavens! What is this?" he exclaimed, as he unfolded and read the evidences of Arnold's treachery. "There is mischief here, and you must answer for it. Put on your clothes."

"But I tell you you are mistaken. Take me before your post commander," said Andre, summoning all his resolution.

"We will do so."

"And I can show that I am not only innocent of all harm, but that I am employed by General Arnold in the cause of the colonies."

"Colonel Jameson shall decide," said Paulding, assisting the prisoner to mount.

CHAPTER XV.

THE ESCAPE OF BENEDICT ARNOLD.

Just before setting out with Major Andre for the headquarters of Colonel Jameson, the three Sons of Liberty, John Paulding, David Williams and Isaac Van Vert, who had so fortunately captured him, were joined by Pete Sunflower, who had first put them on their guard, and together they all rode along.

A more crestfallen person than Major Andre was could not be found. A black fatality seemed to hold him in its grip. He rode along without speaking, while his mind was filled with a hundred emotions.

The whole party rode along in silence for a few moments longer, and then drew up before the headquarters of Colonel Jameson, who was quartered with a small command.

The prisoner was taken into his presence and the papers captured upon him handed over. Paulding gave a detailed statement of how the capture came about, and Colonel Jameson examined the papers, including the passport taken that bore the assumed name of John Anderson.

"Sir, you are a British spy," said Jameson, turning to Andre.

"No, sir; I am not."

"Who and what are you, then?"

"My passport, signed by your superior officer, tells you who I am; but as to my business, I refuse to make any explanation until I can communicate with General Arnold."

"You are very bold, sir; and these gentlemen say that you not only acknowledged yourself to be a British officer, but that you attempted to bribe them to let you go."

"That can all be explained fairly, sir, if you will allow me to communicate with Arnold."

"Could it be explained if I allowed you to communicate with General Washington?" asked the colonel, with emphasis, while looking him fully in the eye.

"It could; but the explanation would have to come from Arnold, in whose employ I am."

"I cannot allow you to communicate with a man whom I deem but little if any better than a traitor," said Jameson, firmly; "you will be kept under strict guard until I can communicate with General Washington."

Andre uttered a certain exclamation which caused Jameson to start and regard him with new interest, and as he caught his eye he gave him a certain mysterious sign.

It was the "word" and "hailing-sign" of a Free Mason!

"Sir, whoever you are, I am bound to recognize and respect those two things, so far as I can do so with consistency."

"Thank heaven for our order!"

"Amen! But you know just how far one can go when one's country is at stake," said Jameson.

"I do; I do not ask you to go beyond it."

"Friends, retire for a few moments and keep up the guard outside," said he, turning to the captors.

Saluting, they all withdrew, although not with the best grace in the world, for they had observed the salutes and had heard the mysterious word.

"By gosh! I think he am a-gwine fo' ter hoodoo de colonel," said Pete.

"There is certainly something between them that I do not like," said Williams.

"Never fear for Colonel Jameson," said Paulding. "He is too sturdy a patriot to be fooled with."

This seemed to pacify the quartette and they posted themselves around the headquarters.

"Now what is it you ask in the name of the salutation you just gave?" demanded Jameson.

"Simply that you will allow me to send a letter to General Arnold. I am in your power and you have possession of all the documents found upon me. This much you can certainly do."

Jameson was silent and thoughtful.

"Yes, you may write him," said Jameson at length.

What a mistake this honest patriot made in this!

The letter was written and a messenger at once dispatched with it. Andre gave a hurried account of his capture, and the finding of the papers upon him, and without suggesting anything appeared to leave it all to Arnold's judgment.

The next morning the messenger arrived at Arnold's headquarters and delivered the letter. Arnold was at breakfast with his wife and a few friends, all of whom noticed the pallor which overspread his features as he read the letter.

Hastily excusing himself he went to his chamber, where he was soon joined by his anxious wife.

"What is it, general? What has happened?" she asked, earnestly.

"All is lost!" said he, sadly.

"Lost?"

"Yes; Andre has been captured and the whole plot is by this time on its way or really in the hands of Washington. There is not a moment to be lost. I must escape down the river and by some means get on board the Vulture that has returned and is now in waiting for Andre."

His clothes were packed without loss of time, and taking a hasty farewell of his wife and child he stole from the house without pausing to offer any explanation to his guests, which his wife, hastily drying her tears endeavored to do, saying that he had been summoned away by Washington.

Hailing the boatman who had always rowed him back and forth he directed him to row down the river with all his strength.

"Pull, my man; pull with all the strength you have!" said he.

"Yes, general. Whither?"

"Do you see that ship a-down the stream?"

"Yes; she is a Britisher, is she not?"

"No; but there is a mystery connected with that ship which will yet be explained. Hark ye, man, there are American hearts on board that craft, as true and bold as any that beat along these lovely shores. Row, now, for much depends upon my getting on board of her in time."

"With all my strength, general," said the honest man, buckling himself to his oars with the strength of a giant.

Under his powerful strokes the boat almost leaped out of the water and forged ahead at a tremendous rate of speed. The Vulture lay some three miles down the river and danger

threatened from all sides; but as everything was at stake—life, liberty, reputation—Arnold urged him on, and even struck the water with his open hand to assist the boatman.

Just before reaching the Vulture a volley of musketry sent their puffs of smoke from the hillside among the trees, and a dozen bullets hurtled around them.

"What is the meaning of that?" asked Ward.

"Some of the enemy's scouts. On! on!" said Arnold, with tragic intensity.

Another volley greeted them; but still no shot took effect, although two or three of the bullets pierced the sides of the boat.

"On! on!" said Arnold; and with a few more strokes the boat drew up alongside of the Vulture.

"Who comes there?" said the guard.

"A friend," replied Arnold.

"Advance, friend, and give the countersign."

Arnold sprang from the boat and soon stood upon the deck of the Vulture.

"Bring your commander here," said he.

The word was passed, and in a few moments Arnold and the commander of the Vulture were in close conversation.

"Where is Andre?" asked the commander.

"He has gone to New York by land, and it is his request that you take me at once there without loss of time."

"I obey," said the commander.

"Return," said Arnold, addressing the boatman who had brought him, "and to all inquiries say that General Arnold has gone on a privateering expedition."

"I will," said Ward, saluting and turning his boat back up stream.

Arnold watched the boat as it sped back up the river, all the while keenly alive to the preparations that were being made on board the Vulture to wing her way back to New York.

In less than five minutes from the time that Arnold stepped upon her deck her anchor was up; her sails spread, and she was taking with her, out of harm's way, one of the greatest villains that ever the sun shone upon.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE FATAL CONSEQUENCES.

Washington, accompanied by hero Ben and his suite, arrived at Arnold's headquarters within an hour of his escape, previous to which the papers captured on the person of Major Andre had been placed in his hands.

Washington spurred his charger to its utmost speed, and the moment he reached the courtyard of the Robinson House he threw himself from his saddle and hurried into the room where he had met Arnold before, but he was not there.

Mrs. Arnold met him as he came into the room. She was very nervous, and as she came forward to greet the commander-in-chief she trembled visibly.

"Where is General Arnold?" demanded Washington.

"He said he was going down the river on an important expedition, your excellency," she replied.

"And how long has he been gone?"

"Not above an hour, sir."

Just then Ben came in with word that the boatman, Ward, had returned and reported rowing to a war sloop down the river. Mrs. Arnold could not hide her joy at learning this, and yet her expression did not escape Washington.

"Madame, I do not wish to cause you pain, but if you do not already know it I must inform you that your husband is a traitor," said he.

"A traitor, do you say?"

"One of the most infamous in history."

Mrs. Arnold covered her face and went from the room without making a reply.

"Now, then, this wretch must be captured," continued Washington, with much spirit, "while we thank heaven for the miscarriage of his infamous plot, we must not let him escape."

At that moment a messenger arrived from Colonel Jameson with a letter from Major Andre to Washington, in which he acknowledged his rank and the whole business between himself and Arnold, but claiming that the transaction was on neutral ground, and that he could not be regarded as a spy.

The appeal made Washington very serious, but he did not forget his first purpose.

"Captain Parkhurst," he called.

"Here, general," said Ben, saluting.

"To you I entrust this business. Ride with all the speed you have and see if there are no batteries along the river, or some means whereby this vessel can be headed off and the capture of this wretch effected."

"I will try, general."

Ben saluted again, and going from the room he mounted Blazes, who had in the meantime been refreshed, and in five minutes was on the road at a flying pace, headed down the river.

Washington at once replied to Andre's letter, informing him that a court-martial would be appointed to take his case into consideration and that their decision would be final.

After this he rode away to West Point and took command of the fortification in person, resolving to wait there until he heard from Ben, while the board of officers appointed to try Andre was sitting over their solemn and disagreeable task.

Andre, by his youth, honor, bravery and fine address, was respected by friend and foe.

Captain Ben Parkhurst rode with the velocity of an arrow, almost, for Blazes was a thoroughbred and seemingly always fresh.

As he reached town after town, giving the alarm and calling upon all true hearts to follow him, he found himself leading at least a hundred patriots, the majority of whom were Sons of Liberty and well mounted.

The Vulture had sailed the moment Arnold was safely on board, and by constant beating against an unfavorable wind, had managed to get as far as where Sing Sing now stands before Ben and his body of heroes came up with her.

But what could be done even then? They had no cannon and no boats. How, then, should they capture Arnold?

As night closed around them the Vulture, in the entire absence of any wind, was obliged to come to anchor almost abreast of where Andre had been taken prisoner.

Ben Parkhurst watched the Vulture as she swung around at her anchor, and his whole heart was caught in contriving some way whereby he might lead his brave followers on board, and at least capture the greatest villain that modern events had produced.

Ben went close to the edge of the water and observed it for some moments in silence. Then he took a piece of bark and threw it as far out as he could. It floated slowly downstream.

"There is a tide," he mused. "Boys, if one can construct a raft, how many of you will go with me to the very death?"

The answer was enough: "We will all go wherever you lead us!" was the sentiment.

So they at once set to work and constructed a raft out of some timber they found, and in a short time it was finished.

With much labor the huge raft was pushed away from the shore and at length got out into the stream, where the tide took and carried it along slowly through the darkness toward the anchored sloop of war.

CHAPTER XVII.

A TERRIBLE ENCOUNTER.

Slowly the huge raft, packed with its fiery freight, floated downstream toward the anchored sloop. Not a breath of air swept the landscape and a sultry stillness hovered over the darkened river.

"Let every man be silent and ready!" said Ben, when they were fairly under way.

Three stalwart men, handling a huge rail behind, guided the clumsy craft along in the darkness, while every heart was braced and every eye strained in the direction ahead which they were slowly making.

It was now nearly midnight, and not a sound was heard to break the strange stillness.

"Guide her close alongside," said Ben, addressing the men at the rude helm.

"We will," was the low response.

"And the moment we reach her sides let every man grapple with his hands to stop the raft, and then follow me on deck. Caution! Fear not!"

Not a word of reply came, but one could feel the respon-

sive will of those huddled patriots as each grasped his weapon still firmer.

Slowly, silently onward they moved; so still that the sentinel on board the Vulture did not suspect their nearness, although they could hear him as he paced back and forth in his watchful rounds.

But it was not possible that the surprise could be complete, and when within two rods of the sloop the sentry discovered and hailed them.

"Who goes there?"

But no reply came, and the sentry fired his musket and alarmed the ship.

In an instant all was confusion on board, and the frightened officers and men began to swarm on deck just as the raft floated alongside and Ben leaped upon the bulwarks, sword in hand, followed by his trusty friends, eager for the fray.

"At them," shouted Ben, but before they could cross swords a stream of marines poured up the forward hatchway and charged upon the patriots with their short swords.

This created a diversion in their favor, and when they turned to confront them it gave the officers time to seize their weapons and come up the companionway.

Benedict Arnold was of the number, and sword in hand he charged upon the patriots, slaying one of them at a blow.

Guns and pistols were brought into use and a scene of the wildest and bloodiest confusion was enacted on board that sloop-of-war.

Officers and men in their night-clothes, or almost naked, were wielding swords or discharging their small arms, and ere five minutes had passed the deck was thickly strewn with the dead and dying.

Scarcely had Arnold withdrawn his sword from the body of the patriot who had fallen by it than Ben Parkhurst sprang upon him with all the ferocity of a young lion, and catching his sword on his arm, held him for a moment at bay.

The light of the musket and pistol flashes enabled them to recognize each other.

"Traitor!" hissed Ben.

"Captain Parkhurst!" almost gasped Arnold, as he stared back and unlocked their sword-hold.

"Yes, Arnold; and I have come for you!"

"Come for me?"

"Yes; Washington sent me to save the life of Major Andre. Do you surrender?"

"Surrender! Boy, do you know me?" hissed Arnold as he sprang again toward our youthful hero, with his eager sword.

But Ben had by constant practice become a skillful swordsman, and he caught the villainous thrust and parried it with perfect ease.

Back and forth, around and around, in the darkness did Ben and Arnold fight, first one and then the other the aggressor, until at length Arnold stumbled over a dead soldier and Ben bounded upon him.

"Hold! I surrender!" shouted Arnold.

"Throw down your sword!"

Arnold threw it away from him.

"Here, Pete!" called Ben.

"Right heah, Marser Ben!" replied the faithful dorky, darting forward.

"Stand over this wretch and do not allow him to rise until I bid you," said he, pointing with his sword to the prostrate traitor.

"All right, Marser Ben, I won't luff him breave if yer only say so."

Without stopping a moment Ben sprang, with his trusty and victorious sword, into the thickest of the fight, slashing right and left. Had the British soldiers been dressed it would have been almost impossible to have distinguished them from the patriots, but as it was there arose no difficulty in so doing.

But the battle was virtually over before Ben charged upon them, for hearing Arnold shout that he surrendered, they supposed it to be the voice of their commander and threw down their arms.

Ben stood there, a victor. But he had lost a dozen or more of his brave fellows and that grieved him greatly.

As quick as quiet could be restored he ordered the marines below deck and the officers back to their cabins. Arnold was allowed to resume his clothes, and was then heavily ironed, to make sure that he should not escape.

It was now about one o'clock, and the late moon began

to shed her light upon the landscape, and to show the conquerors where they were and how surrounded.

It was a strange position to be placed in. They did not know how to make use of the prize they had captured, for there was not a breath of wind, and if they weighed anchor the tide would take them right into the jaws of danger.

What to do Ben knew not; but at length he resolved to wait until morning, in the hope that something would present itself that would guide them out of the dilemma and in the meantime the wounded could be attended to.

While this was going on Ben was contriving how he should reach the shore with Arnold, and finally he discovered a jolly boat hanging in the stern davits, and he resolved to have him placed in it and rowed ashore, leaving the Vulture to her fate.

This decided upon, he at once proceeded to carry it into execution. First, the wounded of his own party were placed in it and sent ashore, two by two, and then after securing the crew of the sloop so that they could not escape without some outside help, he proceeded to send his men ashore as many as the boat would carry at each trip, and finally only he and Pete, with four others, who had been retained to guard Arnold, were left on board.

Before all this had been accomplished the day had broke in the east and the whole landscape was visible. But with the light there came a sight that gave hero Ben much uneasiness, and when Arnold was brought on deck he saw at a glance that aid was near at hand.

A sloop of war—a detachment from the expedition of Sir Henry Clinton—was moving slowly up the river and bearing over against the Vulture. Mr. Blake had proven true to his Tory principles, and had ridden down the river to give the alarm.

An exultant smile wreathed itself upon Arnold's features. "Now, boy, you see that retribution is near at hand. I admire your bravery; but being misdirected, I am sorry for you. I shall probably have the pleasure of seeing you swing from yonder yard-arm."

"Well, you will see me die game whatever comes," said Ben.

"Oh. I do not doubt that, Captain Parkhurst, for I see you do not tremble even when sure death is approaching you."

"You know I cannot do that, Arnold."

"I do. I admire you, and if you will turn now and join the king's army I will guarantee that you have at least a major's commission in the royal army."

"What! Become a traitor?" said Ben with terrible scorn.

"You cannot call it that when you enlist for the good of the colonies."

"As you have?"

"Yes, as I have."

"No, Arnold, not for the king's crown would I turn traitor to my country as you have done," said he, with much fire.

"Well, then, meet your reward," said Arnold, pointing to the approaching sloop of war that was bearing down upon them.

"I will meet it and you shall meet yours," said he, going to the side of the sloop. "Bring the boat alongside quickly."

"What are you going to do?" asked Arnold.

"I am going to take you ashore or die in the attempt," said Ben.

Arnold started back, aghast at the boldness of the proposition; but the boat was rowed alongside and he was ordered to get into it.

"I refuse," said he firmly.

"Very well; we will put you into it."

"You cannot."

"We will soon see," and, calling his men, they lifted the traitor and fairly threw him into the boat alongside.

"Now, is every piece loaded?"

"Yes," was the reply.

"Then row for the shore; row for your lives!"

The oarsmen, who had become rested, bent their backs and dipped their obedient oars.

The men at the oars bent themselves for a desperate struggle, while Ben encouraged them on; and Pete Sunflower used his broad sword for a paddle to help the heavy boat along.

Scarcely had they rounded the larboard side of the Vulture before five boats shot out from the approaching sloop, and put forward for the purpose of intercepting them.

Closer and closer the boats drew on, while those on the opposite shore saw, with wild regret, that their beloved leader was lost, and Arnold's face became almost demoniacal in its laughing triumph.

At length the boats began to close around, and there seemed no hope of escape.

"You, at least, shall not triumph," said Ben, grappling with Arnold.

"Help!" shouted the traitor, as he hurled him over the side of the boat into the water.

But Arnold managed to fasten one of his hands on our hero, and in the struggle the boat was overturned, and all hands were thrown into the water.

Then followed one of the most terrific struggles that was ever seen.

Ben had the advantage, of course, for Arnold was in irons, and he made the most of it, forcing his head under water and holding him there until he was almost drowned, while the struggle between them was almost superhuman.

But, just in time to save the traitor's life, one of the boats belonging to the enemy rowed up beside them, and two strong men pulled them both above water, and finally succeeded in breaking the hold that Ben had upon Arnold, and lifted him into the boat.

In the meantime the others had escaped and were swimming for the shore.

The moment they drew Arnold into the boat Ben saw that all hope of capturing or killing him was gone, and so he boldly struck out for the shore, taking advantage of the confusion. The boats all centered around the one in which Arnold lay panting and, for the moment, speechless.

"Who are you, and what has happened?" asked the captain of the boats' crews.

But Arnold made no reply, and two or three of them began to rub him and take other measures to restore him to speech.

"Here, give him some rum," said the captain of the boat, handing a flask.

Some of the rum was poured down his throat, and he began to revive.

What had happened, and what it was all about seemed to puzzle everybody. At length Arnold recovered his speech sufficiently to make himself understood.

He then explained about the capture and evacuation of the Vulture. The boats were thereupon headed for the war vessel. Ben swam on until he reached the shore.

With heavy hearts the command rode back to West Point, there to report the failure to capture Arnold, and to be present at the hanging of Andre, who had been captured as a spy, tried as a spy, and, according to the laws of war (in spite of the great sympathy that existed for him), hung as a spy.

The execution of this brilliant officer, who had really been betrayed into meeting Arnold within the American lines, produced a marked effect upon both the British and American armies; but Sir Henry Clinton, finding that his plans had miscarried, and that the patriots were too true and too watchful for him, abandoned the business of attempting to cut his way up the Hudson River, and soon after sailed for the South, whither the theatre of war had been transferred.

Washington placed West Point in the completest state of defense, and hastily followed his army. The interview between the great man and our hero, Ben Parkhurst, was very affecting, for he had learned to love the young patriot very much, and to trust him in everything.

No sooner had Washington taken his departure than Ben gathered his troop of scouts, including the original company that had set out with him from Poughkeepsie, and dividing it in two, gave the command of one company to Lieutenant Livingstone, took the other himself, and started down the river, he on the east bank and Livingstone on the west.

Although the bulk of the British army had gone South, the idea of obtaining possession of the Hudson River had by no means been abandoned.

One of the points hoped to be gained by them was, and

CHAPTER XVIII.

IN THE BLACK SHADOW OF ILL-FORTUNE.

Slippery Ben sat in the stern of the boat that was conveying the remnant of his company and the traitor, Benedict Arnold, ashore, whither the victorious company had preceded him.

he point insisted upon by Arnold, who had now become a major-general in the British army, that when the main army moved away the garrisons would follow to strengthen the armies of Gates and Washington, and that it would be an easy matter to capture not only West Point, but all other strongholds from the feeble garrisons left to defend them.

Arnold was very solicitous to undertake the job, but he was sent South, where he soon became very unpopular with his brother officers, and was finally sent back to New York again.

On nearing Yonkers Lieutenant Livingstone found that foraging parties of the enemy were laying waste the whole section, and abusing the inhabitants in the most inhuman manner, while the west bank of the river was escaping entirely.

Under these circumstances he communicated with Ben, and he at once crossed the river on a huge raft and joined him. Marching on a mile or so farther, they were soon informed that a large detachment of the enemy were even then going roughshod over the people, stripping them of all they possessed, and submitting them to the most inhuman indignities.

Ben at once assumed command and rode directly for the enemy, some fifty in number, who had crossed the Spuyten Duyvil Creek, and had burned several houses in the neighborhood.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE END OF A LONG AND BLOODY STRUGGLE.

The fame of Slippery Ben extended far and wide, and when Arnold returned to New York with the understanding that he would be placed at the heads of a command for the purpose of cutting his way through all obstructions which lined the Hudson River, he soon learned that his old enemy was virtually in command, and with such a force of disciplined followers at his back, that the expedition might, and probably would, miscarry. So he wisely hesitated.

So, after looking at the situation in all lights, it was finally concluded to send him to New London, in Connecticut (his native State, by the way), for the purpose of capturing Fort Griswold, and reducing that then important trading town to ashes.

How well he succeeded history bears witness.

With overwhelming numbers he forced the garrison to surrender, and then put them all to death, and the village of New London he set on fire, and burned it to the ground, after which he returned to New York to receive the plaudits of his commander-in-chief, and the curses of every friend of the colonies and of humanity the wide world over.

While all this was going on Washington and his brave generals were fighting the enemy in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, North Carolina, Virginia and other points, but no further attempts in force were made to get possession of the Hudson River, along which our hero, Ben Parkhurst, was the recognized commander.

At that time there was a small settlement on the west side of the river where Nyack now stands, and upon it the Indian chief, Wild Bear, had long meditated a descent. In fact, he would have done so long before had it not been for the watchfulness of the river scouts, for he was allied to the British, and knew that their sanction would be given to any atrocity.

"I want an Indian scout," said Ben.

"Take Pete; he comes the nearest to one," said one of his men.

"I want some one who can speak their lingo and dress like one of them."

"I can tork deir lingo, Marser Ben," said Pete.

"You can?"

"Fo' shua! Yo' know I wor a pris'ner for three yeahs, Marser Ben."

"Yes; but how can we get an Indian dress for you?"

"Mr. Hyter has one that he took from that Indian he killed while trying to steal his horse," said Baldwin.

"Good! Ride over there with Pete, and ask him to lend him the dress, will you?"

"Certainly. Come, Pete."

They rode speedily away, and in the course of half an hour came back again with Pete dressed out for all the world like an Indian, at the same time riding and acting so much like one that it was hard to convince the company that it was their favorite black boy.

"Whoop!" he cried, as he dashed into the camp, brandish-

ing his tomahawk and yelling like a devil. "How am dis yere, Marser Ben?"

"First rate; in fact, I think I should shoot you on sight, you look so much like one of them."

"Capital!" they all exclaimed.

"Good! Ride out and find out all you can."

He had ridden only a mile or so when he met four Indians on foot, and without exciting their suspicions he managed to draw out of them the fact that Wild Bear was going to make a descent on the hamlet the next night, provided Slippery Ben and his troop did not approach too near in the meantime.

With the utmost caution Ben moved his troop to a place of concealment and awaited events, at the same time assuring the inhabitants of his protection.

Night came on, and just before ten o'clock the savages began to steal over the western hill and around its base, forming into a solid body. They stole upon the houses, little dreaming how near Ben and his troop lay concealed.

When near enough they began to yell like demons, and charged upon the houses. But just then Ben led his armed and mounted troop around a little hillock, and rode upon them with the impetuosity of a whirlwind, killing, scattering and sending consternation into their ranks.

The victory was complete, and the chief himself was wounded and a prisoner in the hands of our hero. The inhabitants were very grateful to him, as may be supposed, and to this day the scene of the bloody fight is remembered and pointed out by the descendants of those whom he saved.

But while Ben kept his watch, and maintained his powers on the Hudson, Washington and his generals were meeting with varying success at different points, until, by his watchfulness and valor, Lord Cornwallis was obliged to surrender, and the power of England was broken.

Joy reigned supreme all over the land. Washington resigned his sword to Congress, and retired to his plantation at Mount Vernon, leaving the completion of his work to Congress.

But he was not long allowed to enjoy the delights of retirement, for a grateful country called him to guide its destinies as the first President, and, ever ready to obey the call of his fellow citizens, he yielded, and was elected without a dissenting vote.

This being accomplished, he came to New York to take the oath of office and assume the duties of Executive, and the leading spirits of the young nation assembled there to honor and grace the occasion.

The ceremonies attending the inauguration were at length over with, and Washington's old companions in arms gathered around to congratulate him and to take part in the first Presidential reception.

As evening drew nigh, Washington called his officers about him, while a pleasant smile wreathed his features as he said:

"Gentlemen, go with me a little ways, whither my wife and the ladies will follow us, for the festivities of this day will not be complete without what is to follow. Come."

An hour from that time this distinguished company filed into St. Paul's Church, lighted and decorated as if for some great occasion. In the afternoon Washington and his cabinet had attended divine service there, but now everybody who came was dressed in holiday attire. What did it mean?

Presently Ben Parkhurst and Evelina Filley walked up the aisle, followed by Livingstone, Clinton and Baldwin, each escorting a daughter of Farmer Filley, each with the identical one who had pinned her color upon their coats when they first set out to save their country.

A happier group was never seen, and after the marriage ceremony had been performed, and each had been joined to the lady of his choice, in marched Pete Sunflower with Dinah leaning upon his arm, both dressed with all the showy finery they could get, and they were also married.

When all had been presented, Washington took Ben by the hand, and turning to the assembled company, said: "Ladies and gentlemen, we owe this young man much, for he is one of the bravest of the brave. Let us all unite in wishing him and his comrades a long life amid the peaceful scenes which they have helped to wrest from the tyrant."

History tells the rest; but it has no brighter page than that whereon is recorded the daring deeds of "Slippery Ben and the Boy Spies of the Revolution."

Next week's issue will contain "YOUNG DAVY CROCKETT; OR, THE HERO OF SILVER GULCH."

HELP YOUR COUNTRY!

STANDING BEHIND OUR SOLDIERS.

You are undertaking a great duty. The heart of the whole country is with you. Everything that you do will be watched only by those who are near and dear to you but by the whole nation besides, for this great war draws us all together.

—From President's Wilson's address to the soldiers of the National Army.

THE SECOND LIBERTY LOAN.

The bonds of the second issue of the Liberty Loan are to be issued under the act of Congress approved by the President September 24, 1917.

The amount of the issue will be \$3,000,000,000 or more; \$3,000,000,000 will be offered, and the right is reserved to allot bonds in excess of that amount to the extent of one-half of the oversubscription. That is, if \$5,000,000,000 is subscribed the right is reserved to issue \$1,000,000,000 more than the \$3,000,000,000.

The bonds will bear date November 15, 1917, and will mature November 15, 1942. But the Government reserves the right to call in and pay the bonds in full, with accrued interest, any time after 10 years after their date.

The bonds are convertible gold bonds and bear 4 per cent annual interest, the interest being payable semiannually on May 15 and November 15 of each year.

The bonds are exempt, both as to principal and interest, from all taxation now or hereafter imposed by the United States, any State, or any other possessions of the United States or by any local taxing authority, except (a) estate or inheritance taxes, and (b) graduated additional income taxes, commonly known as surtaxes, and excess-profits and war-profits taxes now or hereafter imposed. They are not liable to the ordinary Federal income tax.

The interest on an amount of bonds the principal of which does not exceed \$5,000, owned by any individual, partnership, association, or corporation, are exempted from the taxes provided for in clause (b) above.

The right is given to holders of the bonds to exchange them for bonds bearing a higher rate of interest if any such shall later be issued by the United States before the termination of the war. This conversion privilege must be exercised, if at all, within six months after the issuance of such higher-rate bonds.

THE BONDS.

The second issue of Liberty Loan Bonds will be of two kinds, registered and coupon.

The registered bonds will be registered at the Treasury in the names of their owners and will be

of the denominations of \$50, \$100, \$500, \$1,000, \$5,000, \$10,000, and \$100,000. Checks for the interest on the bonds will be mailed from the Treasury to the owners each semiannual-interest date.

The coupon bonds will be payable to bearer and will have coupons attached for the interest. They will be in denominations of \$50, \$100, \$500, \$1,000, \$5,000, and \$10,000. The coupons can be cashed like a Government check at any bank.

The coupon bonds of this loan will have only four coupons attached, representing the semiannual interest for two years. Between November 15, 1919, and May 15, 1920, the holders of coupon bonds must exchange their bonds for new bonds having full sets of coupons. These temporary bonds are issued because the work of engraving so many bonds with so large a number of coupons attached can not be completed within a reasonable time for delivery.

PURCHASE OF BONDS.

Bonds of the Second Liberty Loan can be purchased by filling out an application blank made on the form prescribed by the Secretary of the Treasury, which can be obtained from any bank or Liberty Loan committee, and sending it or having it sent to the Treasury of the United States or any Federal Reserve Bank or branch accompanied by the payment of 2 per cent of the amount of bonds applied for.

These applications must reach the Treasury Department, a Federal Reserve Bank or branch thereof, or some incorporated or trust company in the United States on or before the close of business October 27, 1917. Practically every bank in the United States will willingly receive these applications and handle the whole transaction of the purchase of bonds for any subscriber.

PAYMENT FOR BONDS.

A purchaser may pay in full for his bonds at the time of making his application or, if he so prefers, he can take advantage of the installment plan and pay 2 per cent on application, 18 per cent on November 15, 1917, 40 per cent on December 15, 1917, and the remaining 40 per cent on January 15, 1918.

Although so far as the Government is concerned the purchase price for the bonds must be paid as above, nearly every bank in the country will make arrangements by which Liberty Loan Bonds can be paid on an installment plan providing for weekly or monthly payments, and a great many employers will make the same arrangements for their employees.

Payment can be made to the Treasury Department or to any one of the Federal Reserve Banks, but purchasers are urged to make their payments to the banks or other agencies with whom they placed their subscriptions.

HUSTLING JOE BROWN

—OR—

THE BOY WHO KEPT THE TOWN CLOCK

By WILLIAM WADE

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER XVII.

JOE GOES TO NEW YORK.

He had never imagined that there could be so many people in the world.

Joe hit New York at the Grand Central station, and when he came out on Forty-second street he stood with his mouth wide open, lost in wonder.

The crowd pushed and shoved him, the cabbies bawled at him. For the moment he did not know which way to turn.

His one fear was of confidence men and thieves, and he held on to his shabby little grip with a death-like clutch ready to hit the first man who tried to seize it, as he was confident some one would soon try to do.

But the confidence men must have all been off the job that evening, for no one attempted to interfere with him.

Colonel Redding had directed him to take the subway down-town, and at last he found the station entrance without inquiring, which he was resolved not to do.

Once the express train started Joe caught his breath.

He was certain that the motorman must have lost control, and his heart was in his mouth all the way down-town.

It was a relief to get to the Astor House, which he finally did.

To Joe's unsophisticated eye, the shabby old granite building seemed the grandest hotel on earth.

It was in such pleasing contrast to the skyscrapers, too.

Such of those as he saw filled him with wonder, but he was sure he would never dare to sleep in one.

"Suppose a fire should break out in the night!" he said to himself, and he shuddered to think of the awful possibilities as he entered the old hotel.

Joe did not want to go to bed until after midnight, but wandered about the lower part of New York after supper, marveling at what he saw.

"But where were all the people?" he asked himself.

It looked like a city deserted.

The real surprise came when he saw the crowds next day.

We should like to dwell further upon Joe's impression of the metropolis, but these form no part of our story.

The one thing which impressed him most when he began to move about in the morning was the

necessity of hustling as he had never done before.

Everybody seemed to be hustling.

Unless he did the same his case was hopeless.

For the first hour he was nervous beyond all telling, but that feeling gradually wore away.

Joe got his clothes and cashed his check.

At the bank, in spite of Colonel Redding's letter, he was so sharply questioned that it made him hot under the collar, and he felt himself badly abused when the money was finally counted out to him.

He little guessed how lucky was to get it at all.

And now came the time when the real hustling was about to begin.

Colonel Redding had informed Joe that, as Mr. Franklin Noble was a retired capitalist, the best time to call upon him would be in the morning.

He had especially instructed him to take a cab.

This Joe considered a mere waste of money, but he obeyed orders, and at last found himself landed at the door of an elegant mansion opposite Central Park, on the Fifth avenue side.

But it was only one of many.

The houses which he saw stretching out as far as the eye could reach filled Joe with amazement.

He did not hesitate, however, but ran up the broad steps and boldly rang the bell.

An elderly man opened the door.

He looked to Joe like a clergyman, and he asked him if he was Mr. Noble.

The butler stared, and gruffly demanded his business, ignoring the question entirely. Then, snatching the letter out of his hand, he slammed the door, in the boy's face, which Joe thought very rude.

He stood perplexed.

His letter was gone, and the door was closed against him. He hardly knew what he ought to do.

So he did the correct thing, waited, and at last the butler opened the door, and in a more civil tone told Joe to follow him.

He was led into an elegantly furnished room where there were many books, and here he waited nearly twenty minutes.

At last a stout, elderly gentleman entered the room with the leather man's letter in his hand.

He seemed greatly agitated, and as he dropped into a chair after greeting Joe, he took out a silk handkerchief and mopped his bald head.

"Mr. Brown," he said, "who gave you this letter?"

And now, for the first time, Joe realized what a disadvantage he was at in not knowing the leather man's name.

He explained the situation as well as he could, however.

Mr. Noble let him talk himself out without interruption and then asked him all sorts of questions about the leather man.

As he talked his agitation increased, but he finally seemed to get the better of it.

(To be continued.)

CURRENT NEWS

At Mardella Springs station on the Baltimore, Chesapeake and Atlantic Railway, an express train of five coaches, bound for Ocean City, Md., ran over a two-year-old girl in the center of the tracks. Engineer Wallace, on the flyer, which was running about sixty miles an hour, immediately applied the brakes. Flagman Hall, when the train came to a standstill, ran down the tracks and picked up little Annie Kosh Kery, sound asleep on the ties. She was unhurt.

The largest duplex submarine telephone cable in existence was recently laid between Keansburg, N. J., and Annadale, Staten Island, N. Y. In all, the cable measures 28,248 feet, and is one of the double-armored type containing 74 pairs of No. 16 and 12 pairs of No. 22 wire. Loading pots have been installed at five points, the splices being tested for water tightness by dry air pumped into the sleeves before filling with paraffine. The locations of the pots are indicated by spar buoys.

The territory to be acquired by the Government in Harford County, Md., for a new Army proving ground site as a substitute for the Kent Island site will have a thirty-mile range and will include the entire southeastern part of the county and a small section of Baltimore County. The range is to start at and include all of Spesutia Island, where there are several large farms and some fine fishing and ducking shores. It will also include the famous ducking shores in the neighborhood of Bengies. The idea is to have two fifteen-mile ranges, so that guns may be fired in two directions at the same time.

The United States naval training station established at Minneapolis, Minn., recently at Dunwoody Industrial Institute has developed rapidly. Five hundred bluejackets and petty officers from all parts of the country are now in attendance, a hundred more are coming, and the quota will soon reach one thousand. Rear Admiral Leigh S. Palmer, U. S. N., chief of the Bureau of Navigation, made an official inspection of the Dunwoody detail, and reported in most favorable terms. The commandant is Ensign Colby Dodge, U. S. N., retired. The station is training cooks, bakers, blacksmiths, copper-smiths, carpenters, electricians, gas-engine men, machinists, and what has lately been ordered, the most important class of all, radio operators.

Successful experiments with a telephone apparatus installed on a railroad car were carried out recently by a representative of the signal department of the

Canadian Government Railways and the inventor of the device, the former in the car itself and the latter in the dispatcher's office in the Moncton yard. The transmission in this system of communication is made through wheel and axle without the assistance of any contributing medium. Reports of the tests declare that the communication established was in every way satisfactory, although the train was in motion. It is said there was no difficulty in hearing distinctly every word of the messages exchanged. The experiment was tried on a double-track line where the rails are properly "bonded" for the block-signal system, but it is claimed that equally good results can be obtained on any track where the rails are similarly "bonded" without regard to the presence or absence of a block-signal installation.

The magnitude of the war, as a whole, is repeated in every phase of its activity, and in no way more so than in its instruments of war. As we have more than once remarked in these columns, it has been necessary to multiply our units of measurement by from 10 to 100. Weapons which were thought massive and powerful in 1914 are puny in 1917. Thus, heavy artillery, whose weight tied it down to fixed fortification, is now moving merrily over the field of battle. Where, formerly, we talked in millions, now we talk freely in billions. Before the war 25 to 30 knots was battle-cruiser speed—today we have such ships of from 150,000 to 200,000 horse-power steaming at 35 to 40 knots. A notable instance of this growth is in the field of aviation, where the British have aeroplanes of 600 horsepower and the Italians have gone up to 1,000. And the end is not yet.

The safe delivery of eggs to be sent through the mail will be insured and their period of freshness prolonged at the same time by the use of a new system which has recently been patented and is now being called to the attention of egg dealers and shippers. The patent is on a machine which wraps the eggs in a long strip of paper, the eggs being entirely covered by the paper which is twisted about them, making them resemble a length of sausages more than anything else. The paper in which they have been encased has been dampened, and in this condition the eggs are draped around a collapsible wire frame. As the paper dries it becomes taut, and the eggs are securely held between the arms of the frame. When they are placed in a box for shipment they are supported so that they cannot come in contact with each other nor the box, and they are thus enabled to withstand a rough experience which would be disastrous under ordinary conditions. The frames are made in one-dozen and crate sizes.

NEWS OF THE DAY

FISH AS A WAR FOOD.

With a view to the mobilization of the fish industry, representatives of wholesale fish distributors from all parts of the country began a conference recently with officials of the Food Administration and the Bureau of Fisheries, New York, Boston, Gloucester, St. Louis, the Gulf Coast, Lake Erie and the Pacific Coast were represented.

A campaign is planned to popularize frozen fish. War-time conscription of ships and men from the fishery fleet and an intensified demand for fish to release more meat for export to the Allies have developed some adverse conditions in the industry. It is believed that by popularizing frozen fish it will be far easier for the distributors to handle the supply to best advantage.

SISTERS REACH THE END OF THEIR "ROMANCE TRAIL."

The Llewellen sisters, Alexandria and Gloria, who arrived in San Pedro, Cal., dressed in men's clothes and on their way to "somewhere," adventure bound, have reached the end of their "romance trail."

Alexandria, who is the youngest, was shipped back to Stockton to face parental ire, while her sister, unfortunate in being over age, was transferred to the city jail.

The girls left Stockton via the hobo route several weeks ago and sought the thrills of travel astride old tank cars and inside empty box cars. When arrested they gave the names of Ross.

The girls' father wired transportation for Alexandria.

THE PROPER SPIRIT.

A company of Plattsburgers was drawn up to learn how many of them were to graduate as officers.

The names of those who had passed were read out. The officer in charge said:

"The rest of you may go. In my opinion you are not good for anything, but I may be mistaken, and I hope the future will show that I am. There is one way for you to prove this now. You can enter the ranks and take a chance of working up. Any who desire to do this will please step three paces forward."

Three men stepped forward.

"I see," said the instructor officer, "that I made three mistakes. I am sorry I missed you three men. You certainly have the right spirit."

A REINFORCED RIVER.

Floating on the crest of an artificial floor, a fleet of Ohio River barges recently carried down to Cincinnati something like 12,000 tons of coal. The

Ohio River never before under similar conditions has seen such an event in August and it is only because man stepped in to aid nature, that the thing occurred. As always is the case in August the river was in extremely low water. Boats drawing more than a couple of feet normally are tied up. But the United States Army Engineering Corps, wishing to demonstrate the supreme value of the river as an artery of traffic in war-time, has stepped in with an illuminating illustration of what can be done even in these weeks of scant flow.

Dams holding back pools along the Big Sandy, the Kanawha and the Upper Ohio rivers were opened recently and surplus water was allowed to run out. An artificial crest of from three to six feet was formed and on this crest snub-nosed argosies went down the river bearing the coal to the Queen City. Without the presence of the dams which the government has already completed, this movement and others which will undoubtedly follow, could not be made.

ANOTHER WAR WEAPON.

After a murderous artillery fire has swept away the ordinary barbed wire entanglements in front of a trench, there is nothing to impede the onrush of troops except machine-gun and infantry fire, accompanied, at certain times, by well-placed barrage fire from the rear. Under most conditions this resistance is sufficient to deplete the ranks of an invading force, but the fact that the first, second and third line of trenches may be captured in a single charge is proof that gun fire alone cannot dissipate a body of troops. There have been numerous occasions in this war where troops of both sides have deliberately plunged through a heavy barrage fire to carry a line of trenches.

Accordingly, Enid S. Wales of Detroit, Mich., has invented a novel projectile which shoots barbed wire instead of bullets. His idea is to first impede the progress of an onrushing body of troops by spreading coils of barbed wire in front of them and then to attack them with infantry and machine gunfire. The inventor claims that his projectile will distribute masses of barbed wire over a large area, enmeshing a whole company of troops.

Briefly, the projectile consists of a stem which fits the barrel of a trench mortar, a central chamber containing the explosive charge, into which chamber the stem fits, and several hollow caps which carry the coils of barbed wire, the inner ends of which are secured to the body of the shell. When the projectile explodes, the caps containing the barbed wire shoot out like bullets, distributing the wire in tangled masses. A time fuse is provided so that the distance can be gauged.

OUT FOR MONEY

—OR—

A POOR BOY'S CHANCE IN A BIG CITY

By J. P. RICHARDS

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER XIV (Continued).

Early in the evening Mrs. Mulligan, Kitty and Butts arrived, having come by the subway.

"Sure, but thot bates th' owld horse-cars all eout," declared Mrs. Mulligan, resplendent in a red shawl, a green bonnet and plenty of ribbons. "Faix, whin I wint to Harlem before it'd take me two hours be the clock, and now yez get here before yez know yez have shtarted."

"Say, dat's a great way o' travelin'," said Butts, who wore a high collar and a very stiff shirt, "but me neck is wore off rubberin' to see de trains dat we passed. I t'ought sure we was goin' ter run in to 'em an' smash 'em or go bustin' inter dem pillars till I saw we was all right."

"You folks ain't used ter travelin' on high-toned cars," said Kitty, who looked very neat in a dark woollen frock and a big Tam-o'-Shanter cap. "Don't give yourselves away an' folks won't know yer ain't yoused to things."

"Ah, go on," said Butts, "youse ain't used ter not'n' yerself."

"Well, I don't say not'n' if I ain't," said Kitty, with a toss of her head.

Bess was glad to see her old friends, and looked very pretty as she jumped about, her light curls flying, while Mrs. Matthews welcomed them all and made them at home in a short time.

"I seen de ole woman to-day, Phil," said Butts. "She's just off de island an' she axed me where you was, but I didn't tell her."

"Oh, well, I don't suppose she'll make any trouble."

"I dunno. She axed where de kid was, but I didn't tell her not'n'. She was mad, but dat didn't make no difference."

"It's not at all likely that she'll find us away up here," answered Phil, not noticing that Kitty had suddenly flushed up and looked uncomfortable.

They had supper and then played games. Mrs. Matthews playing on the piano and singing and Jim telling funny stories.

Bess grew sleepy at last, and Jim's wife put her on the bed in a back room, while the others went into the parlor and continued the festivities.

Finally, as it was growing late, Mrs. Mulligan said that they must go home, and Jim's wife went into the bedroom to get their wraps.

"Jim!" the wife suddenly screamed, "the door is open and the child is gone!"

"Gone!" echoed everybody, hurrying to the spot.

"Yes, gone, and the door is left open into the hall. Who could have been here?"

Kitty suddenly burst out crying and exclaimed: "It's all my fault. I told the old woman Phil was livin' up-town in style, an' that we was all goin' up to see him put on airs. I was mad and——"

"Oho, Kitty, yez'll be the ruination av everything wid yer temper."

"Never mind," said Phil. "The child must be found."

CHAPTER XV.

THE UNEXPECTED HAPPENS.

No one knew how long Bess had been missing or who had taken her.

Mother Judy had not been seen, nor, in fact, any one of a suspicious character, and as yet it was all guesswork as to what had become of Bess.

Kitty declared tearfully that it was all her fault, that she had no business to get mad, that the old woman must have followed them up-town and stolen the child, and that they would never see her again.

Mrs. Mulligan alternately scolded and comforted, Butts looked disgusted, Mrs. Matthews was excited for fear that some of her things had been stolen, and Matthews declared that he never had liked living in a flat, anyhow.

"Never mind, Kit," said Phil. "You can't help it now, and the only thing to do is to look out next time. We're going to find Bess, and if the old woman has her, it'll mean another visit to the island or maybe a trip up the river. This is a more serious affair than getting drunk or picking pockets."

"What are you going to do?" asked Jim. "Will you inform the police?"

"Yes, I guess so, but we'll work by ourselves all the same. If the old woman did it, we'll have to go to her old hanging-out places. If she didn't, then it's going to be harder. Come on, missus, I'll see you to the station. Don't wait up for me, Mrs. Jim. I've got a key, so it's all right."

They went to the subway, and here Phil asked if any one had been seen with a fair-haired child of about six years.

"Well, I couldn't say how old it was," said the ticket-chopper, "but a woman and a man came through an hour ago and the man had a sleeping child in his arms."

"Boy or girl?"

"I couldn't tell you. It's hair was light and kinder long, but boys dresses that way, too, these days, and it's hard to tell 'em apart."

"How was it dressed?"

"Couldn't tell because it was wrapped up in a shawl."

"Did they go up-town or down?"

"Down, by express."

"Was the woman very old?"

"I guess she must have been, for she hadn't any teeth and her hair was white. The man was a good deal younger and had a thick brown beard."

(To be continued.)

FACTS WORTH READING

A BANK'S WAR GARDEN SHOW.

A San Francisco bank lately held an exhibit of the produce from a war garden planted by one of its staff on a lot 30 by 100 feet. Among the produce shown were dressed Belgian hares, eggs, and half a dozen different kinds of vegetables, with berries, accompanied by a poster giving details of production. The young Belgian does substantially reduce the family's meat bill. Six hens laid an average of four eggs a day, and a patch of alfalfa 25 feet square supplied food for the hares and grain stuff for the chickens all year around. Seven sacks of potatoes were harvested from a plot 27 by 45 feet in size, which also yielded squash between the rows. Green peas were raised in succession to supply the table four months on a plot 12 by 18 feet. Berries were trained on the garden fence.

BROWN PEARLS.

A year or two ago a youth working along a stream near Paterson, N. J., found a mussel shell in a shallow, and picked it up to look at it. With his knife he cut toward the hinge of the shell from each side, which severed two pillars of muscle by which the half shells were held together. When the half shells fell apart the meat was disclosed, and near the hinge was a little round lump.

"Why, it's a pearl!" the youth said to himself. "But it isn't white—it's brown!"

He carried it to Maiden Lane, in downtown New York, the "Street of Baubles," where millions of dollars' worth of pearls and other gems are traded in annually. A buyer, after looking at the pearl, said it was worth \$15.

The young man returned home, and, with a companion, began to hunt systematically for pearls. The stream was a small creek, and it was an easy matter to fish out the mussels in the still waters and on the shoals. In four months the two young men found several hundred little brown pearls, which brought prices ranging from 50 cents up to \$25 each. Most of them were worth from \$2 to \$5. In those four months the two pearl fishers cleaned up \$1,500.

Then the stream "played out" and their bonanza came to an end.

SCHOOLSHIP NEWPORT HOME AFTER CRUISE.

The United States steamer Newport, New York State's Nautical Training School, is moored in the North River opposite Grant's Tomb. The schoolship left Newburgh and steamed slowly down the Hudson on the last lap of a three months' summer cruise, arriving here recently. The Newport will

be tied up at the 129th street pier, where she is scheduled to remain until next spring.

Eighty cadets, all of them training to be officers in the United States Merchant Marine, were on the Newport's deck when she slipped by the last of the Palisades the other afternoon. They cheered as Manhattan's jagged skyline came into view, half-obscured by autumn mists.

"Now that we're back in New York for the winter, we want to call special attention to what the training school offers to young men," said Captain Felix Riesenbergh, commander of the Newport. "We give a two-year cruise in navigation and our men are put into shape for service as officers in the merchant marine. We want all the young men between the ages of sixteen and twenty we can get."

"Those who have high school diplomas can get in without academic examinations. Others will have to pass certain tests. We are going to keep open house at the foot of 129th street, and I will be glad to give applicants all the information they seek."

SUBMARINE RAMS EXCURSION BOAT IN FOG

A United States submarine collided with the Nantasket Beach excursion steamer Mayflower in Boston Harbor during a thick fog the other day. The Navy Yard officials said the damage to the submarine was slight, but that the Mayflower had a hole stove in her port side, near the paddle-box. One seaman on the steamer suffered a broken leg.

Fifteen hundred passengers on board were transferred without accident to the steamer Rose Standish and brought up to Boston. Tugs took the Mayflower to a shipyard. The crash caused intense excitement among the hundreds of women and children aboard the steamer, but officers and crew quickly got the crowd in hand and pointed out the gray hulk of the submarine standing closed by with a Navy Yard tug which reached the scene within a minute after the collision.

According to the report given out at the Navy Yard, the submarine, running on the surface, was returning to the yard from maneuvers in Massachusetts Bay. The fog was so thick that, according to those on board both the war vessel and the steamer, observation did not extend more than ten feet. Accordingly, both ships were proceeding slowly and this greatly lessened the impact when the Mayflower loomed out of the mist directly in the path of the submersible.

After the last passenger had been transferred to safety the submarine proceeded to the Navy Yard under her own power. At the yard it was stated that her bow was stove in, but that the damage was not serious.

THE NEWS IN SHORT ARTICLES

LONDON TO NEW YORK IN ONE DAY.

From London to New York by aeroplane in one day. This is the scheme of J. A. Whitehead, Governing Director of Whitehead Aircraft, Ltd., and he told a daily sketch reporter that it is to be carried to a successful conclusion.

"When our plans are fully matured," he said, "we shall make a trip which will be the most sensational in the whole history of aviation. The aeroplane will be piloted by Herbert Sykes, who anticipates leaving Hanworth Park, Feltham Middlesex, at dawn and reaching New York before night. The trip will be accomplished on a specially designed very powerful Whitehead machine which is being built at our Middlesex factory." Edgar Middleton will accompany Mr. Sykes as navigator. He has served in an Essex regiment and was sub-lieutenant. Both are immensely enthusiastic and confident.

PAPER FAMINE IN GERMANY.

The shortage of print paper in Berlin is so serious that many of the city's important newspapers were unable to appear on Saturday, according to Berlin advices to the Exchange Telegraph's Amsterdam correspondent. Other newspapers were issued only in four-page form, with the prospects for a paper supply so poor that they may soon have to stop publication altogether.

No Berlin newspapers reached Holland except forty copies of the Tageblatt, says the correspondent. Virtually all the newspapers in Saxony have ceased publication for an indefinite period.

The situation, says the Tageblatt, is serious. The advertising of the new German war loan, it points out, will naturally be impossible under these conditions, as well as the printing of advertising of other kinds.

THE UNITED STATES WILL HAVE 1,600 MERCHANT SHIPS.

The United States has today 458 ships of over 1,500 deadweight tons with an aggregate tonnage of 2,871,359, either engaged in or capable of participating in foreign trade. There are also 117 ships of a tonnage of 700,285 of German and Austrian origin. The United States Shipping Board Emergency Fleet Corporation has commandeered nearly 400 steel ships of more than 2,500,000 tons, which are being completed or under contract for construction in American yards. The Board's Fleet Corporation has also contracted for 636 ships with a tonnage of 3,124,700. Totaled these figures show that the United States will have near the end of 1918 a merchant fleet of more than 1,600 ships aggregating 9,200,000 tons to carry its foreign commerce, as

compared with an overseas marine of 1,614,222 tons on June 30, 1914, scarcely a month before the European war began.

The tonnage referred to is exclusive of that engaged on inland waters, unsuitable coastwise ships and small craft operating along the coast and in bays and harbors, and does not, of course, include the prospective additional program of the Emergency Fleet Corporation.

The fleet in prospect is already becoming a reality. Several of the commandeered ships are already taking cargo; others will leave the ways in increasing numbers with each succeeding month. The ships for which the Shipping Board has contracted are under construction and the first launching is expected within 60 to 90 days.

A NEW U-BOAT DETECTOR.

A radio submarine detector, designed to discover the presence of submerged craft at a considerable distance and thwart surprise attacks on American ships, has been invented by Lieutenant William R. Russel, formerly chief of the wireless division of the Seventh Reserve Officer, New York Aero Wireless Corps, who is in Denver, Colo.

Lieutenant Russel describes his device as follows: "It is a mica tube three feet long and six inches in diameter, and there is a rock salt lens midway in its length. Through this lens are projected radiations from a radium audion. The lens eliminates the ultra-violet rays and light waves and permits only the infra-red rays and radium electric waves to pass through. The infra-red rays are the most powerful of the heating waves.

"These concentrated rays and waves pass invisibly through the air from the radio projector until they strike the metallic surface of the hunted submarine. Then they are reflected invisibly back upon a new type of selenium cell, to which is connected a registering device.

"The idea is that this instrument or radium ray projector, as I call it, mounted on an airplane or a chaser, locates the submerged underwater craft by means of radium electric rays. The airplane, for instance, soars over the sea and the observer keeps sweeping the waters with the instrument. The minute the rays strike the hull of the U-boat they are reflected back to the radio-active selenium cell, the operator gets the signal through the wireless headgear he wears, and fires his machine gun or drops a bomb at the spot indicated.

"It is only reasonable to believe that in the majority of cases the U-boat will be fairly hit, for submarines generally do not go much below 200 feet beneath the surface, and the rays from the 'radium gun' can penetrate the sea to a much greater depth."

PLUCK AND LUCK

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 31, 1917.

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Good Current News Articles

Dr. D. G. Long of Reading, Pa., had a narrow escape while on a fishing trip to Fortescue, N. J., where he hooked a four-foot shark which bit fast to his clothing when he hauled it into the boat. Charles Cole and Felix Oehring, who accompanied the Reading doctor, cut the shark's head off before its hold could be released.

A plant for converting shark skins into leather is to be erected at St. Petersburg, Fla., by a corporation of Seattle, Wash., which maintains shark fisheries there and in Alaska. There are at least ten varieties of sharks, namely, the blue, basking, pilgrim, porpoise, bone, man-eater, tiger, hammer-head, thrasher and the mackerel shark, whose skin can be turned into good commercial leather. At the Florida station catching, skinning and tanning can be made an all-year-round industry.

The New York City Department of Health has unearthed a sensational fraud in the manufacture of fake salvarsan. The imitation, which was put up in New York and sold widely throughout this country as well as in Canada, Mexico and Central America, consists of ordinary table salt colored with a little aniline dye. The package, circular, ampoul and every visible detail of the original article are cunningly imitated. It is believed that at least 50,000 doses of the fake article have been sold.

A leading manufacturer of electric heating devices has recently submitted an electric oven to the War Department for possible adoption for army cooking. This oven is designed to take care of baking, boiling and frying operations necessary in the feeding of about 150 men. It is unique in that it is the first oven to be designed to perform all of these various cooking operations at one time. The hot-plate which is bracketed to the oven will accommodate the standard United States army coffee receptacle. The oven is rated at 15 kilowatts.

Grins and Chuckles

Floor Walker—Hurry out, madam! The store's afire. Mrs. Bargains—Oh, is it? Then I'll just wait for the fire sale.

Visitor—Nature always maintains a balance. Editor—That's right. Spring poems begin coming in just as the coal runs short.

"They say there's luck in odd numbers." "I don't believe it. I know a man who got nine years in prison for having three wives."

"Papa is the captain of our ship and mamma is the pilot." "And what are you, my little man?" "I guess I must be the compass. They're always boxing me."

"Is that little boy I saw you playing with this afternoon a good boy, Willie?" asked his mother. "No," replied Willie, "he's not much good, but he's the only kid on the block that I can lick."

"Strike three," said the umpire. "Batter out!" "Whad d'ye mean, out?" protested the batter. "Yuh big stiff, that last one was a mile outside." "You're fined ten dollars," said the umpire. "Do you understand that?" "Sure, I get you now. Money talks."

"Young man," said the office manager, "if you knew as much about the business of this firm as you do about baseball, you'd be holding down my job." "I know that, sir," replied the office boy. "And if you'd make your business as interesting as baseball you'd have kids beggin' for a chance to work for you and willing to pay for the privilege."

Statement of the ownership, management, etc., required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912, of the "PLUCK AND LUCK," published weekly at New York, N. Y., for October 1, 1917. State of New York, County of New York:—Before me, a Commissioner of Deeds in and for the city and county aforesaid personally appeared Luis Senarens, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Editor of "PLUCK AND LUCK," and that the following is to the best of his knowledge and belief a true statement of the ownership, management, etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 443 Postal Laws and Regulations, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher—Harry E. Wolff, 168 West 23d St., New York, N. Y.; Editor—Luis Senarens, 168 West 23d St., New York, N. Y.; Managing Editor—None; Business Manager—None.
2. That the owner is Harry E. Wolff, 168 West 23d St., New York, N. Y.
3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: None.
4. That the two paragraphs next above giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company, but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona-fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds or other securities than as so stated by him.

LUIS SENARENS, Editor.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 28th day of September, 1917.
—Charles Warren Hastings. (My commission expires January 7, 1919.)

ARTICLES OF ALL KINDS

BIG YEAR FOR PEANUTS.

There are 2,001,000 acres planted to peanuts this year! The statement comes from the Agricultural Department, and just note the exactitude of the count! Not a rough guess of two million acres, but an actual count that tacks on another thousand acres! Texas alone will gather a goober crop from 600,000 acres! The greatest crop of peanuts since the first circus traveled across Chaldea 5,794 years ago is in the Autumnal promise. If the yield of peanuts averages only 100 bushels to the acre there will be over 200,000,000 bushels of this joyous ground fruit added to the country's food stock.

Peanuts are used in these enlightened days in more than a score of different forms of food service. There are many people who rate the goober above the chestnut, the almond, the pecan, or the walnut. It is a commodity retailed all over these United States from a million grocery stores and from ten thousand pushcarts. It is exported by shiploads. The boys in the camps and likewise in the trenches will not be short-rationed on this particular delicacy. Nobody has a corner on the peanut crop, and there is no reason whatever why the price should be boosted.

SERIOUS FOREST FIRE IN NORTHWEST.

Sever drouth conditions in the Northwest have developed a forest fire situation so serious that the Forest Service is now spending, in Montana and northern Idaho, \$10,000 a day for fire-fighting and increased patrol. One large fire in the Kootenai National Forest in the northwestern corner of Montana, has engaged 300 fire-fighters and another force of 100 men is contending with a large fire in the Flathead Forest, in the same State. Dangerous conditions are reported also from Washington and Oregon.

In much of the Northwest the Forest Service reports state that no rain has fallen for weeks. As a result the forests are bone-dry. High winds are prevalent and the situation is said to parallel that of 1910, when forest fires caused a heavy loss of property and life.

Practically similar conditions are indicated by reports from Washington and Oregon. In the latter State many fires have already occurred and in the Crater National Forest several are said to be developing seriously.

The regular organization of the Forest Service is being supplemented by additional patrolmen in order to meet the emergency.

CLOVES PRESERVE APPLE.

Apples may come and apples may go, but this one goes on forever. This may be said of an apple

belonging to George M. Reade, 1751 Dayton avenue, St. Paul, Minn., which he picked from a tree in New York in 1868.

Mr. Reade lived on a farm in Cortland County, New York, when a boy. One day, just for amusement, he climbed one of his father's apple-trees, picked the largest apple he could find and stuck cloves in it.

It was merely an experiment, he said. He had heard of preserving apples by putting cloves in them, but thought it only a joke.

He gave the apple to his mother, and later when she died and some goods were shipped to him in Minnesota, the apple was found among them, sound and still fragrant from the spice.

"This apple," Mr. Reade said, "has been from New York to Dakota, and from Tennessee to Minnesota. It has always been exposed to the air."

Strange to say, unlike people and fruit, this apple does not decline in value or ability to stand age. It still is shiny and wholesome-looking as when Mr. Reade pulled it from his father's tree. Fifty years old, it still is fit for sale.

OLD SPANISH RELICS.

For the third time within the last four months workmen at Selvas de Verdugo (Verdugo Woodlands) have unearthed a relic of the old Spanish days.

While clearing a space under one of the large sycamore trees, Pedro Gomez, a laborer on the property, discovered an old Spanish necklace with gold crucifix attached, partly buried in the dirt at his feet. Inquiry was made of several of the "old-timers" in the Selvas de Verdugo district, but no clue to the owner of the necklace was found.

According to the word of Senor Frederic Verdugo, a member of the old Verdugo family to which was given the original grant of 37,000 acres, the "new-fangled" civilization of the Americanos was not cordially welcomed by the old Spanish inhabitants, who had lived rather primitive lives.

"As long as my father lived," said Senor Verdugo, "he would never ride on a street-car nor would he eat in a Los Angeles restaurant. Whenever he came to town it was my father's command that we drive in with our horse and buggy, and he always carried lunch with him which he would eat while we boys took our meals in a Los Angeles cafe. Those seemed to be two prejudices which he could not overcome."

Much of early Southern California history centers about these Verdugo hills. It was here under the picturesque "treaty oak" that the Spanish and American soldiers are said to have signed peace agreements when California was young.

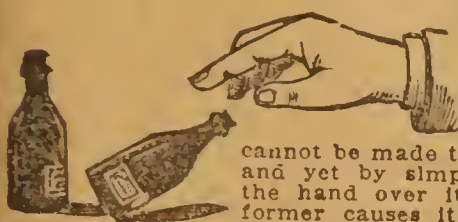
POCKET SAVINGS BANK.

A perfect little bank, handsomely nickel plated. Holds just five dollars (50 dimes). It cannot be opened until the bank is full, when it can be readily emptied and relocked, ready to be again refilled. Every parent should see that their children have a small savings bank, as the early habit of saving their dimes is of the greatest importance. Habits formed in early life are seldom forgotten in later years. Price of this little bank, 10c.; 3 for 25c., mailed, postpaid.
C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d Street, N. Y.

IMITATION BED BUGS.

This toy is an exact imitation of the friendly little fellow who shares your bed, eats out of your hand or leg and who accepts your humble hospitality even without an invitation. The fact that he also insists on introducing all his friends and family circle, sometimes makes him most unpopular with the ladies; most every woman you know would have seven kinds of fits if she saw two, or even one, of these imitations on her bedspread. Six are contained in a transparent envelope. Price, 10c. by mail.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.



The Bottle Imp.—The peculiarity of this little bottle is that it cannot be made to lie down, and yet by simply passing the hand over it, the performer causes it to do so. This trick affords great amusement, and is of convenient size to carry about. Price 10c. each by mail, postpaid.
C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.



JUMPING CARD.—A pretty little trick, easy to perform. Effect: A selected card returned to the deck jumps high into the air at the performer's command. Pack is held in one hand. Price of apparatus, with enough cards to perform the trick, 10c.

FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.



THE TANTALIZER PUZZLE.

Consists of one horizontal and one perpendicular piece of highly polished metal bent in such a manner that when assembled it seems utterly impossible to get them apart, but by following the directions it is very easily accomplished. This one is a brain twister. Price 10c. by mail, postpaid, with directions.
C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

SECOR SPARKLER.



Hold discs in each hand and twist the strings by swinging the toy around and around about 30 times. Then move the hands apart, pulling on the discs and causing the strings to untwist. This will rotate the wheel and cause the sparks to fly. The continued rotation of the wheel will again twist the strings. When this twisting commences slacken the strings slightly until they are full twisted, then pull. Price 25 cts. each by mail, postpaid.
C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

MAGIC PUZZLE KEYS.

Two keys interlocked in such a manner it seems impossible to separate them, but when learned it is easily done. Price 6c. by mail, postpaid.
WOLFF Novelty Co., 168 W. 23d St., N. Y.



STAR AND CRESCENT PUZZLE.

The puzzle is to separate the one star from the linked star and crescent without using force. Price, 10 cents; 3 for 25 cents, by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF Novelty Co.,
168 W. 23d St., N. Y.

MYSTERIOUS PLATE LIFTER.

Made of fine rubber, with bulb on one end and inflator at other. Place it under a table cover, under plate or glass, and bulb is pressed underneath, object rises mysteriously; 40 inches long. Price 25c., postpaid.
C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

CACHOO AND ITCH POWDER.

As Itch powder, Cachoo and Bombs are unobtainable, we cannot accept orders for less than One Dollar's worth of an assortment. They can be sent by express only, on which we will prepay the charges.

WOLFF Novelty Co., 168 W. 23d St., N. Y.

GREAT BURGLAR PUZZLE.



The latest and most fascinating puzzle ever placed on the market. Patented May 30. It consists of four revolving dials, each dial containing 16 figures, 64 figures in all. To open the safe these dials must be turned around until the figures in each of the 16 columns added together total 40. The puzzle is made on the plan of the combination lock on the large iron safes that open on a combination of figures. Persons have been known to sit up all night, so interested have they become trying to get each column to total 40. In this fascinating puzzle. With the printed key which we send with each puzzle the figures can be set in a few minutes so as to total 40 in each column.

Price 15 cents; mailed, postpaid.
H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.



GOOD LUCK BANKS.

Ornamental as well as useful. Made of highly nickeled brass. It holds just One Dollar. When filled it opens itself. Remains locked until refilled. Can be used as a watchcharm. Money refunded if not satisfied. Price, 10c. by mail.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

THE SPIDER WEB PUZZLE.



A very interesting little puzzle. It consists of a heavily nickeled plate and brass ring. The object is to get the ring from the side to the center and back. This is very hard, but we give directions making it easy. Price, 10 cents each, by mail, postpaid.

FRANK SMITH,
383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.

SCIENTIFIC MIND READING.



Wonderful! Startling! Scientific! You hand a friend a handsome set of cards on which are printed the names of the 28 United States Presidents. Ask him to secretly select a name and hold the card to his forehead and think of the name. Like a flash comes the answer "Lincoln, Washington," or whatever name he is thinking of. The more you repeat it the more puzzling it becomes. With our outfit you can do it anywhere, any time, with anybody. Startle your friends. Do it at the next party or at your club and be the lion of the evening. This was invented by a famous magician.

Price, with complete set of cards and full instructions, 12 cents, mailed, postpaid.
C. BEHR 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

BE A MAGICIAN.

Make money go through a lead-pencil. Other sleight-of-hand and card tricks, with cards and instructions, for 10 cents.
F. RASCH, Midas, Nevada.



2 to \$500 EACH paid for hundreds of old Coins. Keep ALL money dated before 1895 and send Ten cents for New Illustrated Coin Value Book, size 4x7. It may mean your Fortune. OLARKH COIN Co., Box 95, Le Roy, N. Y.



BOYS LOOK AT ME Do you want to know how to flirt, tell stories girls like to hear, write real love letters and be a dandy fellow with the girls? Write quick for Love's Casket giving sample letters, and lots of other good things. All 10c
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CHRISTMAS CARD CO., Depi. R. Beverly, Mass.

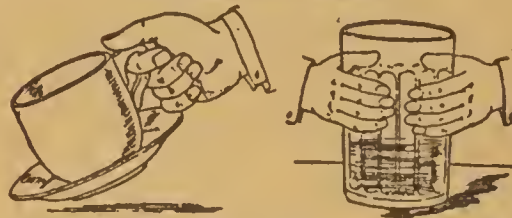
WILLARD-JOHNSON PRIZE-FIGHT PUZZLE.



Four strips of cardboard, each three inches by one and a half inches, showing Willard and Johnson in various absurd postures. The solution in the puzzle lies in so arranging the strips that they show Willard in the complete picture, the heavyweight champion. Price, 10c. by mail, postpaid, with directions.

FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.

RUBBER SUCKER.



Rubber Vacuum Suckers

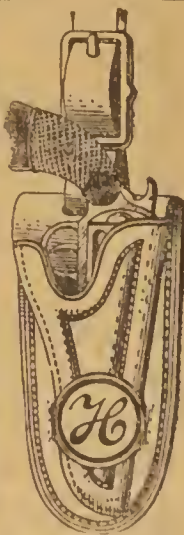
The latest novelty out! Dishes and plates will stick to the table, cups to the saucers like glue. Put one under a glass and then try to lift it. You can't. Lots of fun. Always put it on a smooth surface and wet the rubber. Many other tricks can be accomplished with this novelty.

Price, 12 cts. each by mail, postpaid.
C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d Street, N. Y.

GOOD LUCK GUN FOB.

The real western article carried by the cowboys. It is made of fine leather, with a highly nickeled buckle. The holster contains a metal gun, of the same pattern as those used by all the most famous scouts. Any boy wearing one of these fobs will attract attention. It will give him an air of western romance. The prettiest and most serviceable watch fob ever made. Send for one to-day. Price 20 cents each by mail postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.



BLACK-EYE JOKE.

New and amusing joker. The victim is told to hold the tube close to his eye so as to exclude all light from the back, and then to remove the tube until pictures appear in the center. In trying to locate the pictures he will receive the finest black-eye you ever saw. We furnish a small box of blackening preparation with each tube, so the joke can be used indefinitely. Those not in the trick will be caught every time. Absolutely harmless. Price by mail 15c. each; 2 for 25c.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

THE WAR FOUNTAIN PEN.



A very handsome fountain pen case to which is attached a pocket holder neatly made of metal and highly nickel-plated. When your friend desires the use of your pen and gets it, he is very much astonished when he removes the cap by the sudden and loud noise of the explosion that occurs, and yet a little paper cap does it all. Price, 35c, by mail, postpaid.

FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.

JITNEY BUS GAME.



A circular metal box with a glass top. Inside is a tiny garage fixed at one side and a loose traveling little Ford. It requires an expert to get the swiftly moving auto into the garage. This one grabs your interest, holds it, and almost makes you

will you find after repeated trials how hard it is to do the trick. Price 12c, by mail, postpaid. WOLFF Novelty Co., 168 W. 23d St., N. Y.

ROUGH RIDER DISC PISTOL.



Made of nicely colored wood 5½ inches long. The power is furnished by rubber bands. Ten discs of cardboard with each pistol. Price, 6c, each, by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF Novelty Co., 168 W. 23d St., N. Y.

FORTUNE TELLING CARDS.

The most comical fortune telling cards ever issued. Every one a joke that will arouse screams of laughter. They are shuffled, and one is drawn—red for ladies, white for gentlemen. On the drawn card is a mirth-provoking picture, and a few words revealing your fortune. Price 5c., sent by mail, postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d Street, N. Y.

THE KAZOO.



Made in the exact shape of a submarine. With this comical little instrument you can give a bride and groom one of the finest serenades they ever received. Or, if you wish to use it as a ventriloquist, you will so completely change your voice that your best friend will not recognize it. Price, 12c, by mail, postpaid.

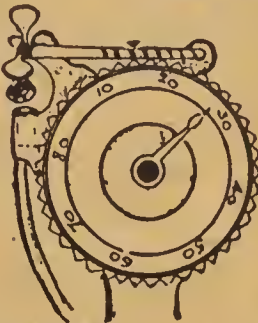
WOLFF Novelty Co., 168 W. 23d St., N. Y.

MAGIC LINK PUZZLE.



A number of rings. The scheme is to link them together just exactly the same way magicians link their hoops. It looks dead easy. But we defy anybody to do it unless they know the secret. Price 10c, by mail, postpaid. WOLFF Novelty Co., 168 W. 23d St., N. Y.

THE LUNG TESTER.



We have here one of the greatest little novelties ever produced. With this instrument you can absolutely test the strength of your lungs. It has an indicator which clearly shows you the number of pounds you can blow. Lots of fun testing your lungs. Get one and see what a good blower you are. Price 15c, by mail, postpaid.

FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.

THE RUBBER DAGGER.



On account of the war we have substituted this novelty for the Magic Dagger. It is eight inches in length, made to look exactly like a steel weapon and would deceive almost anybody at whom you might thrust it. But as the blade is made of rubber, it can do no injury. Price 15c, by mail, postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre Street, Brooklyn, New York.

TWO-CARD MONTE.



This famous trick gets them all. You pick up a card and when you look at it you find you haven't got the card you thought you had.

Price 10c, by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF Novelty Co., 168 W. 23d St., N. Y.

MAGIC PENCILS.

The working of this trick is very easy, most startling and mystifying. Give the case and three pencils to any one in your audience with instructions to place any pencil in the case point upward and to close case and put the remaining two pencils in his pocket. You now take the case with the pencil in it and can tell what color it is. Directions how to work the trick with each set.

Price 25 cts. each by mail, postpaid.

Wolff Novelty Co., 168 W. 23d St., N. Y.

THE HELLO PUZZLE



Can you get the ring off? This puzzle is the latest creation of Yankee ingenuity. Apparently it is the easiest thing in the world to remove the ring from the block, but it takes hours of study to discover the trick, unless you know how it is done. Price by mail, postpaid, 10c.; 3 for 25c. H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

NUT AND BOLT PUZZLE.



A very ingenious puzzle, consisting of a nut and bolt with a ring fastened on the shank, which cannot be removed unless the nut is removed. The question is how to remove the nut. Price, 15c, by mail, postpaid. FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.

IMITATION CUT FINGER.



A cardboard finger, carefully bandaged with linen, and the side and end are blood-stained. When you slip it on your finger and show it to your friends, just give a groan or two, nurse it up, and pull a look of pain. You will get nothing but sympathy until you give them the laugh. Then duck! Price 10c. each, postpaid. Wolff Novelty Co., 168 W. 23d St., N. Y.

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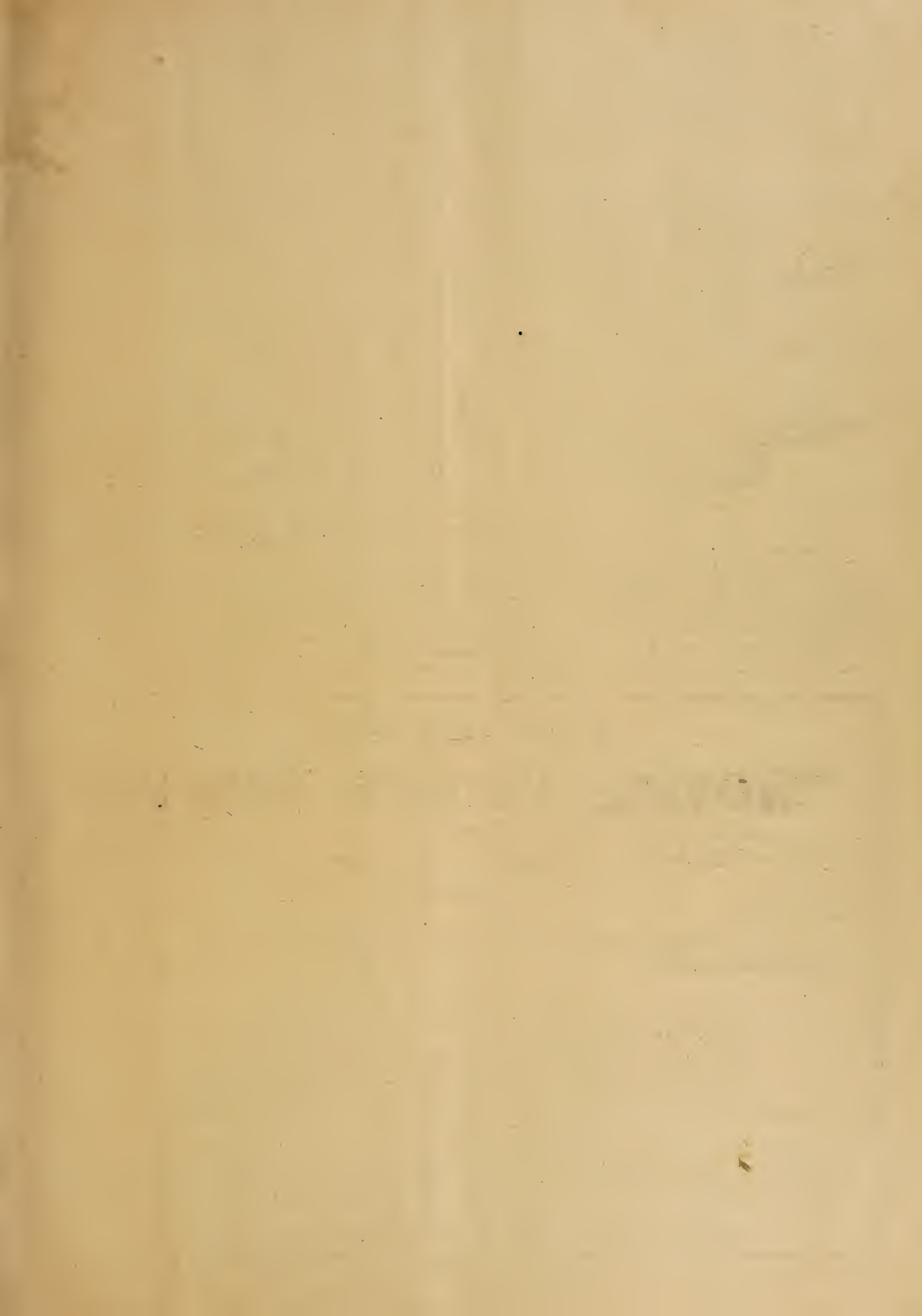
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