

*Incidents in the Life
of a Unionist,
during The Great Rebellion.*

*The summer sun has passed
the meridian but his rays still
fall with unabated fervor, bathing
the earth in radiance and piercing
the green domes of oak with bril-
liant shafts that strike the smooth
gravel below, in trembling ara-
besques of light and shade.*

*Instinctively we seek a shelter
beneath the wide spreading bran-
ches of these live oaks where
the soft, west wind that gently
stirs the leaves above us, may
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breath. The song of the mocking-
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Contributed to Maine Memory Network by Maine Historical Society

MMN # 99392

Date: 1864

Description: Kiah Sewall account of escape from Mobile

(2)

Some leafy covert until the shadows lengthen on the sward, then, with all the vivacity of early morn, he will pour forth his gay, vesper trills to the departing day. Meanwhile, across the fields, now turning crisp and brown, the cheerful sound of "Bob White", comes at intervals from that merry whistler never weary of calling to his companion; anon, the shrill note of the locust rises in deafening chorus on the ear and then dies away. The eye wanders over the garden, where the sunny blossom of the Cape Jessamine seems of yet more unsullied purity from contrast with the scarlet flames of the Pomegranate, and

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the summer roses not yet faded, grow side by side with the orange whose rich clusters are beginning to glow with imprisoned sunlight, then seeks new vistas of shade, and rests where the honey suckle and wild grape clamber to the top of a water oak to droop in delicate festoons above the little gate that opens on a rustic bridge. The bright green lizards run, from the shelter of the leaves, along the fence and bask in the sunlight, distending their pink throats - gay butterflies flutter about in an aimless way as if in mere joy of existence and all nature seems penetrated with light and life and warmth. It is the subtle breath of Summer filling

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(4)

us with a delicious languor; but let us turn our steps to the long piazzas and shady galleries of the mansion. The cool, quiet tints that come through the open doorways are grateful after this fulness of light and color and a quiet library well-stored with books stands temptingly open, but we pass on in search of the inmates for everything bespeaks the abode of peace and contentment - a happy home. We have not far to look. They are gathered in the dining room - a lunch has been taken and all are hanging around the husband and father who is collecting little parcels, as if for a journey and giving words of counsel. One brings a

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shawl, another ties a bundle and he hastens to take an affectionate leave of each and all. Care and anxiety have left their impress on those faces, but still they are hopeful and beam with encouragement and affection on the idolized one who is going from them. "You will not be gone long." "Perhaps, in a week we shall have you at home again." but the mother whispers with tearful eyes - "Don't come back till the Yankees come." The little one, the darling of the flock, receives her Father's fond caress in wondering silence and in one moment more, swift wheels bear the gray-haired

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(6)
sire from his loved home,
from his helpless family.
Amid their tears, they thank
God that he has gone and
crushing down the grief that
is swelling in their hearts,
strive for each other's sake,
to interest themselves in little
household tasks and speak
hopefully of the morrow.
They little dreamed of the
months of weary waiting
that were before them.
Do you seek an explanation
of this scene, in most of its
features so like the partings
that take place every day?
That home was in the
Confederate States and under
the despotic sway of its gov-
ernment, there was no se-
curity for liberty and hap-
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as a glance at the history of
one of its citizens for the past
previous four years, will show.
He was born and educated
in New England but removing
in early manhood to the South,
had there reared his family
and invested the earnings
of many years. Devoting him-
self with ardor to his profession,
he stood in its front rank
and his abilities and un-
questioned integrity com-
manded the esteem of his
fellow citizens. The Sunny South
became to him a cherished
spot and its delightful cli-
mate and wealth of natural
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fresh enjoyment. He em-
ployed his leisure hours in
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reclaimed from the original forest and naturally looked forward to years of quiet enjoyment in its retirement, when in the society of his family and friends, he could indulge those scholarly tastes for which the arduous duties of his profession had hitherto afforded little opportunity. Although an enthusiast in the study of Politics, his feet never pressed the dusty arena of ~~political~~^{party} strife. Enlarged and comprehensive views precluded the pettiness of sectional feeling. "My Country" is a phrase of varying signification. To one it is that little spot where he happened to be born, another draws the line around his property.

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to him, it meant "The United States." Picture the grief - the indignation of such a man when the noisy threats of Secession were really carried out and the smouldering fire of rebellion kindled into flames at Sumter. He vainly tried to exert his influence to stem the torrent but Madness ruled the hour. Many of those who but a few, short weeks before, had been as bitterly opposed to Secession as he was had yielded to the wave of public opinion that swept resistlessly over the land and said to him, "Don't you see how every one is going?" with a scarcely concealed contempt for the man who could refuse to listen to the voice of a destiny so manifest.

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Finding it worse than useless to try to convince men of their error, he acquiesced in what he could not help, so far as appearances went and carefully abstained from any expression of opinion that ~~would~~ provoke animosity. Unable to get away with his large family and equally unable to trim his sails to the popular breeze, he confined himself to the immediate duties of his profession, spending as much time as possible in the seclusion of home and keeping aloof from all with whom he could not sympathize. But this of itself was proof positive of his disloyalty; he was narrowly watched and his

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actions, his words, his very looks construed against him. The report was circulated that at his own table, such toasts had been drunk as "The Old Flag" and "Success to the Union". A prominent member of the bar meeting him ~~one~~ day on the street ^{demanding} ~~asked~~ him with all the authority of a magistrate, to know if that report was correct, and a gentleman of his acquaintance remarked confidentially to a lady who was on intimate terms with the family of Mr. R, "I have a list of these suspected men and his name is among them; within six weeks they will all be arrested. I'm sorry, but it can't be helped. These traitors must not be suffered to go at large."

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He shunned the groups at the street corners who eagerly discussed the last bulletin from the seat of war or the prospects of the times - it was commented on. When for some weeks he was absent from church, they said it was because the prayer for the President of the United States was omitted. He could not display the joy he did not feel when tidings of Confederate victories came that was against him, and more especially the fact of his Northern birth which was never lost sight of. In short, he was spoken of and marked as a "dangerous man." A friend, himself a Southerner and afterwards an ~~member of~~ officer in the

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wished to have a tract of land
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sword, leaving neither man
woman nor child, nor any
trace of life and so to remain
forever, a blackened waste,
an eternal barrier between
the North and South. Con-
trasts were constantly made
between the material of the
two armies - the rabble - the
offscouring of Northern cities -
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us our equals to fight with."
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equalled by their meanness.
"One Southerner can whip five
Yankees any day." "A Yankee
thinks more of a picayune
than a Southerner does of
five dollars.
Too often, alas! from the
pulpit, the heralds of that
gospel of love which says to
its disciples, "above all things
have fervent charity among
yourselves;" invoked the wrath
of heaven on the cruel inva-
der and assured their hear-
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of the right - We are in the
right - therefore - God is
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cing logic of the teachers of
the people. None but a trai-
tor would question its force,
none but a traitor would
dare to pray. Lord, let the
right prevail, teach us what
is right! Is it a wonder
that the heart of R. revolted
from such arrogance?

In January 1862, alarmed
by the presence of Federal
troops in the vicinity, the
Governor of the State ordered
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man under sixty, to repel
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"You have no right to ask me
that question Sir", he replied
and the other turned away,
rebuked. Nothing came of
that, but some three months
later he was arrested and
brought before a tribunal
composed of a few, petty
militia officers. "Dress'd in
a little brief authority", they
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(18)

These are all our first citizens
— and — "pointing to them,
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ence. It's a mere form; there
will be no active service, mere-
ly to answer at roll-call and
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ally". R. looked at the book
and saw the names of some
whom he knew to be Unionists,
but he declined to sign on the
grounds that he did not
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was perfectly familiar. Another
then brought forward the pro-
clamation of the Governor
but he insistently quoted from
the State laws showing that
it had no legal force what-
ever. Foiled with their own
weapons, they once more
endeavored to cajole him
into yielding and failing
in that also, turned him over
to the Provost-Marshal, who,
after a few inquiries, said,
"I don't think I can take the
responsibility of detaining
you Mr. R," and released him.
Others were arrested at the
same time and equally firm
in their refusal to do military
duty, and take the military
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One of the saddest features

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of the times was the low, dishonorable means resorted to by many, to keep alive the popular excitement. In the early part of the war, the story went around that the first Confederate prisoners captured, were heavily armed. A gentleman of birth and breeding and supposed to be well-informed as to the policy and plans of those in power, was one day asked if it was really true - "No, indeed," said he, "but we must do something to rouse the masses." One lady left her own place of worship and went to the Episcopal church, that she might ascertain whether a lady from the North, suspected

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of disloyalty, responded to the petitions for the President of the Confed. States. She ascertained that she did not and reported the fact in triumph.

And thus the wearisome months passed. Each day the yoke under which the people groaned became more oppressive. There were numberless petty interferences with private rights. Even women and children could not go abroad without passes. The patience with which these things were borne was almost marvellous. The only hope of escape for the Unionists from the perils that environed them, was in the capture of the place by the U. S. Troops. They watched and waited and prayed for

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their country's flag to bring deliverance, till the hearts of some grew sick with "hope deferred" and the hope itself well nigh died out. Day by day they counted the dim specks in the blue horizon and day by day the papers still reported "no change in the appearance of the fleet."

Some of those weary, watching eyes closed forever on the things of earth, trusting to the last but not permitted to behold the realization of their fond hopes. It may seem incredible, but no paper could be found brave enough to publish a short obituary notice of one of this feeble and persecuted remnant, an old citizen and a man of singularly blameless life and un-

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obtrusive demeanor, whose only fault was that he could not at once ignore the convictions of more than fifty years and yield a joyful allegiance to an unjust usurpation. A wonderful buoyancy of temperament helped to sustain R. in this dark hour. However it might be retarded, the success of the Union arms was to him an ultimate certainty. If reverses were sometimes dispiriting, the least success was far more cheering. A habit of keen observation, with due allowance for the garbled and often grossly incorrect statements of the public prints enabled him to get at the truth in advance of the more credulous multitude. One day, he gave in his own parlor, some reasons

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for not crediting the report of
a "glorious victory" over which
every one was rejoicing, when
a young guest very pertly
replied, "Oh, Mr. R. you think
so because you don't wish to
believe it." Information sub-
sequently received showed
that he was right.

People at the North can
have but a faint idea of
Southern life at that time,
even in localities distant
from the actual scene of con-
flict. Persons grow old very
fast. Hearing each morning
that tidings of some momen-
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(25)
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globe by the blockade - the
only tidings of the press con-
cerned the limited area of
the South and were principal-
ly warlike. Did one determine
to withdraw from all outside
influences and in the seclu-
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(25)
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globe by the blockade - the
only tidings of the press con-
cerned the limited area of
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laid home to the ground and make this a scene of desolation. Where once the eye sought in vain to penetrate the dense shade of the forest - every tree was prostrate and the sunshine illumined the tents of the camp and the parade-ground of the army. Military necessity had laid his iron hand on our pleasant fields and ramparts, trenches and chevaux de-fride, were the only blossoms. At home there was no danger of forgetting the changed aspect of the times. We wore homespun and Confederate shoes and palmetto hats - we drank Confederate tea and coffee - we pasted paper over the broken glass in our windows and swept with Confederate brooms made of grass and sometimes of palmetto. At night we

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burned Confederate candles - yards of wicking dipped in wax and resin and wound around a porter bottle or a corn-cob. Confederate earthenware decked our tables; as for table cloths - they were a luxury dispensed with long before. Food to put on the table, was of more consequence. Some persons were fortunate enough to have pigs and poultry of their own raising - Mr. R. had a small flock of turkeys and one was occasionally brought on the table as a great delicacy, after a steady diet of bacon for some weeks. This more than once happened to be the case on the Fast Days so frequently appointed by Jefferson Davis. Even the old cook was struck by the coincidence and said on one such occasion. "Pears

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to me, yer has bigger dinners ~~dan y~~ Fast Day dan yer does any oder time." There was some satisfaction even in so private a protest where one's mouth was constantly "held in with bit and bridle".

B Perhaps it was fortunate that the exigencies of the times made such constant demands on one's ingenuity and labor. "What shall we eat and drink and where withal shall we be clothed?" was a question that recurred each morning with added force and not unfrequently banished sleep from the pillow at night. Hands that had been used to holding the ^{pen, took up the} capstone and awl and patiently fashioned shoes to protect the feet that eloquently displayed their needs. Aristotle and Tacitus were laid aside

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and the axe was wielded in their stead, not for his own benefit alone, but once, through a bitter, cold Sunday to keep a poor, suffering Confederate soldier warm. He was very ill and had been taken from the cheerless camp to a comfortable bed, prepared for him in one of the parlors at Myrtle Grove. R. cut with his own hands, fuel to keep his fire going day and night until such ministrations were no longer needed. Nor was this a solitary instance; rarely was a sick soldier turned away from those doors, again and again were they tenderly nursed ^{and restored} to health, and "the blessing of him that was ready to perish" was gratefully given to the hated

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(30)

"Yankee", while many a boasting Confederate closed his doors" and passed by on the other side."

Meantime the cause of the Union was slowly but surely gaining ground. As one point after another fell before its victorious forces, the few, tired souls who were still loyal, encouraged each other in the hope that their own day of deliverance was rapidly approaching and were sufficiently unselfish to rejoice in the successes most important to the cause, if not such as they would have chosen - "Our time will come next" - said they. At length the approach of the fleet so long and confidently predicted

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became a matter of certainty. The storm, watched and prayed for, came not to stay its course and the "invincible Armada" swept proudly past the thundering Forts into the still waters of the River, startling the city with its murderous guns. Then ensued a scene of terror and confusion - the alarm-bell wildly ringing - citizens rushing hither and thither in the attempt to get away with their families and effects and so sudden was the alarm that no one thought of resistance, but they came not then. The people rallied from the first shock and eagerly prepared to defend their firesides. R. had previously obtained a pass from the Gen'l Commanding to leave the city on business.

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Not only were the military authorities on the alert to force every one into the ranks, but certain citizens became ^{so} officiously alive to the emergency of the case, as to patrol the streets with a squad of soldiers, exploring every bye-way and parading in triumph to the office of the Provost, the few, feeble men hitherto permitted by infirmity and age to linger at home. Their vigilance was unwearied. An old gentleman was seen one day to wink at a friend in the street - they marked him and waiting until night dragged him from his boarding-house to answer for that obliquity of vision. They had long sought an ^{pretext} opportunity

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for arresting Mr. R. the imminent peril of the city furnished it. He was driving one morning with his little girls, and leaving them in the buggy, stepped into a drug store to procure some medicine needed in the family. These men who saw him enter, stepped in also and surrounding him said, "We are under the necessity of arresting you, Mr. R, unless you will sign your name to the roll of this company, producing it. R. told them he was not prepared to sign, it was a matter that required consideration, he must think about it. "You must decide at once Sir, or, we shall have to place you in confinement", said one. R. spoke of his

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helpless children sitting in the sun and requested permission to take them home, but - in vain - so seeing escape to be hopeless on account of the children he signed the roll of a volunteer company and was allowed to leave. There was but one voice at home when he told his tale and it echoed the convictions of his judgment, he must go away. He would rather have his arm palsied than raise it against his country and a prison was the only alternative. "Go at once" they all cried "in a few days this place will certainly fall and from the country you can easily return to us - The few preparations needed were hastily made and on the evening of the same day, as we have seen, he quietly left the city without difficulty as he had a pass, and amid the stillness

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of the night, on the smooth bosom of the stream found time to reflect on the step he had taken and its probable consequences. A return, while the place was in the same hands, was not to be thought of, but so confident was he that the Federals would occupy it within a fortnight, that the separation, unpleasant as it was, gave him no serious concern; but, despite his efforts to be hopeful the thought of all that his family might be exposed to, during the attack and change of armies would recur with painful force. Disturbed by these anxious misgivings, to him the night passed wearily away but with the dawn more cheerful thoughts came. The consciousness of a lofty rectitude of purpose gave him a feeling of peace and trust unknown to

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weaker souls - "Reaching his destination, ^{while} ~~and~~ attending to business the days slipped away but brought not the tidings he so longed to hear. The same state of military inactivity continued in the vicinity of his home. His only course was to "stand and wait" and wearisome he found it, although somewhat beguiled of its dulness by frequent letters from home which assured him that everything went on well. As a means of diversion, he explored the country for miles, on horseback, and after one of these long rides, exposed to the hot sun, an attack resembling sunstroke prostrated him for several days. His beard had been suffered to grow untrimmed and

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sickness had greatly altered his appearance when, on the first day that his strength had sufficiently returned he rode to the neighboring village and there learned that a man from L. was in the place searching for some one. He at once recognized from the description a fellow citizen most active and virulent in the persecution of Northerners, who had been instrumental in his own arrest and whom he now with reason, supposed to be in search of himself. There was then no longer peace for him, even in this secluded spot. Not satisfied with forcing him to flee from his home, the implacable malice of his foes pursues him even here and he must seek some surer asylum. This land infected

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with treason refused to shelter a loyal heart.

Returning to the plantation of the friends who had entertained him, he wrote a short letter home, expressing the necessity for a long journey on his part and the uncertain period of their reunion. His expressions were of necessity guarded in those days of espionage; he could only give utterance to his deep affection and confidence that he was acting for the best interests of his loved ones. As soon as this letter was despatched, under cover to a friend, he commenced the preparations for his perilous journey. A suit of butternut homespun with a flannel shirt, an old soft hat and coarse shoes gave him the appearance of

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a quiet country farmer. A stout hickory sapling furnished a useful cane and completed his outfit. Leaving all other baggage with his friends a very few necessaries were placed in a pair of saddle bags and mounted on a stout, little mule, our friend bade adieu to this kind family and thus severing the last link that bound him to his home, turned his face Northward.

The sun was just rising as he started and the cloudless sky and still air betokened a hot day. Wishing, as far as possible to avoid observation, he made a circuit of some miles around the village and getting into the public road, stopped about eight

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o'clock at a farm house to get breakfast and after a short halt, started again and rode on until four in the afternoon when, feeling faint and very weary, he stopped at the most promising place that presented itself - a respectable log-house with some slight show of comfort in its surroundings. He reined in his mule at the gate and gave the customary call "Halloa the house!" "Halloa yer self" replied an old man coming around the corner while a couple of dogs barked in chorus. "Can I get something to eat here and spend the night?" "Wall stranger, I reckon yer kin, yer dont look like one o' them Gov't

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agents or a bushwhacker. I dont want ter see no sich. Come in stranger and Ill 'ten' to yer mule. My niggers has most all run off, to them plaguey Yankees." R. stepped to the door and a respectable, middle aged woman said, "Come in and sit down". Her face bore traces of care and anxiety as she told him of their four sons all gone. Two with Dick Taylor two beyond the Mississippi, they did not know where, and no one at home to help the old man. Then they were in constant dread of Yankee raids and visits from Forrest's men, who generally made a clean sweep wherever they went. She was sick of the war and lamented the good, old times, complaining that

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Government took nearly all they could make and having withal, a great dread of the terrible Yankees. It was a sad but common picture. The old man endeavored to find out the errand of his guest who gave the impression that he was going up the road a piece, to see some land. They asked him to "stop by" on his return and give the news. After a night's rest and breakfast, he started again on his journey. The country showed the devastating effects of war. Fields uncultivated & fences down - buildings out of repair - few people seen except at the villages, where a few were seen gathered around the Post-

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Office and bar-room discussing the latest news from the army and fortifying themselves with Confederate whiskey. R. endeavored to keep clear of all such groups. On one occasion he was hailed as he jogged slowly by on his mule. "Hallo you, whar ye going on that critter?" but he paid no attention and a turn in the road concealed him from their view. He rode until after sunset and branching off from the main road, came to the residence of a country gentleman to whom he had letters of introduction. What a blessed haven of rest it was to the weary traveller! He received a cordial welcome from Mr. A. and the ladies

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The busy whirr of the spinning wheel was heard from early dawn until night and two looms were in constant use, weaving jeans for the men and homespun for the women. The old gentleman had his farm and stock to attend to and the matron her smoke house and household. The ladies braided hats of the palmetto and knitted gloves and socks for the soldiers and from homespun thread, and plied the needle with unwearied industry. At night they sat on the verandahs, illuminated by a blaze of light-wood knots in the yard, and talked of their suffering land and their absent ones. In this hospitable and delightful retreat, R. spent two nights

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and a day and once more pursued his way, which was now growing more perilous. A few miles would bring him to a part of the country that was alternately overrun by both forces, although within the Confederate lines. No armies were at that time stationed near but a large body of Forrest's command were known to be somewhere in the vicinity, now here, now there, guarding the border which it was forbidden to cross under the severest penalties. R. had changed his original plan for crossing the State line, having reason to believe that a large body of these troops were in that quarter, and now went some fifteen miles out of his way to avoid them. His anxiety was increased by the

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fact that but little reliance could be placed on any information, and the very step that seemed to him the most prudent might lead him into the very danger he dreaded, and the small bodies of cavalry were so constantly on the alert that it was difficult to count with any certainty on their movements. He had ridden about ten miles, when the road branched off in two divergent forks, in a solitary place in the woods. He was quite at a loss which to take, not knowing where they led to, but finally decided to try the right. After riding some distance, he came to a field where a negro was hoeing

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by the road side and asked him the name of the nearest town and its distance. This enabled him to get his bearings and soon after, reaching the place, he rode through the most retired street without attracting attention and gained the woods on the other side - A large clearing soon appeared and here, in a narrow part of the road, with the open fields on either hand, he suddenly spied a party of Forrest's men coming towards him over the brow of a little hill. There was no escape - his heart almost stood still. Did they suspect his errand they would hang him to the nearest tree. With a silent

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prayer he rode on, slackening the pace of his mule and striving to look as indifferent as possible. They pass him with merely a look - he breathes more freely - Thank God! the danger is over - When they suddenly rein in their horses - "Holloa there! Where do you come from?" "Down there a piece, some ten miles," pointing over his shoulder. "Have you met any one on the road?" "No", and that was all - but oh, the dread of that moment. After they were out of sight and hearing, he put his staunch little mule over the ground at her most rapid pace but heard nothing more of this party - At three P.M. he stopped for a couple of hours to feed the mule and rest,

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at the house of a woman with three little children. She was digging in the garden patch. Her husband was in the army. She came in and baked some sweet-potatoes in the ashes and gave them to him, with some corn-dodgers and honey and a bowl of buttermilk. While he ate, the white-headed children stood around stubbing their toes in the cracks of the floor and sucking their fingers, and the poor woman told him a hard tale of her lonely life. She seemed grateful for the money he gave her in return for his meal, and speaking a pleasant word to the children he once more pursued his lonely way, reaching the battle-field of C. just about sundown

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(52)

A wild desolate-looking place it was, with traces of the fierce struggle still visible. It was a great relief to have passed this point safely. He rode on by moonlight for two or three hours after dark, desiring to get well away from this neighborhood; then, feeling unable to go further and wishing to give the mule rest, stopped at the first, decent house and asked for food and lodging. The request was granted and while the women were preparing supper, he cautiously and without seeming too inquisitive, tried to find out something from the man about the neighborhood and condition of things there. But they

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seemed to be rather a dull set and said but little. After he had seen his mule well cared for - he threw himself on the straw bed and being very weary dropped asleep but was soon aroused by the clatter of hoofs. They stopped and through the thin partition, he heard two men enter with noisy tread and call for something to eat. They seemed to be in an ill-humor and very talkative and silenced the grumbling of the old man quite peremptorily. R. gathered from their conversation that they belonged to the army, ~~but~~ were in search of a deserter and had been riding several miles without success

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They asked whose mule that was outside and were told, "It belongs to an old man that comes yer an hour ago to stop the night." They announced their intention to sleep on the floor of the passage. R. did not fancy such neighbors, but there was no help for it. They soon became quiet and he too yielded to the influence of sleep and did not make his appearance the next morning until after the soldiers had gone. It was Sunday. He did not like the looks of the place or people and as soon as breakfast was over, determined to ride on and see if he could not do better. The country began

(54)

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(55)

to look more thrifty the dwellings neater and his spirits were unconsciously cheered. In three or four hours, he neared a small village and selecting a neat dwelling on the outskirts determined to apply for shelter there. The villagers were attending divine service but he found a pleasant, motherly-looking woman at home who cordially invited him in, taking him for a Methodist minister and explaining how it was that she happened to be absent from her place in the sanctuary. He undeceived her but evidently made a good impression, for she cordially invited him to stay and

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make them a visit. Her husband was the village doctor and as she was speaking, he came in. R. liked his appearance and told them that he was going a little further, on business but wanted to stop over Sunday and rest for a day or two where he could be quiet, that he did not care about seeing any one. They acceded without expressing surprise, but while they continued talking, a little boy ran in and said some visitors were coming. On hearing this ^{went out from} R. took his ^{the back of the house} mule through the fields into the woods on the bank of a stream and staid there the remainder of the day. The good woman sent him

(56)

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(57)

dinner in a tin bucket. In the evening he had a long talk with his host and sounding him first, gave him to understand that he wished to go into the city of M. Now be it understood that a very extensive, though in a measure underhand, traffic was carried on with this same city. Most of the people in this section of the state were really Southerners at heart, but since, although any ^{persons} ~~one~~ could enter the Federal lines, they were not permitted to recross them without taking the oath, they were prudently "on the fence" and generally kept their real political proclivities to themselves. By taking a bale of cotton, farm produce or, if any one was

(57)

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(38)

so fortunate as to have them, a few Greenbacks into the city, they could procure and take home with them many little comforts. These expeditions were generally kept secret for the Confederate soldiers were no friends to this traffic on the part of the citizens. The Dr. seemed pleased to find that our friend was going in that direction and said that he also had been wishing to go there for some time, to buy some medicines and proposed that they should go together. R. agreed. This companion man had made the trip before and his familiarity with the route would be an advantage, but he was

(58)

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(39)

tired of riding the mule and asked the Dr. if he had a buggy. He had not, but knew a man who had one and thought he could borrow it. He would try the next day and perhaps on Tuesday, they could start. He went on Monday to see the owner of the buggy and on his asking the loan of it for a few days to go into the country with a friend, the man proposed to go with them, taking one with him in the buggy by turns, while the third should ride on horseback, but he could not go before Wednesday and wanted them to wait until then. The Dr. told him he would consult his friend about it. But the plan did

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(60)

not please him. This man was of an inquisitive, prying disposition, not at all the companion to be desired for such a journey. On reporting this to R, they both agreed to do without the buggy and start in the morning on their mules, spending the night with a married daughter of the Dr. who lived about half way. Accordingly they were up at daybreak and after an early breakfast, started; taking a lunch that they need not stop for dinner on the way. R. found the old Doctor a pleasant companion, full of story, anecdote and village gossip. He greatly admired

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(61)

R.'s saddle and bridle, the Calter of which was new when he started and both were much better than the Dr's weather-worn trappings. Once in a while, R could see that he was curious about him and rather mystified but this curiosity was never offensively manifested and they jogged along very amicably, stopping at noon in the shade for an hour or so, and about four in the afternoon reached the place where they were to spend the night. R. arose the next morning with the lightest heart he had carried since leaving home. There now seemed to be a fair prospect of his getting ^{safely} within the lines. Before, he had hardly dared

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(62)

to hope and even now, some thing might intervene. They made an early start and passing through a pleasant country more generally cultivated than any they had seen, about noon safely crossed the little stream that marked the limit of the United States lines and assured them of safety.

To R. the rush of feeling was almost overwhelming. A deep and joyful sense of gratitude filled his heart and his eyes were dim with tears as he reverently gazed on his country's flag once more. Who can attempt to fathom the emotions of such an hour, save those

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who like him, have been driven from their homes, pursued and oppressed because they were true to their country and the right and after much weariness and privation and torturing anxiety find themselves Safe beneath the protecting folds of her banner. He could have knelt and kissed the God but his companion seemed unconcerned and they rode on as before, through the picket lines - through the various camps, while the spires of the city gleamed brightly in the sunshine.

The Dr. evidently thought that his new friend would return with him in a few

(63)

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(64)

days. He said he generally put up at the Planters House. R. preferred one at the other end of the city. So they separated on entering the city and went their several ways. When R. reached the hotel, he called for pen and paper and wrote a note to General W. Commanding the Post, to ask for an interview, despatching a porter with it. He then made his toilette and had just finished, when an orderly came to conduct him to headquarters, leading a tall horse. R. was stiff and weary and the horse was a great contrast to the little mule, but they clattered along over

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the paved streets and before long arrived. A long and satisfactory interview with the General ended in his being furnished with a pass to go wherever he wished and an order to the Q. M. G. to buy the mule if he found him suitable for their purpose. He did and this filled our friends empty purse with greenbacks. He spent the night at the Hotel and in the morning called to see his fellow traveller but not finding him in, went back and sent the saddle and bridle to the Planters House with a note, asking him to accept them as he should return another way, and would not need them. The next eve'g he

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started North and here we must leave him. His baffled foes were enraged at his sudden disappearance but could only conjecture the asylum that sheltered him.

It was long before his anxious family heard of his safety, still longer before they were reunited, but a kind Providence watched over them and they were once more permitted to meet under the same roof-tree and recount the trying scenes of the past, "with none to molest or make them afraid."

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