

Albany Register.

A Narrow Escape.

BY CHARLES F. WILKINS.

For a while after the close of the war, my office was just opposite Captain H—'s, and it was with great pleasure that I used to go over to the captain's, after business hours, and listen to his "war yarns," as he called them. He seldom spoke of himself, but the following he told me of his own personal experience, which I give in his own words.

During the war I did considerable duty as a spy, and on one occasion I came near losing my life.

Just after one of our fierce battles, particular information was needed concerning the condition of the rebel troops quartered in our section. I was fully aware of the risk I incurred, nor was I ignorant of the fate awaiting me if I was suspected and taken.

I had reconnoitered pretty thoroughly, gained about all the information necessary, and was beginning to think of returning, when the following incident decided me.

While walking along, musing upon the exciting events which were then transpiring, I was met by a rebel private.

"Hello, old boy! you're going the wrong way," cried the fellow in an animated tone of voice.

"I guess not," I replied carelessly. "Well, I suppose you know best; but you'd better go back with me to the camp. I'm going to get a description of the chap that's been playing the spy," added the fellow, familiarly.

"What about him? It's all news to me," I replied with as little outward appearance of concern as possible, though my pulse beat a little quicker than usual at the man's words.

"You must be deaf, then, for everybody is talking about him to-day," he continued. "His name is Tom Jones and he's been skulking round here, listening to what the officers say, pumping the men and trying to find out what the next move is to be. But they're on his track. There's a bounty on his head, and he's as good as a dead man."

"Good enough for him!" I exclaimed, maintaining the same indifferent demeanor. "His life isn't worth much, that's a fact. But I say, comrade," I said, slapping him familiarly on the shoulder, "isn't hanging a little too good for the rascal?"

The man replied with a coarse laugh and an oath, and then passed on his way, leaving me in no enviable state of mind. Had the fellow been acquainted with me, detection would have been certain. When I left the rebel barracks in the morning, I noticed nothing unusual; but my absence, added to other circumstances, awakened suspicion. Not a moment was to be lost; my life depended upon instant concealment, as flight at that hour (it being then four in the afternoon) would be attended with extreme danger.

Without further delay, I entered a thick growth of trees near by and looked about for some place of concealment. I could discover nothing but a large brush heap, but as no better could be found, I concealed myself beneath it as well as possible.

I was none too soon, for in a short time I heard the tramp of horses' feet, and the voices of men. Without halting they passed the spot where I lay. I breathed more freely when their shouts were lost in the distance. In my hiding-place time dragged slowly. The ground was cold and very damp from the effects of a recent rain, which did not add much to the pleasantness of my situation. I dared not stir for fear of attracting the attention of some person who might be lurking in the vicinity.

For several days I had not felt well, owing to the effects of the long march I had endured before undertaking this business, and I felt that I was rapidly becoming worse. Cold chills ran over me, my head was hot and ached badly, and a general languor pervaded my whole system.

It was now evening; the moon shone brightly. What should I do? I feared being seen if I attempted to leave my covert. But if it was dangerous to go, it was equally so to remain. For three hours had I lain there, benumbed with cold and growing more feeble every moment.

At this juncture I remembered having seen a small cabin at a short distance. I determined to seek it, throw myself upon the mercy of the inmates, and ask assistance and protection.

Pushing aside the brush cautiously, and glancing from side to side, I crept hurriedly a little ways upon my hands and knees, and then gradually raised myself to an upright position. This was not accomplished without severe effort; my limbs were weak and cramped, and I could hardly walk for the pain it gave me. My head was so light and dizzy that it was some minutes before I could recollect in what direction the cabin was. But at length my senses returned, and I moved slowly forward. Guided by the light which shone from the window, I approached the cabin, but paused at hearing the sound of voices. Taking a few more noiseless steps I was en-

abled to glance through the rude window. Two men and two women were within.

I could hear their voices plainly from where I stood, and I listened to see if I could not gain some clue to the character of the inmates.

"I am quite confident that we shall succeed," said one.

"The reward is worth trying for, anyway," returned the other.

"What will be done with him if he should be caught?" asked the younger of the two females.

"No matter! they won't be likely to let him go again," said the elder man, with a significant shrug of the shoulders.

"He'll be treated as spies usually are, probably," remarked the middle-aged woman who had not before spoken.

The younger shuddered and looked thoughtful. "I wish there was no such thing as war; it so brutalizes human nature," she said earnestly, after a pause.

"The sooner the Yanks is conquered the quicker it will be ended," said the youngest man. "So you see it's our duty to catch this fellow who is said to be very cunning and useful in his way. He can't be a great ways off and the sooner we get started after him, the sooner we shall hunt him down."

The other gave his hearty assent to this proposal, and after talking over their plans together, both men left the cabin and passed so near where I stood, that by raising my hand I could have touched them. But fortune favored me, and the darkness which succeeded the moon's departure, hid me from their sight.

Waiting until they were out of hearing, I stepped to the cabin door and tapped.

The latch was raised, and a voice demanded, "Who's there?"

"A friend; one, at least, who has not the power to harm you," I replied.

The door opened wider, and the woman scrutinized me closely.

"I am sick, hungry and sorely pressed by enemies; I am the spy for whom the reward is offered. I am in distress. You can save me or deliver me into the hands of your husband, or those who have gone in pursuit of me."

The mother and daughter exchanged glances but neither spoke, and anxiously I awaited the decision.

The woman who opened the door, motioned me to enter. I did so, and a seat was placed for me by the daughter, whose sympathies were obviously enlisted.

"We can give you food, but our protection will avail but little after my husband's return," said the woman.

"Can you not conceal me?" I asked earnestly. "Heaven will surely reward you."

The mother looked at her daughter and they conversed together in a low tone.

"We will do what we can," said the former, briefly, as she placed food and drink before me and signed me to eat.

"Do not stop to talk," she added, quickly, as I endeavored to express my gratitude. "There is no time to lose, and food will do you more good than anything else."

I did not wait for a second bidding, and the nutritious leverage soon had the effect to renew my strength and inspire fresh courage. My head felt less giddy, the cheerful fire warmed my stiffened limbs, and I would certainly have fallen asleep in my chair had not a feeling of dread lest the men should suddenly return, caused me to look often anxiously towards the window.

"They will be gone two hours," said the youngest, as if to reassure me on that point.

I signified my thanks and looked at the fair speaker so attentively that a crimson glow stole over her countenance, making her look still more interesting. I forgot for the moment my illness, the danger I had incurred, the risk I now ran, everything in contemplating her symmetrical figure, regularity of features, and the benevolent kindness that beamed from her eloquent eyes. My rapture was of short duration, the barking of a dog, and the exclamation of my deliverer, "You are lost!" brought me to my senses.

"Father must be near, for that is his dog," I started to my feet and looked hurriedly about for some means of escape besides the door which I entered.

The girl shook her head, and the color fell from her cheeks by reason of her terror. I knew that discovery was inevitable if I remained where I was, and that the result would be equally fatal if I ventured to leave the cabin.

The voices of the men came nearer and nearer. The young girl stood spell-bound for an instant, then sprang towards a door which opened into a closet.

"Go in, quick," she whispered, "and hide yourself behind the clothes."

I obeyed, and the door was quickly closed and fastened upon me, while my deliverer, with uncommon self-possession, (as I afterward learned) placed herself in the chair I had just vacated, drew up to the table on which food had been placed, and very deliberately commenced eating. She had

hardly done so when her father and his companion entered the cabin, both looking somewhat ill-humored and disappointed.

"What are you up and doing for, at this hour, Nellie?" asked the former, regarding the young lady with a look of astonishment and displeasure.

"Waiting for you so long made me hungry," was the unhesitating reply.

"Well, and so are we hungry, girl; so get us something quick, for we've got to ride a dozen miles yet; that is, if the fellow don't disappoint us again."

Confound him! we might have been on the right track by this time if the horses had been round in time," he muttered, as Nellie busied herself in placing food before them.

In the meantime, the mother, who had left the cabin before the men returned, had entered an out-building, and was preparing a comfortable place in which I could conceal myself before her husband's return.

Before the men finished eating she returned, but started back in alarm at perceiving what a change in affairs the last twenty minutes had wrought. Nellie caught her eye and a warning glance recalled her usual presence of mind.

"Well?" she said, interrogatively, approaching the table.

"We've had to wait for horses, and the rascal will give us the slip if we don't make better time," returned her husband, moodily.

"I say, Dan," he added, with an impatient gesture, "haven't you most done eating?"

"Shouldn't wonder," replied Dan, pushing back his chair and buttoning his coat. "I'm ready."

"We'll go, then, as soon as I get my other hat from the closet." And approaching my place of concealment, the speaker stepped in and commenced searching for his hat. I crouched behind a pile of bedding, trembling lest a sudden movement of the man should expose my person. I was certain that my heart beat loud enough to be heard, and when I felt the clothes move before me I gave up all for lost.

The girl's emotions were none the less intense. Her face became pale, her feet seemed bound to the floor, and her heart almost stopped beating as her eye marked each emotion of her father. As he approached the corner where she knew I was, she placed her hands over her eyes and sank into a chair.

But he did not discover me. The hat was found at length, and Nellie raised her eyes. Her father stood without the closet while his companion was assuring him that if he did not hurry all would be lost.

"Where is he?" inquired the woman, when they were gone.

"In there," replied the daughter, pointing toward the closet.

"It is Providence, indeed!" was the exclamation of the mother, as she comprehended the narrow escape.

I lost no time in getting to the out-building mentioned. It was an old affair and used but seldom, and being so near the Confederate camp, would not be likely to be subjected to a very thorough search by my pursuers, who believed me to be much farther off.

In this place I remained several days, receiving the best of care from both mother and daughter, who visited me as often as they could without attracting observation.

When my strength returned, and I was able to travel, my generous protectors furnished me with disguises, and during the husband's absence, were enabled to assist me considerable on my perilous journey.

I encountered but few difficulties, however, and passed the Confederate lines in safety.

"By the way," said the Captain, looking at his watch, "you must take tea with me this evening. No excuses," he continued, as he saw me about to speak. "I want to introduce you to the heroine of my story; she is my wife now."—Our Fireside Friend.

The Ten Banquetters.

Half a score of years ago Mrs. Bigelow kept a large and fashionable boarding house at 93 Great Jones street. Among her boarders were ten gentlemen who had lived together for many years, and with whom the bonds of friendship had become cemented. They often dined together, and in parties of three or four visited places of amusement, the whole party congregating in the sitting room before bedtime and comparing notes of the day's business and the evening's amusement.

The breaking out of the war of the rebellion changed the current of life of several of this social party, and a number of them expressed their determination to join the Union ranks. Many were the regrets at the dissolution of their fraternal society, and it was decided that they should have a farewell dinner on the evening of September 10, 1862. Arrangements were made accordingly by their amiable hostess, and at eight o'clock precisely on the evening named the ten gentlemen entered the dining-room and took their seats at the table. Each and every one of them was full of life and hope and the future prospects of each were the subject of an animated conversation during the early progress of the meal. Speeches were made, songs sung, and toasts drunk, and it was not

till two o'clock in the morning that the party abandoned the festive board and sought their rooms.

Before their departure, however, each arose in his place and made a solemn vow that if he was living ten years hence he would meet the rest of his companions in the same place and dine with them as they had dined that night. Each one was to occupy the same seat, and as nearly as possible they were to have the same kind of a dinner. Since then the house has become the Maltby House, under the proprietorship of Mr. J. B. Smith.

Some days ago Mr. Smith was requested by Mr. Edward Winslip, broker, 24 Broad street, to prepare a dinner for ten gentlemen on the evening of September 10, 1872. Mr. Winslip briefly narrated the circumstances of the contract and that, being the eldest of the party of ten, he had been appointed on the evening of their dining in 1862, as the Chairman.

At precisely eight o'clock last Tuesday evening Mr. Winslip, the sole survivor of the party, entered the dining room of the Maltby House, and the doors were quickly closed behind him. No one was there except Geo. Benly, the head waiter, and one or two other colored waiters. The rooms and tables were arranged precisely as they were ten years before, and Mr. Winslip, with head bowed and a saddened expression of countenance, took the same seat he had occupied ten years before. All around were empty chairs and empty plates and unfilled glasses.

The meal was begun and the solitary banqueter was served with the required courses. Mr. Winslip occasionally passing a word with the head waiter, "Poor boys! They're all gone," said he. "One went down in the Monitor in Mobile bay; another was drowned in the same waters; two were shot in Mobile; one lost both legs by a ball and another was pierced through the heart; another died in Philadelphia, and a sixth died in New York."

He said that as he was walking up Broadway one evening in February last, he felt a tap on the shoulder and a voice asked him if he knew Mr. —. "I do," replied Mr. Winslip. "He died at 4 o'clock to-day," said the voice.

Though Mr. Winslip turned quickly upon feeling the tap and hearing the voice he was unable to ascertain who it was that had addressed him. He afterwards learned that one of the party of ten had died that day and at the hour indicated. Mr. Winslip said that the oldest of the party, next to himself, was only 29.—New York Tribune.

A Jealous Husband's Revenge.

A terrible tragedy has recently been enacted in Brazil. It appears that a noble of the empire, a man of large possessions and great influence, married at mature age a young and most lovely woman. For some time all went pleasantly. Among the constant visitors of the nobleman's villa was an officer of the Brazilian army, whose attentions to the nobleman's lady soon became very marked. Although every one else observed the growing intimacy between the two, the husband, himself appeared utterly unobservant of the fact.

At length the truth was thrust upon him, and he was obliged, much against his will, to admit that the intimacy between his young wife and the handsome officer had been criminal.

He was a man of strong feelings, but of great self-possession and determination. After the fact of his wife's infidelity had been placed beyond doubt, he apparently soon resolved on the course that he would pursue. The officer was a guest at his villa. After breakfast one morning, the marquis informed the officer that he wished a few moments' conversation with him. They retired to the library, whence, after a short interview, they came, arm in arm, and apparently the best of friends. They passed into the grounds and waved an adieu to the ladies who occupied one of the balconies.

Shortly after mid-day the marquise, who sat in her boudoir, was startled by a sharp knock at the door. She languidly bade the visitor enter. A terrible surprise awaited her.

The door opened; she recognized the tread of her husband and turned her head. Horror of horrors! The marquis advanced with the bloody head of her lover, on a dish! He held the dreadful offering before his guilty and shuddering wife, and said:

"Madam, the colonel sends you this, and regrets that he cannot present it in person."

The horrified woman gazed with unutterable anguish on the awful spectacle. The marquis deliberately drew his revolver, placed it to his wife's ear and blew out her brains. He then shot himself through the heart.

It is supposed that the marquis and the colonel had fought with swords, as the latter's body, pierced through the heart, was found in an adjoining wood, and that the nobleman having slain his adversary had cut off his head, and then finished the dreadful tragedy as already described.

In a certain locality of Houston county, Georgia, it is said to be the custom to hand around quinine pills instead of fruit.

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