

A WAR REMINISCENCE

Scenes at Hatcher's Creek and Petersburg Recalled.

John B. Scace Speaks to a Reporter of Stirring Scenes—Escaped with a Slight Wound, but, Like Other Veterans, Has Suffered Since—A Story that Reads Like a Page from History.

From the Albany, N. Y., Journal.

When one encounters in print the life story of some soldier of the civil war, a feeling of admiration and sympathy is the certain result. Accustomed though we are to tales of heroism and suffering in everyday life, there is something peculiarly attractive about these old war records, serving, as they do, as a sacred passport to the heart of every true American. Thousands found their rest on the field of carnage or in the hospital, but their comrades, when the struggle was over and the victory won, returned to their homes and began anew the battle of life.

John B. Scace, the widely known contractor and building mover of Albany, N. Y., has had an unusually interesting life, and when seen by a reporter recently at his home, No. 15 Bradford Street, told of his many experiences and adventures while serving under the old flag in the late war. Although having endured all the hardships and privations of life in the ranks, Mr. Scace bears his more than half a century of years with an elastic step and a keen mind, taking an active interest in private and public affairs.

While still a boy, his family moved from Albany, his birthplace, to Pittsfield, Mass., and here he was educated. He mastered the carpenter's trade, became a member of Berkshire Lodge, No. 52, I. O. O. F., and was entering upon a successful business life when came the call from Washington for men. All over the country the word spread, and excitement ran high. All the old-time patriots that had made Massachusetts famous in Revolutionary days was fired to its utmost. Every town and village sent out its squad or company.

The company in which Mr. Scace enlisted in September of 1862, as a private, became Company A, Forty-ninth Regiment, Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry. Under the common impression that the war would be one of but short duration, the men were enlisted for nine months only. Scarcely were they uniformed and armed before they were ordered to the front. The regiment, which at the time was under the command of Col. W. F. Bartlett, served in the First Brigade, First Division, Nineteenth Corps, and participated in some of the hottest battles of the great rebellion.

Mr. Scace, at the time, was but twenty-two years of age, and he remembers well with what a beating heart he first fell in line. His regiment was ordered South, directly through the enemy's country, with Baton Rouge as the objective point. After several months of weary marches, during which Company A passed through several lively skirmishes with the enemy constantly hovering about the flanks and rear, the capital city of Louisiana was reached. An evacuation followed. Citizens and the rebel soldiery stationed in the city fled like frightened sheep, bearing with them what goods they could carry and setting torch to the rest. The beautiful capital building, which had been converted into a war prison, had also been fired, and the boys in blue swarmed in, just in time to save their captive comrades from perishing in the flames. Mr. Scace, who had been, while en route, promoted to corporal, was in the thickest of the action, and describes the scenes in a graphic manner. Although the city had fallen almost without a blow given or received, a fight was not far off, for word was received that a large force of the enemy was fast approaching.

A bloody battle ensued at Plain Store, a few days' march out of the capital, in which Corporal Scace was severely wounded. A missile ball struck his left thigh and, grazing the bone, narrowly missed the great artery. He was retired to the camp at Baton Rouge, but recuperated so rapidly that he entered, soon after, again into active service. The battles of Fort Hudson and Donaldsonville followed, with all their thrilling episodes.

It was not long after this that, by reason of the expiration of his term of enlistment, he was honorably discharged. His repatriation was not a long one, however, for he soon afterward re-enlisted to serve for the remainder of the war. For meritorious services he had been raised to the sergeant's stripes, and as such served in Company A, Thirty-first Regiment, Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, under Col. Charles F. Walcott. During the

term of his re-enlistment Sergeant Scace participated in some of the hottest struggles of the war. Many a gray-haired veteran today recalls the scenes of Hatcher's Run, the fall of Petersburg and the battle of Sailor's Creek.

After his honorable discharge, June 4, 1865, Mr. Scace returned to Albany and settled down once again to his business and social interests. He has resided in the city ever since. It would seem that now, of all times, his peace and happiness would have been uninterrupted. Such was not to be the case, for four years ago, while engaged in superintending the raising of the immense smokestack of the Albany Electric power house, the lever of a loosened window struck him a heavy blow across the back. The effect of the blow was not at first apparent, he being able to leave his bed in a few days. But the worst was to follow, for without warning he was seized with acute rheumatism in all its virulence. Untold agony followed.

Said Mr. Scace, "I could not sleep for the pain. No one will know the tortures the rheumatism gave me. I don't know how I lived during those days. I became little more than skin and bones, and it seemed like life didn't have anything but suffering in it. Cures? I tried every so-called rheumatism cure that was ever invented. I gave all of them a good trial before I stopped taking them. My friends and neighbors recommended remedies after they heard of, but my rheumatism went on just the same. Well, after I had almost had the life tortured out of me, I came across a newspaper account of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and I thought I might as well add another name to the list as not, so I ordered some of my druggist.

"I tell you, I was glad in those days to hear of anything that could give me any hope at all. Yes, I got them, and before I had taken two boxes that pain began to leave me. Why, I couldn't understand it. I couldn't imagine myself being cured. But before I had taken a half-dozen of those boxes I was cured. The suffering which had made my life almost unbearable for so long had disappeared. I was a new man.

"I began to get strong. I picked up in flesh, and I went back to my business with all the vigor and vim of a young man. I think everyone who knows me will tell you what it did for me. Pink Pills is the greatest medicine ever discovered, and if my recommendation will do it any good I want you to use it. I hope others will hear of it and be benefited as I have been. Everyone should have a box of it. I can't say too much for them."

Mr. Scace exclaimed enthusiastically in conclusion. This is but one of the many cases in which Pink Pills have taken such a beneficent part in the history of humanity. Mr. Scace is now enjoying the fruits of an unusually large business, managed solely by himself, and covering almost the entire eastern portion of the State. Mr. Scace is also an ivory carver of marked ability, which he follows solely for his own pleasure. Many little trinkets, carved by the light of the camp-fire, attest his skill in this direction.

Far from being solicited to recommend the curative which had taken such a load of misery from his life, in his gratitude he prais for it is unstinted and unceasing. And from his own statements one may easily see that when he does cease to sing its virtues, it will be to utter the last muttering in.

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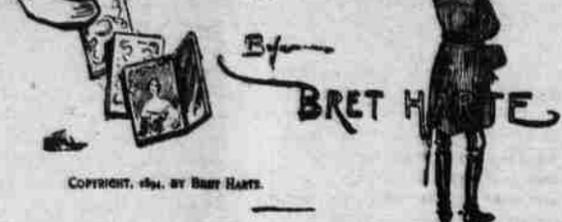
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CLARENCE



"You must miss the old times," he said calmly. "I am afraid you found very little of them left, except in those flowers."

"And hardly there," she said bitterly. "Your troops had found a way through the marsh and had trampled down the bushes."

Brant's brow clouded. He remembered that the brook which had run red during the fight had lost itself in this marsh. It did not increase his liking for this beautiful but blindly vicious animal at his side and even his momentary pity for her was fading fast. She was incorrigible. They walked on for a few moments in silence.

"You said," she began at last in a gentler and even hesitating voice, "that your wife was a southern woman."

He checked an irritated start with difficulty. "I believe I did," he said coldly, as he regretted it.

"And of course you taught her your Gospel—the Gospel according to St. Lincoln. O, I know," she went on hurriedly, as if conscious of his irritation and seeking to allay it. "She was a woman and loved you, and thought with your thoughts and saw only with your eyes. Yes—that's the way with us—I suppose we all do it," she added, bitterly.

"She had her own opinions," said Brant, briefly, as he recovered himself.

Nevertheless his manner so decidedly closed all further discussion that there was nothing left for the young girl but silence. But it was broken by her in a few moments in her old contemptuous voice and manner.

"Pray don't trouble yourself to accompany me any further, Gen. Brant. Unless, of course, you are afraid I may come across some of your—your soldiers. I promise you I won't eat them."

"I am afraid you must suffer my company a little longer, Miss Faulkner, on account of these same soldiers," returned Brant, gravely. "You may not know that this road, in which I find you, takes you through a cordon of pickets. If you were alone you would be stopped, questioned, and, failing to give the password, you would be detained, sent to the guard house and—"

he stopped and fixed his eyes on her keenly as he added "and searched."

"You would not dare to search a woman!" she said, indignantly, although her flush gave way to a slight pallor.

"You said just now that there should be no sex in a war like this," returned Brant, carelessly, but without abating his scrutinizing gaze.

"Then it is war," she said, quickly, with a white, significant face. His look of scrutiny turned to one of puzzled wonder. But at the same moment there was a flash of a bayonet in the hedge, a voice called "halt," and a soldier stepped into the road.

Gen. Brant advanced, met the salute of the picket with a few formal words, and then turned toward his fair companion, as another soldier and a sergeant joined the group.

"Miss Faulkner is new to the camp, took the wrong turning, and was unwittingly leaving the lines when I joined her." He fixed his eyes keenly on her now colorless face, but she did not return his look. "You will show her the shortest way to quarters," he continued to the sergeant, "and should she at any time lose her way you will again conduct her home—but without detaining or reporting her."

He lifted his cap, remounted his horse and rode away as the young girl, with a proud, indifferent step, moved down the road with the sergeant. A mounted officer passed him and saluted—it was one of his own staff. From some strange instinct he knew that he had witnessed the scene, and from some equally strange intuition he was annoyed by it. But he continued his way, visiting one or two outposts and returned by a long detour to his quarters. As he stepped upon the veranda he saw Miss Faulkner at the bottom of the garden talking with some one across the hedge. By the aid of his glass he could recognize the shape of the mulatto woman which he had seen before. But by its aid he also discovered that she was carrying a flower exactly like the one which Miss Faulkner still held in her hand. Had she been with Miss Faulkner in the lane—and if so, why had she disappeared when he came up? Impelled by something stronger than mere curiosity, he walked quickly down the garden, but she evidently had noticed him, for she quickly disappeared. Not caring to meet Miss Faulkner again, he retraced his steps, resolving that he would on the first opportunity personally examine and interrogate this new visitor. For if she were to take Miss Faulkner's place even in a subordinate capacity, this precaution was clearly within his rights.

He reentered his room and seated himself at his desk before the dispatches, orders and reports awaiting him. He found himself, however, working half mechanically, and recurring to his late interview with Miss Faulkner in the lane. If she had any inclination to act the spy, or to use her position here as a means of communicating with the enemy's lines, he thought he had thoroughly frightened her. Nevertheless, now, for the first time, he was inclined to accept his child's opinion of her. She was not only too clumsy and

the self-restraint of a spy. Her nervous agitation in the lane was due to something more disturbing than his mere possible intrusion upon her confidence with the mulatto.

On the contrary, it seemed to be personal to himself. He recalled the singular significance of her question: "Then it is war?" He recalled her strange allusion to his wife: was it merely the outcome of his own foolish confession on their first interview, or was it a concealed ironical taunt? Having satisfied himself that she was not likely to imperil his public duty in any way, he was angry with himself for speculating further. But, although he still felt toward her the same antagonism she had at first provoked, he was conscious that she was beginning to exercise a strange fascination on him.

Dismissing her at last with an effort, he finished his work and then rose and unlocking a closet took out a small dispatch box to which he intended to intrust a few more important orders and memoranda. As he opened it with a key on his watch chain he was struck with a faint perfume that seemed to come from it—a perfume that he remembered. Was it the smell of the flower that Miss Faulkner carried—or the scent of the handkerchief with which she had wiped his cheek—or a mingling of both? Or was he under some diabolical spell of that wretched girl—and her witch-like flower? He leaned on the box and suddenly started. Upon the outer covering of a dispatch was a singular blood-red streak! He examined it closely—it was the powdery stain of the lily pollen—exactly as he had seen it on her handkerchief.

There could be no mistake. He missed his hand over the stain—he could still feel the slippery, impalpable powder of the pollen. It was not there when he had closed the box that morning; it was impossible that it should be there unless the box had been opened during his absence. He reexamined the contents of the box, the papers were all there. More than that—they were papers of no importance except to him personally; contained no plans nor key to any military secret; he had been far too wise to intrust any to the accidents of this alien house. The prying intruder, whoever it was, had gained nothing! But there was unmistakably the attempt! And the existence of the would-be spy within the purlieus of the house was equally clear.

He called an officer from the next room. "Has anyone been here since my absence?"

"No, general." "Has anyone passed through the mill?"

He had fully anticipated the answer, the subaltern replied: "Only the women servants."

He reentered his room. Closing the door, he again carefully examined the box, his table, the papers upon it, the chair before it, and even the Chinese matting on the floor, for any further indication of the pollen. It hardly seemed possible that anyone could have entered the room with the flower in their hand without scattering some of the tell-tale dust elsewhere; it was too large a flower to be worn on the breast or in the hair. Again, no one would have dared to linger there long enough to have made an examination of the box—with an officer in the next room, and servants passing. The box had been removed and the examination made elsewhere.

An idea seized him. Miss Faulkner was still absent—the mulatto had apparently gone home. He quickly mounted the staircase, but, instead of entering his room, turned suddenly aside into the wing which had been reserved. The first door yielded, as he turned the knob gently, and he entered a room which he at once recognized as the "young lady's boudoir." But the dusty and draped furniture had been arranged and uncovered, and the apartment had every sign of present use. Yet, although there was very evidence of its being used by a person of taste and refinement, he was surprised to see that the garments, hanging in the open press, were such as were used by negro servants, and that a gaudy handkerchief, such as housemaids use for turbans, was lying on the pretty silken coverlet. He did not linger over these details, but cast a rapid glance round the room. Then his eyes became fixed on a fanciful writing desk which stood by the window. For in a handsome vase placed on its level top and drooping on a portfolio below hung a cluster of the strange flowers that Miss Faulkner had carried.

CHAPTER IV.

It seemed plain to Brant that the dispatch box had been conveyed here and opened for security on this desk, and in the hurry of examining the papers the flower had been jostled, and the fallen grains of pollen overlooked by the spy. There were one or two freckles of red on the desk, which made this accident appear the more probable. But he was equally struck by another circumstance. The desk stood immediately before the window. As he glanced mechanically from it he was surprised to see that it commanded an extensive view of the slope below the eminence on which the house stood, even beyond his furthest line of pickets. The vase of flowers—such of which was nearly as large as a niggolite blue

central position before it, and no doubt could be quite distinctly seen from a distance. Of that he would satisfy himself hereafter. But for the present he could not resist the strong impression that this fateful and extraordinary blossom, carried by Miss Faulkner and the mulatto, and so strikingly "in evidence" at the window, was in some way a signal. Obeying an impulse which he was conscious had a half-superstitious foundation, he carefully lifted the vase from its position before the window and placed it on a side table. Then he cautiously slipped from the room.

But he could not so easily shake off the perplexity which the occurrence had caused, although he was satisfied that it was fraught with no military or strategic danger to his command, and that the unknown spy had obtained no information whatever. But he was forced to admit to himself that he was more concerned in his attempts to justify the conduct of Miss Faulkner with this later revelation. It was quite possible that the dispatch box had been purloined by some one else during her absence from the house—as the presence of the mulatto servant in his room would have been less suspicious than hers. There was really little evidence to connect Miss Faulkner with the actual outrage—rather might not the real spy have taken advantage of her visit here to throw suspicion upon her? He remembered her singular manner—the strange inconsistency with which she had forced this flower upon him. She would hardly have done so had she been conscious of it having so serious an import. Yet what was the secret of her manifest agitation? A sudden inspiration flashed across his mind; a smile came upon his lips. She was in love—the enemy's line contained some slight young subaltern with whom she was in communication—and for whom she had undertaken this quest. The flower was her language of correspondence, no doubt. It explained also the young girl's animosity against the younger officers—his adversaries; against him-

self—their commander. He had previously wondered why—if she were indeed a spy—she had not closed—upon some equally specious order from Washington—the headquarters of the division commander, whose reports were more valuable. This was explained by the fact that she was nearly blind, and her lover in her poor condition. He had no idea that he was receiving excuses for her—he believed she was only just. The recollection of a certain had said of the power of love—she had hurt him cruelly at the time, and he was clearer to him, and even returned, to mitigate her offense. She would be here but a day or two longer; he could afford to wait without interrogating her.

(To be continued.)

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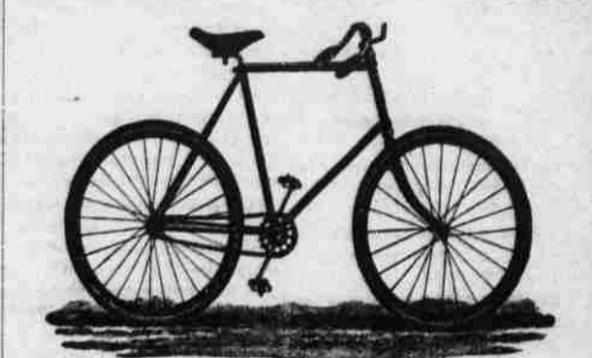
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