

A MEMORIAL DAY ROMANCE

J. F. HENDERSON

COL. LEVISON BRANT was a little startled by the news that his daughter was engaged to be married, subject to his fatherly approval. Still, he felt that there was no need for worry. Dorothy was 20, and since her mother's death had been left almost entirely to the care of her Aunt Mary at Poplarville, while her father was occupied with his business affairs in the city. It was natural, therefore, in her lack of adequate parental protection, that she should turn to matrimony as the most convenient and comfortable refuge.

Col. Brant had come down to Poplarville in response to an invitation to deliver the Memorial day address at the public exercises to be given under the auspices of his old Grand Army post. He had formerly been a resident of the town. That was before the growth of his business necessitated its removal to a larger field, and made it advisable for him to take up his abode in the city. Dorothy spent the greater part of her time in Poplarville. She was not partial to city life, especially as it separated her from Aunt Mary, who was a second mother to her, and from the old homestead, to which she was greatly attached.

It was Dorothy who met Col. Brant at the railway station when he arrived on the evening preceding the 30th of May, 1885, and it was Dorothy who blushingly confided to him, on their way to the house, that a very handsome and a very worthy young man had been paying court to her for two months past.

"He will call on you this evening, papa, to ask your consent," she said, softly.

"The deuce!" growled her father. "You have already given yours, I suppose?"

"Why, papa—of course." And so it came about that Richard Challoner, the fortunate suitor for Dorothy's hand, called at the homestead that evening and was formally introduced to Col. Brant. He was indeed a handsome and dignified young man, whose frank geniality and courtly manners had already made a staunch ally of Aunt Mary and at once made an agreeable impression on the colonel. He was a budding young lawyer of unimpeachable Virginia stock, who had recently established himself in Poplarville for the practice of his profession and had bounded at once into popular favor.

In the course of the evening Col. Brant and young Challoner retired to the library on the second floor of the house to indulge in a quiet smoke and a private interview. Here Challoner broached the subject of his love for Dorothy, and soon gained the consent



It was Dorothy who met Col. Brant.

of the grizzled old father to the proposed marriage. When they were leaving the room, after finishing their cigars, Challoner's attention was attracted to a picture on the wall, and he stopped to look at it. In a moment he seemed deeply interested. Then he caught his breath sharply, and gripped a chair to steady himself.

The picture was a painting in oils, evidently the work of an artist of more than ordinary talent. It was a war-time scene, representing a battlefield in perspective, with troops engaged in a running fight in the background, half obscured by clouds of smoke. In the foreground were the figures of two infantry officers who had crossed swords in a duel to the death. One of them

wore the blue regimentals of the northern army; the other was clad in confederate gray; both were stalwart, typical soldiers. The artist had caught the spirit of the encounter; his genius had endowed it with life, action, atmosphere. The play of the muscles, the expression of the faces, the fire in the eyes of the combatants, were wonderfully realistic. The picture represented the exact moment when the federal officer, gaining a momentary advantage over his adversary, was ending the fight by driving his gleaming sword through the confederate's body.

"That painting," said Col. Brant, coming up behind Challoner and looking over his shoulder, "is no favorite of mine. It memorializes an episode in my career as an army officer that I would give worlds to forget. The artist was an eye-witness of the scene, and his portrayal is spoken of as the work of a master, but I should have destroyed the thing long ago if my sister had not begged permission to keep it. My sister is Dorothy's Aunt Mary, you know. She fully understands that it is not to be displayed on the wall when I am in the house, but I suppose this is a case of forgetfulness on her part."

He paused, but Challoner did not speak or move. In a sorrowful voice, the colonel continued:

"The picture is calculated to perpetuate the memory of a most regrettable affair. As you probably know, one of the nastiest skirmishes of the war took place only five miles from this spot. Poplarville was in a panic. But we managed to beat off the enemy, and they were soon in full retreat, with our boys in hot pursuit. At the very beginning of the chase the horse ridden by the young colonel of a rebel regiment stumbled and fell. I happened to be close behind this man when the accident occurred, and believing him to be badly hurt, I quickly dismounted to render him such assistance as I might. But apparently he was not hurt at all. With a yell he sprang to his feet and rushed upon me with drawn sword. Of course, I had to defend myself. Three times during the fierce fencing that ensued I begged him to desist and avoid unnecessary bloodshed. Twice I was in a hair's breadth of being killed by his skillful onslaught; but in the end I was victorious, and he fell. I intended only to disable him, but, unfortunately, my blade passed clear through his body. Six weeks he was in the military hospital here before he finally succumbed, and his body now lies in the Poplarville cemetery. By the way," suddenly exclaimed the colonel, "his name was Challoner—Col. Challoner—the same name as yours, I believe. My God, sir, I hope he was not a relative—a—"

The words died on his lips, for at that moment the younger man turned slowly around and faced him. Richard Challoner was pale as death; his breath came in quick, excited gasps; his eyes shone with a fierce, vindictive glare.

"He was my father!" The words fairly hissed through his clenched teeth. "I am Col. Challoner's son. And you were the man who killed him—you—you! By God, sir, you shall answer to me for that act!"

Col. Brant was struck dumb with horror.

"My reason for coming to Poplarville to begin my business career," continued the young man, hoarsely, "was because my father lay in your cemetery here. I wanted to be near him—to care for his grave. I never dreamed—"

He broke off suddenly and seemed to restrain himself by a strong effort. Then, with a quick, nervous gesture, he turned on his heel, and without trusting himself to utter another word, he strode from the room. At the foot of the stairs he met Dorothy, who was waiting for him. The sight of his white face and blazing eyes startled her.

"Richard! Richard!" she cried. He brushed past her without an answering sign, took his hat from the rack, and an instant later the hall door closed behind him.

The day which custom has set aside for the annual decoration of soldiers' graves dawned bright and beautiful. Poplarville was in holiday attire. The air was freighted with the perfume of flowers, the buildings were gay with bunting, flags floated at half-mast, and the Poplarville band discoursed patriotic music in the public square.

Col. Lewiston Brant mingled with the veterans of his post, and not a few remarked his grave demeanor and the unusual sadness that seemed to have settled down upon him. Apparently he had aged ten years in as many hours. Col. Brant delivered his Memorial day oration with an eloquence born of deep feeling and sincerity. He moved all hearts by his simple, touching tribute to the heroes who had laid down their lives in their country's defense, and closed with this appeal:

"But while we are honoring our

dead, let us not forget the graves of those other brave fellows whose resting place is in our cemetery—the men who were pitted against us in that awful struggle—who fell as devoted martyrs to a cause which they believed to be right. Remember them, also, with your flowers, your tears and your prayers."

In a secluded part of the cemetery that afternoon Richard Challoner stood alone beside a grave which was marked by a granite headstone bearing the name of his father. So occupied was he with his own gloomy thoughts that he did not notice the timid, hesitating approach of Dorothy Brant until she was within a few feet of him. He straightened up then, and greeted her with a solemn, courtly bow, while his cheek flushed. The girl was very pale, and her eyes were red with weeping. She carried an armful of roses, which she silently and reverently deposited on the dead confederate's grave. Then, facing the man opposite with a look of piteous appeal, she took from her bosom a letter and handed it across to him.

"Read this, Richard," she said, in a frightened, quivering voice. "It was written by your father to my mother many years ago, before I was born. It has been preserved among mamma's other treasures, left at her death. Aunt Mary found it last night, and I— we wanted you to see it, and—please don't refuse, Richard."

"Written by my father to your mother?" he said, slowly, with a deeply puzzled look.

"Yes, yes. Oh, please read it. It



Reverently Deposited on the Dead Confederate's Grave.

will help you to understand. This is my last request, Richard."

He said no more, but took the letter from its time-worn envelope and read:

Mrs. Levison Brant.—Dear Madam: It pains me to learn that your husband's supposed responsibility for my condition has almost prostrated you. Pray do not worry on that score. I assure you from my inmost soul that I not only forgive your husband, but I have already begged his forgiveness for forcing him to commit an act which he so deeply deprecates. The fault was entirely my own, and I alone am the one who should suffer. Believe me, I am profoundly sorry for what happened, and it is not a sorrow that is influenced by selfish considerations, or the fear of death. Since I have been in this hospital Col. Brant has become my most valued and best-beloved friend. What he has done for me can never be told, but he has made me realize that there are true gentlemen at the north as well as in the south, and that he is one of the noblest men in the world. I thank you, dear madam, for giving me this opportunity to say that, so far from feeling resentment, I entertain only sentiments of warmest friendship and gratitude toward your husband. Sincerely yours, WILLIAM CHALLONER.

The color came and went in the young man's face as he read, and the light in his eyes softened to a tender glow. Finishing, he crumpled the letter convulsively in his hand, and came round the headstone of the grave at a half-dozen quick strides.

"Dorothy," he cried, seizing her hand, "this is a glorious revelation to me. Let us hunt up your father at once. I will go down on my knees to him if you like. With you for a wife and Col. Brant for a father-in-law I shall be the happiest man in Poplarville."

The Veteran's Dream.

We met last night in the old post hall, And some of the boys were sadly missed;

Twenty present, ah, that was all— The rest had answered the great roll call

Out of eighty-nine on the charter list. Then up spoke Bates of the Twenty-third, Who had served all through till the war was done,

"It's a long time, boys, since their names I've heard."

And I move we call them one by one." So they read each name and to my ear Came words borne forth on the evening breeze—

It sounded to me like a faint: "Here, here, here."

And I knew they answered that roll call clear From their resting place beneath the trees.

I seemed to see them all in line Just touching elbows and standing straight;

Yes, each was there of the sixty-nine, And I spoke to one old pal of mine Who had left us alone in ninety-eight, And cried: "Old comrade, what means all this?"

Then he said as he tapped on his muffled drum: "We are calling the names of the ones we miss—"

The twenty boys who have not yet come."

Then he gave the order: "Right by twos."

And they smiled on me as they marched away; But their "tramp, tramp, tramp" I did not lose—

'Till old Bates shook me: "Having a snooze?"

Come, old pard, I go home your way."



Mr. Henpeck—It's no use. We can't agree on a single subject.

Mrs. Henpeck—You're wrong, dear. I always agree with you on the weather.

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During the last twenty years many of our citizens have been attacked in the spring months by grip. Some have had serious or slight attacks every year or two. All know it to be a dangerous disease. If Lane's Pleasant Tablets (which are sold at 25 cents a box by druggists and dealers) are taken when the first symptoms are felt, there is hardly a chance of the malady getting a foothold. If you cannot get them near home, send 25 cents to Orator F. Woodward, Le Roy, N. Y. Sample free.

A Quandary.

"A necklace of diamonds has been stolen from me!" said Mrs. Cumrox. "Aren't you going to notify the police?" "I don't know what to do. It does seem rather class to be robbed of jewelry; and yet I hate to have people think I'd ever miss a little thing like a necklace."

Ask Your Druggist for Allen's Foot-Ease.

"I tried ALLEN'S FOOT-EASE recently, and have just bought another supply. It has cured my corns, and the hot, burning and itching sensation in my feet which was almost unbearable, and I would not be without it now.—Mrs. W. J. Walker, Camden, N. J." Sold by all Druggists, 25c.

Realism.

Artist—This picture I call "Pigs in Clover."

Critic—I see the pigs, but where is the clover?

Artist—The pigs ate it.

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For Red, Weak, Watery, Watery Eyes, Compounded by Experienced Physicians, Conforms to the Pure Food and Drug Law. Murine Doesn't Smart. Soothes Eye Pain. Try Murine for Your Eyes.

A Diplomat.

Mother—Aren't you ever going to get over fighting, Willie?

Willie—Yes'm, when I'm licked.

Particularly for Particular People.

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Casbit—A rich heritage.

Free! A 10c package of Garfield Tea to anyone mailing us this notice, with name and address, and names and addresses of 10 friends not now using the Ideal Laxative. Garfield Tea Co., Brooklyn, N. Y.

All pleasure must be bought at the price of pain. For the true, the price is paid before you enjoy it; for the false, after you enjoy it.—John Foster.

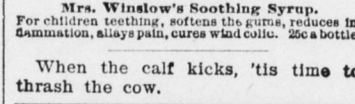
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For children teething, softens the gums, reduces inflammation, allays pain, cures wind colic. 25c a bottle.

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Dr. D. Jayne's Expectorant is the best remedy known for croup; it gives quickest relief.

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H. M. WILLIAMS, Law Building, Toledo, Ohio.

Readers of this paper desiring to buy anything advertised in its columns should insist upon having what they ask for, refusing all substitutes or imitations.

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Thousands of women have written the story of their suffering, and have told how they were freed from it by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound—for thirty years these reports have been published all over America.

Without great merit this medicine could never have gained the largest sale of any remedy for woman's ills—never could have become known and prized in nearly every country in the world.

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Read this letter from a grateful woman, then make up your mind to give Mrs. Pinkham's medicine a chance to cure you.

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The Panhandle and South Plains region of northwest Texas offers good lands at the lowest prices in the Southwest.

You can't buy land there as cheaply this year as last, and it will cost more next year. So the time to buy is now.

I am not in the land business. The Santa Fe Railway employs me to help settle up the country along its lines. The service to you is absolutely free. I am not to exaggerate. The truth about the Southwest is strong enough.

I consider the Panhandle and South Plains as unequalled for the man with small means. Likewise nothing better for the man with a big bank-roll. Both will prosper.

This country is no longer on the frontier. Thousands already have settled there. More are coming in on every train. You won't be lonesome, but you won't be crowded, either.

You ask what can be raised? Beef, cereals, fruit—and other things.

The average rainfall is twenty-four inches, enough for raising crops without irrigation. The more brains you farm with, the bigger the yield. "Dry-farming" helps out some seasons.

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"I came to Hereford four years ago and bought 640 acres of land nine miles southeast of town.

"Bult me a house and broke about forty acres of land the first year. Sold \$416 worth of produce off of same and had enough left to winter thirty-five head of cattle and horses. The second year had 120 acres in crop, and sold \$802 worth of farm products and wintered forty-five head of stock. The fourth crop is not yet harvested, except the wheat and oats. The wheat and oats will bring me about \$409, and expect to get about \$1,000 out of the balance of the crop, besides wintering my stock.

"I now have 165 acres in cultivation. I raise wheat, oats, June corn, milo maize, kafir corn, sorghum, California wheat, millet and cotton, and all kinds of vegetables. I came here with \$800 and could make my check out now for \$4,500."

Mr. Curfman seems to be a satisfied man. You can do as well as he—perhaps better. May I help you get a home somewhere in this best of the few places in the United States where raw land may be bought for less than its worth?

Cut out this advertisement. Mail it to me with your full name and address. I will then mail you illustrated land folders which tell the story in detail and send our homeseekers' monthly, *The Earth*, six months free. Questions promptly answered.

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