

THE HOSPITAL NURSE.

BY FRANK H. STAUFFER.

"Corporal, you trained as a detective, did you not?"

Col. Cardonne was steadfastly regarding me with his keen, gray eyes.

"And acquired quite a reputation," I replied, with the customary salute.

"It wasn't a local one, either," I added, with pardonable pride.

"Then you are the man I want," the Colonel rejoined, a grave look filling his face.

"There is a spy in our midst, and I expect you to arrest him."

Our armies were infesting Vicksburg. The battle of Champion Hill had been fought, which placed us between the armies of Johnston and Pemberton without a possibility of their effecting a junction.

The Colonel told me why his suspicions had been aroused, and gave me a few clues, not about the culprit, but about his methods.

He was communicating with the enemy by means of the Yazoo River or Chickasaw Bayou.

Within three days I captured the culprit, a boyish-looking fellow connected with the quartermaster's department.

He offered no protest, he made no denials. He was either a brave young fellow or else was supremely indifferent about results.

I took him before the Colonel, and when his eyes rested upon that officer I saw his face redden with surprise and confusion.

He was smoothly shaven, and that made the rush of blood more perceptible.

I related the circumstances of his arrest and his conduct under it, and presented certain papers which I found upon his person.

The Colonel and two members of his staff who were present at once decided that he was guilty.

"I see the name John Davis here. Is that your name?" demanded the Colonel.

"It is not," replied the spy. "However, I have been known by that name."

"What is your real name?" asked the Colonel.

"Delos Demarra," was the prompt, fearless reply, without a suspicion of evasion about it.

It was an odd name, but pleasing in sound, for he had pronounced it with rare distinctness.

Happening to look at the Colonel just then I noticed a change in his usually stolid face; it lasted scarcely a second, and yet I plainly saw it. I could not help but connect it with the flush that passed over the face of the spy.

I was confident, too, that the effect produced by the announcement of the name had not escaped the observation of the young man. Something like a smile stirred his lips, and there was a suggestion of reserved strength in it.

After a consultation between the Colonel and his staff, I was ordered to take the prisoner to the guard-house.

That night, while in my tent, I became aware of the presence of an intruder. I was instantly on the alert, but instead of springing up, I remained quiet, and a minute later heard him step out into the moonlight.

I walked noiselessly to the door and saw Col. Cardonne pass out of sight. There was no mistaking his commanding figure and erect bearing.

"What did he want in my tent?" I thought.

Then it came to me like a flash. Stepping to the place where I kept the keys to the guard-house, I found that they were gone. My amazement gave place to indifference, though my curiosity did not abate.

"I am not responsible for what the Colonel may do," I muttered to myself.

I crept into my bunk and soon fell asleep. In the morning I found the keys in their place. I had not heard the Colonel return them, and almost felt like looking upon the affair as a dream.

A little later and it was known all over the camp that the spy had effected his escape. Of course the Colonel investigated the matter with a show of thoroughness, but without result, and by and by the escape was forgotten.

One day, just as our brigade was about to go into action, I said:

"Colonel, a word with you, please."

He stopped and paid me respectful

attention. He was a soldier in every sense of the word, but without arrogance.

"You did not call me to the witness stand in that investigation," I said.

"What investigation?" he asked.

"In connection with the escape of the spy," I reminded.

"Oh!" ejaculated the Colonel. "I did not know you had anything to tell."

"Ah, Colonel, I had a great deal to tell," I said. "I wasn't going to push myself forward. I held back for your sake. Col. Cardonne, I saw you come into my tent and take the keys."

He was a little startled.

"Is that so," he asked, in a queer tone.

"Yes," I replied. "I shall never betray your secret, Colonel, but I am everlastingly curious to know what it all meant."

"Well, Corporal, so would I be," he said with a short laugh. "You have been very frank and very discrete, and I tell you all about it after the battle."

It was the 17th of May, and the battle which ensued was the battle of Black River Bridge. The Colonel was wounded and was sent to the hospital.

In an engagement which occurred three months later, I was wounded, taken prisoner, and conveyed to a Confederate hospital.

There were several female nurses, one of whom was especially kind to me. She was clad in sombre hues but they did not detract from her loveliness. Her very presence did me good.

As I was unable to speak, my most troublesome wound being in my cheeks I found my gratification in simply watching her. I fell desperately in love with her, which was not an inexplicable occurrence to me, and possibly not to her, for she was conscious of her charms.

One morning I heard cannonading, and noticed that it became suggestively distinct. The tide of war was surging that way, and a tangible evidence of it came in the form of a shell which crashed through the roof of the hospital.

The fire was still burning, and to my intense surprise and admiration, my handsome nurse picked up the shell and flung it out of the window.

"We don't want the nasty thing in here, do we boys?" she said.

A number of the wounded men clapped their hands in applause.

"You are a brave woman," I said.

"Why, Corporal," she exclaimed, coming to me, "those are the first words you have spoken since entering the hospital."

I was about to reply, but she cautioned me not to.

"Wait a few days," she said with one of her bewildering little smiles.

A week later I said to her.

"You called me corporal."

"Yes," she replied, "your sash designates your rank. You forgot that."

"No, I didn't. We have met before, and you know it. For days I have been trying to conjecture. It isn't a fancy, I am sure."

"No Corporal, it isn't," she said, with a repressed smile, a twinkle of mischief in her glorious brown eyes. "I am Delos Demarra. You once arrested me for a spy."

It dawned on me then, and I have no doubt my face expressed my surprise. I censured myself for not having at once recalled that sweet voice and smile and those calm, fearless brown eyes.

"I escaped, you remember, she reminded, with a slight grin.

"Without a display either of nerve or sagacity on your part," I replied.

"Why do you say that?" she quickly asked, one dainty hand uplifted.

"Colonel Cardonne helped you," was my answer.

"Oh!" she ejaculated, rifts of red and white crossing her face. "He told you so?"

"He got the keys of the guard-house from me," I replied.

I did not add that he had obtained them by stealth. She looked at me steadfastly, almost confidingly. I thought—with a longing for me to say more.

"You are on the wrong side of this issue," I remarked.

"I believe there is a difference of—of—sentiment," she replied, a little drolly.

"It is more than a sentiment," I ventured to say.

Well, we will not argue about it," she replied, with one of her charming gestures.

"I entertain opinions, and you'll allow me to do that, I know. I'll nurse you, so that you can go home. You'll hold me no grudge for that I am sure. I did the same for Colonel Cardonne."

In a—Union hospital?" I asked.

"Why to be sure," she replied.

"And he's gone North?"

"Yes. He'll be back though. Now we have talked enough, don't you think?"

Our next conversation was still more personal. I proposed marriage and told her my history and prospects, both of which were good. All was of no avail. She refused, kindly of course but with hopeless positiveness.

"You love some one else," I said.

"That wouldn't be very strange would it?" she asked, that soft, bewildering smile once more about her lips.

"Well, no," I disconsolately admitted.

The close of the war found me enjoying the rank of Colonel, while my friend Colonel Cardonne, had been promoted to a General.

A few years later I spent a week or two at one of our popular mountain resorts. While sauntering along a wooded path I met a sprightly little miss of 4 or 5 summers. She had soft, questioned brown eyes, was prettily dressed, and did not seem in the least shy. While I glanced around, wondering where her protectors were, I heard some one call out:

"Delos, darling! Delos!"

O, how that name thrilled me! Looking at the child again, my emotion increased, for I recognized in her a strong resemblance to the woman whose hand I had sought in marriage.

A minute later a vivacious, bright-faced, graceful young girl came in sight.

"I heard you call this sweet little thing Delos," I said, lifting my hat; "pray, what is her last name?"

"Cardonne," she answered.

"Ah," I ejaculated, my hand at my mouth, to hide its nervous twitching. "The General and myself are old friends. Is he here?"

"Just beyond the bend in the path, sir," she said, with a curtesy.

I found the General seated beside his wife, on one of the rustic benches. He gave me a hearty welcome, and then introduced me.

"You have met before," he said, laughing. "You once arrested her for a spy."

"And she was guilty," I replied.

"She afterward nursed me in the hospital."

"Oh, she did, eh?" exclaimed the General. "Why, Delos, you never told me."

"Didn't I, dear?" she said, in an odd tone. "I supposed you knew. You told the Colonel that you released me."

"Why, no I didn't!" declared the General.

"You admitted it," I reminded.

"Well, maybe I did," rejoined he, laughing.

Mrs. Cardonne was sociable with me; still, she was reserved enough to show me that she had not forgotten my passionate declaration of love.

"General," I said, as we walked back to the hotel together, "you promised to explain that to me."

"Explain what?" asked he.

"Your previous acquaintance with the—spy."

"Oh," he ejaculated. "Well, I believe I did promise. However, there isn't much in it. We were betrothed before the war, both being from the South. Then came the appeal to arms. I had been educated at West Point; I was a child of the State; I was in the regular army. I owed my country allegiance. My convictions of duty rose higher than my preferences, and I espoused the Union cause. Delos, here, was a fiery little Southerner, and she broke the engagement, as she had threatened that she would. Loving her as I did, I helped her out of the trouble caused by her arrest, and she repaid it by nursing me back to life. The war ended—so did our estrangement. Nothing very remarkable in all that, was there?"

"It has satisfied my curiosity," I simply replied.

The young girl I met in the path

was Mrs. Cardonne's sister. She is my wife, now, and whenever I hear the name Delos, it does not disturb me any more than the name Becky, Ann, or Bridget would.

THE FAIR GIRL GRADUATE.

Could I see the editor? she asked, looking around for him, and wondering what was going on under his table.

Eh! yes, I'm him, responded the editor, evolving himself, and slipping a cork in his pocket. What can I do for you?

I'm a student in Packer Institute, responded the blushing damsel, and I've written a little article on Our School Days, which I would like to have published, if you think it is good enough.

Certainly, replied the editor, gazing in unconscious admiration upon the beautiful face before him. Does it commence: Our school day. How the words linger in sweet cadences on the strings of memory! Is that the way it runs.

Why, yes, responded the beaming girl.

Then it goes on: How we look forward from them to the time when we shall look back to them. Isn't that it.

It certainly is, answered the astonished girl, radiant with delight. How could you know what I had written.

Then it changes from the pianissimo and becomes more tender: The shadows gathered around our path. The roses of friendship are withering, but may we not hope that they will bloom again, as we remember the affection that bound us here and made—

No, you're wrong there, and the soft eyes looked disappointed.

Is it Hope on, hope ever? asks the editor.

That comes in further on. You had it nearly right. It is: The dun shadows close around us. The flowers of friendship are sleeping, but not withered, and will bloom again in the affectionate remembrance of the chains that bound us so tightly.

Strange that I should have made that mistake, said the editor, musingly. I never missed on one before. From there it goes: Schoolmates, let us live so that all our days shall be as radiant as those we have known here, and may we pluck happiness from every bush, forgetting never that the thorns are below the roses, and those whose hands are bruised in the march through life.

That's it exclaimed the delighted girl. Then comes, Hope on, hope ever.

Sure's you're born cried the editor blushing with pleasure, and once more on the track.

Yes, yes, you're right giggled the girl. I can't see how you found me out! Would you like to print it? and her face assumed an anxious shade.

Certainly, responded the editor. I'll say it is by the most promising young lady in Brooklyn, the daughter of an esteemed citizen, a lady who has taken a high social rank.

That finishes the school commencement at one swoop, sighed the editor gloomily, as the fair vision floated out. Can't see how I made that blunder about the shadows and roses and friendship. Either I'm getting old, or some of these girls have struck something original. Here, Swipes tell the foreman to put this slush in the next tax sales supplement, and the editor felt in his hair for the cork and wondered what had happened to his memory.—Brooklyn Eagle.

Singular Death.

LANCASTER, Sept. 18.—A singular fatal accident occurred at New Haven near this city, on Tuesday afternoon.

William Varnan, of Lancaster, started for Litch with a big load of furniture sold by his employer, Walter Heinisch. When near the village a low hanging telephone wire caught on a bureau on his wagon, and was drawn to extreme tension before his horse stopped. He then climbed to the top of the load and thoughtlessly while on the wrong side of the wire, pushed it loose. The rebounding wire struck him in the neck and threw him a distance of twenty feet into the summer road, where he fell on his head and fractured his skull. He lived until Thursday evening, with only momentary periods of consciousness in the interval. He leaves a wife and one child. The Bell Telephone company will probably have to stand a suit for damages. The funeral took place to-day.

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