

A Tale of Louisiana

BY D'ERF MAILLAW

During the great Civil War the Union soldiers encountered many instances of loyal devotion to the old flag in the South. One particular instance, I recall, of loyalty to the Union on the part of a Southerner, and a Jew, where a tragedy might readily have been enacted. At the time I was Judge Advocate of a military commission, organized in New Orleans during the last year of the war.

A Jew was brought before us, upon the charge of having furnished aid and comfort to the Confederacy. Proofs of his guilt appeared quite conclusive. He had been captured within the enemy's lines, opposite Baton Rouge, and upon his person was found a paper containing a very complete list of articles, including revolvers, ammunition, quinine, etc. He had agreed to deliver these the following evening to the Confederate captain, with whom he appeared to be arguing when our boys captured the squad. I have forgotten the stated compensation, but it was very large, the amount to be paid for each article being listed at figures far beyond even war prices.

The Jew could speak but little English, and his attorney, who had been a colonel in a Western volunteer regiment, and was permitted by courtesy to act in the prisoner's behalf, antagonized, from the first, Colonel Buchanan, the president of the commission. The latter was a Regular Army officer of the old school, a martinet, red-tape West Pointer, who still maintained that McClellan was the best of all our Generals, and that Grant, Sherman and Sheridan were Generals simply by good luck, and without special military requirements. The Articles of War and military rules and regulations were to him as sacred as Holy

taunted him about his "Yankee friends," to the effect that "hanging was better than helping Rebels." The President appeared to consider all this side testimony as wholly irrelevant and useless; apparently his own mind was fully made up as to the prisoner's guilt, although there appeared to me room for very grave doubt. The placid and almost contented look of the old Hebrew, and his unconcern when captured with such a damning paper in his possession, compelled in me a belief that he was not entirely guilty, or at least that the whole truth had not yet been known, and that there must be some extenuating circumstances.

In my position as Judge Advocate, I endeavored to bring out these points, and worded my questions accordingly. But Colonel Buchanan was supreme over any court where he presided, and no question was ever permitted to be asked that he did not fully sanction and often change to suit his own views. He tried to be just, yet he was extremely arbitrary and opinionated, and I feared he had already prejudged the case.

After a consultation with his client, the lawyer said he would like to have the Rebel Captain who commanded the captured squad summoned.

"What do you propose to prove by him?" thundered the Colonel. "He is a Rebel, taken in arms against the Government; I doubt if I ought to permit his testimony to have any weight before this Commission."

The lawyer, however, insisted that he was a very important witness, and though refusing to reveal his line of defense, demanded that he be produced, and threatened, if his request was refused, to lay the whole matter

"Do you recognize this paper with the list of articles, which he agrees, over his own signature, to deliver to you, and in which you are described as belonging to the Rebel army?"

"I should reckon I did. Didn't I write it and put it in every blessed article I thought we Rebs, as you call us, could get and make use of?"

I looked at Colonel Buchanan and saw a pallor slowly creeping over his face.

"Do you mean to say, sir," he asked, "that this prisoner did not voluntarily meet you people, and of his own free will agree to sell and deliver the articles mentioned in that paper?" The witness threw his head back and laughed boisterously. The old Colonel's face changed from white to an apoplectic red, and he again rapped for order, and said sarcastically, "Please restrain your merriment and answer my question; remember this is a court room, and not a theatre."

"Beg pardon, Colonel, but if you'd seen how the old sinner trembled when I shoved my six-shooter under his nose and told him I'd blow out his brains if he didn't sign it, you'd want to laugh, too. The six-shooter hadn't nary a charge, but he didn't know that. You see, the way we got hold of him was this: Some of our boys live in Baton Rouge, and they know the old fellow has always been considered a bigger Yankee than old Greeley himself. When we saw him inside our lines, near the Ferry, where we learned he had been to visit some sick relative, we made up our minds we'd got a pretty good thing. We knew he was a rich old covey, and that his store carried one of the biggest stocks of goods outside of Orleans. I decided that I could scare him into signing that 'Yankee' paper, and he was tamed, work."

I thought at one time I'd really have to load up and give him a flesh wound to make him ante up. Then just as he had signed the paper you Yankeys swooped down upon us."

"Do you mean to say, on your oath—on your oath, sir," said the Colonel imperiously, "that the prisoner did not send word to you that he would meet you at that Ferry and furnish you certain information and contraband articles for certain sums of money?"

The young Confederate jumped up, and balancing himself on his foot, cried out, with the most intense scorn: "And you call this a Yankee court of justice! Couldn't any of you take trouble enough to find out what kind of a man you were trying? Why, any child in Baton Rouge could have told you who old Jew Isaacs was, and twice he's had a rope 'round his neck, and been nearly choked into the Kingdom Come by our boys because he wouldn't tell where you 'uns were camped—and all the old fellow would say was, 'Hang away.' Couldn't you find out, through some of your smart witnesses, that my own capture was due to the plucky old devil, who was brave enough and loyal enough to you Yankeys to send word to your Captain by his little son when and where he had agreed to meet us, in spite of my oath to him that I would shoot him down like a dog if he breathed a word to any one?" And the indignant Southerner sank down in his chair, wiping the perspiration from his face.

That the dramatic part of this startling denouement was partly arranged by the lawyer has always been my conviction. He knew from the first that he had a snare case, and he had been greatly nettled by the sharp words and rulings of President Buchanan. At any rate, the effect was all that he could have wished. Never before, in his long military career, had the old Colonel's pride received such a blow. His boast had been that he had presided over more than fifty court-martials and had seldom had his findings disapproved, as he claimed to know all there was to know about military law.

The room was cleared and the Colonel, after a few words of explanation, added, "Of course, the case will be dismissed at once and the prisoner released. I desire to confess to you gentlemen that for my part I fear I have allowed my prejudices to influence my judgment, and that I have been nearer than ever before in all my military life committing a very grave and serious error. We are none of us too old to learn."

After adjourning the court, the noble old man went into the adjoining room, shook hands most heartily and courteously with the lawyer, the Confederate Captain and the old Jew, and said that none of them could be more pleased than he that any suspicions he may have had were found to be false.

As I was arranging my papers, some one touched me on the shoulder, and looking around I encountered Isaacs' swarthy countenance. He said, in his broken English: "I see you are a Mason." Answering in the affirmative, and learning that he was one, I asked why he had not made himself known before. "Oh, no," he said, "not while I was under charges, but now I am very glad to know you as one. I want you to bring some of your army friends and dine with me next Sunday," handing me his card. I accepted his invitation and had an experience for the first time of dining in the family of a wealthy Jew.

He had invited a number of his friends, and the board was presided over by his only daughter, the most lovely Jewess I had ever seen. She was tall and graceful as a swan, with a clear, olive complexion through which burned the glow of perfect health, and she looked at me with eyes which, even out of the dim haze of years, I can see distinctly to-day—deep wells of melting brown, modestly shaded by long silky lashes.

As I was presented she came bravely forward, a charming blush diffusing its tint on her cheeks, and taking both my hands in her own two little soft ones, she said, in the purest English: "Captain, how can I thank you for your great kindness to my dear old father? Indeed, I shall always wish you joy and happiness."

I disclaimed having done anything at all to warrant her warm thanks; nevertheless, they were most pleasant to hear and the grateful glance she gave me well nigh set my young brain on fire. I was seated at her right hand and found her conversation cultured and herself truly bewitching.

The dinner itself was splendid and elaborate, consisting of innumerable courses and of unknown dishes. Some rare wines were brought from their cobweb beds, along with costly cigars. Over the wine and walnuts, Isaacs in-

formed me that he desired to repay me in some way for what he claimed to be my great service to him during his trial. I assured him that I had done nothing for him that the case did not fully warrant, but he insisted that but for several of my protests he might have been condemned without a hearing. I explained to him that that was simply the duty of any Judge Advocate, but he said that Jews were never ungrateful never can get a point blank offer, that if I would resign my commission and start a store in Mobile, which had then just come into the possession of the Union forces, he would stock it with ten or even twenty thousand dollars' worth of goods, give me the entire charge and make me an equal partner.

As I mused over the old Maderia, visions arose before me of a prosperous business and also frequent calls to Baton Rouge to consult with Mr. Isaacs, when I doubted not I would be a welcome visitor at his and his daughter's home, and—I all but accepted the offer.

But ere the evening was spent, the spirit of war drove sentiment from my thoughts. An orderly brought the news of another fierce guerrilla raid up from the Bayou Teche, and making a hasty adieu, thanking the old gentleman for his generous offer and bending over his lovely daughter's hand, I galloped back to my command and was soon again in the saddle on a four days' ride.

A DIFFERENCE IN THE SEXES.

Sentiment Not Highly Developed in Men—Prosaic and Unromantic.

Women never can get used to the lack of romantic sentiment displayed by the average man.

It takes a woman to hoard up every scrap of the writing of a beloved hand, and lock it away in a desk with blue ribbon around it.

The most cursory note he has scribbled in pencil is safely treasured up, not because it breathed unusual or fervid sentiments, but because indited in that hand.

Twenty-five years after, she can still regard with tender interest the flower he gave her on such and such a day, which she wore in her bosom until it died, and then tucked religiously into a book. A bit of gown she wore when she first saw him, the book they read together, the first "photo" he gave her—all these things have a mighty and undying interest for woman, who is by nature more sentimental than man.

The best man in the world often has a singular lack of romance of this sort in his make-up. When the past is over he forgets it. A rose that has served its purpose in his buttonhole, worn on whatever momentous occasion, is esteemed by him to be more fit for the waste basket than the bureau drawer. He has been known to crumple her billet-doux before his lady's eyes and smilingly toss it to the four winds; and he would be puzzled to understand why that lightsome disregard of his should send a little chill to her heart.

No, men are not by nature sentimental animals. They can love without cumbering themselves with endless effects belonging to the object of their affections. And far be it to say that theirs is not the wiser method of the two. It simplifies life and is least likely to precipitate future embarrassments.

LUCKY STEERAGE MOTHER.

Child Born Aboard Ship Presented with Wardrobe and Twenty-Five Dollars.

A few weeks ago the European steamer Graf Waldersee came limping into New York Harbor after having encountered, according to statements of the steamer officials and crew, one of the worst storms ever encountered on the Atlantic. But notwithstanding the rough voyage, there was a little incident on shipboard which attracted as much attention as the storm. On the second day out just before the storm broke there was born to one of the steerage passengers a son, who was appropriately named Herman Waldersee Gales, and the cabin passengers gave him a wardrobe, besides raising \$25 for his mother.



THE TYPICAL AMERICAN MOTHER PAINTING BY MAUD STEMM.

Notwithstanding the fact that 1,932,000 steerage passengers embarked for New York from European ports during the past three years, according to figures compiled by the immigration authorities, it is a remarkable fact that only 116 babies have been born in the steerage during that time. This number does not include the recent arrival on the Waldersee.

Yet, there was an early precedent for ocean births, for, according to history, the first English child born in the limits of New England was Peregrine White, who first saw light of day on the Mayflower in Cape Cod Harbor.

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THE PAPER WILL HANG YOU HIGHER THAN HAMAN.

Writ, and like a Roman Senator, he would have stotically passed sentence upon his own son had he been found guilty of breaking the least of them. Treason in its mildest form was most odious to him, and that any officer should stoop to enrich himself a penny's worth by trade in Government property was cause for the severest punishment and everlasting disgrace. The ex-Colonel of Volunteers, with his breezy Western style and his disregard of red tape and formality, injured his client's cause from the first, and several times Colonel Buchanan threatened to forbid his presence before the Commission. The testimony at first was very strong against the prisoner. The captain commanding the Union squad swore clearly and without challenge to all the details. Word had been brought to him by an unknown boy that a lot of Rebels had been seen several times near the Ferry, opposite Baton Rouge, and would be there again, particularly the evening in question. Obtaining permission from the General commanding, the Captain took part of his company, crossed over, concealed himself and men near the Ferry and witnessed the interview between the Confederate Captain and this Jew. He was not close enough to hear the conversation, but he observed the Jew was not surprised to meet the Rebels, and shortly after they met he saw him hand the Captain a paper. Meanwhile, his men had cautiously closed in on the enemy, and after a slight resistance captured the entire party. It was true, the Captain added, that he knocked the Rebel Captain's revolver from his hand just as he was about to shoot the Jew, but neither of them would state whether there was any quarrel, or if so, the cause. The Jew seemed surprised to be treated as a prisoner, and when the paper was found upon him, and some of the boys wanted to hang him without trial, he looked bewildered and dazed. He attempted, two or three times, to make some sort of explanation, but seemed so free and unconcerned about the whole matter, and tried to be so confidential, that the Captain, too, at last got angry, and told him that if he didn't hold his tongue no great effort would be made to restrain the boys from carrying out their threat. The Sergeant and two of the men testified in much the same way. The Sergeant added that when he said to the Jew, "Why, you gray-headed old sinner, don't you know that that paper we found on you will hang you higher than Haman," the Jew merely shrugged his shoulders and said something to the Rebel Captain, who had

before General Banks, commanding the Department. The Colonel stared up in an instant.

"I want you to understand, sir," he said, "that not even the President of the United States can compel me to summon a witness if I think it unnecessary. I have sworn, as have the other members of this Commission, to do my whole duty without fear or favor."

After a few moments of painful silence, possibly seeing from our disgusted looks that we were becoming impatient with his arbitrary manner, he said, "But I do not want to be unfair in this matter."

I ventured to say, "Mr. President, might it not be advisable to summon this witness, and if it is shown that he has no material knowledge, to then refuse to hear him further?"

Utterly ignoring me, he asked the lawyer how soon he could produce the witness.

"A half hour after you issue the summons," was the reply.

"The court stands adjourned till the usual hour to-morrow, Captain," to me, "prepare the necessary summons," said to the lawyer, "if your witness is not here promptly when the court meets I shall not wait a moment. Too much time has been wasted already."

As the lawyer passed me when leaving the room he gave me a sly dig, and with a solemn wink whispered, "My lining's to-morrow."

Promptly when called the following morning, the Rebel Captain appeared. He was a laughing, bright-eyed young fellow of about 23, using crutches as a result of the loss of his right leg. Colonel Buchanan was impressively polite, and told him not to attempt to stand while the oath was administered. It was evident from the first that our Rebel had no fear of Yankee Colonels or Yankee courts. He called out "Howdy" to the different members, and told our dignified President that he was jolly glad to see him, but would prefer to change places with him, and added, "What in the world are 'uns trying to do with old Uncle Isaacs?"

The Colonel rapped severely for order, and after the usual preliminaries, the lawyer asked the witness if he recognized the prisoner.

"Recognize that old Jew Yankee? You bet I do. If you 'uns hadn't been quite so confounded smart, we 'uns would have made a right peart haul out of the old rascal, and as they say it's no-sin for a white man to beat a Jew, I don't believe he'd ever got a cent of pay from us."