

CHAPTER I.

The day and date is the 21st of July, 1861.

The scene is the battleground of first Bull Run, a field made memorable forever.

From daybreak to high noon the Federal army under McDowell has been moving down on the Confederate position selected weeks ago by the general.

The cheering is heard a mile away above the noise of battle. The Federal center moves forward to pursue the shattered enemy, and couriers ride away with the news.

Behind the flying Confederates is a plateau of 800 acres, comprising two or three farms. There are two or three farmhouses, orchards, meadows, thickets of pine, barren fields.

Noun becomes 1 o'clock. The skirmishers are at work all along the front of the plateau, but there is no fighting.

Another hour slips away. The Federals have waited too long. At noon they could have carried the position with a rush.

Thirteen thousand Federals move against the plateau at different points almost as one man, and the battle opens with a great crash.

"Halt, men, halt! Those who are not cowards will follow me!"

It was too late to rally the company as a whole. It was breaking back on the reserve, headed by its two lieutenants, but at the call to rally about 30 of the men turned and raised a cheer and followed the flag.

whatever weapon they could wound or kill. It was the fight of a mob. It was a mob which went circling round and round the battery long ago disabled by the killing of all its horses.

"Who commands this company?" asked the general, looking in vain for a commissioned officer.

"I reckon on 60 days," said the man. "Then I'll put down."

"I don't like to say 20," replied the captain as he stood up to look over the crowd. "You see, we've got to there, wherever it is, and then we've got to have a fight or two and march around, and I should reckon on 50 days anyhow.

An army party is like unto nothing else in its foolishness, in its madness, in that feeling of terror which makes service towards of brave men for a few hours.

What were they fleeing from? Death? If so, almost every man of them had faced death for hours that day without flinching.

CHAPTER II.

Let us go back a few weeks and connect the chain of events.

The thunder of a hundred guns had been let loose at Charleston, and the south was rushing to arms.

of the old store and postoffice two men were seated at a table borrowed somewhere for the occasion.

"We want 60 more men to fill up this company. Within a week we shall be ordered to the front.

"I reckon on 60 days," said the man. "Then I'll put down."

"I don't like to say 20," replied the captain as he stood up to look over the crowd.

Directly opposite two men sat looking out of a second story window. They were in the law office of Justin Williams, a Helong citizen of the town and a lawyer of repute.

A curious fact is that there are less white people on the high plains of the northwest now than there were ten years ago, and there will probably be less in ten years more than there are now.

It seems scarcely possible that satin and moire can long enjoy the tremendous popularity now accorded them.

They do not stop to reflect," said the lawyer as his face assumed a more serious look.

"I am a southern man, and I believe the south has been justly punished in her course, but our people are foolishly underestimating the strength and temper of the north.

"You are neutral today, but you cannot be 30 days hence," said the old lawyer as a troubled look came into his face.

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business matters between us. It may be years before there is any further call for our legal talents in this or any other Virginia town.

The old lawyer rose up and passed down stairs on his way home without further remark, leaving Royal Kenton in a brown study, which was interrupted 10 minutes later by wild cheering on the street.

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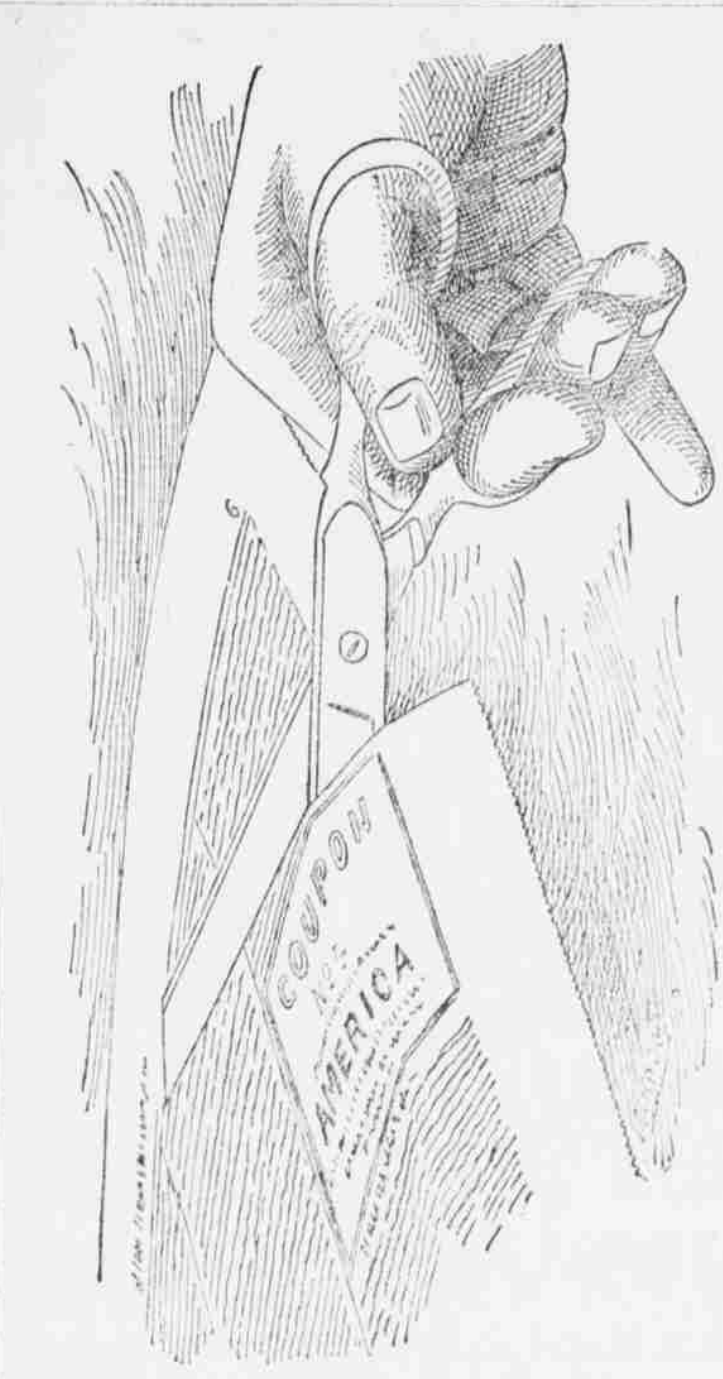
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