

FINLEY MARTHA

ELSIE AT
VIAMEDE

Martha Finley

Elsie at Viamede

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Martha Finley

Elsie at Viamede

CHAPTER I

It was a beautiful evening at Viamede: the sun nearing its setting, shadows sleeping here and there upon the velvety flower-bespangled lawn, and filling the air with their delicious perfume, the waters of the bayou beyond reflecting the roseate hues of the sunset clouds, and the song of some negro oarsmen, in a passing boat, coming to the ear in pleasantly mellowed tones. Tea was over, and the family had all gathered upon the veranda overlooking the bayou. A momentary silence was broken by Rosie's pleasant voice:

"Mamma, I wish you or grandpa, or the captain, would tell the story of Jackson's defence of New Orleans. Now while we are in the neighborhood we would all, I feel sure, find it very interesting. I think you have been going over Lossing's account of it, mamma," she added laughingly, "for I found his 'Pictorial History of the War of 1812' lying on the table in your room, with a mark in at that part."

"Yes, I had been refreshing my memory in that way," returned her mother, smiling pleasantly into the dark eyes gazing so fondly and entreatingly into hers. "And," she added, "I have no objection to granting your request, except that I do not doubt that either your grandfather or the captain could do greater justice to the subject than I," glancing inquiringly from one to the other.

"Captain, I move that you undertake the task," said Mr. Dinsmore. "You are, no doubt, better prepared to do it justice than I, and I would not have my daughter fatigued with the telling of so long a story."

"Always so kindly careful of me, my dear father," remarked Mrs. Travilla in a softly spoken aside.

"I am doubtful of my better preparation for the telling of the story, sir," returned the captain in his pleasant tones, "but if both you and mother are disinclined for the exertion I am willing to undertake the task."

"Yes, do, captain; do, papa," came in eager tones from several young voices, and lifting baby Ned to one knee, Elsie to the other, while the rest of the young members of the household grouped themselves about him, he began his story after a slight pause to collect his thoughts.

"You all, I think, have more or less knowledge of the War of 1812-14, which finished the work of separation from the mother country so nearly accomplished by the War of the Revolution. Upon the close of that earlier contest, England, it is true, acknowledged our independence, but evidently retained a hope of finally recovering her control here.

"All through the intervening years, our sailors on our merchant vessels, and even, in some instances, those belonging to our navy, were subjected to insults and oppression when met on the high seas by the more powerful ones of the English. The conduct of British officers – claiming the right to search our vessels for deserters from theirs, and often seizing American born men as such – was most gallingly insulting; the wrongs thus inflicted upon our poor seamen were enough to rouse the anger and indignation of the meekest of men. The clearest proofs of citizenship availed nothing; they were seized, carried forcibly aboard the British ships, and, if they refused to serve their captors, were brutally flogged again and again.

"But I will not go into details with which you are all more or less acquainted. We did not lack abundant cause for exasperation, and at length, though ill prepared for the struggle, our government declared war against Great Britain.

"That war had lasted two years; both parties were weary of the struggle, and negotiations for peace were being carried on in Europe. In fact the treaty had been signed, December 24, in the city of

Ghent, Belgium, but news did not travel in those days nearly so fast as it does now, and so it happened that the battle of New Orleans was fought two weeks afterward, January 8, 1815, both armies being still in ignorance of the conclusion of peace."

"What a pity!" exclaimed Grace.

"And Andrew Jackson was the commanding general?" remarked Walter in a tone between inquiry and assertion. "Was he an American by birth, Brother Levis?"

"Yes; his parents were from Ireland, but he was born on the border between North and South Carolina, in 1767; so that he was old enough to remember some of the occurrences of the Revolutionary War; one of them being himself carried to Camden, South Carolina, as a prisoner, and there nearly starved to death and brutally treated by a British officer; cut with a sword because he refused to black his boots for him."

"Was that so, sir?" queried Walter. "Well, I shouldn't wonder if the recollection of all that made him more ready to fight them in the next war, particularly at New Orleans, than he would have been otherwise."

"No doubt," returned the captain. "Jackson was a man of great energy, determination, and persistence. It is said his maxim was, 'till all is done nothing is done.' In May of 1814 he was made a major-general in the regular army and appointed to the command of the Department of the South, the Seventh Military District, with his headquarters at Mobile, of which the Americans had taken possession as early as April, 1812.

"Jackson's vigilance was sleepless. The Spanish had possession of Pensacola, and, though professing neutrality, were secretly favoring the British. Of this Jackson promptly informed our government, but at that time our War Department was strangely apathetic, and his communication was not responded to in any way.

"But he had trusty spies, both white and dark-skinned, everywhere, who kept him informed of all that was taking place in the whole region around. He knew that British marines were allowed to land and encamp on shore; that Edward Nichols, their commander, was a guest of the Spanish governor, and the British flag was unfurled over one of the forts. Also, that Indians were invited to enroll themselves in the service of the British crown, and that Nichols had sent out a general order to his soldiers, and a proclamation to the people of Kentucky and Louisiana, announcing that the land and naval forces at Pensacola were only the van of a far larger number of vessels and troops which were intended for the subjugation of Louisiana and especially the city of New Orleans.

"Jackson arrived in that city on the 2d of December, and prepared to defend it from the British, whom he had driven out of Florida. They had planned to take the lower Mississippi Valley, intending to keep possession of the western bank of the river. They had among them some of the finest of Wellington's troops, who, but a short time before, had been engaged in driving Napoleon out of Europe.

"In December, 12,000 men under the command of Sir Edward Packenham, brother-in-law of Wellington, were landed below New Orleans. They had come from Jamaica across the Gulf of Mexico. Their expedition was a secret one, and they approached New Orleans midway between Mobile Bay and the Mississippi River, entering Lake Borgne and anchoring there.

"A small American navy, composed of five gunboats, opposed their progress, but was soon dispersed by their superior force of fifty vessels, large and small. Then the British took full possession of the lake, and landed troops upon a lonely island called the Isle des Pois (or Pea Island).

"Some Spaniards, who had formerly lived in New Orleans, told Cochrane of Bayou Bienvenu, at the northwestern extremity of Lake Borgne, by which he could nearly reach the city, the bayou being navigable for large barges to within a few miles of the Mississippi River.

"A party was sent to explore it, and found that by following it and a canal they would reach a spot but half a mile from the river and nine miles below the city.

"They hurried back to Cochrane with a report to that effect, and by the 23d of December half of the army had reached the spot.

"A few months before – September 1st – the British sloop of war *Sophia*, commanded by Captain Lockyer, had sailed from Pensacola with despatches for Jean Lafitte, inviting him and his band to enter the British service."

"Lafitte! Who was he, Brother Levis?" queried Walter.

"A Frenchman," replied the captain, "who, with his elder brother, Pierre, had come to New Orleans some six years before. They were blacksmiths, and for a time worked at their trade; but afterward they engaged in smuggling, and were leaders of a band of corsairs, seizing, it was said, merchantmen of different nations, even some belonging to the people of the United States, and for that they were outlawed, though there was some doubt that they were really guilty. But they carried on a contraband trade with some of the citizens of Louisiana, smuggling their wares into New Orleans through Bayou Teche, or Bayou Lafourche and Barataria Lake. That had brought them into trouble with the United States authorities, and the British thought to get the help of the buccaneers in their intended attack upon the city, where Pierre Lafitte was at that time a prisoner.

"Captain Lockyer carried to Jean a letter from Colonel Nichols offering him a captain's commission in the British Navy and \$30,000, and to his followers exemption from punishment for past deeds, indemnification for any losses, and rewards in money and lands, if they would go into the service of England's king.

"Lockyer also brought another paper, in which they were threatened with extermination if they refused the offers in the first."

"Were they frightened and bribed into doing what the British wished, sir?" asked Walter.

"No," replied the captain; "they seized Captain Lockyer and his officers, and threatened to carry them to New Orleans as prisoners of war; but Lafitte persuaded them to give that up, and they released the officers. Lafitte pretended to treat with them, asking them to come back for his reply in ten days, and they were permitted to depart.

"After they had gone, he wrote to a member of the legislature telling of the visit of the British officers, what they had said to him and his men, and sending with his letter the papers Captain Lockyer had left with him. He also offered his own and his men's services in defence of the city, on condition that past offences should never be brought up against them.

"Troops were badly needed in the American army, and Governor Claiborne was inclined to accept Lafitte's offer; but the majority of his officers were opposed to so doing, thinking the papers sent were forgeries, and the story made up to prevent the destruction of the colony of outlaws, against whom an expedition was then fitting out. Lafitte knew of the preparations, but supposed they were for an attack upon the British. They, the members of the expedition, made a sudden descent upon Barataria, captured a large number of Lafitte's men, and carried them and a rich booty to New Orleans.

"Some of the Baratarians escaped, Jean and Pierre Lafitte among them. They soon collected their men again near the mouth of Bayou Lafourche, and after General Jackson took command in New Orleans, again offered their services, which Jackson accepted, sending a part to man the redoubts on the river, and forming of the rest a corps which served the batteries with great skill.

"In his letter at the time of sending information with regard to the attempt of the British to bribe him to enter their service, Jean Lafitte said: 'Though proscribed in my adopted country, I will never miss an occasion of serving her, or of proving that she has never ceased to be dear to me.'"

"There!" exclaimed Lulu with enthusiasm, "I don't believe he was such a very bad man, after all."

"Nor do I," her father said with a slight smile; then went on with his story.

"Early on the 15th of December, Jackson, hearing of the capture of the gunboats, immediately set to work to fortify the city and make every possible preparation to repulse the expected attack

of the enemy. He sent word to General Winchester, in command at Mobile, to be on the alert, and messengers to Generals Thomas and Coffee urging them to hasten with their commands to assist in the defence of the city.

"Then he appointed, for the 18th, a grand review of all the troops in front of the Cathedral of St. Louis, in what is now Jackson Square, but at that time was called Place d'Armes.

"All the people turned out to see the review. The danger was great, the military force with which to meet the foe small and weak, but Jackson made a stirring address, and his aide, Edward Livingston, read a thrilling and eloquent one.

"They were successful in rousing both troops and populace to an intense enthusiasm, taking advantage of which, Jackson declared martial law and a suspension of the writ of *habeas corpus*."

"What is that, papa?" asked Grace.

"It is a writ which in ordinary times may be given by a judge to have a prisoner brought before him that he may inquire into the cause of his detention and have him released if unlawfully detained. It is a most important safeguard to liberty, inherited by us from our English ancestors."

"Then what right had Jackson to suspend it, sir?" queried Walter.

"A right given by the constitution of the United States, in which there is an express provision that it may be suspended in cases of rebellion or invasion, should the public safety demand it," replied the captain: then resumed his narrative.

"After the review, Jean Lafitte again offered his own services and those of his men, urging their acceptance, and they were mustered into the ranks and appointed to important duty.

"Jackson showed himself sleeplessly vigilant and wonderfully active, making every possible preparation to meet and repulse every coming foe.

"On the evening of the 23d, the schooner *Carolina*, one of the two armed American vessels in the river, moved down and anchored within musket shot of the centre of the British camp. Half an hour later she opened a tremendous fire upon them from her batteries, and in ten minutes had killed or wounded a hundred or more men. The British answered with a shower of Congreve rockets and bullets, but with little or no effect, and in less than half an hour were driven in confusion from their camp.

"They had scarcely recovered from that when they were startled by the sound of musketry in the direction of their outposts. Some prisoners whom General Keane had taken told him there were more than 12,000 troops in New Orleans, and he now felt convinced that such was the fact. He gave Thornton full liberty to do as he would.

"Thornton moved forward and was presently met by a column under Jackson. There was some fierce fighting, and at length the British fell sullenly back. About half past nine the fighting was over; but two hours later, when all was becoming quiet in the camp, musket firing was heard in the distance. Some drafted militia, under General David Morgan, had heard the firing upon the *Carolina* early in the evening, insisted upon being led against the enemy, and on their way had met some British pickets at Jumonsville and exchanged shots with them. By that advance against the foe, Jackson had saved New Orleans for the time, and now he set vigorously to work to prepare for another attack, for he knew there would be another. Also, that the men who were to make it were fresh from the battlefields of Europe – veteran troops not likely to be easily conquered or driven away. He omitted nothing which it was in his power to do for the defence of the city, setting his soldiers to casting up intrenchments along the line of the canal from the river to Cypress Swamp. They were in excellent spirits, and plied their spades with such energy and zeal that by sunset a breastwork three feet high might be seen along the whole line of his army.

"The American troops were quite hilarious on that Christmas eve, the British soldiers gloomy and disheartened, having lost confidence in their commander, Keane, and finding themselves on wet ground, under a clouded sky, and in a chilly atmosphere; but the sudden arrival of their new

commander, Sir Edward Packenham, in whose skill and bravery they had great confidence, filled them with joy.

"But while the Americans were at work preparing for the coming conflict, the foe were not idle; day and night they were busy getting ready a heavy battery with which to attack the *Carolina*. On the morning of the 27th, they had it finished, began firing hot shot upon her from a howitzer and several twelve and eighteen pounders, and soon succeeded in setting her on fire, so that she blew up.

"It was a tremendous explosion, but fortunately her crew had abandoned her in time to escape it. The *Louisiana*, who had come down to her aid, was near sharing her fate, but, by great exertion on the part of her crew, she was towed out of reach of the enemy's shot, anchored nearly abreast of the American camp, on the other side of the river, and so saved to take a gallant part in the next day's fight. Packenham next ordered his men to move forward and carry the intrenchments of the Americans by storm. They numbered 8000, and toward evening the two columns, commanded respectively by Generals Gibbs and Keane, obeyed that order, moving forward, driving in the American pickets and outposts, and at twilight they encamped, some of them seeking repose while others began raising batteries near the river.

"The Americans, however, kept them awake by quick, sharp attacks, which the British called 'barbarian warfare.'"

"Barbarian warfare, indeed!" sniffed Walter. "I wonder if it was half so barbarous as what they employed the Indians to do to our people."

"Ah, but you must remember that it makes a vast difference who does what, Walter," laughed Rosie.

"Oh, yes, of course," returned the lad; and Captain Raymond went on with his story.

"Jackson was busy getting ready to receive the enemy: watching their movements through a telescope, planting heavy guns, blowing up some buildings that would have interfered with the sweep of his artillery, and calling some Louisiana militia from the rear. By the time the British were ready to attack, he had 4000 men and twenty pieces of artillery ready to receive them. Also the *Louisiana* was in a position to use her cannon with effect in giving them a warm reception.

"As soon as the fog of early morning had passed away, they could be seen approaching in two columns, while a party of skirmishers, sent out by Gibbs, were ordered to turn the left flank of the Americans and attack their rear.

"Just then a band of rough looking men came down the road from the direction of the city. They were Baratarians, who had run all the way from Fort St. John to take part in the fight, and Jackson was delighted to see them. He put them in charge of the twenty-four pounders and they did excellent service.

"Next came the crew of the *Carolina*, under Lieutenants Norris and Crawley, and they were given charge of the howitzer on the right. A galling fire of musketry fell upon the British as they advanced in solid column, then the batteries of the *Louisiana* and some of Jackson's heavy guns swept their lines with deadly effect, one of the shots from the *Louisiana* killing and wounding fifteen men. The British rocketeers were busy on their side, too, but succeeded in inflicting very little damage upon the Americans.

"But I must leave the rest of the story for another time, for I see we are about to have company," concluded the captain, as a carriage was seen coming swiftly up the driveway. It brought callers who remained until the hour for the retiring of the younger ones among his hearers.

CHAPTER II

The next evening the Viamede family were again gathered upon the veranda, and, at the urgent request of the younger portion, seconded by that of the older ones, the captain resumed the thread of his narrative.

"Keane's men," he said, "could no longer endure the terrible fire that was so rapidly thinning their ranks, and they were presently ordered to seek shelter in the little canals, where, in mud and water almost waist deep, they leaned forward, concealing themselves in the rushes which grew on the banks. They were Wellington's veterans, and must have felt humiliated enough to be thus compelled to flee before a few rough backwoodsmen, as they considered Jackson's troops.

"In the meantime, Gibbs and Rennie were endeavoring to flank the American left, driving in the pickets till they were within a hundred yards of Carroll and his Tennesseans. Carroll perceived their object and sent Colonel Henderson with 200 Tennesseans to cut Rennie off from the main body of the enemy by gaining his rear. Henderson went too far, met a large British force, and he and five of his men were killed and several wounded. But Gibbs, seeing how hard the fight was going with Keane, ordered Rennie to fall back to his assistance. Rennie reluctantly obeyed, but only to be a witness of Keane's repulse. Packenham, deeply mortified by the unexpected disaster to his veterans, presently ordered his men to fall back, and retired to his headquarters at Villere's."

"Had he lost many of his men that day, sir?" queried Walter.

"The British loss in the engagement is said to have been about one hundred and fifty," replied Captain Raymond; "that of the Americans nine killed and eight wounded. Packenham called a council of war, at which it was resolved to bring heavy siege guns from the navy and with them make another attempt to conquer the Americans and get possession of the city, which Packenham now began to see to be by no means the easy task he had at first imagined. He perceived that it was difficult, dangerous, and would require all the skill of which he was master; that his movements must be both courageous and persevering if he would save his army from destruction.

"Jackson, too, was busy with his preparations, extending his line of intrenchments, placing guns, establishing batteries, and appointing those who were to command and work them.

"A company of young men from the best families, under Captain Ogden, were made his body-guard and subject to his orders alone. They were posted in Macarte's garden.

"Everybody was full of enthusiasm, active and alert. Particularly so were the Tennessee riflemen; they delighted in going on 'hunts,' as they called expeditions to pick off the sentinels of the enemy. So successful were they in this kind of warfare on Jackson's left, very near the swamp, that soon the British dared not post sentinels there. They (the British) threw up a strong redoubt there which Captain You and Lieutenant Crawley constantly battered with heavy shot from their cannon; but the British persevered, and by the end of the month had mounted several heavy guns, with which, on the 31st, they began a vigorous fire upon the Americans.

"That night the whole of the British army moved forward to within a few hundred yards of the American lines, and in the gloom, began rapid work with spade and pickaxe. They brought up siege guns from the lake, and before dawn had finished three half-moon batteries at nearly equal distances apart, and six hundred yards from the American line.

"They (the batteries) were made of earth, hogsheads of sugar, and whatever else could be laid hold of that would answer the purpose. Upon them they placed thirty pieces of heavy ordnance, manned by picked gunners of the fleet, who had served under Nelson, Collingwood, and St. Vincent.

"That morning was the 1st of January, 1815. A thick fog hid the two armies from each other until after eight o'clock. Then a gentle breeze blew it aside, and the British began firing briskly upon the American works, doubtless feeling sure they would presently scatter them to the winds, and that

their own army, placed ready in battle array, would then rush forward, overpower the Americans, and take the city.

"Heavier and heavier grew their bombardment; the rocketeers sent an incessant shower of fiery missiles into the American lines and upon Jackson's headquarters at Macarte's, more than a hundred balls, shells, and rockets striking the building in the course of ten minutes. He and his staff immediately left the house, and in the meantime he had opened his heavy guns on the assailants.

"The British were amazed to find heavy artillery thundering along the whole line, and wondered how and where the Americans had got their guns and gunners.

"It was a terrible fight. Pakenham sent a detachment of infantry to turn the American left, but they were driven back in terror by the Tennesseans under Coffee. After that, the conflict was between the batteries alone, and before noon the fire of the British had sensibly abated. Then they abandoned their works and fled helter-skelter to the ditches for safety; for their demi-lunes were crushed and broken, the hogsheads, of which they were largely composed, having been reduced to splinters and the sugar that had filled them mixed with the earth. Some of their guns were dismounted, others careened so that it was very difficult to work them, while the fire of the Americans was still unceasing. At noon, as I have said, they gave up the contest. That night they crawled back and carried away some of their cannon, dragging them with difficulty over the wet ground, and leaving five of them a spoil to the Americans.

"They (the British) were deeply chagrined by their repulse, had eaten nothing for sixty hours, nor had any sleep in all that time, so that their New Year's Day was even gloomier than their Christmas had been.

"The Americans, on the other hand, were full of joy that they had been able to repulse their own and their country's foes; and their happiness was increased by the news that they were soon to have a re-enforcement, Brigadier-General John Adair arriving with the glad tidings that 2000 drafted militia from Kentucky were coming to their assistance. These arrived on the 4th of the month, and 700 of them were sent to the front under Adair.

"Pakenham had lost some of his confidence in the ability of himself and his troops to conquer the Americans, but hoped to be more successful in a new effort. He decided to try to carry Jackson's lines on both sides of the river. He resolved to rebuild his two batteries near the levee, which had been destroyed by the Americans, mount them well, and employ them in assailing the American right, while Keane, with his corps, was to advance with fascines to fill the ditches, and scaling ladders with which to mount the embankments.

"But first 1500 infantry, with some artillery, were to be sent under cover of night to attack Morgan, whose works were but feebly manned, and, getting possession, enfilade Jackson's line, while the main British army attacked it in front.

"All the labor of completing these arrangements was finished on the 7th, and the army, now 10,000 strong, was in fine spirits, no doubt thinking they had an easy task before them. But Jackson saw through their designs, and was busily engaged in making his preparations. He had thrown up a redoubt on the edge of the river, and mounted it with cannon so as to enfilade the ditch in front of his line. He had, besides, eight batteries at proper distances from each other, and Patterson's marine battery across the river, mounting nine guns; also the *Louisiana* near at hand and ready to take any part she could in assisting him.

"The plain of Chalmette was in front of Jackson's line. His whole force on the New Orleans side of the river was about 5000; only 2200 of them were at his line; only 800 of them were regulars, most of them being new recruits commanded by young officers.

"The British attempted to carry out Pakenham's plans, but Thornton was delayed in reaching Morgan by the falling of the water in the canal and river, so that the sailors had to drag the boats through the mud in many places, and it was three o'clock in the morning before half his force had crossed. Besides, the powerful current of the Mississippi carried them down stream, and they were

landed at least a mile and a half below the point at which they had intended to disembark, and the roar of the cannon on the plain of Chalmette was heard before all had landed. The British had formed in line and advanced to within 450 yards of the American intrenchments, and there, under Gibbs and Keane, they stood in the darkness, fog, and chilly air, listening for the boom of Thornton's guns.

"The time must have seemed long to them, and doubtless they wondered what delayed him. But day began to dawn, the red coats of the enemy could be dimly seen by our troops through the fog, and Lieutenant Spotswood, of battery No. 7, opened the battle by sending one of his heavy shots in among them.

"The fog rolled away, and the British line was seen extending two-thirds of the distance across the plain of Chalmette. A rocket was sent up from each end of the line and it broke into fragments, the men forming into columns by companies. Then Gibbs moved forward toward the wooded swamp, his troops, as they advanced, terribly pelted by the fire of the Americans, the batteries Nos. 6, 7, and 8 pouring shot incessantly into their line, making lanes through it.

"Some sought shelter from the storm behind a projection of the swamp into the plain; but in vain. Whole platoons were prostrated, but their places were instantly filled by others.

"The company who were to have brought the fascines and scaling ladders had forgotten them, and that, with the terrible fire of the American batteries, wrought some confusion in the ranks; but they pressed on bravely, cheering each other with loud huzzas, their front covered by blazing rockets. As rank after rank fell under the fire of the Americans, their places were instantly occupied by others, and the column pushed on toward the American batteries on the left and the weaker line defended by the Kentuckians and the Tennesseans.

"Those British troops were Wellington's veterans who had fought so bravely in Europe, and now, in spite of the awful slaughter in their ranks, they moved unflinchingly forward, without pause or recoil, stepping unhesitatingly over their fallen comrades, till they were within two hundred yards of our lines, when General Carroll's voice rang out in clear, clarion tones, 'Fire!' and, at the word, the Tennesseans rose from behind their works, where they had lain concealed, and poured in a deadly fire, each man taking sure aim, and their bullets cutting down scores of the enemy.

"Then, as the Tennesseans fell back, the Kentuckians stepped quickly into their places and poured in their fire with equally deadly aim; then another rank followed, and still another, so that the fire slackened not for a moment, while at the same time grape and round shot from the batteries went crashing through the British ranks, making awful gaps in them.

"It was enough to appall the stoutest heart, and their lines began to waver; but their officers encouraged them with the cry, 'Here comes the Forty-fourth with the fascines and the ladders!'"

"Papa, what are fascines?" asked Grace.

"Long faggots used for different purposes in engineering," he replied. "It was true they were coming with them, Packenham at their head, encouraging his men by stirring words and deeds; but presently a bullet struck his bridle arm, and his horse was shot under him. He quickly mounted a pony belonging to his favorite aid, but another shot disabled his right arm, and, as his pony was being led away to the rear, another passed through his thigh, killed the horse, and he and it fell to the ground together. He was carried to the rear and placed under an oak, where he soon died in the arms of Sir Duncan McDougall, the aid who had resigned the pony to him.

"Other officers fell, till there were not enough to command. General Keane was shot through the neck, and the wound compelled him to leave the field. General Gibbs was mortally wounded and died the next day. Major Wilkinson, who then took command, fell on the parapet, mortally wounded; then the British fled in wild confusion."

"But they had been very brave," remarked Grace. "What a pity it was that they had to fight in such a bad cause. Were there very many of them killed, papa?"

"Yes, a great many. Of a regiment of brave Highlanders, with twenty-five officers, only nine officers and one hundred and thirty men could be mustered after the terrible fight was over. Another regiment had lost five hundred men.

"While this fighting had been going on, another of their divisions of nearly one thousand men, led by Colonel Rennie, attacked an unfinished redoubt on Jackson's right and succeeded in driving out the Americans there, but could not hold it long, being terribly punished by Humphreys' batteries and the Seventh Regiment. Yet Rennie succeeded scaling the parapet of the American redoubt. Beale's New Orleans Rifles poured such a tempest of shot upon the officers and men in the redoubt that nearly every one was killed or wounded. Rennie, who had just shouted, 'Hurrah, boys! the day is ours!' fell mortally wounded.

"And now this attacking column also fell back, and by hastening to the plantation ditches, sought shelter from the terrible tempest of shot and shell coming from Jackson's lines.

"General Lambert with his troops tried to come to the aid of Pakenham, Gibbs, and Keane, but was able only to cover the retreat of their vanquished and flying columns."

"And the victory was won then, papa?" queried Lulu.

"Yes, though the battle had lasted but a short time; by half past eight a. m. the musketry fire had ceased, though the artillery kept theirs up till two o'clock in the afternoon."

"Were both Americans and British playing their national airs while the fight was going on, sir?" asked Walter.

"The British had no music but a bugle," replied the captain, "not even a drum or a trumpet; but all through the fight, from the time they sent up their first signal rocket, the New Orleans Band was stationed near the spot where the American flag was flying, playing national airs to cheer and animate our soldiers."

"Were not the British rather more successful in another part of the field, Captain?" asked Eva.

"Yes," he replied; "in their attack upon the troops on the right bank of the river, they being only militia and few in number; also fatigued and poorly armed. Morgan, their commander, was compelled to spike his cannon and throw them into the river, his men being driven from their intrenchments.

"Then Thornton, his assailant, pushed on to Patterson's battery, three hundred yards in the rear, and Patterson, threatened by a flank movement also, was compelled to spike his guns and flee on board of the *Louisiana*, his sailors helping to get her out of the reach of the foe.

"But Thornton soon heard of the disasters of his comrades on the other side of the river, and received orders to rejoin them. Jackson had sent four hundred men to re-enforce Morgan, but there was now no need of their services. Thornton re-embarked his troops at twilight, the Americans repossessed themselves of their works, and Patterson removed the spikes from his guns, put his battery in better position, and at dawn informed Jackson of what he had done by heavy firing upon the British outposts at Bienvenu's.

"In that battle of January 8, 1815, the British had lost twenty-six hundred men, seven hundred killed, fourteen hundred wounded, and five hundred made prisoners; while the Americans had only eight killed and thirteen wounded. Lossing tells us, 'The history of human warfare presents no parallel to this disparity in loss.'

"In Thornton's attack, the British loss was a little more than one hundred; the American, one killed and five wounded. On that side of the river the British secured their only trophy of their efforts to capture New Orleans. So Lossing tells us, adding, 'It was a small flag, and now [1867], hangs conspicuously among other war trophies in Whitehall, London, with the inscription: "Taken at the battle of New Orleans, January 8, 1815."'"

"That looks as though our British cousins must esteem it quite a triumph to be able to succeed in taking anything from Uncle Sam," laughed Rosie.

"Yes," said Walter, "I think they compliment us by making so much of that one little trophy."

"So do I," said Lulu. "Papa, is that the end of your story?"

"No, not quite," replied the captain. "After the battle had come to an end, Jackson and his staff passed slowly along his whole line, speaking words of congratulation and praise to his brave troops, officers and men. Then the band struck up 'Hail Columbia,' and cheer after cheer for the hero went up from every part of the line. The citizens also, who had been anxiously and eagerly watching the battle from a distance, joined in the cheering. Then, after refreshing themselves with some food (doubtless having gone into the battle without waiting to eat their breakfast), the soldiers set to work to bury the dead of the enemy in front of Jackson's lines, and take care of the wounded.

"General Lambert sent a flag of truce asking for an armistice in order to bury his dead, and Jackson granted it on condition that the British should not cross to the right bank of the river.

"The next morning, detachments from both armies were drawn up in front of the American lines, at a distance of three hundred yards, then the dead bodies between that point and the intrenchments were carried by the Americans upon the very scaling ladders left there by the British, and delivered to them. They were buried on Bienvenu's plantation, and, as Lossing tells us, the graves were still there undisturbed when he visited the spot in 1861. He says also that it is regarded with superstitious awe by the negroes in the neighborhood.

"The wounded who had been taken prisoners were carried to the barracks in New Orleans and tenderly cared for by the citizens. Some of the dead British officers were buried that night by torch light in the garden at Villere's; the bodies of others, among whom were Packenham, Rennie, and Gibbs, were sent to their friends in England."

The captain paused, and Violet said playfully, "I fear we are fatiguing you, my dear; suppose you leave the rest of your story for another time."

"And that we have some music now," added her mother, a suggestion which was immediately adopted, the whole party adjourning to the parlor.

CHAPTER III

The captain opened the piano and glanced smilingly at his young wife. But Violet shook her head playfully. "I think mamma should be the player to-night," she said. "She has scarcely touched the piano for months, and I am really hungry to have her do so."

"Will you give us some music, mother?" queried the captain, offering to lead her to the instrument.

"Yes," she returned laughingly. "I could never wilfully allow my daughter to suffer from hunger when in my power to relieve it."

"Patriotic songs first, please, mamma," entreated Walter, as she took her seat before the instrument. "I do believe we all feel like singing 'Hail, Columbia!' and the 'Star-Spangled Banner.' At least I do, I am sure."

"I presume we are all in a patriotic frame of mind to-night," she returned, giving him a smile of mingled love and pride as she struck a chord or two, then dashed off into "Yankee-doodle-dandy," with variations.

"Hail Columbia!" and "Star-Spangled Banner" followed, old and young uniting together with enthusiasm in singing the patriotic words, but still other voices were unexpectedly heard joining in on the concluding strains:

"That star-spangled banner, oh, long may it wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!"

"Oh, Cousin Molly and Mr. Embury! Dick, too! and Betty!" cried Violet, hurrying with outstretched hand toward the doorway into the hall, where the cousins stood in a little group looking smilingly in upon them. "Come in; I am delighted to see you."

The invitation was promptly accepted, and for the next few minutes there was a tumultuous exchange of joyous greetings.

Dr. Percival and his half brother, Robert Johnson, had been spending some months together in Europe, their sister Betty visiting friends in Natchez through the winter, and only that morning the three had returned to Magnolia Hall, where Betty had a home with her sister Molly, and the brothers were always welcome guests.

Presently all were seated and a very animated conversation ensued, the newly arrived having much to tell and many inquiries to make concerning absent friends and relatives.

After a little it came out that Betty was engaged and shortly to be married, provided "Uncle Horace" was satisfied with regard to the suitableness of the match, of which no one acquainted with the reputation, family, and circumstances of the favored lover, felt any doubt.

It was a love match on both sides; the gentleman, an American, engaged in a lucrative business, of irreproachable character and reputation, pleasing appearance and manners, in fact, all that could reasonably be desired, assured of which, Mr. Dinsmore gave a prompt consent, adding his warm congratulations, which Betty accepted with blushes and smiles.

"I was not unprepared for this, Betty," he said with a smile, "having received a letter from the gentleman himself, asking for the hand of my niece, Miss Johnson."

"O Betty, how nice!" cried Rosie with a gleeful laugh, and softly clapping her hands. "When is it to be? I hope before we leave for the North, for I, for one, want to see what a pretty bride you will make, and I dare say Mr. Norris, your favored suitor, feels in as great haste as I."

"I am quite aware that I have no beauty to boast of, coz," laughed Betty, "but I believe it's a conceded point that a woman always looks her best at such a time, and in bridal attire. However that may be, though, I shall want you all present, so I will hurry my preparations in order that the great

event may take place while you are here to have a share in it. By the way, I have laid my plans to have three bridesmaids and several maids of honor, and I have planned that they shall be my three young friends, Cousin Rosie Travilla, Evelyn Leland, and Lucilla Raymond," glancing from one to another as she spoke, then adding, "Now don't decline, any one of you, for I shall be mortally offended if you do."

"No danger of that, unless compelled by some one of the older folks," laughed Rosie, turning inquiringly toward her mother, while Evelyn colored and smiled, hesitated momentarily, then said in a noncommittal way, "You are very kind, Betty, but I'll have to think about it a little and ask permission."

Lulu's face grew radiant with delight. "O Betty, how good of you!" she exclaimed. "Papa, may I?" turning a very pleading look upon him and hurrying to his side.

He took her hand in his, smiling affectionately into the eager, entreating eyes. "I think you may, daughter," he said kindly, "since Cousin Betty is so good as to include you in the invitation. I see nothing in the way at present."

"Oh, thank you, sir!" she cried joyously, then turned to listen with eager interest to an animated discussion going on among the ladies in regard to the most suitable and tasteful attire for bride and bridesmaids or maids of honor.

"The bride will, of course, wear white," Violet was saying, "but it would be pretty and in accordance with the fashion for her maids of honor to dress in colors."

"Yes," assented Rosie, "and I propose blue for Eva, delicate straw or canary color for Lu, who has a complexion just to suit, and pink for me. What do you say, girls?" turning to them where they stood side by side.

"I like the idea," replied Evelyn, Lulu adding, "And so do I. Do you approve, papa?" hurrying to his side again.

"Yes, daughter; if it pleases you and meets the approval of the ladies."

"You are so good to me, dear papa!" she exclaimed with a look of gratitude and affection.

But it was growing late, and leaving various matters to be settled in another interview to be held at an early day, the cousins bade good night and departed.

"Papa, I do think I have just the best and kindest father in the whole world!" exclaimed Lulu, seating herself upon his knee and putting her arm about his neck, her lips to his cheek, when he had come to her room for the usual good-night bit of chat.

"Rather strong, isn't it?" he queried laughingly, holding her close and returning her caress with interest.

"Not too strong, you dear, dear papa!" she said, hugging him tighter. "Oh, if ever I'm disobedient or ill tempered again I ought to be severely punished."

"My dear child," he said gravely, smoothing her hair with caressing hand as he spoke, "do not ever again give your father the pain of punishing you. Watch and pray, and try every day to grow into the likeness of the dear Master. It makes me happy that you want to please me, your earthly father, but I would have you care far more about pleasing and honoring Him."

"I do care about that, papa. Oh, I want very much to have Him pleased with me, but next to that I want to please you, because you are such a good, kind father, and I love you so dearly."

"Yes, daughter, and I esteem your love one of the great blessings of my life, while you are dearer to me than words can express: one of God's good gifts for which I am truly thankful. But I must now bid you good-night and leave you to rest, for it is growing late."

"Yes, sir. But I feel as wide-awake as possible – I'm so excited thinking about Betty's wedding. So I wish you'd stay just a little bit longer. Can't you, papa?"

"No, daughter, I must leave you and you must go to bed at once; try to banish exciting thoughts, and get to sleep."

"I'll try my very best to obey my own dear father," she returned, looking up into his face with eyes full of ardent affection.

He smiled, held her close for a moment, repeating his caresses, saying low and tenderly, "God bless and keep my dear daughter through the silent watches of the night, and wake her in the morning in health and strength, if it be His will." Then releasing her he left the room.

She was soon in the land of dreams; the sun was shining when she awoke again.

The wedding and matters connected with it were the principal topics of discourse at the breakfast table. Betty had expressed an ardent wish to have present at the ceremony all the relatives from the neighborhood of her old home, saying that she and Molly had already despatched invitations which she hoped would be accepted, and now it was settled that Mr. Dinsmore and Grandma Elsie should write at once, urging all to come to Viamede and remain till the summer heats would make it more prudent to return to a cooler climate. There was talk, too, of an entertainment to be given there to the bride and groom, of suitable wedding gifts, and also the attire of maids of honor.

The young girls selected to take part in the ceremony were particularly interested, excitable Lulu especially so; she could hardly think of anything else, even in the school-room, and as a consequence recited so badly that her father looked very grave indeed, and when dismissing the others told her she must remain in the school-room studying, until she could recite each lesson very much more creditably to both herself and her teacher.

"Yes, sir," she said in a low, unwilling tone, casting down her eyes and coloring with mortification; "but I think the lessons were dreadfully hard to-day, papa."

"No, daughter, it is only that your mind is dwelling upon other things. You must learn to exercise better control over your thoughts and concentrate them always upon the business in hand."

"But, papa, I'll never be able to learn the lessons before dinner time, and I am hungry now; are you going to make me fast till I recite perfectly?"

"No, my child: you may eat when the rest of us do, and finish your tasks afterward. You may have a cracker now if you are hungry."

"Oh, may I go and get her some, papa?" asked Grace, who had lingered behind the others, full of concern and sympathy for her sister, and was now standing close at his side.

"Yes, my darling," he said, smiling upon the little girl, and smoothing her hair with softly caressing hand.

"Oh, thank you, sir!" and away she ran, to return in a few moments with a plate of crackers, when she found Lulu alone, bending over a book, apparently studying with great diligence.

"Oh, thank you, Grace!" she exclaimed; "you are ever so good. I was so taken up with the talk about the wedding at breakfast time, that I didn't eat nearly so much as usual. Some folks in papa's place would have made me fast till my lessons were learned; but he's such a good, kind father; isn't he?"

"Yes, indeed!" returned Grace emphatically, setting down the plate as she spoke. "Now I'll run away and let you learn your lesson."

Lulu did not feel fully prepared for her recitations when the dinner bell rang, but, having her father's permission, she went to the table with the others. At the conclusion of the meal he inquired in an aside, his tone kind and pleasant, if she were ready for him.

"No, sir," she replied, "not quite."

"You may take half an hour to digest your dinner, then go back to your tasks," he said.

"Yes, sir, I will," she answered, taking out the pretty little watch, which was one of his gifts, and noting the time. Then, in company with Rosie, Evelyn, and Grace, she went out upon the lawn and sauntered about under the trees, gathering flowers.

She was careful to return to the school-room at the appointed hour. Presently her father followed her. "Are those lessons ready, daughter?" he asked in his usual kindly tones.

"No, sir; not quite," she replied.

"I am sorry," he said, "as if they were, I would hear them at once and you might make one of the party who are going over to Magnolia Hall."

"Papa, I should so like to go along!" she exclaimed, looking up coaxingly into his face.

"And I would be glad to give you the pleasure," he said with a slight sigh; "but you know I cannot do that, having already told you your lessons must be creditably recited before you can be allowed any further recreation."

"They're so long and hard, papa," grumbled Lulu, looking wofully disappointed.

"No, my child; with your usual attention you could easily have learned them before the regular school hours were over," he said. "I am not going with the others and will come for your recitation in another hour or perhaps sooner." So saying he turned and left the room.

"Oh, dear! I do wish I was old enough not to have lessons to learn," sighed Lulu. But seeing there was no escape, she turned to her tasks again, and when her father came in according to his promise, was able to say she was ready for him and to recite in a creditable manner. He gave the accustomed meed of praise, smiling kindly on her as he spoke. "There, daughter," he added, "you see what you can do when you give your mind to your work, and I hope that in future you will do so always at the proper time."

"I hope so, papa; I do really mean to try," she replied, hanging her head and blushing. "Are the ladies and girls all gone?"

"Yes; some time ago," he said. "I am sorry I could not let you go with the others, as I have no doubt you would have enjoyed doing so."

"I hope you didn't stay at home just to hear my lessons, papa?" she said regretfully.

"I might possibly have gone could I have taken my eldest daughter with me," he replied, "though there were other matters calling for my attention. However," he added with a smile, "you need not measure my disappointment by yours, as I am certain it was not nearly so great."

At that moment a servant came to the door to tell the captain that a gentleman had called on business, and was in the library waiting to see him.

"Very well; tell him I will be there presently," replied Captain Raymond. Then turning to Lulu, "You may amuse yourself as you like for an hour, then prepare your lessons for to-morrow."

"Yes, sir," she answered, as he left the room, then put on her hat and taking a parasol wandered out upon the lawn.

The captain had been giving the young people some lessons in botany, and the girls were vieing with each other as to who should gather into her herbarium the largest number of plants and flowers, particularly such as were to be found in that region, but never, or very rarely, in the more northern one they called their home. Lulu had found, and, from time to time, placed in her herbarium, several which she highly prized for both beauty and rarity, and now she went in quest of others.

She had scarcely left the house when, much to her surprise, she met her baby brother and his nurse.

"Why, Neddie dear, I thought you had gone –" but she paused, fearing to set the child to crying for his mother.

"Marse Ned's sleeping when dey goes, Miss Lu; I spec's dey'll be back fo' long," said the nurse; and catching him up in her arms she began a romping play with him, her evident object to ward off thoughts of his absent mother.

Lulu walked on, spent a half hour or more gathering flowers, then returned to the school-room, where she had left her herbarium lying on her desk. But Master Ned, there before her, had pulled it down on the floor, where he sat tearing out the plants which she had prepared and placed in it with so much labor and care.

At that trying sight, Lulu's anger flamed out as it had not in years; not since the sad time when little Elsie was so nearly sacrificed to her eldest sister's lack of self-control.

"You naughty, naughty, naughty boy!" she exclaimed, snatching the herbarium from the floor. "I'd just like to shake you well, and spank you, too. You deserve it richly, for you have no business to be here meddling with my things!"

At that the baby boy set up a wail. Then their father's voice was heard from the veranda outside. "Come here to papa, Neddie boy," and the little fellow, who had now scrambled to his feet, hastened to obey.

Lulu trembled and flushed hotly. "I wish I'd known papa was so near and I'd kept my temper, too," she sighed ruefully to herself, then set to work to repair damages to the best of her ability; but, as her passion cooled, with thoughts dwelling remorsefully upon her unkind treatment of her baby brother, also apprehensively on the consequent displeasure of her dearly loved father. She loved little Ned too, and heartily wished she had been more gentle and forbearing toward him.

But her hour of recreation was past, and with Ned's baby prattle to his father, as he sat on his knee, coming to her ear through the open window, she sat down at her desk, took out her books, and tried to study; but it seemed impossible to fix her thoughts upon the business in hand, and presently hearing the patter of the little fellow's feet as he ran along the veranda, then out into the garden, she sprang up and followed him.

"O Neddie dear," she said, catching him in her arms and giving him a hearty kiss, "sister is ever so sorry she was cross to you. Will you forgive her and love her still?"

"Ess," returned the baby boy with hearty good will, putting his chubby arms about her neck and hugging her tight; then cooing sweetly, "Ned 'oves oo, Lu."

"And Lu loves you, Neddie darling," she returned, kissing him again and again.

Then setting him down, she sped back to the school-room, took up her book, and made another attempt to study; but without success; laying it aside again almost immediately, she went in search of her father.

He had left the veranda, but going on into the library, she found him in an easy chair, with a newspaper in his hand which he seemed to be reading with great attention, for he did not turn his head or eyes toward her as she drew near and stood at his side. She waited longingly for a recognition of her vicinity, but he gave none, seeming too intent upon his paper to be aware of it; and he had taught her that she must not rudely interrupt him or any grown person so engaged, but wait patiently till her presence was noted and inquiry made as to what she wished to say.

The five or ten minutes she stood silently waiting seemed a long time to her impatient temperament. "Oh, would papa never give her an opportunity to speak to him?" At last, however, as he paused in his reading to turn his paper, she ventured a low breathed, "Papa."

"Go instantly to your own room, taking your books with you, Lucilla, and don't venture to leave it till you have my permission," he said in stern, cold accents, and without giving her so much as a glance.

She obeyed in silence. Reaching her own room she again opened her book and tried to study; but found herself so disturbed in mind that it was wellnigh impossible to take in the meaning of the words as she read them over and over. "I can't learn these lessons till I've made it up with papa," she sighed half aloud, and putting down the book opened her writing desk.

In a few minutes she had written a very humble little note, saying how sorry she was for the indulgence of her passion and her unkindness to her darling little brother; but that she had asked and received his forgiveness; then sought her father to beg him to forgive her too, and tell him she was ready to submit to any punishment he thought best to inflict. But oh, might it not be something that would be over before the rest of the family should come home from their drive?

She signed herself "Your penitent little daughter Lulu," folded the note, sealed it up in an envelope, and wrote her father's name on the outside.

She could hear the prattle of her baby brother coming from the lawn. Her window opened upon an upper veranda, and going out there, she called softly, "Ned, Neddie dear!"

The little fellow looked up and laughed. "Lu!" he called; then catching sight of the note in her hand, "What oo dot?" he queried.

"A letter for papa," she replied. "Will you take it to him and ask him to please read it?"

"Ess; fro it down," he said, holding up both hands to catch it. "Me will tate it to papa."

It fell on the grass at his feet, he stooped and picked it up, then trotted away with it in his hand.

Again Lulu took up her book and tried to study, but with no better success than before. "What will papa do and say to me?" she was asking herself. "Oh, I hope he won't keep me long in suspense! I don't believe he will; he never does, and – ah, yes, I hear his step."

She rose hastily, hurried to the door and opened it. He stood on the threshold. "Papa," she said humbly, "I am very, very sorry I was passionate and cross to dear little Ned."

"As I am," he replied, stepping in, securing the door, then taking her hand, leading her to the side of an easy chair and seating himself therein. "I was deeply grieved to hear my eldest daughter speak in such angry words and passionate tones to her baby brother. It not only gave the dear little fellow pain, but set him a very bad example which I greatly fear he will follow one of these days, so giving me the pain of punishing him and you that of seeing him punished!"

"Papa, I am the one who ought to be punished," she burst out in her vehement way, "and I just hope you will punish me well. But oh, please don't say I shall not go to Cousin Betty's wedding, or not be one of her bridesmaids or maids of honor."

He made no reply at first. There was a moment's silence, then she exclaimed, "Oh, papa, I just can't bear it! I'd even rather have the severest whipping you could give me."

"You are a little too old for that now," he said in moved tones, drawing her to a seat upon his knee. "It has always been to me a hard trial to feel called upon to punish my dear child in that way; a sad task to have to do so in any way; and if you are a good girl from now on to the time of the wedding, you may accept Betty's kind invitation."

"Oh, thank you, sir! thank you very much indeed!" she exclaimed. "I don't deserve to be allowed to, but oh, I do fully intend to rule my temper better in future!"

"I hope so indeed; but you will not succeed if you try merely in your own strength. Our sufficiency is of God, and to Him alone must we look for strength to resist temptation and be steadfast in fighting the good fight of faith. Try, my dear child, to be always on your guard! 'Watch and pray,' is the Master's command, repeated again and again. 'Take ye heed, watch and pray.'.. 'Watch ye, therefore.'.. 'And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.'.. 'Watch ye and pray lest ye enter into temptation.'"

"Papa, I do really mean to try very hard to rule my own spirit," she said humbly; "I have been trying."

"Yes, dear child, I have not been blind to your efforts," he returned in tender tones. "I know you have tried, and I believe you will try still harder, and will at length come off conqueror. I fear I have not been so patient and forbearing with you to-day as I ought. I think now I should have let you speak when you came to me in the library a while ago. Your father is by no means perfect, and therefore has no right to expect perfection in his children."

"But I had indulged my temper, papa, and did deserve to be punished for it."

"Yes, that is true. But it is all forgiven now, and your father and his eldest daughter are at peace again," he added, giving her a loving embrace.

"And that makes me so happy," she said, lifting her dewy eyes to his. "I am always very far from happy when I know that my dear father is displeased with me."

"You love him, then?"

"Oh, yes, yes, indeed! dearly! dearly!" she exclaimed, putting her arms about his neck and laying her cheek to his.

He held her close for a moment, then saying, "Now I want you to spend an hour over your lessons for to-morrow, after which you and I will have a walk together," he left her.

By tea time the family were all at home again, and their talk at the table was almost exclusively of the preparations for the approaching wedding.

"Mamma," said Rosie at length, "I for one would dearly like to go to New Orleans and select dress and ornaments for myself; also a present for Betty."

"I see no objection, if a proper escort can be provided," was the smiling rejoinder.

"Suppose we make up a party to go there, do the necessary shopping, and visit the battle fields and everything of interest connected with them," suggested Captain Raymond. "We can stay a day or two if necessary, and I think we'll all feel repaid."

The proposal was received with enthusiasm by the younger portion of the family, and even the older ones had nothing to say against it. Lulu was silent, but sent a very wistful, pleading look in her father's direction. It was answered with a nod and smile, and her face grew radiant, for she knew that meant that she would be permitted to take the little trip with the others.

"Dear papa, thank you ever so much," she said, following him into the library as they left the table.

"For what?" he asked jestingly, laying a hand upon her head and smiling down into the happy, eager face.

"Giving me permission to go with you and the rest to New Orleans."

"Ah, did I do that?" he asked, sitting down and drawing her to a seat upon his knee.

"Not in words, papa, but you looked it," she returned with a pleased laugh, putting her arm about his neck and kissing him with ardent affection. "Didn't you, now?"

"I don't deny that I did, yet it depends largely upon the good conduct of my eldest daughter," he said in a graver tone, smoothing her hair caressingly as he spoke. "I hope she will show herself so sweet tempered and obedient that it may not be necessary to leave her behind because she is lacking in those good qualities."

"Papa," she replied low and feelingly, "I will ask God to help me to be patient and good."

"And if you ask for Jesus' sake, pleading his gracious promise, 'If ye ask anything in my name, I will do it,' your petition will be granted."

At that moment the other girls came running in, Rose saying eagerly, "Oh, Brother Levis, we all hope you will be so kind as to go on with your historical stories of doings and happenings at New Orleans. Please treat us to some of them to-night, and let us have all before we visit their scenes, won't you?"

"Certainly, Sister Rose," he replied, adding, "It looks very pleasant on the veranda now. Shall we establish ourselves there?"

"Yes, sir, if you please," she said, dancing away, the others following.

Presently all were quietly seated, the older people almost as eager for the story as were the young, and the captain began.

"While the armies before New Orleans were burying their dead, others of the British troops were trying to secure for themselves the free navigation of the Mississippi below the city by capturing Fort St. Philip, which is in a direct line some seventy or eighty miles lower down the stream, and was considered by both British and Americans as the key of the State of Louisiana.

"The fort was at that time garrisoned by three hundred and sixty-six men under the command of Major Overton of the rifle corps, with the addition of the crew of a gun-boat. Just about the time that the British killed in the battle of New Orleans were being carried by the Americans under Jackson to their comrades for burial, a little squadron of five English vessels appeared before the fort and anchored out of range of its heavy guns, the bomb vessels with their broadsides toward it; and at three o'clock they opened fire on it. Their bombardment went on with scarcely a pause till daybreak of the 18th, when they had sent more than a thousand shells, using for that purpose twenty thousand pounds of powder. They had sent, too, beside the shells, many round and grape shot.

"During those nine days the Americans were in their battery, five of the days without shelter, exposed to cold and rain a part of the time; but only two of them were killed and seven wounded.

"On the 18th, the British gave up the attempt. That same day a general exchange of prisoners took place, and that night the British stole noiselessly away. By morning they had reached Lake Borgne, sixty miles distant from their fleet.

"They could not have felt very comfortable, as the wintry winds to which they were exposed were keen, and the American mounted men under Colonel De la Ronde, following them in their retreat, annoyed them not a little.

"The British remained at Lake Borgne until the 27th, then boarded their fleet, which lay in the deep water between Ship and Cat Islands.

"In the meantime Jackson had been guarding the approach to New Orleans lest they might return and make another effort against it. But on leaving that vicinity they went to Fort Bowyer, at the entrance to Mobile Bay, thirty miles distant from the city of that name, then but a village of less than one thousand inhabitants. The fort is now called Fort Morgan.

"It was but a weak fortress, without bomb-proofs, and mounting only twenty guns, only two of them larger than twelve pounders, some of them less. It was under the command of Major Lawrence.

"The British besieged it for nearly two days, when Lawrence, a gallant officer, was compelled to surrender to a vastly superior force.

"It is altogether likely that the British would then have gone on to attack Mobile, had not news come of the treaty of peace between the United States and Great Britain.

"The news of Jackson's gallant defence of New Orleans caused intense joy all over the Union, while in England it was heard with astonishment and chagrin."

"They didn't know before how Americans could fight," said Walter with a look of exultation, "and they have never attacked us since."

"No," said his mother, "and God grant that we and our kinsmen across the sea may ever henceforward live in peace with each other."

"It seems a great pity that the news of peace had not come in time to prevent that dreadful battle of New Orleans and the after fighting of which you have just been telling us, Captain," remarked Evelyn.

"Yes," he replied; "and yet, perhaps, it may have been of use in preventing another struggle between the two nations; we have had difficulties since, but fortunately they have thus far been settled without a resort to arms."

"I suppose there was an exchange of prisoners?" Walter said inquiringly.

"Yes, though, in regard to some, the Dartmoor captives in especial, it was strangely slow."

"Dartmoor, papa?" Grace said with inquiring look and tone.

"Yes; Dartmoor is a desolate region in Devonshire; its prison, built originally for French prisoners of war, had thirty acres of ground enclosed by double walls, within which were seven distinct prisons.

"At the close of the War of 1812-14 there were about six thousand prisoners there, twenty-five hundred of them impressed American seamen who had refused to fight against their country, having been forced into the British Navy and being still there at the beginning of the struggle. Some of the poor fellows, though, had been in Dartmoor Prison ten or eleven years. Think what an intense longing they must have felt for home and their own dear native land! How unbearable the delay to liberate them must have seemed! They were not even permitted to hear of the treaty of peace till three months after it had been signed. But after hearing of it, they were in daily expectation of being released, and just think how hope deferred must have made their hearts sick. Some of them showed a disposition to attempt an escape, and on the 4th of April they demanded bread, and refused to eat the hard biscuits that were given them instead.

"Two evenings later they very reluctantly obeyed orders to retire to their quarters, some of them showing an inclination to mutiny, passing beyond the limits of their confinement, when, by the orders of Captain Shortland, commander of the prison, they were fired upon; then the firing was repeated by the soldiers without the shadow of an excuse, as was shown by the impartial report of a committee of investigation, the result of which was the killing of five men and the wounding of thirty-three."

"I hope those soldiers were hung for it!" exclaimed Walter, his eyes flashing.

"No," replied the captain, "the British authorities pronounced it 'justifiable homicide'; which excited the hottest indignation on this side of the ocean; but now the memory of it has nearly passed away."

"Now, Brother Levis, if you're not too tired, won't you please go on and tell us all about the taking of New Orleans in the last war?" asked Walter, looking persuasively into the captain's face.

"Certainly, if all wish to hear it," was the pleasant toned reply; and all expressing themselves desirous to do so, he at once began.

"Ship Island was appointed as the place of rendezvous for both land and naval forces, the last named under the command of Captain David G. Farragut, the others led by General Butler.

"Farragut arrived in the harbor of the island, on the 20th of February, 1862, on his flag-ship, the *Hartford*, in which he sailed on the 2d, from Hampton Roads, Virginia, but sickness had detained him for a time at Key West.

"The vessels of which he had been given the command, taken collectively, were styled the Western Gulf Squadron. Farragut had been informed that a fleet of bomb vessels, under Commander David D. Porter, would be attached to his squadron. Porter was the son of Commodore David Porter, who had adopted Farragut when a little fellow and had him educated for the navy. It was he who commanded the *Essex* in the War of 1812, and Farragut was with him, though then only in his twelfth year."

"Then he must have been past sixty at the time of the taking of New Orleans," remarked Walter reflectively.

"He and Porter joined forces at Key West," continued the captain. "Porter's fleet had been prepared at the Navy Yard in Brooklyn, exciting much interest and curiosity. There were twenty-one schooners of from two to three hundred tons each; they were made very strong and to draw as little water as possible. Each vessel carried two thirty-two pounder rifled cannon, and was armed besides with mortars of eight and a half tons weight that would throw a fifteen-inch shell which, when filled, weighed two hundred and twelve pounds.

"Farragut's orders were to proceed up the Mississippi, reducing the forts on its banks, take possession of New Orleans, hoist the American flag there, and hold the place till more troops could be sent him.

"An expedition was coming down the river from Cairo, and if that had not arrived he was to take advantage of the panic which his seizure of New Orleans would have caused, and push on up the river, destroying the rebel works. His orders from the Secretary of War were, 'Destroy the armed barriers which these deluded people have raised up against the power of the United States Government, and shoot down those who war against the Union; but cultivate with cordiality the first returning reason which is sure to follow your success.' Farragut, having received these orders, at once began carrying them out, with the aid of the plans of the works on the Mississippi which he had been directed to take, particularly of Fort St. Philip, furnished him by General Barnard, who had built it years before.

"The plan made and carried out was to let Porter's fleet make the attack upon the forts first, while Farragut, with his larger and stronger vessels, should await the result just outside the range of the rebel guns; then, when Porter had succeeded in silencing them, Farragut was to push on up the river, clearing it of Confederate vessels, and cutting off the supplies of the fort. That accomplished, Butler was to land his troops in the rear of Fort St. Philip and try to carry it by assault. Those two

forts, St. Philip and Jackson, were about thirty miles from the mouth of the river, Fort Jackson on the right bank, and Fort St. Philip on the left.

"Ship Island, the place of rendezvous, is about one hundred miles northeast of the mouth of the Mississippi. In the last war with England, as I have told you, St. Philip had kept the British in check for nine days, though they threw one thousand shells into it.

"Fort Jackson was a larger fortification, bastioned, built of brick, with casemates and glacis, rising twenty-five feet above the water. Some French and British officers, calling upon Farragut before the attack, having come from among the Confederates, while visiting whom they had seen and examined these forts with their defences, warned him that to attack them would only result in sure defeat; but the brave old hero replied that he had been sent there to try it on and would do so; or words to that effect.

"The forts had one hundred and fifteen guns of various kinds and sizes, mostly smooth-bore thirty-two pounders. Above them lay the Confederate fleet of fifteen vessels, one of them an iron-clad ram, another a large, unfinished floating battery covered with railroad iron. Two hundred Confederate sharp-shooters kept constant watch along the river banks, and several fire-rafts were ready to be sent down among the Federal vessels. Both these and the sharp-shooters were below the forts. Also there were two iron chains stretched across the river, supported upon eight hulks which were anchored abreast.

"Farragut's naval expedition was the largest that had ever sailed under the United States flag, consisting of six sloops of war, twenty-one mortar schooners, sixteen gun-boats, and other vessels, carrying in all two hundred guns.

"But the vessels were built for the sea and were now to work in a much narrower space – a river with a shifting channel and obstructed by shoals.

"To get the larger vessels over the bar at the southwest pass was a work of time and great labor. They had to be made as light as possible and then dragged through a foot of mud. Two weeks of such labor was required to get the *Pensacola* over, and the *Colorado* could not be taken over at all.

"The mortar vessels were towed up stream and began to take their places. Porter disguised them with mud and the branches of trees, so that they could not be readily distinguished from the river banks, being moored under cover of the woods on the bank just below Fort Jackson. The stratagem was successful; his vessels were moored where he wished to have them, the nearest being two thousand eight hundred and fifty yards from Fort Jackson, and three thousand six hundred and eighty from Fort St. Philip.

"On the opposite side of the river, and a little farther from the forts, Porter had his six remaining vessels stationed, screening them also with willows and reeds, and mooring them under cover of the woods to conceal their true character.

"On the 18th of April, before nine o'clock in the morning, the attack was begun by a shot from Fort Jackson, then, as soon as Porter was ready, the *Owasco* opened fire, and the fourteen mortar boats concealed by the woods, also the six in full sight of the forts, began their bombardment.

"The gun-boats took part in the conflict by running up and firing heavy shells when the mortars needed relief. Porter was on the *Harriet Lane*, in a position to see what was the effect of the shells, and direct their aim accordingly.

"The fight went on for several days, then Farragut, deeming there was small prospect of reducing the forts, prepared to carry out another part of his instructions by running past them. He called a council of the captains in the cabin of the *Hartford*, and it was then and there decided that the attempt should be made.

"It was an intensely dark night, the wind blowing fiercely from the north, but Commander Bell with the *Winona*, the *Itasca*, *Kennebec*, *Iroquois*, and the *Pinola* ran up to the boom. The *Pinola* ran to the hulk under the guns of Fort Jackson, and an effort was made to destroy it with a petard, but failed. The *Itasca* was lashed to the next hulk, but a rocket sent up from the fort showed her to the

foe, who immediately opened a heavy fire upon her. But half an hour of active work with chisels, saws, and sledges parted the boom of chains and logs, and the hulk to which she was attached swung round and grounded her in the mud in shallow water. But the *Pinola* rescued her.

"Two hours later an immense fire-raft came roaring down the stream, but, like those sent before, it was caught by our men and rendered harmless. They would catch such things with grappling-irons, tow them to the shore, and leave them there to burn out harmlessly.

"Day after day the bombardment went on, fire-rafts coming down the river every night, but Fort Jackson still held out, though its citadel had been set on fire by the shells from the mortar boats, and all the commissary stores and the clothing of the men destroyed; also the levee had been broken in scores of places by the exploding shells, so that the waters of the river flooded the parade ground and casemates.

"By sunset on the 23d, Farragut was ready for his forward movement, but Porter, with his mortar boats, was to stay and cover the advance with his fire. Farragut, on board his flag-ship, the *Hartford*, was to lead the way with it, the *Brooklyn*, and the *Richmond*.

"These vessels formed the first division, and were to keep near the right bank of the river, fighting Fort Jackson, while Captain Theodorus Bailey was to keep close to the western bank with his (the second) division, to fight Fort St. Philip. His vessels were the *Mississippi*, *Pensacola*, *Varuna*, *Oneida*, *Katahdin*, *Kineo*, *Wissahickon*, *Portsmouth*.

"Captain Bell still commanded the same vessels which I just mentioned as his, and his appointed duty was to attack the Confederate fleet above the forts, to keep the channel of the river, and push right on, paying no attention to the forts themselves.

"In obedience to these orders, the *Itasca* ran up to the boom, and at eleven o'clock showed a night signal that the channel was clear of obstruction excepting the hulks, which, with care, might be passed safely.

"A heavy fog, and the settling of the smoke from the steamers upon the waters, made the night a very dark one. No sound came from the forts, yet active preparations were going on in them for the approaching struggle, and their fleet was stationed near them in readiness to assist in the effort to prevent the Union vessels from ascending the river.

"At one o'clock every one on the Union ships was called to action, but the fleet remained stationary until two, and at half past three Farragut's and Bailey's divisions were moving up the river, each on its appointed side, and at the rate of four miles an hour.

"Then Porter's mortars, still at their moorings below the forts, opened upon those forts a terrible storm, sending as many as, if not more than, half a dozen shells, with their fiery trails, screaming through the air at the same moment.

"But no sound came from the forts until they discovered Captain Bailey's ship, the *Cayuga*, just as she had passed the boom, when they brought their heavy guns to bear upon her, and broke the long silence with their roar.

"When she was close under Fort St. Philip she replied with heavy broadsides of grape and canister as she passed on up the river.

"The other vessels of Bailey's division followed closely after, each imitating the *Cayuga's* example in delivering a broadside as she passed the forts, which they did almost unharmed, with the exception of the *Portsmouth*, a sailing vessel, which lost her tow, on firing her broadside, and drifted down the river.

"Captain Bell and his division were not quite so fortunate. Three of his vessels passed the forts, but the *Itasca* received a storm of shot, one of which pierced her boiler, and she drifted helplessly down the river. The *Kennebec* lost her way among the obstructions and went back to her moorings below; the *Winona*, too, recoiled from the storm.

"In the meantime, Farragut was in the fore rigging of the *Hartford*, watching with intense interest, through his night glass, the movements of the vessels under the command of Bailey and Bell,

while the vessels he commanded in person were slowly nearing Fort Jackson. He was within a mile and a quarter of it when its heavy guns opened upon him. They were well aimed, and the *Hartford* was struck several times.

"Farragut replied with two guns which he had placed upon his forecastle, while at the same time he pushed on directly for the fort. When within a half mile of it he sheered off and gave them heavy broadsides of grape and canister; so heavy that they were driven from all their barbette guns. But the casemate guns were kept in full play, and the fight became a very severe one.

"The *Richmond* soon joined in it; the *Brooklyn* got entangled with some of the hulks that bore up the chain, and so lagged behind. She had just succeeded in freeing herself from them, when the Confederate ram *Manassas* came furiously down upon her, and when within about ten feet, fired a heavy bolt at her from its trap-door, aiming for her smoke stack; but fortunately the shot lodged in some sand-bags that protected her steam-drum.

"The next moment the ram butted into the *Brooklyn's* starboard gangway; but she was so effectually protected by chain armor that the *Manassas* glanced off and disappeared in the darkness.

"All this time a raking fire from the fort had been pouring upon the *Brooklyn*, and just as she escaped from the *Manassas* a large Confederate steamer attacked her. She pushed slowly on in the darkness, after giving the steamer a broadside that set it on fire and speedily destroyed it, and suddenly found herself abreast of Fort St. Philip.

"She was very close to it, and speedily brought all her guns to bear upon it in a tremendous broadside.

"In his report Captain Craven said, 'I had the satisfaction of completely silencing that work before I left it, my men in the tops witnessing, in the flashes of the shrapnel, the enemy running like sheep for more comfortable quarters.'

"While the *Brooklyn* was going through all this, Farragut was having what he called 'a rough time of it.' While he was battling with the forts, a huge fire-raft, pushed by the *Manassas*, came suddenly upon him all ablaze, and in trying to avoid it the *Hartford* got aground, and the incendiary came crashing alongside of her.

"In telling of it Farragut said, 'In a moment the ship was one blaze all along the port side, half way up the main and mizzen tops. But thanks to the good organization of the fire department, by Lieutenant Thornton, the flames were extinguished, and at the same time we backed off and got clear of the raft. All this time we were pouring shells into the forts and they into us; now and then a rebel steamer would get under our fire and receive our salutation of a broadside.' The fleet had not fairly passed the forts when the Confederate ram and gun-boats hastened to take part in the battle.

"The scene was now both grand and awful. Just think of two hundred and sixty great guns and twenty mortars constantly firing, and shells exploding in and around the forts; it 'shook land and water like an earthquake,' Lossing tells us, 'and the surface of the river was strewn with dead and helpless fishes.' Major Bell, of Butler's staff, wrote of it, 'Combine all that you have ever heard of thunder, and add to it all you have ever seen of lightning, and you have, perhaps, a conception of the scene. And,' continues our historian, 'all this destructive energy, the blazing fire-rafts and floating volcanoes sending forth fire and smoke and bolts of death, the thundering forts, and the ponderous rams, were crowded, in the greatest darkness just before dawn, within the space of a narrow river, "too narrow," said Farragut, "for more than two or three vessels to act to advantage. My greatest fear was that we should fire into each other; and Captain Wainwright and myself were hallooing ourselves hoarse at the men not to fire into our ships."'

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