

**FREESE JACOB**

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SECRETS OF THE LATE  
REBELLION

**Jacob Freese**  
**Secrets of the Late Rebellion**

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Secrets of the Late Rebellion / Now Revealed for the First Time:*

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**CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTORY.**  
**EXPLANATIONS AND PLEDGES**

THE "History of the Great Rebellion," as some have called it, or of "The American Conflict," as others have called it, has been written over and over – by Greeley, by McClusky, by Abbott, by Kattell, by Pollard, and by others – and it is not my intention to write it again: but I Purpose, as Macaulay says in the first two words of that wonderful History of England in which, by the magic of his pen, he has made facts, which, until then, had lain only in the brains of old women, in the traditions of old men, in forgotten newspapers, and in neglected pamphlets, come forth in all the habiliments of life; some grinning with merriment, and others frowning with despair – some as angels of heaven, and others as demons of hell – I Purpose, throughout the whole of this volume, to write of the sayings and doings of those who, in the great war between the United States and the "Southern

Confederacy," stood in the side wings, or *behind* the scenes, as proprietors, as stockholders, as lessees, as stage managers, as prompters, as scene-shifters, as curtain-droppers, as wire-pullers, and without whom the acts *before* the scenes could not have been, and would not have been, enacted.

Many, yea, most of those who attended to their various parts behind the scenes, while those in front were attending to theirs, have gone to their long homes. Like the hero of a hundred battles

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"They sleep their last sleep and have fought their last battle,  
No sound can awake them to glory again;"

yet a few remain, scattered throughout the North, scattered throughout the South, in cities, in towns, in offices, in workshops, in negro huts; and from these, and such as these, we have gathered and now propose to put on record, the *inner* or *secret* history of the greatest war of the nineteenth century – a war in which more men were engaged, more deeds of valor done, more lives lost, and during which there was more of masterly diplomacy exercised, on both sides, than in any war which has occurred since the days of the Roman empire.

Eighteen years ago! Only three words, uttered in a single breath and seeming but as yesterday, when looking backward, and yet where is the tongue that can tell, or the pen that can write all that has transpired within that time?

Fields made desolate by battles then are now waving with grain, covered by green swards, or bedecked with flowers; what were then hastily constructed earthworks are now grassy mounds; covered over with shrubbery; what then were rifle-pits are now pleasant pathways for man and beast; cities then burned, or otherwise made desolate through the ravages of war, have regained more than their former size, beauty, and commercial prosperity; plantations then laid waste have been restored to more than their former productiveness; wounds, ghastly, bloody wounds, then made by shot or shell, or sabre cut, are now so healed that even the cicatrices are scarcely observable; and, but for vacant chairs in many households, and too well-filled cemeteries at Arlington Heights, at Gettysburg, and all over the land, it would be difficult for us now to realize that a terrible, desolating war had swept over this country within so short a time as eighteen years.

Time is indeed the great leveller, bringing king and subject, master and slave, to a common platform; nor is it less the great assuager and healer. Passions which burned in the breasts of men with the fierceness of a furnace, eighteen years ago, have so smouldered and died out, that not even a spark can now be found on the hearthstones of their hearts; and hence it is that what could not have been told fifteen, ten, or even five years ago, without the risk of inflaming passions and leading to greater harm than good, may now be told without the slightest objection either from actors or subjects. In history, as in law,

there are *statutes of limitation*, and when these bounds are once passed, all that occurred previous to those dates is wiped from the record of *personal* responsibility, and becomes the property of the historian.

Most, if not all, of the facts which I purpose to incorporate in this history will be new – that is, such as have never been published before. They have been known, of course, to the actors and to a few confidential friends, and vague hints of their existence have found their way in newspapers from time to time; but never before have they reached the public eye or ear in book form; nor would they now, but for the fact that the limitation of responsibility has so far passed, that no possible harm can come from their publicity. To make the new facts intelligible as to time and bearing, old facts will, in some cases, have to be repeated, but in all such cases the old facts will be but the frames, while the new facts will be the pictures.

Though we are not at liberty in all cases to give the sources of our information, yet no one need question the substantial correctness of every statement found in this volume, though it may occasionally happen that names have been given incorrectly or misspelled, or that the dates are not precise. To remember names and dates is not easy for any one, and that, after a lapse of fifteen years, some of these should have been partially or entirely forgotten by some of our informants, is not at all strange. Of course we can only give the statements as received. Most of them we have had direct from the lips of those who were participants

in the scenes, others from official sources, that is, from those who were in, or directly connected with, governmental departments; others, from hints given at the time, but the details of which could not be stated until the prejudices and passions of the war had subsided; and still others, from those who had them from the lips of the participants.

Some of the facts and incidents hereafter to be related are but new manifestations of the Fabian policy, and however unfair they would have seemed to Northern people had they been known at the time, yet now, few, if any, will regard them other than as acts of masterly diplomacy upon the part of Mr. Davis and his cabinet. But for this policy, the Southern Confederacy would have had to succumb at least two years before it did; and, on the principle that "while there is life there is hope," the longer they could prolong the contest the more to their credit. The relative strength of the North and South, at the beginning of the war, may be fairly represented by the numbers 20 and 10. Now take one off from each at five successive engagements, and the figures will stand 15 and 5. Before, the smaller equalled the one-half of the larger number, now it equals only the one-third. Again take one off from each at four more engagements, and the figures will stand 11 and 1 – the smaller representing only the one-eleventh part of the larger, while one more engagement wipes out the smaller number entirely, and yet leaves the one-half of the larger. From this plain mathematical statement it will be seen how important it was for the Southern Confederacy to pursue the

Fabian policy of delay, both as to its operations in the field, and in its diplomacy with English and Northern capitalists.

The learning of these "*Secrets of the Late Rebellion*" has had the effect to increase, rather than lessen, our admiration of Jefferson Davis as a statesman, and such we think will be the effect upon all who may read this book. However much we may condemn his political principles, however much we may condemn the rebellion, and however rejoiced we may be that he and it failed of success, yet, now that we know of the secret as well as the open difficulties with which he had to contend, we cannot but admire the talent, the energy, and the perseverance with which he overcame them all for months and years; and at last only yielded to necessities which no foresight, no talent, no energy could have overcome.

Nor is he the only one of the "Lost Cause" whom these "Secrets" make us to admire the more. Others, many others, as will be seen by the following chapters, acted their parts nobly and well, and deserve more credit than has ever yet been accorded to them by the historian; while others whose secret fiendish acts are herein recorded, acted worse, a thousandfold worse, than the public ever knew or probably would have known but for the appearance of this volume.

In putting on record the following facts and incidents of the war, my aim shall be to view everything from a historic standpoint only. As a Northern man, and as a late officer in the army, my partisanship and prejudices during the war were

doubtless as strong as those of any other man; but so far as I know my own heart, not a particle of that partisanship or prejudice now remains, and I believe that I can write of both sides with equal impartiality. In relating the incidents, I may not have occasion to express any opinion at all for or against; but if I should, my readers may rest assured that it will be done without a particle of prejudice. With these explanations, and these pledges, I am now ready to begin the relation of facts and incidents as they occurred *Behind the Scenes* during the late War. J. R. F.

# **CHAPTER II. RUNNING THE LAND BLOCKADE. KING COTTON BEHIND THE SCENES**

ON the 4th of February, 1861, the Confederate Congress met at Montgomery, Ala. It was composed of nine delegates from Alabama, three from Florida, ten from Georgia, six from Louisiana, seven from Mississippi, three from North Carolina, seven from South Carolina – forty-five in all.

They adopted the old Constitution of the United States, with the exception of five clauses. The first was a change in the preamble – making the States named, other than "We the people," the contracting parties; the second change related to the "importation of African negroes," etc.; the third related to the escape and delivery of slaves; the fourth related to adjusting disputes between the contracting States; the fifth empowered Congress to "lay and collect taxes, duties, imposts, etc." The Constitution, as amended, was adopted February 8th, and on the same day Jefferson Davis, of Mississippi, was elected President, and Alexander H. Stephens, of Georgia, Vice-President, by a unanimous vote.

On the 18th of February Mr. Davis was inaugurated, and immediately after he nominated, and Congress confirmed, the following cabinet:

Secretary of State.....Robert Toombs.

Secretary of the Treasury.....C. G. Memminger.

Secretary of War.....L. Pope Walker.

This same Congress authorized a loan of fifteen million dollars, secured by an export duty on cotton, and passed an act "To modify the navigation laws, and to repeal all discriminating duties on ships and vessels" – by which the entire coasting trade from Charleston to Galveston was thrown open to the British flag. Had English capitalists framed the law, they could not have made it to please themselves better.

On the 17th of April, 1861, President Davis issued a proclamation offering to grant letters of marque and reprisal to aid the Southern Confederacy in resisting what he called "the wanton and wicked aggressions" of the United States government.

To this President Lincoln immediately responded by issuing a proclamation, dated April 19th, declaring the Southern ports in a state of blockade.

The Congress of the Southern Confederacy assembled at Montgomery again on the 29th of April, 1861. President Davis, in his message, advised the immediate passage of a law authorizing the acceptance of proposals for privateers. He denounced the proclamation of President Lincoln in relation to Southern ports as a mere paper blockade. "The loan authorized," he said, "had been promptly taken (by whom, or on what terms, he did not say); and that a much larger amount had now become

necessary to defray the expenses of the war," etc., etc.

This Congress authorized President Davis to issue letters of marque and reprisal, and prescribed regulations for the conduct of privateers. It also passed an act prohibiting the export of cotton or cotton yam from any of the Confederate States, except through their own seaports, under a penalty of forfeiture of the cotton, a fine of five thousand dollars, and six months' imprisonment. It further proposed that the planters should be invited to put their crops into the hands of the government, and accept Confederate bonds for their value. On the 20th of May, 1861, this Congress adjourned, to reassemble at Richmond, Va., in two months.

On the 20th of July, 1861, the Confederate Congress reassembled at Richmond. Meanwhile the cabinet had been enlarged as follows:

Secretary of the Navy.....S. R. Mallory, of Florida.

Postmaster-General.....J. H. Reagan, of Texas.

Attorney-General.....J. P. Benjamin, of Louisiana.

This Congress included sixty-eight members, of whom fifteen were from Virginia, ten from North Carolina, nine from Alabama, three from Florida, ten from Georgia, six from Louisiana, seven from Mississippi, eight from South Carolina.

President Davis stated in his message that "fifty million dollars had been subscribed in cotton," and that "late crops had been abundant." Among the first acts of this reassembled Congress was to adopt the convention of Paris in 1856, in respect

to maritime law, whereby the wishes of Great Britain were acceded to in all respects. This was, in effect, that enemies' goods should be respected in neutral ships, and that privateering should be abolished in time of war. The United States government had demurred to these propositions, for reasons ably stated at the time by Secretary Marcy, and afterwards reaffirmed by Secretary Seward. Had they become a part of national law, Great Britain could have taken every bale of cotton from the ports of the Southern Confederacy without let or hindrance. So far as the Confederacy was concerned, this act of their Congress gave full consent; but the United States still objected, nor had the propositions been concurred in by all other nations. This same Congress empowered President Davis to appoint two commissioners, with full powers, to proceed to Great Britain and other European countries, to negotiate a recognition of the Southern Confederacy, and, if practicable, make treaties of commerce.

Having thus briefly stated the organization, the acts, and the position of the Southern Confederacy with regard to financial and cotton questions – the only questions now under consideration – we will next trace the acts of the United States government bearing upon the same questions.

When the Confederate Congress first met at Montgomery, Mr. Buchanan still occupied the Presidential chair at Washington; but he had done nothing to interfere with the organization of the Southern Confederacy, nor, in his view of

the case, had he any power or authority to interfere. One month after, on the 4th of March, 1861, Abraham Lincoln, of Illinois, was inaugurated President, Hannibal Hamlin, of Maine, Vice-President, and immediately after the cabinet of Mr. Lincoln was formed as follows:

Secretary of State.....Wm. H. Seward, of New York.  
Secretary of the Treasury...S. P. Chase, of Ohio.  
Secretary of War.....Simon Cameron, of Penna.  
Secretary of the Navy.....Gideon Wells, of Conn.  
Secretary of the Interior.....Caleb B. Smith, of Ind.  
Postmaster-General.....Montgomery Blair, of Md.  
Attorney-General.....Edward Bates, of Mo.

After the inauguration of President Lincoln, the United States Senate remained in session until the 28th of March, occupied most of the time with confirmations.

Immediately after the attack upon Fort Sumter, April 14th, 1861, President Lincoln issued a call for 75,000 troops; called an extra session of Congress to meet on the 4th of July following, and on the 19th of April, as heretofore stated, issued a proclamation declaring all the Southern ports in a state of blockade. The blockading squadron on the Atlantic coast, on the 4th of July, 1861, consisted of twenty-two vessels, with 290 guns and 3300 men, under command of flag-officer Stringham. The Gulf squadron, at the same time, consisted of twenty-one vessels, with 282 guns and 3500 men, under flag-officer Mervin.

This Congress authorized a loan of \$ 170,000,000; but made

no effort at all to negotiate a loan abroad, as it was well understood that English capitalists were passively hostile to the war, and, so far as they could consistently, favored the Southern Confederacy. With them cotton was king, and from the first moment of its life the Southern Confederacy did what it could to increase the love between King Cotton and his British admirers. Indeed, it was felt all over the North (and hoped for in the South) that there was some danger of European interference, since the desire for cotton, the eagerness for free trade, and the hope of immediate gain might prompt to an interference which the aristocratic element of Great Britain, and the friends of despotism in France, would have rejoiced to see undertaken.

Not long after the United States government had given notice to other nations of the blockading of Southern ports, efforts were made to break or disregard it. Liverpool merchants claimed that, under the treaty between this country and Great Britain, they had the right to enter any port of the United States, and that the attempt to enforce the blockade against British ships was an infringement of national law. The English government having already recognized the blockade as a belligerent right, the British minister in reply told the Liverpool merchants that "if any British ship, being a neutral, knowingly attempts to break an effective blockade, she is liable to capture and condemnation."

Notwithstanding this notification, scores of British merchants resolved to take the risk of running the blockade, because of the immense profits to be made therefrom. To buy cotton for

ten cents, and then sell it for thirty cents, per pound, and then to pay the ten cents in arms, accoutrements, and other English manufactured goods, on which they could make a profit of at least one hundred per cent., were opportunities which seldom occurred, and which, in-their estimation, would justify great risks. Nor were British merchants the only ones who took this view of the case, as the sequel of this history will show. The merchants and other moneyed men of New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore were just as eager for the "almighty dollar," and were quite as ready to take risks to obtain it. The risk was lessened from the fact that the coast to be guarded extended over three thousand miles; that the number of vessels to guard it (heretofore given) were but few in proportion to the length of coast; and that the Southern Confederacy was as anxious to have them bring their goods and take their cotton in exchange, as English and Northern merchants 'were to do it. Every Confederate fort and every Confederate soldier was ready to render all the aid possible to every blockade runner, no matter whether from London, Liverpool, Nassau, New York, Philadelphia, or Baltimore. As an evidence of the extent to which trade by blockade running was carried on, it has been estimated that the amount of ships and cargoes sent in by English capitalists to the one port of Wilmington, N. C., from January, 1863, to December, 1864, amounted to \$66,000,000. What, meanwhile, was the extent of trade between Wilmington and other Southern ports with New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore capitalists is

not known, but probably as great, if not greater, than with English capitalists.

Another fact, which greatly contributed to blockade running and other clandestine trade, was that all through the North there were warm sympathizers with the South – some of whom had been born in the South, others had relatives and friends there, others had had extensive business relations with Southern men, and still others sympathized with the South from a political standpoint – each and all of whom were ready to help the South in any way they could; and yet to save themselves from censure, if not from arrest, felt obliged to call themselves "Union" men. These men were everywhere, and often where least suspected.

Kattell, in his "History of the Great Rebellion," in writing of the difficulties under which President Lincoln's administration labored for the first few months, says: "The diplomatic corps abroad and the incumbents of office at the North were most of them inclined to thwart the action of the new administration, and in their train was a large number of active men on whom the government could not depend, if it had no opposition to encounter. The new administration found itself thus completely in the power of the secession party, and all its secrets, from the cabinet debates to the details of orders, were known to the South. The bureaus of the departments, the judiciary, the army and navy, and the offices were all filled with persons who were eagerly watching to catch up and transmit every item of information that might aid the Confederates, or thwart the

government."

The above is true so far as it goes, but it is only a very small part of the whole truth – not the one hundredth part of what we now know to be true, some parts of which will be told in the following pages.

Macaulay's description of the condition of England, immediately preceding the signing of the treaty of Rys-wick, portrays the condition of the United States government during a portion, if not during the whole time of the war, quite as well as if written for the purpose. He says: "Her secret enemies had commanded her fleets and armies, had ministered at her altars, had taught at her universities, had swarmed in her public offices, had sat in her Parliament, had bowed and fawned in the bedchamber of her King." The facts and incidents hereafter to be related will show, in part, and would show wholly, if all were told that is known, that what Macaulay says of the condition of England from 1689 to 1697, was no less true of the United States from 1861 to 1865. Of course, all this inured greatly to the benefit of the Southern Confederacy, but was as greatly detrimental to the United States government, and at times made final success seem very doubtful, if not impossible.

# CHAPTER III. ESTABLISHING STATIONS – FIRST TRIP AND FIRST PASSENGERS. BRAINS AND CAUTION SHIFTING THE SCENES

THE battle of Gettysburg, fought on the 2d and 3d of July, 1863, was one of the most important, if not *the* most important, battle of the whole war. The conflict had now been going on for over two years with varying success. Each side had used its utmost efforts for success, and to the general public the end seemed no nearer than in the beginning; but those behind the scenes saw things in a different light, and especially was this true of President Davis and his cabinet. While he and they well understood the advantages of keeping up a fair outside show, they knew equally well that the proportion of strength had greatly changed between the North and the South. Commencing with proportions of two to one (20 to 10) they had reached the proportions of three to one (15 to 5), and another such battle as that which had just occurred – in which the losses on both sides were immense, and in which both sides thought themselves defeated, and were making preparations for retreat on the day following – would make the disproportion still greater.

They knew, too, that every day made their situation more and

more desperate; that every day increased the effectiveness of the blockade; that food, clothing, and all the necessaries of life were every day becoming scarcer; and while they still had almost any quantity of cotton, they knew the people could not eat that, and unless some new source of nutrition for the Confederacy could be opened, it must soon succumb from mere exhaustion. To add still further to the difficulty, their communication with the North seemed about to be cut off entirely. Up to that time their letters from their Northern sympathizers, from England, and from other parts of the world, had reached them through blockade-runners, mostly by the way of Nassau; but the recent capture of some of these blockade-runners, and the stricter watch now kept by the United States blockading squadron, made this source look more and more doubtful, and certainly less and less reliable.

Mr. Davis, when United States Senator and when Secretary of War, had credit for brains and great shrewdness; but never did he need them so much as now, and as "necessity is the mother of invention," the fact of the need called forth from his fertile brain a plan of domestic diplomacy which would have done credit to Pitt in his palmiest days. However good a conception or plan may be, still it is of no use unless it can be put into execution, and just here was President Davis's greatest trouble. He had scores of officers about him ready to do his slightest bidding, but among them all he could think of no one exactly fitted for the kind of service he then had in view. When in his greatest distress of mind, walking the floor for hours at a time, thinking,

thinking, thinking, it happened that Colonel Ralph Abercrombie, who was in command of a Louisiana regiment in General A. P. Hill's corps, came into Richmond, and, as was his custom, called immediately at the executive mansion. The Colonel had been known to Mr. and Mrs. Davis since a boy. Mr. Davis, when Secretary of War, had appointed him to a lieutenancy in the regular army. Both Mr. and Mrs. Davis were on the most intimate terms with his widowed mother, and though the Colonel was now about thirty years of age, they still called him Ralph.

When, on this visit, he observed the President's anxiety, he naturally inquired the cause, and soon learned from Mr. Davis the outlines of his plan. The Colonel at once offered his services to put the President's plan into execution, only suggesting that, instead of opening the route to Washington via Chesapeake Bay and Leonardstown, Md., he would prefer a more northern route, for the reason that he was better acquainted with the Potomac between the Great Falls and Cumberland than with the route proposed by President Davis. When a lad, he had attended St. James' College, near Hagerstown, Md., and, by frequent drives through the country, had learned every foot of ground between that point and Washington city.

Mr. Davis listened attentively, and when the Colonel had finished, he quickly replied that his offer of services had relieved his mind of a great anxiety; that he would accept them most gladly; and that he would agree to any route upon which the Colonel might fix. He told the Colonel, in addition, that he would

appoint, to assist him, any one whom he might name, and that in opening and establishing the route he could employ whoever he pleased, and use any amount of funds that might seem necessary, as the project involved millions of money, if not the very life of the Confederacy; and that the few thousands it might cost would only be as dust in the balance, as compared with the advantages to be gained.

Colonel Abercrombie immediately turned over the command of his regiment to Major Charles Hall (the Lieutenant-Colonel, John H. Black, being on sick leave from a wound received at Gettysburg), and entered upon the duty of opening this new route to Washington. From Richmond to Orange Court-House (General Lee's headquarters) was by rail, and involved no difficulty. From thence to the Rapidan River, on the southerly side of which lay the Confederate army, and on the northerly side the Union army, was easy enough; but from thence, to first get through the Union line of pickets, and then traverse about seventy miles of country, until the Potomac was reached at or near the Great Falls, about twelve miles above Washington, was the tug of war. To establish this latter part of the route involved the employment of about twenty men – some as guides from point to point; some to furnish horses, or other conveyances, to the blockade-runners and their passenger guests; some to entertain and conceal them whenever they came that way; some to be on the constant lookout, and pass the word from post to post, if any danger threatened the blockade-runners or any

of their employees; some to row them across the Potomac, and meanwhile keep their boats concealed from the eyes of Union troops and guards; and others to pass them through safely from the Great Falls to Washington and return. The men so employed included planters or farmers, doctors, merchants, and day-laborers, all of whom received pay for their services from the Confederacy, through the hands of Colonel Abercrombie or Colonel Kill-gore. Besides these, the guides had under pay three old negro women, at whose huts they stopped and concealed themselves and guests, whenever occasion required. At Great Falls, Messrs. Garrett & Morse, merchants, were the principal agents. Upon them depended mainly the keeping open of the line from that point to Washington city; the crossing of the Potomac at or near that point; and to see that the guides on the Virginia side of the Potomac were always ready for service. At Washington city the grand depot, or end of the line, was at Ben Beveridge's saloon, and the "Washington House," kept by Ben's mother, at the corner of Third Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. Ben furnished the disguises for both conductors and passengers on this line, and was always ready to lend a helping hand in any way in which his services could be made available. His first advance pay for services was two thousand dollars in gold, to which additions were made from time to time until he received from eight thousand to ten thousand dollars, all in gold. All these men were in entire sympathy with the Southern Confederacy, and nearly all offered their services gratuitously when first spoken

to on the subject by Colonel Abercrombie; but his plan was to bind every man to greater faithfulness by having him to accept pay from the Confederacy, and hence he would not accept of gratuitous service from any one. How many thousands or tens of thousands of dollars were distributed by Colonel Abercrombie and Colonel Killgore, for the Confederacy, in this service, we are unable to say, but certainly a good many. It took about six weeks of faithful service for Colonel Abercrombie to open this new line, and, when completed, he returned to Richmond and reported to President Davis that the line was now ready for business.

Mr. Davis approved of all that had been done, and asked Colonel Abercrombie whom he would have as an assistant. The Colonel named his personal friend, Colonel Newton Killgore, who was then on detached service at Charleston, S. C. Killgore was a graduate of West Point, and a Lieutenant in the Topographical Engineer Corps, U. S. A., previous to the breaking out of the war. He was then about twenty-seven years of age, active, energetic, wide-awake, and just the man, as Colonel Abercrombie thought, for such service. Mr. Davis sent for him, and after explaining the kind of service to be done, placed him upon the duty, and directed him to hold himself in constant readiness for orders, which he did from that time forth.

The first service, on this new line, required by President Davis of Colonel Abercrombie, was to carry eleven letters to, and open personal negotiations with, Major Weightman, of Washington; George Thomas, John P. Grundy, Alexander

Gibson, of Baltimore; Dr. Charles Howell, C. C. Pollard, George J. Platt, of Philadelphia; Mr. McLane, President of the New York Pacific Mail Steamship Company, Mr. Waddell, of the same company, and John Lamb and Alexander Goldsmith, brokers, of New York city.

With Major Weightman Mr. Davis had been on most intimate terms of friendship for many years. Both were Mississippians, both had been in the Mexican war, where Major Weightman gained considerable notoriety, was badly wounded, returned home, married a rich lady at Jackson, Miss, (a Miss Willowby), resigned his commission in the regular army, removed to Washington, and from thenceforth lived a quiet, retired life in that city. When the war broke out between the North and South, Major Weightman still continued his residence in Washington city, and soon became on most intimate terms with Secretary Seward and President Lincoln. When rallied about his position, he always replied that he was "a Union man," and there left it. His word was regarded as law, and no one questioned him further. Meanwhile, however, all his sympathies were with the South, and he was in almost constant communication with Mr. Davis. Through him Mr. Davis first learned of these other gentlemen to whom he now wrote, and with some of whom he had, after learning of them, kept up a correspondence. Mr. Davis now wanted arms, provisions, clothing, while these gentlemen, he knew, wanted cotton, and the object of the present letters and negotiations was to exchange the one for the other – to

the great advantage of the Confederacy, and with immense profit to those who might take part in the speculation. The Confederacy had taken in exchange for bonds, had taken for taxes, and had otherwise become in possession of millions upon millions of dollars' worth of cotton. The gentlemen to whom these letters were addressed possessed, or could control, millions upon millions of dollars in money, and with this money could purchase what the South then stood so much in need of – arms, food, and clothing. The cotton was greatly needed by American and English manufacturers, and could be sold at a price five times greater than Mr. Davis would sell it to them for. On the goods which they would exchange for the cotton, immense profits could be made. The only difficulty was in getting the cotton out of the Confederacy, or in securing it from destruction while it had to remain there. To effect this they must either run the blockade, or so cajole President Lincoln, his cabinet, and his generals in the field as to secure the cotton whenever the Union armies reached the places where the cotton was deposited. The risk in all this was considerable, but the immense profits to be gained far more than overbalanced the risks.

On reaching Washington, Colonel Abercrombie went directly to the house of Major Weightman. The two soon after met at Ben Beveridge's, and then and there negotiated for a suite of rooms in the "Washington House," to be all the time kept for the agents of, and all the while paid for by, the Southern Confederacy. An order for two thousand dollars in gold was handed Ben

Beveridge at once, as an earnest of what he might expect if he proved faithful and true. Three days after, Major Weightman and Colonel Abercrombie went to Baltimore to call upon Mr. George Thomas. After the delivery of President Davis's letter, and a general talk over the matters to which the letter referred, Mr. Thomas concluded to call together a few well known Southern sympathizers at a dinner-party next day, when and where the whole subject could be thoroughly canvassed. The dinner came off next day, as proposed, and around the table were gathered the following well-known gentlemen: Mr. George Thomas, John P. Grundy, Dr. Leslie Buckler, Alexander R. Gibson, Major Weightman, Colonel Abercrombie, James Wilson, J. W. Jenkins. The result of this conference was entirely in favor of President Davis's wishes.

Next day Major Weightman and Colonel Abercrombie, accompanied by Mr. James Wilson, went to Philadelphia, and called at once upon Dr. Charles Howell, then living on Rittenhouse Square. After delivery of letters and talking over matters somewhat, Dr. Howell, like Mr. Thomas, decided to call together at a dinner-party next day a few well known Southern sympathizers, when and where the whole subject could be thoroughly discussed. This was done, and the following gentlemen were present: Dr. Charles Howell, C. C. Pollard, George J. Platt, Philip Swift, Charles H. Mason, Jacob Florence, Major Weightman, Colonel Abercrombie, and Messrs McLane, Lamb, and Waddell, of the New York Pacific Mail Steamship

Co., who had been invited by telegraph. Here, too, the result of the conference was entirely favorable to Mr. Davis's wishes; but, before a final conclusion of the negotiations, it was deemed best that Messrs Lamb and Waddell should accompany Colonel Abercrombie back to Richmond, see President Davis personally, take a general trip through the Confederate States, and, on their return, report to an adjourned meeting. Meanwhile, whatever funds Mr. Davis might need should be furnished Major Weightman, to be deposited by him with Mr. Riggs, the banker at Washington, to the credit of the Southern Confederacy.

These arrangements were all satisfactory to Colonel Abercrombie except the piloting of Messrs. Lamb and Waddell through the Union lines to Richmond. This, he feared, would be a difficult, if not an impossible, task.

While he recognized the fact that both these gentlemen might sit in their Wall Street banking-offices with all the dignity of a Sir Josiah Child, or grace a lady's parlor with all the urbanity of a Lord Chesterfield, yet he feared that when disguised as farmers or day-laborers, when required to tug along on foot for several miles at a time, and then ride, pell-mell, on horseback for a score of miles at a time; when compelled to sleep in garrets or in the loft of a negro-hut; when required to prevaricate, or even to lie, in order to get by a Union sentinel, they might not be quite equal to the occasion. The Colonel tried to persuade them to go by the way of Nassau, and from there run the blockade into Charleston, as he himself had done when he first entered the Confederate

States; but the more he tried to persuade them to this course, the more determined they were to go with him. Over the difficulties and hardships mentioned by the Colonel, they only laughed, said they could stand it all, that it would be as holiday-sport to them, and that, in a day or two, both would meet the Colonel at Ben Beveridge's, in Washington, and from thence make their way with him to Richmond.

The third day after, Messrs. Lamb and Waddell were in Washington, and that night, between eleven and twelve o'clock, left Beveridge's, *en route* for Richmond. Ben and Weightman accompanied them to a Mr. Thecker's house, in Georgetown, where the disguises were to be put on. Lamb first placed himself in the hands of the manipulators. He had been wearing long chin whiskers; these Ben cut off at one fell swoop, leaving his face as bare as a child's. Next, his hair was nicked and chopped over, as if done with a pair of sheep-shears, in the hands of a country bumpkin, instead of by a Broadway barber. Then he was stripped of his latest-fashioned coat, vest, and pants, and in their place was supplied with a suit which would have done credit to an ox-team driver. Waddell came next. His magnificent beard, covering his entire face, was cut clean off, and, in place thereof, two false "mutton-chop" side whiskers and a false moustache, both butternut-color, were put on his face. Next, Ben applied the shears to Waddell's head, and pretty soon his hair presented the appearance of a country ox driver's. Then he, too, was stripped of his Broadway suit, and in a few minutes transmogrified into

a fat, jolly farmer, or a Conestoga team-driver. The Colonel was already in disguise, and had been ever since he left his uniform at Mr. Joseph Mix's, about eleven miles within the Confederate lines, and now it only required a little touching up, which the Colonel did for himself while the others were laughing over their own outlandish appearance.

About one o'clock in the morning all were ready for a start. Ben consented to go along until the first guard was passed – Major Weightman to wait at Thecker's until Ben returned. It was the latter part of August, 1863, and the nights, just then, were not only very warm, but very dark. Ben led the way, Lamb and Waddell followed, and the Colonel served as rear-guard. When Ben, who was several hundred yards in advance, reached the canal-lock, near which a guard was stationed, he played the drunkard, and cursed the lock-tender loud enough for the guard to hear. The lock-tender was one of the Colonel's men, and in the pay of the Confederacy. He knew Ben's voice, and knew, too, that the Colonel was not far off Ben told the lock-tender, in a voice loud enough for the guard to hear, that he had plenty of whiskey and plenty of cigars in his pockets, and wondered if the guard would n't like some. The lock-tender thought it probable, whereupon Ben staggered off towards the guard, flourishing a bottle of whiskey as he went, and crying out to the guard, "Don't shoot! Don't shoot!" The bait took. The guard gave no challenge – allowed Ben to approach him – took a good swig of whiskey from Ben's bottle – lit a cigar which Ben had handed him –

entered into a rip-raving-swearing conversation with Ben; and, while all this was going on, the Colonel and his guests slipped quietly by, and were a good half-mile beyond the guard before Ben bade him good-night.

A further walk on the tow-path of the Chesapeake and Ohio canal, for over two miles, brought the three travellers to Widow Ennis's farm- and lock-house. She was in the pay of the Confederacy; and within a half-hour from the time of reaching there, the three travellers were in the saddle, and, accompanied by her son, to bring the horses back, on their way to the Great Falls. They rode along at a brisk trot, and part of the time the New York gentlemen were nearer the ears than the tails of their horses, nevertheless they managed to hold on, and, after a ride of nine miles, reached Hendrickson's, about a half-mile from the Falls. Here they dismounted. Joseph took the horses back to his mother's stable, while our three travellers walked on, about one mile, until they reached the garden-fence in the rear of the hotel, which they clambered over, or through, and finally got into the back-building of the hotel, through a private door. The Colonel knew all the points, and Lamb and Waddell had only to follow him to secure themselves and him from observance by the Union sentinel, whose station was but a little way from the front of the hotel. At Hendrickson's they left the main road, and followed a by-path until they reached the garden in the rear of the hotel. In creeping through the garden-fence, Waddell tore his coat badly about the shoulder, which distressed him not a little, and for

which he was heartily laughed at by his companions. Mr. Morse, who kept the hotel, was soon with his back-door customers, and certainly no guests ever received a more hearty welcome.

Great Falls, it may here be said, once for all, is neither a town nor a village; but consists of a large three-story stone building, used as a hotel for summer visitors, and as a private residence in the winter, and a large store-building, with numerous out-houses, used for transportation purposes – all of which belong to the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company; but were at this time rented, and the business carried on by Messrs. Garrett & Morse, the former of whom gave more especial attention to the store, and the latter to the hotel. Both were Marylanders; both sympathized heartily with the Southern cause, though nominally "strong Union men;" both were under the pay of the Confederacy; and both, or as a firm, received from the Southern Confederacy, at different times, through the hands of Colonels Abercrombie and Killgore, sums in gold amounting to between six and eight thousand dollars. Both were first-class business men, of high character, and, from their love of the Southern cause, would, doubtless, have rendered it all the aid they could had they not received one cent of pay; but such was not the policy of President Davis or his agents. They insisted that all who aided should be paid, and so long as cotton could be converted into gold, this was possible, and certainly the true policy.

It was now about three o'clock in the morning, but the Colonel would not retire until he had sent for, and consulted with, Garrett,

as to future movements. From him the Colonel learned that the line was open, and in good working order, that guide No. 1 would be on hand the next night to row them across the Potomac, and conduct them to guide No. 2, and that, meanwhile, all three should retire, and keep themselves entirely out of sight until the following night. The retiring and resting part suited Lamb and Waddell exactly. Both were thoroughly tired from their long walk and horseback ride, neither being at all used to that kind of exercise. Lamb was then about fifty, Waddell about forty years of age; the first was lean, the latter fat; both knew how to handle gold and greenbacks, but neither knew how to handle reins or sit a saddle, especially when on the back of a rough trotting country farm-horse. Their feet would slip through the stirrups; in descending hill, they would, somehow or other, slip from their saddles towards the ears of their horses; and in going up hill it was with difficulty they kept from slipping off their saddles towards their horses' tails. They knew how to walk Broadway and Wall Street with as much grace as a French dancing-master; but when it came to walking on the tow-path of a canal, to creeping through garden-fences, and such like performances, neither of them could do it half as well as a country clod-hopper. Bed! rest! of course they were ready for bed and rest, and the sooner the better; and, suiting the action to the word, both were soon in bed, and snoring away for dear life.

For some cause or other, guide No. 1 did not put in an appearance next night, and our travellers were obliged to keep

themselves concealed for another day. The following night, however, he came, and between nine and ten o'clock the three slipped out of the back-door of the hotel, made their way to the boat, which was in waiting about a mile up the Potomac, were rowed across by the guide, then walked about a mile to a negro-hut, and then about three miles more to a farm-house. Here horses were procured, and then for about thirty miles, mostly through private lanes and pig-paths, through woods and over fields, over torn-down fences and through open gates, they trudged along until they reached the farm-house of Dr. Carrico. It was now nearly daybreak, and our travellers were thoroughly tired out. The Doctor, who was in the pay of the Confederacy, though within the Union lines, and nominally a "Union man," received the travellers with open arms, and in a little while had them safely tucked away in bed-chambers, where the eye of no chance Union soldier or visitor could see them.

Here they remained until the next night. Then with a new guide (guide No. 2 having returned with the horses) they left Dr. Carrico's shortly after nightfall, and, upon horses furnished by the Doctor, rode about thirty-two miles to the farm and mill of Mr. Henry Budd. In this long ride, like the other, most of the way had to be made through private roads and pig-paths, as Union forces were in all that country, and on the public highways there was danger of meeting Union cavalry or infantry, as patrols or sentinels, at any moment. It was about three o'clock in the morning when they reached Budd's mills. Just before reaching

there our travellers dismounted, and the horses were slipped into Budd's stable, as there was a Union sentinel at this mill who could not be passed on horseback, and with whom some diplomacy had to be used to get by at all. To effect this, the Colonel, Lamb, and Waddell approached as near the mill as possible, and then secreted themselves, while the guide (No. 3) went forward to interest the sentinel in conversation, until they could slip by. The guide knew everybody in that neighborhood, and fortunately, knew the sentinel, so that with lively conversation, and an occasional drink from a well-filled canteen, he soon had the sentinel so engrossed that the three travellers stepped across the mill-race, slipped around on the other side of the mill, and soon were a good half-mile beyond the sentinel. Here they waited in a woods for their guide to come up. He, on the plea that he was going to see an "uncle", on the other side, got away from the sentinel erelong, and soon after overtook the three travellers.

From the point where the guide rejoined them, all four walked to the farm-house of Mr. Jonathan Brisco, about four miles from Budd's mill. Here a Union sentinel had been placed as a safeguard, while easterly and westerly from the house, sentinels were placed only a little way apart. This was the extreme outer line of the Union army, and was guarded, of course, with extra vigilance. If once through this line our travellers thenceforth would be within the lines of the Confederate army and entirely safe, but just how to get through was now the problem to be solved. The plan resolved upon was that Colonel Abercrombie,

Lamb, and Waddell should remain concealed some distance from the house, while the guide should go forward and make arrangements with the sentinel to allow the three to come up and go into the house to see his "uncle," and then, while he interested the guard with lively conversation and occasional drinks of whiskey, the three to slip out of the back-door, down through the garden, over a meadow, through a creek, and as far and as fast as possible in the pines beyond. The plan all worked like a charm, except that while the three were making their way from the house the sentinel chanced to observe them. He at once asked the guide what it meant. The guide replied that they were going to another neighbor's house, a little beyond, to see about some corn, and would soon return to remain the balance of the night with his "uncle." The sentinel still seemed troubled about having let the three men pass his post, and the guide, seeing this, and wanting to keep in the good graces of the Union sentinel, as he might need his services again, slipped fifty dollars in gold (which the Colonel had handed him for the purpose) into the sentinel's hand, which at once eased his mind and made everything seem exactly right.

From this point the three travellers walked about six miles to Mr. Andrew Mitchell's. Here they procured horses, mounted at once, and rode thirteen miles, to Mr. Walter Randolph's, near a railroad station called China Grove, about ten miles north-easterly from Orange Court House. Probably no three travellers ever rejoiced more over the completion of a trip than these three

on reaching China Grove station. They were now among friends, and from this point they could go by railroad to Richmond. The Colonel soon doffed his disguise, and was again in the uniform he had left there when on his way to Washington. Messrs. Lamb and Waddell could not procure new suits until they reached Richmond, and therefore had to content themselves with the old until then. About ten o'clock the cars came along, our three travellers jumped aboard, and within an hour were at Orange Court-House, seated around the best breakfast that mine host of Freeman's Hotel could get up. At two p.m. they took the cars for Richmond, and before nightfall were at the Spottsylvania Hotel, in the capital of the Southern Confederacy.

Next morning early, Messrs. Lamb and Waddell were in quest of new suits, which they obtained from a readymade clothing-store, not far from the hotel. Next, they went to Mowrey's banking-house to exchange some of their gold for Confederate notes, which at that time was exchangeable at the rate of eight dollars in Confederate notes for one dollar in gold. Then they returned to the hotel, and soon after were introduced to President Davis's private secretary, N. Burton Harris, Esq. He took them to the Executive Mansion and introduced them to Mr. Davis. With him they had a long conference on business affairs, after which he introduced them to and put them in special care of certain prominent gentlemen at the capital, whose duty and pleasure it would be to give them such additional information as they might need, and accompany them to such other cities of the

Confederacy as they might desire to visit. The Colonel called upon the President the same evening, made a full report of all that he had seen and heard and done while at the North, and then left to visit his regiment, which lay near Gordonsville.

Messrs. Lamb and Waddell, after spending a few more days in and about Richmond, seeing what was to be seen and learning what was to be learned, left for Newbern, Wilmington, Charleston, Savannah, Mobile, and other places where Confederate cotton was in store. At all these points they found immense quantities of cotton, some of which they were told had been seven years gathered, and held meanwhile for better prices. At each place they found government agents, and others, who assured them that the cotton could be got through the blockade, if they only had ships on which to load it.

They saw, too, at every place they visited, a determined spirit on the part of the people never to give over the struggle, until their separation was achieved. Of course they did not see, and great care was taken that they should not see, anything like destitution among the people. The tables which they saw were all well spread, though it took the last loaf of bread from the pantry or the last pickle from the jar. It was a part of the masterly diplomacy of President Davis, and of those who surrounded and upheld his hands, never to show a want, or cry *peccavi*, where a Northern ear could see the one or hear the other. "Not one cent for tribute, but millions for defence," was their cry from first to last, – was their cry, indeed, until, when the egg was finally

broken, nothing was found but an empty shell.

Having finished their journey through the States of the Confederacy, occupying between two and three weeks, Messrs Lamb and Waddell returned to Richmond and reported to President Davis that they were entirely satisfied with what they had seen and heard, and that, so soon as they could report the facts to Messrs McLane, Thomas, Howell, and others, there would be no difficulty whatever in his obtaining all the money and all the supplies he might at any time need in exchange for cotton. Colonel Abercrombie was then telegraphed for, and on the day following reported at the Executive Mansion. From the President he received full instructions as to further operations. He then informed Messrs Lamb and Waddell that he was now ready to conduct them back to Washington. Next day they started by rail for China Grove station. Here, at Mr. Randolph's, they exchanged uniform and fashionable suits for their former disguises, and from thence traversed about the same route, rode and walked about the same distances, met with about the same incidents as when on the outward trip, until they finally reached Ben Beveridge's in Washington city. Here they met Major Weightman and informed him of all they had seen and learned. Then on to Baltimore, where they called upon, and reported to, Mr. Thomas and his associates. From this point the Colonel returned to Washington, while Messrs Lamb and Waddell went on to Philadelphia, where they reported to Dr. Howell and his associates; and then to New York, where they

reported to Mr. McLane and others. All to whom they reported expressed entire satisfaction as to the result of their trip, and were ready to invest in the enterprise to the extent of their means. Not long after, a general meeting of all the "cotton ring" associates was held at Dr. Howell's, in Philadelphia, when plans were perfected to charter or purchase ships to send to Newbern, North Carolina, to be freighted with needed articles outward and cotton inward. It so happened that three of their vessels were seized by the blockading squadron, not many weeks after, and this for a time threw a cloud over their enterprise; but so soon as the loss was reported to Mr. Davis he gave them enough additional cotton to make up for the loss of the three vessels and their cargoes. From thenceforth they met with but few, if any, losses, though they continued operations, at various points along the coast, until the fall of Fort Fisher, on the 15th of January, 1865. How much the "ring" made in their cotton operations it would be impossible to say; but we have it from an intimate friend of Mr. Gilmore Meredith's, of Baltimore, that his share of the profits amounted to a "million of money," and if his share reached that amount, others, whose investments were far greater, must have reaped still larger amounts.

This cotton ring, made up of the gentlemen whom we have heretofore named as seated around the dinner-tables of Messrs. Thomas and Howell (besides Messrs. Gilmore Meredith, of Baltimore, Samuel Harding, Alphonso Lip-pincott, and Alexander Goldsmith, of New York), must not be confounded

with the one, or more, mentioned by General L. C. Baker, chief of the national detective police, in his letter of January 30, 1865, to Hon. E. B. Wash-burne, chairman of committee on commerce, in which the names of Thurlow Weed, Ward Lamon, Leonard I. Sweat, Wm. P. Dole, D. Randolph Martin, B. F. Camp, Prescott Smith, A. H. Lazare, H. A. Risley, T. C. Durant, Samuel Norris, and Simeon Draper, occur as playing principal parts.

These last named gentlemen were nearly all avowed Republicans, and several of them personal and intimate friends of President Lincoln and Secretary Seward. The others were mostly avowed Southern sympathizers (though nominally "Union men"), and some of them had long known, and been on most intimate personal terms with, President Davis, besides having friends and relatives scattered all over the South. The one had no object but to make the almighty dollar. The other had friendship, as well as the almighty dollar, as a basis for action. Which of the two is most to be commended, or most to be condemned, each reader must decide for himself.

And before closing this chapter we again beg to say – as stated in the introductory chapter – that, while vouching for facts, we cannot in every instance vouch for the names and dates given throughout this volume. Our informants in every case meant to give us exact names and exact dates; but the many years elapsing between the events and the relating of them to us, had caused a partial forgetting of names and dates, although the incidents

remained as fresh in the minds of the relators as though they had occurred but the day before. In second and all subsequent editions of this work, these errors (if such there be) will stand corrected, for so soon as this work gets before the public, errors, if any there be, will doubtless be observed and corrected by such as were, or are, cognizant of the facts. The author most earnestly invites such corrections, or any others that may be found in the work, as his aim from the first has been to "set down naught in malice," nor to say anything of anybody, or in the relating of any event, but what is strictly true.

## CHAPTER IV. ANOTHER CONDUCTOR ON THE NEW LINE. CAUTION SLIDING THE SCENES

IN the preceding chapter, mention is made of the fact that President Davis placed Colonel Newton Killgore on this same service; and in the same paragraph a brief account is given of his accomplishments, and the position he held in the United States army previous to the war. In this chapter we purpose to give a bird's-eye view of his services as conductor on this new line, for running the land blockade.

Not long after the time when Colonel Abercrombie had started on his first trip for Washington, President Davis sent for Colonel Killgore, and desired him to carry an order for arms and ammunition to Major Weightman, of Washington. He was directed, however, to await, at China Grove station, Colonel Abercrombie's return to that point, and then to go on or return to Richmond, according as the negotiation of Colonel Abercrombie had been successful or otherwise. Accordingly, when Messrs. Abercrombie, Lamb, and Waddell reached Mr. Randolph's, they found Colonel Killgore awaiting them. A consultation resulted in sending him forward on his mission with all convenient speed.

His general route was the same as that over which our three travellers had just passed; his stopping places the same; his

guides the same; and in due time he found himself in the rooms of the Confederacy at Ben Beveridge's. Ben sent for Major Weightman. To him Colonel Killgore delivered his orders, letters, and verbal messages; received from the Major whatever of information and messages he had to send to President Davis, and within six hours was ready to start on his return trip for Richmond. He returned as he went, and within five days from the time of leaving Washington stood in the presence of Mr. Davis, ready to give an account of his mission. Everything had been done to the entire satisfaction of the President, and the Colonel was directed to hold himself in constant readiness for like orders.

After this, Colonel Killgore made frequent trips between Richmond and Washington. Of course he wore a disguise, and acted the part of a green country bumpkin: and so well did he wear the one, and assume the other, that never, but on two occasions, did he meet with incidents worthy of special record.

The first of these occurred as follows: After delivering messages and documents to Major Weightman, he proceeded to Baltimore, to deliver others to Mr. Thomas. While at the Fountain Hotel it chanced that his false moustache became loose, or somewhat disarranged. He stepped before a mirror, in the public reading-room, to readjust it, and, while doing so, observed a gentleman watching him very closely. Leaving that hotel instantly, he went to Barnum's, but was scarcely there before he noticed the same gentleman, who had watched him in the other hotel, again eyeing him closely. Soon the gentleman stepped up to

him, and called him by his first name. The Colonel immediately recognized him as an old army friend, whom he had not seen for many years, and whom he had little thought to meet there, and under such circumstances. The gentleman was a Southerner; recognized, and entirely approved of the Colonel's new position as Ambassador Extraordinary between high contracting parties; and in a little while after they were drinking the health of each other, and confusion to their enemies. The Colonel at first feared that one of Baker's detectives had discovered his disguise while he was arranging his moustache, as before related, and felt not a little relieved when his observer turned out to be a friend instead of an enemy. He never again adjusted his false moustache in the reading-room of a hotel.

The other incident occurred as follows: He had been to Washington, and was on his return to Richmond. Crossing the Potomac, at a point above the Great Falls, he was accosted by a man on the Virginia side, who wanted to know where he had come from, and where he was going? Colonel Killgore replied that he lived in Maryland, not far from the Falls, and was on his way to visit a friend on the Virginia side. Other conversation followed, until the Colonel thought his questioner was satisfied, though he meanwhile had fully made up his mind that his questioner was none other than one of General Baker's secret detectives. The Colonel finally bade his questioner good-bye, and started to leave, when his questioner cried out, "Stop! I believe you are a spy – you are my prisoner!"

"No, I am not!" answered Colonel Killgore, and instantly sent a bullet whizzing into the brain of his questioner. The man fell, and died at once. An examination of the papers upon his person proved him to be, as the Colonel had suspected, one of the captains of General Baker's National Detective force. His body was left precisely where it fell, while Colonel Killgore proceeded on his journey, and in due time arrived in Richmond. When the body of the captain was found, some days after, it was discovered that a bullet had pierced his brain; but it was not known then, nor, except to a very few, was it ever known afterwards, who sent it there. This is the first publication of the real facts of the case, though the newspapers of the time were full of suppositions, not one of which was true, or anywhere near true.

Colonel Killgore continued one of the conductors on this line until the line was closed. After the war he returned to Charleston, studied law, was admitted to practice, and when last heard from was doing a large and successful business, and was regarded as among the first men of the State.

# CHAPTER V. NOBILITY AFTER THE NUGGETS. DIPLOMACY PROMPTING THE ACTORS

IN September, 1863, cotton was quoted in New York city at 70 cents, gold at \$1.29. The first indicated the great want for cotton by the manufacturers of this country, of England, and of other parts of the world. The second indicated the want of confidence, then existing, among the moneyed men of the world in the stability of this government.

The great divorce trial then going on in the court of last resort – the Court of Arms – in which the South, as representing the wife, was complainant, and the North, as representing the husband, was defendant, had thus far been attended with varied success. In the first contest, at Fort Sumter, the wife spit fire at the husband, and the husband quickly succumbed. In the second contest, at Bull Run, the wife flew at the husband's eyes and ears, and he, to save both, ran back to Washington. In the next, General Lyon, on behalf of the father, made a dash at General Price, at Booneville, Mo., when the latter suddenly remembered that he was needed elsewhere and left without ceremony. In Western Virginia, General McClellan sprang for the scalp of General Garnett, when the latter concluded that some point nearer Richmond would be more healthy. And thus the trial had

been dragging its slow length along, sometimes favorable to the complainant and sometimes to the defendant, up to the time mentioned at the opening of this chapter.

Meanwhile the children on both sides only seemed the more determined to win finally, the oftener they were defeated temporarily; and criminations and recriminations became harsher and fiercer on both sides. The children of the North sided with the father, and claimed that the letter of the original contract must be kept; that in that contract there was no provision for divorce, nor was it admissible now. The children of the South sided with the mother, and claimed that the father had ill-treated the mother, had outgrown the mother, because of advantages taken of her, and by every law, human and divine, she was entitled to a divorce. The children of the North claimed that even if a legal divorce was possible, an equitable division of the estate was impossible. That a considerable portion of the estate had been purchased with blood, or treasure, or both, since marriage, and was so located that division was impossible; that Texas, California, and New Mexico had cost thousands of lives and one hundred and thirty-five millions of dollars, and could not now be divided; that Louisiana and the free navigation of the Mississippi River had cost fifteen millions of dollars, and could not now be divided; that Florida had been purchased of Spain at a cost of six million dollars, and that it had cost twenty-five millions more to get the Seminole Indians out of its swamps, and that it could not now be divided. To all this the children of

the South replied, that not only what the mother had brought to the estate, but all that had been since obtained, contiguous to that which she had before marriage, belonged of right to her and her alone, and that they would maintain her in this right against all comers: The children of the North further complained that over three millions of the children of the common household were held in bondage by Southern masters, and that they must be liberated ere we could hope to have permanent peace at home, or the respect of nations abroad. The children of the South replied that those held in bondage were the descendants of Ham, whom Noah, with God's approval, assigned to perpetual bondage to the sons of Shem and Japhet. To this the children of the North replied that the New Dispensation of Christ, teaching forgiveness to all, kindness to all, love to all, had done away with the Old Dispensation of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," and that the command, "Come unto me all ye ends of the earth," included the black man no less than the white. The children of the South replied that they had not brought slavery into the family, nor would they drive it out, and if others of the household attempted to do so, they would maintain it; and thus, too, this question stood up to the time mentioned in the opening of this chapter.

In the second chapter of this work we mentioned the fact that among the first acts of the first Confederate Congress was the authorizing of a loan of \$15,000,000. Also, the fact that, at a subsequent meeting of the Congress at Richmond,

President Davis stated in his message that "\$50,000,000 had been subscribed in cotton." In neither case was it officially stated who had subscribed for these loans, but there is scarcely a doubt that much the larger part was subscribed by British capitalists. English manufacturers wanted the cotton; English capitalists wanted a profitable investment for their surplus funds; the sympathies of the English nobility and of the upper classes generally were then almost wholly with the Southern Confederacy; they believed, as Europeans generally believed then, that the South would succeed in establishing a separate government; that, whether they succeeded or not, the English government would so far interfere as to secure the getting of any cotton which English manufacturers and English capitalists might purchase of the Confederacy; and, under all these circumstances, it is not at all surprising that a large part of the sixty-five millions named should have been subscribed for by British subjects; nor is it surprising that after they had thus subscribed, and in some cases paid their money in advance by cashing Confederate bonds, they should have used extraordinary means – strange and eventful means – to secure the cotton.

Having thus made the frame and stretched on it the canvas, we are now ready to paint the picture, and, when finished, it will, we think, fully justify the caption given to this chapter, "Nobility after the Nuggets" – "Diplomacy Prompting the Actors."

In the latter part of September, 1863, Lord John Brew-erton arrived in the city of New York direct from London. So soon as

the steamer in which he came arrived at the wharf, he directed his valet to have his baggage taken to the Astor House, while he, taking the first cab he found at the landing, directed the driver to drive him with all possible speed to the office of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, 88 Wall Street. On reaching the office he inquired for the president of the company, Mr. Allan McLane, found him in, and for the next two hours was closeted with him. That same evening Mr. McLane called upon Lord Brewerton at the Astor House, dined with him, and again spent several hours with him in close and confidential conversation – mostly with regard to the Southern Confederacy.

The two following days Lord Brewerton spent in New York attending to various business matters, and on the third day he and Mr. McLane went together to Baltimore. At Philadelphia Mr. C. C. Pollard joined them. At Baltimore they met Colonel Ralph Abercrombie, who chanced to be in Washington at the time, and who had been telegraphed for, through Major Weightman, to meet them at Baltimore. That night and the following day were spent in consultations with Messrs. Thomas, Grundy, Wilson, and others. In the evening McLane and Pollard returned to New York, while Lord Brewerton and Colonel Abercrombie went to Washington. They walked from the depot direct to Ben Beveridge's, where a scene occurred which is difficult to put upon canvas – a scene much easier imagined than described. When the two came into the saloon Ben was absorbed in conversation with some gentlemen, and did not see them enter.

The Colonel, desiring to attract Ben's attention without calling upon himself the attention of others, stepped up to the bar and asked for "Bourben whiskey," putting special emphasis on the word Bourben, as this was the Confederate password which had been agreed upon between him and Ben. The clerk behind the bar sat a bottle of Bourbon whiskey upon the marble counter for the Colonel to help himself; but still Ben did not come up, and kept on chatting and laughing with his friends. The Colonel, determining to attract his attention, put the glass to his lips, and then, with an oath loud enough to wake the dead, smashed the glass into a thousand pieces on the marble counter, and declared that such BOURBEN as that was not fit for a dog to drink. Of course, Ben rushed to the counter to see who had dared commit such an outrage in his saloon; the Lord shrank back aghast, as though an earthquake was about to open under his feet; some Indians who chanced to be in the saloon at the time became very much excited and seemed about to raise a war-whoop, and, for a moment, confusion worse confounded prevailed; but so soon as Ben recognized the Colonel he comprehended the whole situation, acknowledged that his clerk had made a mistake in setting out some other bottle than "Bourben," made a thousand apologies for the mistake, and then, in a tone as mild as that of a sucking-dove, invited the Colonel and his friend "John" into a side room, where they might take a drink alone by themselves. The outsiders had been completely hoodwinked, while the insiders had a hearty laugh all to themselves over the

incident and its happy ending. Major Weightman was then sent for, and when he came he and Lord Brewerton had a conference of some hours. When this had ended, a cab was called, and Lord Brewerton was driven direct to the residence of the British Minister, Lord Lyons, while the Colonel was driven to his sister's (Mrs. Professor Joseph H. Saxton), on Capitol Hill.

Lord Brewerton remained with Lord Lyons some days, and then returned to New York, with the expectation of returning at once to England; but, on reaching there, he found a cablegram awaiting him which required his immediate return to Washington to see Lord Lyons, and, if possible, to make his way from thence to Richmond, to see President Davis. He accordingly returned next day to Washington, saw the British Minister, saw Colonel Abercrombie, and finally succeeded in making arrangements with the latter for an overland trip to Richmond. The Colonel explained to him the hardships which he would have to endure in making the trip overland, and tried hard to persuade him to return to New York and go by the way of Nassau; but Lord Brewerton insisted that he could stand the hardships, and would much prefer it to a trip by sea. He was at this time about fifty years of age, a gentleman of high mental culture, of elegant manners, had spent all his life in the very highest walks of society, and had not probably ever endured one hour of real hardship; but his health was good, and he thought he would rather enjoy, than otherwise, the hardships of which the Colonel spoke. At all events, he insisted upon trying it, and so the matter was finally

agreed upon.

Next night, about ten o'clock, Major Weightman and Colonel Abercrombie left Ben Beveridge's saloon in a close carriage; called at the English embassy for Lord Brewerton; then on to Thecker's, in Georgetown, where Ben was waiting with the disguises. Here, under Ben's skilful hands, Lord Brewerton underwent a complete transmogrification. His mutton-chop whiskers were cut off; his hair chipped and hacked as though done with a broad-axe; his fashionable suit laid aside, and a rough farmer's suit substituted; in place of his fine patent leather boots, a pair of negro clodhoppers were put upon his feet; in place of his fine beaver, a coarse slouch hat; all of which my lord enjoyed and laughed over as heartily as the others. The Colonel being in disguise already, it only took a rub or two here, and a scrape or two there, to make him ready for the trip.

By midnight all were ready. As before, in the case of Lamb and Waddell, Ben led the way, and, by playing drunk, and treating the sentinel with whiskey and cigars, got them safely by the first post. From there they walked about two miles to Widow Ennis' farm-house; thence rode to Hendrickson's, nine miles; thence walked to the Falls, one mile. Here Garrett and Morse received them with open arms, and furnished such refreshments as were needed. Mrs. Morse seemed specially impressed at the presence of a live lord, and honored the occasion by putting on her best silk dress before coming down-stairs to be introduced. The guide was in waiting, and within two hours all three left

their friends to cross the Potomac. To reach the place where the boat for crossing had been concealed required a walk of about two miles; and, when across, it required a walk of another mile to reach the negro hut of old "Aunt Rachel." It was now so near daylight that the Colonel deemed it unsafe to go further, so that all that day the three remained concealed in Aunt Rachel's humble quarters. They could not venture outside the door even for a moment, and at times the lord seemed in great distress at such close confinement; but the day wore away at last, and soon after nightfall the three walked about four miles to Mr. Francis Latimer's. Here the Colonel had expected to get saddle-horses, as before, but the horses were away, and nothing remained in the shape of a conveyance but an old mule, blind in one eye, and a two-wheel dirt-cart. After some consultation and delay, it was decided to take these, and in a little while after the blind mule and two-wheeled cart, with an old darkey, "Uncle Jarrett," as driver, stood before the door. Some straw had been thrown in the cart, on which our travellers might lay; but Mr. Latimer thought this beneath the dignity of a live lord, and therefore had an old splint-bottom chair set in the cart, on which the lord might sit, while the Colonel could lay upon the straw at his side.

The night was very dark, besides which the age and blindness of the mule made him to stumble frequently. They had not gone half a mile before Lord Brewerton found that his seat was a very uncertain and a very uncomfortable one. Down would go one of the wheels into a deep rut. "Ha! hi! be careful, my man! be

careful! What a bloody road this is, to be sure!" the lord would cry out. On a little farther, and down would go the other wheel into a deep rut. "Ho! ha! hi! here we go over, to be sure! Be careful, my good man; be careful! Why, Colonel, I never saw such bloody roads in all my life. Do they ever work them?"

"Yes, sometimes," the Colonel replied, as sober as a judge, though almost dying from suppressed laughter. Indeed such a scene would have made a dog laugh, and surely the blind old mule would have laughed outright could he have laughed at all. The Colonel, lying upon the straw on the bottom of the cart, felt no fear at all when it sidled over; but Lord Brewerton, on the chair, was indeed in danger of being spilled out every time the cart made a sudden lurch. A little farther and one of the wheels strikes and passes over a good sized stone. "Ha! hi! he! here we go sure this time! Be careful, my dear man, be careful! And did you ever see such a bloody road in all your life, Colonel? Are you sure, my dear man, that you are in the road?"

"Yes, massa, I'se sure. I knows'em well. I'se travelled dis road many times, massa," replied old Jarrett; and then, turning to his mule, said, "Git along, Jack, git along! Lift yer feet high, Jack; lift yer-feet high! Git up, git along, Jack!" And thus for full two miles they trudged along, the lord in danger every five minutes of being thrown over the wheels, and calling everything "bloody! bloody! bloody!" while the Colonel could not help occasional outbursts of laughter, though all the while trying to suppress it, out of respect for the feelings of Lord John.

At length Lord Brewerton's patience gave way entirely, when he seized the old chair and hurled it from the cart, and then laid down in the straw beside the Colonel. The other six miles, to Wilson's mill, were made without any incident worthy of record.

Old Aunt Rachel's negro hut was probably the first in Virginia that ever gave shelter for a whole day to a live lord; and it is safe to say that no live lord ever rode behind a blinder mule, in a more rickety cart, or with a safer driver, than Lord Brewerton did that night. To show his appreciation of treats so rare, we may add, that before leaving Aunt Rachel he handed her two twenty-dollar gold pieces, and before bidding Uncle Jarrett goodbye, he made him happy for life by handing him five twenty-dollar gold pieces.

"God bless you, massa, God bless you!" was all the answer either of them could make to such unexpected generosity; but this, to one whose nature was nobler than his blood, was quite sufficient.

At Wilson's they procured horses, and rode about eight miles to a grove. There they dismounted, as it was dangerous to travel the public road farther, and sending the horses back with the guide, the two trudged along on foot, over fields and through by-paths for about five miles, until they reached Mr. Joseph Berry's. Here they stayed all day, and at night rode on horseback, about seventeen miles, to Mr. Frederick Hutchings. At this farm-house they again changed horses, and then rode six miles farther to Nathan Allen's. Again they changed horses, and then rode about fifteen miles to Budd's mill. It was now near morning, and for

the balance of the day they remained concealed in Mr. Budd's house. When night came, they managed, as the Colonel had before, to pass the sentinel at the mill, and then walked four miles to Mr. Brisco's. Here they obtained horses and rode eleven miles to Dr. Charles Worthington's. Here one of the outside-Union sentinels was stationed. The guide knew him personally, and slipped one hundred dollars in gold into his hands. The sentinel became suddenly stone-blind, and our travellers passed by without difficulty. They were now within the Confederate lines, and no longer in fear of arrest.. After a short walk they procured horses, and then a ride of nineteen miles brought them to Randolph's, at China Grove station. This route, it will be seen, varied some little from that taken by Messrs. Lamb, and Waddell. A change of Union troops and sentinel-stations made a change of route sometimes necessary. The conductors of the line, Colonels Abercrombie and Killgore, had no less than five different points at which they crossed the Potomac, and at each point, look-outs and guides were all the while in waiting and all the while in the pay of the Confederacy.

At Randolph's, Colonel Abercrombie laid aside his disguise and again assumed his uniform; Lord Brewerton brushed up as best he could; both took seats in the next passing train; and in a few hours thereafter were at the Ballard House, in Richmond. No sooner was Lord Brewerton in his bed-chamber than he kneeled (inviting the Colonel to do the same) and offered up a most earnest prayer of thanks to God for his deliverance from dangers,

and for the safety which had attended him thus far in his travels.

Of course, the arrival of Lord Brewerton was at once made known to Mr. Davis, and on the following day the President not only called upon him, but insisted that he should make the Executive Mansion his home while he remained in Richmond, to which Lord Brewerton finally consented, and at once accompanied Mr. Davis to his home. For a day or two they were in close consultation. After that, members of the cabinet, army officers, and other prominent gentlemen commenced to call upon Lord Brewerton. It was soon after arranged that a reception ball should be given him at the Executive Mansion. The programme included the illumination of the grounds with brilliant fire-works, the attendance of military bands, with special invitations to all the leading civil and military officers of the Confederacy. The reception and ball came off, and was even more brilliant than had been anticipated. Among those present, were Generals Lee, Breckenridge, and Beauregard. The ladies, it had been arranged, should all dress in calico, from the President's wife down. This was observed to the letter, and the lord was given to understand that it was done as a compliment to the cotton manufacturing interests of England, though the fact was that but few Southern ladies had any of their silks and satins left to wear. Although the South, even in the very highest circles of society, was beginning to feel the pinch-ings of poverty in dress, food, and in almost everything else, yet this was carefully concealed from the eyes and ears of Lord Brewerton during the whole time

of his stay in the Confederacy.

About two weeks after the grand ball, Lord Brewerton, accompanied by a few friends, started on a tour of inspection through the Confederate States, especially to places where cotton was stored in large quantities. They visited Wilmington and Newbern, N. C., Charleston, Savannah, Mobile, and many other points. The entire trip occupied about two months. On his return to Richmond, Lord Brewerton expressed to President Davis and others his entire satisfaction with what he had seen and otherwise learned, adding that he had not the shadow of a doubt as to the final success of the Confederate arms. He assured Mr. Davis that whatever money, arms, and provisions the Confederacy might need would be promptly furnished by himself and his associates, in exchange for cotton; and that the cause of the South would continue to receive, as it had all along received, the sympathy and moral support of all the *upper* classes of England. He also assured him that if the ministry of England could have the least possible excuse for interfering between the North and the South, they would be more than glad to espouse the cause of the South, as England's material interests all lay in this direction, and the moral sentiment of the nation could not stand for one moment in the way of its moneyed interests.

Lord Brewerton remained in Richmond after his return about one week, in consultation with President Davis and his cabinet; Colonel Abercrombie was then telegraphed for; all the needed arrangements were made; the two left Richmond, and in less

than a week were at the English embassy at Washington. Their return was by the same route as that on which they had gone; walking and riding about the same, except that they missed this time a ride behind old Jarrett's blind mule; nor did they have the luxury of spending a whole day at Aunt Rachel's negro hut. Lord Brewerton told Lord Lyons all about the incidents of their trip (as well as all that he had seen and learned of the Confederacy), and the two had over them and their wine many a hearty laugh.

It so happened that on the evening following the return of Lord Brewerton and Colonel Abercrombie to Washington, there was to be a grand reception at the White House. The lord invited the Colonel to accompany him to this reception, and to be introduced as his friend. The Colonel hesitated at first, as he feared he might possibly be recognized by some of his old Washington acquaintances, or by some of Baker's secret detectives. He finally consented, however, and, in the disguise of a "French exquisite," did attend President Lincoln's grand reception, and saw and heard all that was to be seen and heard on such occasions. Of course, Lord Brewerton was the observed of all observers, and was recognized by all (save those who knew to the contrary) as a staunch friend to the Union. A few days after, Lord Brewerton and the Colonel went to Philadelphia, where they met a party of gentlemen at Dr. Charles Howell's, and where future business arrangements were talked over and agreed upon. From here the lord went to New York, while the Colonel returned to Washington and from thence to Richmond.

Thus we finish the record of the visit of one English peer to the Southern Confederacy; but this, by no means, constitutes the whole of such visits during the war. In January, 1863, Lord Talbot was at Charleston, having reached there by the way of Nassau. He had a son who was a colonel in the Confederate army, and who continued in the service until the close of the war. In November, 1863, Lords Harvey and Kartwright were at Richmond; they, too, having reached the Confederate States by the way of Nassau. Major Hodges, one of General Beauregard's staff, was the son of an English lord, and did faithful service until the war closed. Adjutant-General Cooper said that upon the army rolls were the names of scores who were either the sons of, or nearly related to, English peers. Lord Cavendish, who was in very bad health, remained at Nassau during most of the time that the war continued, rendering such aid to the Confederacy as lay in his power. Indeed, the immense hotel at Nassau was crowded with English and Northern sympathizers with the South nearly all the while, from the beginning to the end of the war, watching chances for running the blockade, and otherwise aiding the Confederacy in whatever way they could. These gentlemen, however, while friends to the Confederacy, were still more friends to their own pockets. With them "cotton was king," and of this king they were trying to get as much in their pockets as possible, while English ministers and English consuls were aiding them to the extent of their ability. This was true not only at Washington and at Nassau, but generally with

British ministers and British consuls throughout the world, which fact, added to what we have related of Lord Brewerton, who, doubtless, represented many other persons besides himself, and many other interests besides his own, fully justifies, as we think, the caption given to this chapter, Nobility after the Nuggets – Diplomacy Prompting the Actors.

# CHAPTER VI. IN TIGHT PLACES AND OUT. SHREWDNESS PULLING THE WIRES

THE plan of our work admits of only one more chapter on the subject of running the land blockade, though, if space permitted, the entire volume might be filled with incidents connected with this one service. This chapter, therefore, must embrace a variety of incidents.

On one of the trips, Colonel Abercrombie conducted Mr. Charles R. Dangerfield from Washington to Richmond, and return. Mr. Dangerfield was a large manufacturer, or the agent of manufacturers, of English arms, accoutrements, etc., and his object in visiting Richmond was to make contracts with the Confederacy in exchange for cotton. Nothing of special note occurred on the way to Richmond, except that, while lying at the negro hut all day, two men came to the door, and asked "Aunt Jemima" if Colonel Abercrombie was not there? This Mr. Dangerfield heard, and it frightened him almost out of his wits. "Now Grant's men have us!" said he, and, springing up from where he lay, he was ready to surrender at once; but the military experience of the Colonel made him cooler and more courageous than the Englishman, and he, instead of surrendering, was getting ready to sell his life as dearly as possible, when "Aunt Jemima"

called out, "All's right, honey, all's right! dese be your guides, Mas'er Colonel; all's right!" Had a ten-thousand ton weight been lifted from Mr. Dangerfield's breast, he could not have felt more relieved. He was ready to dance a hornpipe then and there, and would have done it, had he not been too old, fat, and clumsy for such a youthful sport. From Richmond, Mr. Dangerfield visited all the larger cities, and all the cotton-storing places of the Confederacy. On his return to Richmond he made contracts with the government to his entire satisfaction, and in due time returned to Washington, New York, and thence to London.

At another time the Colonel conducted another English manufacturer, Mr. Francis Willis, across the lines and back. He, like Mr. Dangerfield, visited the principal points in the Confederacy, and, on his return to Richmond, made contracts to furnish arms, accoutrements, saddles, clothing, etc., in exchange for cotton.

There were others who were passengers on this line, at various times; but as their object was to see friends or attend to domestic affairs, and had no direct connection with the war, we think it unnecessary to particularize them.

On one of the trips Colonel Abercrombie was arrested as a spy – though his duties, and those of Colonel Killgore's, were as foreign to those of a spy as one thing can be foreign to another – and as there were incidents connected with the arrest and escape never heretofore known, we will now relate them.

The Colonel was on his way from Richmond to Washington.

Had reached Great Falls in safety, and was about half way between that point and Georgetown, when a sentinel suddenly called, "Halt! stand, or I'll fire." The Colonel, who was in the disguise of a farmer, tried to explain to the sentinel that he was a farmer, living near Georgetown; that he had been up to Garrett & Morse's store to see a friend, and was now on his way back; that he was an uncompromising "*Union* man," etc., etc.; but the sentinel's only reply was that his orders were to halt and detain any one who attempted to pass his post, and that the Colonel must stand precisely where halted until the corporal came around, and not move a step forward or backward, or he would fire upon him. The Colonel saw that he had a sentinel to deal with who could not be either cajoled or bribed, and that he could do nothing else than await the coming of the corporal, and then try his arts upon him. Could he have got near the sentinel, he would have disarmed him and escaped, but this was impossible. When the corporal came around to relieve the guard the Colonel told him the same story he had told the sentinel; but he seemed to doubt the story, and told the Colonel he must "fall in" and accompany them to the Captain's headquarters, about a half-mile distant. On reaching there the Colonel repeated the same old story, to all of which the Captain listened attentively and respectfully. The Captain had just eaten his supper, and, learning from the Colonel that he had not yet had his, asked him to take a seat at the table and help himself. While the Colonel was eating, the Captain narrowly observed him, and pretty soon cried out, "Yes! I see

you are a farmer from the way you handle your knife and fork! A pretty farmer you are, to be sure!" The Colonel was nonplussed for a moment and could make no reply; but after awhile managed to say that he "could n't see why a farmer could not handle a knife and fork just as well as anybody else." He was caught, fairly caught, by his "society manners," and the more he talked, the better satisfied the Captain became that he was not a farmer, and might be a spy. He was accordingly sent, that same night, to the headquarters of the Eleventh Pennsylvania regiment, and there put in the guard-house. Next morning the colonel of this regiment sent him to General Wilson's headquarters, near by, who, after some questions, sent him back to the guard-house. The next night Colonel Abercrombie made an attempt to escape, and nearly succeeded. This being reported to General Wilson, he ordered a heavy ball and chain to be strongly riveted to the Colonel's leg. Matters now began to look desperate; for, while the Colonel had no fear of being condemned as a spy, he was ready to do anything, rather than be brought before a court-martial and *recognized*. He bethought himself of some medicine he always carried with him. Of this he took a dose, and soon had a most violent diarrhoea. He now could ask, and did ask, to be sent to a hospital, and next day was sent to the Lincoln Hospital, near Georgetown. It changed that on the next couch to his in the hospital lay a Confederate captain, named Lawrence Norton, of Georgia. The two soon became acquainted. The Colonel told the Captain that if by any means the ball and chain could be taken

from his leg, he could escape from the hospital. The Captain told his wife this when she visited him next day; the wife became immediately interested, and soon procured and brought to her husband a watch-spring file; the Captain that same night so filed the clasp, which held the ball and chain to the Colonel's ankle, that it could be slipped off at any moment. The Colonel watched the surgeon when he came into the hospital next day, and managed to slip a pass from the surgeon's overcoat pocket while it lay upon a stand near his bed. With this pass and two empty bottles in his hand, he rushed by the sentinel at the door, on the plea that he was in great haste to bring medicines which the doctor had just sent him after. Once outside the building, he sprang over a cemetery fence, and from thenceforth allowed no grass to grow under his feet until he was safe at Ben Beveridge's hotel. Here, of course, there was great rejoicing at the Colonel's wonderful escape; but, fearing pursuit, it was thought best that the Colonel should proceed at once to Baltimore, and from thence to Philadelphia. It was deemed best, too, that he should not start from the Washington depot, lest detectives be on the watch there for him. Accordingly, Ben ordered up his own spanking team of bays, and before daybreak had the Colonel at the Bladensburg station, where he took the first train that came along for Baltimore. Fearing, however, to go into the Baltimore depot, lest detectives might be there on the watch for him, the Colonel got off the train at the Relay House, and gave a man a twenty-dollar gold piece to drive him into Baltimore, a distance

of about thirteen miles. He went direct to the Fountain Hotel, in Light Street, where he remained carefully concealed for several days, only seeing Mr. Thomas, Mr. Wilson, and such others as he knew to be firm friends of the Southern cause. Then he went to Philadelphia and remained at Dr. Howell's for about two weeks.

Meanwhile the newspapers of Washington and of the whole country were publishing accounts about the "wonderful escape of a rebel spy," and all sorts of guesses were made as to who he was, how he had managed to escape, who had helped him, where he had gone, etc., etc. Of course, the whole of Baker's national detective force and all the police and detective forces of New York, Philadelphia, and of every other Northern city, were specially charged to search out, arrest, and bring to speedy justice this "desperate rebel spy;" but not one of them all ever succeeded in arresting, nor even in ascertaining who this "rebel spy" was; and not until this shall appear in print will the world at large ever know who the arrested party was, how he managed his escape, or what became of him after his escape.

## CHAPTER VII. JOHNSON IN A QUANDARY. THE HEART MASTERING THE HEAD

There was another incident connected with the running of the land blockade which, though hardly sufficient for an entire chapter, is too important and too interesting to allow to pass without notice: for not until this is published will it ever be known outside of some half-dozen persons. The incident was as follows:

On one of his blockade-running visits to Washington, Colonel Abercrombie learned that Senator Andrew Johnson, as it then was (though afterwards Vice-President, and still afterwards President of the United States), had rooms at Beveridge's Hotel, the very place that he was making his headquarters when in Washington. Knowing the Senator to be a fierce, uncompromising Union man, the news of his close proximity at first alarmed the Colonel; but, upon reflection, he remembered that Mrs. Johnson and his mother had long been on the most intimate terms, – that the Senator knew him personally, and had always treated him with the utmost kindness, – that he was a man of generous heart, and even though he should learn of his being there, the danger of his interfering with him was next to nothing. He therefore decided to stand his ground and take the chances.

As proximity to danger is always exciting, and, after a time,

becomes attractive, so in this case, what at first seemed alarming, after a time became so attractive that the Colonel had a longing desire to see and converse with his old friend, Andrew Johnson. He communicated this desire to his friend and co-associate in the blockade-running business, Ben Beveridge, and asked him what he thought of it. Ben, at first, thought it would not do at all; but, like the Colonel, after thinking over the matter some time, concluded that it would be a capital joke, and advised the Colonel to try it.

The Colonel was disguised – so disguised, indeed, that even his own sister would not have known him, had she met him in the street – and the arrangement was, that Ben should await in the entry, near the Senator's chamber-door, while the Colonel went in to talk with him; and that, if the Senator did not receive him kindly, or if he showed any disposition to arrest him, the Colonel should at once quit the room, and Ben would help him to escape.

Everything thus understood, the Colonel went to the Senator's door and knocked gently. A deep, stentorian voice replied, "Come in but the Colonel pretended not to hear this, and knocked again, as he wanted the Senator to come to and open the door, that he might at once step within the room, whether the Senator invited him to do so or not. The second knock brought the Senator to the door, which he opened far enough to face his visitor, when he said:

"How do you do, sir?"

The Colonel replied, and, while replying, stepped within the

room, when the Senator shut the door, and invited his visitor to take a seat. The Colonel did not sit down, but, taking hold of the back of the chair offered him, he said to Mr. Johnson:

"You seem not to know me, Mr. Senator. When did you leave Greenville? and where is Mrs. Johnson and Bob?"

This confused the Senator more than ever, as the visitor seemed to be familiar with his wife and son, as well as with himself, and yet he could not recollect to have ever seen him before.

"Well, no," replied the Senator, "I really cannot place you, or call your name. By jingo! who are you, any way?"

"I guess you don't want to know me," replied the Colonel, "and I had better be going."

"Oh, no, sir; oh, no," replied Mr. Johnson; "sit down! sit down! When did you come from Greenville? But really, sir, I cannot recall your name – I cannot."

The Colonel observed the Senator's confusion, and so enjoyed the joke that it was some time before he would let himself be known. Then, suddenly tearing the false whiskers from his face and putting on a natural expression, he stood revealed before the Senator.

"My God! is this you, Ralph?" was all that Mr. Johnson could say for some moments; and then added, "Why, Ralph, ain't you in the rebel service?"

"Well, what if I am?" replied the Colonel; "you don't propose to arrest me, do you?"

"No, no; but, by jingo! what under heavens brought you here?" said the Senator; and, going to the door, locked it before the Colonel had time to reply. "Sit down! sit down!" he added, "and tell me all about it. What under heavens could have brought you here, or induced you to call upon me?"

The Colonel then took a seat and explained to Mr. Johnson why he was there, the nature of his business, and that he had only called upon him as a good joke, and to renew an old acquaintance; to all of which the Senator listened attentively, though trembling meanwhile from excitement. When the Colonel had finished, Mr. Johnson sprang from his chair, walked hurriedly across the room two or three times, went to the front windows and pulled down the shades, and then, turning to the Colonel, said:

"Does anybody know that you are here with me?" Just then Mr. Johnson heard a tittering in the entryway, and, turning to the Colonel, asked him if he had any companions waiting outside. The Colonel replied, that he thought it might be Ben, as he alone knew of his visit. Immediately Mr. Johnson stepped to the door, and, seeing Ben, asked him to step in. Ben did so, and now the Senator became more in a quandary than ever. He scolded both Ben and the Colonel pretty severely, and told them they did not appreciate the awkward position in which they were placing him; that, if the Colonel's visit to him were known, it would, under the circumstances, compromise him in a most serious manner. Ben tried to soothe the Senator by telling him that the Colonel's

call upon him was only intended as a joke; that it could never be known outside of their three selves; and that it should never be repeated, if annoying to him. The Senator replied, that while he was glad, personally, to see Ralph, yet the fact that he was known to be an officer in the rebel army, and in his business of blockade-running might by some be regarded as a spy, made it doubly awkward for him, and, if it were known to the Senate, might cost him his seat, as well as his reputation as a consistent Union man; that nearly every one would say that he ought to have had the Colonel arrested and detained, at least as a prisoner-of-war, if not as a spy; and that, in holding communication with him without attempting his arrest, he made himself a party to his crime, whether as a rebel to the government or as a spy. The more the Senator talked about it, the graver he became over it, until the Colonel and Ben saw that what had been intended as a comedy might prove a serious tragedy with all concerned, and that the sooner they got out of the way the better. Before leaving, the Senator exacted from each a solemn promise that they would not repeat the joke under any possible circumstances.

There is no kind of doubt that Senator Johnson felt greatly troubled at receiving such a visit from an officer in the Confederate service, and in learning that his landlady's son, Ben, was just as much of a rebel at heart as the Colonel himself. He knew, too, that his official duty as a United States Senator was to have both of these men arrested, tried, and, if possible, convicted, while his heart prompted to a course directly the

contrary. He had long known, and had high regard for, the mothers of both; the men he had known from childhood upward, and always liked them, as boys, as young men, as men in active life, and he would as soon have thought of having his own son, "Bob," arrested as either of these, and yet his duty plainly pointed in that direction. It was a conflict between his head and his heart, in which his heart gained the mastery.

That the Senator did not hold any ill-will against the Colonel or against Ben for this wild prank of theirs against his Senatorial and official dignity is proven from the fact that he still continued to board with Ben's mother at the "Washington House," and within two years after he became President he appointed the Colonel as one of three commissioners to reopen and establish mail-routes throughout the late Confederate States.

# **CHAPTER VII. PRISONERS, HOW USED AND HOW ABUSED. CRAFT AND CRUELTY PROMPTING THE ACTORS**

IN General L. C. Baker's "History of the United States Secret Service," four chapters are devoted to the subject of bounty-jumpers. In these chapters the startling facts are disclosed that on investigation, it was found that only one in four of the enlisted men reached the front that, in some instances, the entire quota of a township was filled with the names of bounty-jumpers, not one of whom ever really enlisted or went to the front; that desertions from the army became so common that to "even attempt to show, by actual figures, the number would be impossible;" that "to aid the soldier to desert was deemed to be as much the legitimate business and calling of the professional bounty broker as to enlist him;" that in one investigation it was shown, "out of 5,284 enlisted, only 2,083 actually entered the service;" that out of this number – less than one-half who really enlisted – not more than three-fourths ever reached the front, and of these probably one-fourth deserted and returned to the States, to reënlist and receive bounty again; that of one hundred and "eighty-three who enlisted in one day at Hoboken and were credited to the quota of

Jersey City, every one was a bounty-jumper;" that case after case came to light where a single bounty-jumper had enlisted *three* times, and received three separate bounties, in *one* day, and that even gipsy-like gangs were organized, who travelled from city to city, enlisting such of their number as they could, assisting such as enlisted to escape, and then on to the next city or recruiting station to repeat the same thing. Of one such gang it is related that "in a trip of thirty-two days their total profits amounted to \$32,000."

It is also a matter of record that while skirmishes and battles were in progress, Union soldiers in the front ranks, and especially if sent forward as skirmishers, would sometimes throw down their muskets and run over to the enemy; and it not unfrequently happened that sentinels on the outposts were missing and never heard of more, or, if heard of, it would be found they had gone within the Confederate lines and surrendered.

These matters have all been told, and well told, by other historians, but not until these "Secrets of the Rebellion" have been published will it be generally known what became of those who thus threw down their arms, and of those who thus abandoned their posts, to go over to the enemy, and that to encourage bounty-jumping in the North, and thereby promote desertions from the Union army, became, after August, 1863, a part of the masterly diplomacy or tactics adopted by the Confederate Government.

Of the bounty-jumpers who first tried the game of going over

to the enemy, under the belief that they would soon be exchanged or paroled, and thus have opportunities for procuring additional bounties, quite a number were shot as spies. The "dead-board," as it was called, of General Lee's army, had a summary way of dealing with all cases which they deemed of a questionable character. A statement from the person making the arrest; where found, and under what circumstances; a few questions to the accused; a consultation of ten minutes among the seven officers who composed the board; sentence; and on the day following, and sometimes on the same day, the accused would be seen sitting on an empty coffin, on his way to execution.

But in August, 1863, a new thought crossed the brain of the Confederate authorities. They then concluded that, instead of shooting bounty-jumpers as spies, they could make them serviceable to the Confederate cause by using them as stool-pigeons, and like as stool-pigeons are used to draw whole flocks into the net, so these could be used to corrupt, and bring thousands into the Confederate lines. In pursuance of this new idea, five large tobacco warehouses, on Carey Street, each three stories high, directly opposite "Castle Thunder," in Richmond, were converted into a prison, and called "Castle Lightning." In this prison, bounty-jumpers alone were put, and the rations furnished them were doubly as good as the rations furnished the prisoners in other prisons. Whenever an exchange of prisoners was possible, those in Castle Lightning were always given the preference, and, when about to leave, they were told that they

should take from the Yankees as many bounties as they possibly could; that, if again sent to the front, they should desert, and bring as many others along with them as possible; that they would always be well treated, and given the best rations the Confederacy could afford; that they would be exchanged, or otherwise sent back to their homes, at the first opportunity; and that to secure safety and good treatment, when coming into the Confederate lines, they should cry out, "Bounty-jumper! Bounty-jumper!" This was told them not only when about to leave, but again, and again, and again during their stay, and the superior treatment they received while prisoners, assured them that the promises made would all be fulfilled.

Within a few weeks after the return of the first batch of these bounty-jumpers to the North, the effect of the new policy began to show itself, and it steadily increased from that time onward. Hardly a day, and sometimes several times in a day, squads of Union prisoners arrived in Richmond, and were marched to Castle Lightning, who had voluntarily come within the lines, and claimed to be bounty-jumpers. Nor was there scarcely a day in which squads of these same men might not be seen leaving the prison, on their way to be exchanged, or otherwise sent back to the Union army, or direct to their homes. Like leaven, its tendency was to leaven the whole lump, as the authorities of the Confederacy believed would be the case when they adopted the policy. One such man in a company would, in time, taint the whole company; ten such men in a regiment would, in time,

taint the whole regiment. When a battle is progressing, a single regiment, yea, a single company, going over to the enemy will sometimes so change the tide of battle that what seemed an assured victory, will prove a most disastrous defeat.

Of course it is not known, never can be known, how many millions of dollars, nor how many thousands of lives the adoption of this policy by the South cost the North; nor can the South ever know the amount of advantage which they derived from adopting the policy; but that it was a new mode of warfare, and showed great shrewdness on the part of those who conceived and carried out the project, all will agree in admitting.

Having thus shown how the Confederate authorities used Union prisoners to benefit their own cause, we will next proceed to state some additional facts as to the abuse received by other Union prisoners. The facts which we now purpose to state are not from hearsay, not from one-sided newspapers, nor from partisan historians, but directly from the lips of one who had occasion to visit Confederate prisoners frequently during the war, whose whole soul was in, and with, the Confederate cause, and who could not be, and would not be, by any who knew him, accused of sympathy with the "Yankees," as he usually styles Union soldiers when speaking of them. We have not space to write of all, and will limit our remarks to only four of the many places throughout the Confederate States at which Union prisoners were confined.

*First.* – "Libby Prison." This was located in Richmond, and had been a tobacco warehouse previous to its use as a prison. It

was an immense brick building, three stories high, rough floors, no plastering, a great number of windows, no fire-places, and no means for heating other than for the office on the first floor. In this, hundreds of Union prisoners were thrust and kept for weeks, months, years – some with scarcely enough clothing left to cover their nakedness, and with no chance for a change; many without a blanket, even in the coldest winter weather; all without beds, or mattress, or anything but the hard floor to lie upon. Their ordinary daily ration consisted of a loaf made from one pint of corn-meal and one pint of rice soup. Occasionally, though rarely, they would have bread made from wheat flour and soup made from meat and bones. Once in a great while they were served with meat, but the quantity served to each man was so small that it could be taken at a mouthful. Our informant says he knows of a certainty that some *actually starved to death*– that others *actually froze to death*– that many were *wantonly shot* while thoughtlessly looking out of the windows, by sentinels on the sidewalks, who had positive orders from Lieutenant Turner, the officer in command of Libby, to shoot any "d – d Yankee" whose head might be seen at the window-bars; and that hundreds, yea, thousands, died from sickness brought upon them by the privations from which they suffered. We could give other details, but they are too horrible to write, and would be too sickening to read.

*Second.* – "Castle Thunder." All that we have said of "Libby" will apply equally well to this prison, except that in some cases

the cruelty of treatment might be *multiplied by two*, and in some instances by *three*. Here our informant saw prisoners with ball and chain to their legs, and handcuffed together; chanced to be in the room when the brains of one of the prisoners were spattered against the wall, by a ball from the musket in the hands of a sentinel on the pavement two stories below, and only because the prisoner had dared to look out at a window; learned of many like cases which occurred before and after that visit; nor has he any doubt that scores were there inhumanly shot, because of orders from the officer in command, Captain Alexander. At least one Union prisoner, a Captain Dayton, was hung on the charge of being a spy. In this prison, dogs that chanced to stray in were seized, killed, and eaten; and rat-meat was regarded as a dainty dish.

*Third.* – Salisbury, N. C., was a large enclosure within a high board fence, on the outside of which was a walk for sentinels, and within which was the "dead-line," about thirty feet from the fence, to cross which meant instant death to any prisoner. The "sinks" for the camp were located on this "dead-line," and at one of his visits our informant saw the dead body of a prisoner lying in one of the "sinks," who had been shot by a sentinel in the afternoon of the day before while sitting on the pole at the "sink." The sentinel, when asked why he had shot the prisoner, replied that he thought he was trying to come over the dead-line and therefore shot him. At this same visit our informant saw sentinels, with guns on their shoulders, pacing their rounds on the outside

of this fence, who were not over twelve years of age, and the one who had shot the prisoner at the "sink" was scarcely over this age. The whole regiment on guard at that camp, at that time, was made up of boys from twelve to sixteen years of age, and of very old men – not one of all of whom was fit for a soldier. The officer in command, a Major Gee, was himself a brute, and no more fit to have the care of human beings than a hyena would be to be placed in charge of a sheepfold. Here, as at Libby and Castle Thunder, the usual ration was a loaf made from one pint of corn-meal, each day, and occasionally a small bit of meat. For shelter most of them had to burrow for themselves, like rabbits, in holes under ground; and so poorly were they off for clothing and shoes, that our informant saw scores of men standing about the doors of hospitals, waiting for the clothing and shoes of those who might die within. Every morning carts came around to gather up the dead, to take them without the camp and throw in trenches.

*Fourth.* – Andersonville, Georgia. This was an enclosure of about twenty-five acres, surrounded by a high stockade, and by earthworks mounted with cannon. One end of the enclosure was a swamp, through which crept a sluggish, muddy stream, and this was the only water to which the prisoners had access. To add to the filthiness and consequent unhealthfulness of this water, a Confederate camp was located upon it, above the point where the stream entered the stockade. The few buildings within the enclosure were scarcely enough for hospital purposes, and here, as at Salisbury, the prisoners had to burrow in the earth

for shelter. Even in the coldest of weather thousands had no blankets, nor scarcely clothing enough to cover their nakedness. Their ordinary ration here, as at the other places named, was a loaf made from one pint of corn-meal each day, and when, as occasionally they did, receive anything beyond this, it was regarded as a rare treat. The shooting of men on the "dead-line" was almost of daily occurrence.

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