

# VARIOUS

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# **Various**

## **The Continental Monthly, Vol. 1, No. 4, April, 1862 / Devoted To Literature And National Policy**

### **The War Between Freedom And Slavery In Missouri**

It is admitted that no man can write the history of his own times with such fullness and impartiality as shall entitle his record to the unquestioning credence and acceptance of posterity. Men are necessarily actors in the scenes amid which they live. If not personally taking an active part in the conduct of public affairs, they have friends who are, and in whose success or failure their own welfare is in some way bound up. The bias which interest always gives will necessarily attach to their judgment of current events, and the leading actors by whom these events are controlled. Contemporaneous history, for this reason, will always be found partisan history—not entitled to, and, if intelligently and honestly written, not exacting, the implicit faith of those who shall come after; but simply establishing that certain classes of people, of whom the writer was one, acted under the conviction that they owed certain duties to themselves and their country. It will be for the future compiler of the world's history, who shall see the end of present struggles, to determine the justice of the causes of controversy, and the wisdom and honesty of the parties that acted adversely. To such after judgment, with a full knowledge of present reproach as a partisan, the writer of this article commends the brief sketch he will present of the beginning and military treatment of the great Rebellion in the State of Missouri. He will not attempt to make an episode of any part of this history, because of the supposed vigor or brilliancy of the martial deeds occurring in the time. Least of all would he take the 'Hundred Days,' which another pen has chosen for special distinction, as representing the period of heroism in that war-trampled State. Any 'hundred days' of the rebellion in Missouri have had their corresponding *nights*; and no one can be bold enough yet to say that the day of permanent triumph has dawned. Humiliation has alternated with success so far; and the most stunning defeats of the war in the West marked the beginning and the close of the hundred days named for honor. This fact should teach modesty and caution. For while justice to men requires us to admit that the greatest abilities do not always command success, devotion to principle forbids that a noble cause should be obscured to become the mere background of a scene in which an actor and popular idol is the chief figure. It is with a consciousness of such partialities as are common to men, but with an honest purpose, so far as the writer is able, to subordinate men to principles, that this review of the origin and chief incidents of the rebellion in Missouri is begun.

The close connection of the State of Missouri with the slavery agitation that has now ripened into a rebellion against the government of the United States, is a singular historical fact. The admission of the State into the Union was the occasion of vitalizing the question of slavery extension and fixing it as a permanent element in the politics of the country. It has continued to be the theatre on which the most important conflicts growing out of slavery extension have been decided. It will be the first, in the hope and belief of millions, to throw off the fetters of an obsolete institution, so long cramping its social and political advancement, and to set an example to its sister slave-holding States of the superior strength, beauty, and glory of Freedom.

The pro-slavery doctrines of John C. Calhoun, after having pervaded the democracy of all the other slave-holding States, and obtained complete possession of the national executive, legislative and judicial departments, finally, in 1844, appeared also in the State of Missouri. But it was in so minute

and subtle a form as not to seem a sensible heresy. Thomas H. Benton, the illustrious senator of the Jackson era, was then, as he had been for twenty-four years, the political autocrat of Missouri. He had long been convinced of the latent treason of the Calhoun school of politicians. He was able to combat the schemes of the Southern oligarchy composing and controlling the Cabinet of President Polk; unsuccessfully, it is true, yet with but slight diminution of his popularity at home. Nevertheless, the seeds of disunion had been borne to his State; they had taken root; and, like all evil in life, they proved self-perpetuating and ineradicable. In 1849 the Mexican war, begun in the interest of the disunionists, had been closed. A vast accession of territory had accrued to the Union. It was the plan and purpose of the disunion party to appropriate and occupy this territory; to organize it in their interests; and, finally, to admit it into the Union as States, to add to their political power, and prepare for that struggle between the principle of freedom and the principle of slavery in the government, which Mr. Calhoun had taught was inevitable. But the hostility of Benton in the Senate was dreaded by the Southern leaders thus early conspiring against the integrity of the Union. The Missouri senator seemed, of all cotemporaneous statesmen, to be the only one that fully comprehended the incipient treason. His earnest opposition assumed at times the phases of *monomania*. He sought to crush it in the egg. He lifted his warning voice on all occasions. He inveighed bitterly against the 'Nullifiers,' as he invariably characterized the Calhoun politicians, declaring that their purpose was to destroy the Union. It became necessary, therefore, before attempting to dispose of the territories acquired from Mexico, to silence Benton, or remove him from the Senate. Accordingly, when the legislature of Missouri met in 1849, a series of resolutions was introduced, declaring that all territory derived by the United States, in the treaty with Mexico, should be open to settlement by the citizens of all the States in common; that the question of allowing or prohibiting slavery in any territory could only be decided by the people resident in the territory, and then only when they came to organize themselves into a State government; and, lastly, that if the general government should attempt to establish a rule other than this for the settlement of the territories, the State of Missouri would stand pledged to her sister Southern States to co-operate in whatever measures of resistance or redress *they* might deem necessary. The resolutions distinctly abdicated all right of judgment on the part of Missouri, and committed the State to a blind support of Southern 'Nullification' in a possible contingency. They were in flagrant opposition to the life-long principles and daily vehement utterances of Benton—as they were intended to be. Nevertheless, they were adopted; and the senators of Missouri were instructed to conform their public action to them. These resolutions were introduced by one Claiborne F. Jackson, a member of the House of Representatives from the County of Howard, one of the most democratic and largest slave-holding counties in the State. The resolutions took the name of their mover, and are known in the political history of Missouri as the 'Jackson resolutions.' And Claiborne F. Jackson, who thus took the initiative in foisting treason upon the statute-books of Missouri, is, to-day, by curious coincidence, the official head of that State nominally in open revolt. But Jackson, it was early ascertained, was not entitled to the doubtful honor of the paternity of these resolutions. They had been matured in a private chamber of the Capitol at Jefferson City, by two or three conspirators, who received, it was asserted by Benton, and finally came to be believed, the first draft of the resolutions from Washington, where the disunion cabal, armed with federal power, had its headquarters.

Thus the bolt was launched at the Missouri senator, who, from his prestige of Jacksonism, his robust patriotism, his indomitable will, and his great abilities, was regarded as the most formidable if not the only enemy standing in the way of meditated treason. It was not doubted that the blow would be fatal. Benton was in one sense the father of the doctrine of legislative instructions. In his persistent and famous efforts to 'expunge' the resolutions of censure on Gen. Jackson that had been placed in the Senate journal, Benton had found it necessary to revolutionize the sentiments or change the composition of the Senate. Whigs were representing democratic States, and Democrats refused to vote for a resolution expunging any part of the record of the Senate's proceedings. To meet and overcome this resistance, Benton introduced the dogma that a senator was bound to obey the

instructions of the legislature of his State. He succeeded, by his great influence in his party, and by the aid of the democratic administration, in having the dogma adopted, and it became an accepted rule in the democratic party. Resolutions were now invoked and obtained from State legislatures instructing their senators to vote for the 'Expunging Resolutions,' or resign. Some obeyed; some resigned. Benton carried his point; but it was at the sacrifice of the spirit of that part of the Constitution which gave to United States senators a term of six years, for the purpose of protecting the Senate from frequent fluctuations of popular feeling, and securing steadiness in legislation. Benton was the apostle of this unwise and destructive innovation upon the constitutional tenure of senators. He was doomed to be a conspicuous victim of his own error. When the 'Jackson resolutions' were passed by the legislature of Missouri, instructing Benton to endorse measures that led to nullification and disunion, he saw the dilemma in which he was placed, and did the best he could to extricate himself. He presented the resolutions from his seat in the Senate; denounced their treasonable character, and declared his purpose to appeal from the legislature to the people of Missouri.

On the adjournment of Congress, Benton returned to Missouri and commenced a canvass in vindication of his own cause, and in opposition to the democratic majority of the legislature that passed the Jackson resolutions, which has had few if any parallels in the history of the government for heat and bitterness. The senator did not return to argue and convert, but to fulminate and destroy. He appointed times and places for public speaking in the most populous counties of the State, and where the opposition to him had grown boldest. He allowed no 'division of time' to opponents wishing to controvert the positions assumed in his speeches. On the contrary, he treated every interruption, whether for inquiry or retort, on the part of any one opposed to him, as an insult, and proceeded to pour upon the head of the offender a torrent of denunciation and abuse, unmeasured and appalling. The extraordinary course adopted by Benton in urging his 'appeal,' excited astonishment and indignation among the democratic partisans that had, in many cases, thoughtlessly become arrayed against him.<sup>1</sup> They might have yielded to expostulation; they were stung to resentment by unsparing vilification. The rumor of Benton's manner preceded him through the State, after the first signal manifestations of his ruthless spirit; and he was warned not to appear at some of the appointments he had made, else his life would pay the forfeit of his personal assaults. These threats only made the Missouri lion more fierce and untamable. He filled all his appointments, bearing everywhere the same front, often surrounded by enraged enemies armed and thirsting for his blood, but ever denunciatory and defiant, and returned to St. Louis, still boiling with inexhaustible choler, to await the judgment of the State upon his appeal. He failed. The pro-slavery sentiment of the people had been too thoroughly evoked in the controversy, and too many valuable party leaders had been needlessly driven from his support by unsparing invective. An artful and apparently honest appeal to the right of legislative instructions,—an enlargement of popular rights which Benton himself had conferred upon them,—and—the unfailing weapon of Southern demagogues against their opponents—the charge that Benton had joined the 'Abolitionists,' and was seeking to betray 'the rights of the South,' worked the overthrow of the hitherto invincible senator. The Whigs of Missouri, though agreeing mainly with Benton in the principles involved in this contest, had received nothing at his hands, throughout his long career, but defeat and total exclusion from all offices and honors, State

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<sup>1</sup> An incident that occurred at Palmyra, in Marion County, of which the writer was a witness, may be given as a fair illustration of Benton's insulting and insufferable manner in this celebrated canvass. During the delivery of his speech, in the densely-crowded court-house, a prominent county politician, who was opposed to Benton, arose and put a question to him. 'Come here,' said Benton, in his abrupt and authoritative tone. The man with difficulty made his way through the mass, and advanced till he stood immediately in front of Benton. 'Who are you, sir?' inquired the swelling and indignant senator. The citizen gave his well-known name. 'Who?' demanded Benton. The name was distinctly repeated. And then, without replying to the question that had been proposed, but with an air of disdain and annihilating contempt that no man in America but Benton could assume, he proceeded with his speech, leaving his interrogator to retire from his humiliating embarrassment as best he could. At the close of the address, some of his friends expressed surprise to Benton that he had not known the man that interrupted him. 'Know him!' said he; 'I knew him well enough. I only meant to make him stand with his hat in his hand, and tell me his name, like a nigger.'



and National. This class of politicians were too glad of the prospective division of his party and the downfall of his power, to be willing to re-assert their principles through a support of Benton. The loyal Union sentiments of the State in this way failed to be united, and a majority was elected to the legislature opposed to Benton. He was defeated of a re-election to the Senate by Henry S. Geyer, a pro-slavery Whig, and supporter of the Jackson resolutions, after having filled a seat in that august body for a longer time consecutively than any other senator ever did. Thus was removed from the halls of Congress the most sagacious and formidable enemy that the disunion propagandists ever encountered. Their career in Congress and in the control of the federal government was thenceforth unchecked. The cords of loyalty in Missouri were snapped in Benton's fall, and that State swung off into the strongly-sweeping current of secessionism. The city of St. Louis remained firm a while, and returned Benton twice to the House; but his energies were exhausted now in defensive war; and the truculent and triumphant slave power dominating, the State at last succeeded, through the coercion of commercial interests, in defeating him even in the citadel of loyalty. He tried once more to breast the tide that had borne down his fortunes. He became a candidate for governor in 1856; but, though he disclaimed anti-slavery sentiments, and supported James Buchanan for President against Fremont, his son-in-law, he was defeated by Trusten Polk, who soon passed from the gubernatorial chair to Benton's seat in the United States Senate, from which he was, in course of time, to be expelled. Benton retired to private life, only to labor more assiduously in compiling historical evidences against the fast ripening treason of the times.

The Missouri senator was no longer in the way of the Southern oligarchs. A shaft feathered by his own hands—the doctrine of instructions—had slain him.

But yet another obstacle remained. The Missouri Compromise lifted a barrier to the expansion of the Calhoun idea of free government, having African slavery for its corner-stone. This obstacle was to be removed. Missouri furnished the prompter and agent of that wrong in David E. Atchison, for many years Benton's colleague in the Senate. Atchison was a man of only moderate talents, of dogged purpose, willful, wholly unscrupulous in the employment of the influences of his position, and devoid of all the attributes and qualifications of statesmanship. He was a fit representative of the pro-slavery fanaticism of his State; had lived near the Kansas line; had looked upon and coveted the fair lands of that free territory, and resolved that they should be the home and appanage of slavery. It is now a part of admitted history, that this dull but determined Missouri senator approached Judge Douglas, then chairman of the Committee on Territories, and, by some incomprehensible influence, induced that distinguished senator to commit the flagrant and terrible blunder of reporting the Kansas-Nebraska bill, with a clause repealing the Missouri Compromise, and thus throwing open Kansas to the occupation of slavery. That error was grievously atoned for in the subsequent hard fate of Judge Douglas, who was cast off and destroyed by the cruel men he had served. Among the humiliations that preceded the close of this political tragedy, none could have been more pungent to Judge Douglas than the fact that Atchison, in a drunken harangue from the tail of a cart in Western Missouri, surrounded by a mob of 'border ruffians' rallying for fresh wrongs upon the free settlers of Kansas, recited, in coarse glee and brutal triumph, the incidents of his interview with the senator of Illinois, when, with mixed cajolery and threats, he partly tempted, partly drove him to his ruin. The Kansas-Nebraska bill was passed. What part Atchison took, what part Missouri took, under the direction of the pro-slavery leaders that filled every department of the State government, the 'border-ruffian' forays, the pillage of the government arsenal at Liberty, the embargo of the Missouri river, and the robbing and mobbing of peaceful emigrants from the free States, the violence at the polls, and the fraudulent voting that corrupted all the franchises of that afflicted territory, do sufficiently attest. It is not needed to rehearse any of this painful and well-known history.

The Territory of Kansas was saved to its prescriptive freedom. The slavery propagandists sullenly withdrew and gave up the contest. The last days of the dynasty that had meditated the conquest of the continent to slave-holding government were evidently at hand. The result of the struggle in



Kansas had reversed the relation of the contesting powers. The oligarchs, who had always before been aggressive, and intended to subordinate the Union to slavery, or destroy it, found themselves suddenly thrown on the defensive; and, with the quick intelligence of a property interest, and the keen jealousy of class and caste which their slave-holding had implanted, they saw that they were engaged in an unequal struggle, that their sceptre was broken, and that, if they continued to rule, it would have to be over the homogeneous half of a dismembered Union. From this moment a severance of the Slave States from the Free was resolved on, and every agency that could operate on governments, State and National, was set to work. It was not by accident that Virginia had procured the nomination of the facile Buchanan for President in the Baltimore Convention of 1856; it was not by accident that Floyd was made Secretary of War, or that, many months before any outbreak of rebellion, this arch traitor had well-nigh stripped the Northern arsenals of arms, and placed them where they would be 'handy' for insurgents to seize. It was not by accident that John C. Breckenridge headed the factionists that willfully divided and defeated the National Democracy, that perchance could have elected Judge Douglas President; nor was it by accident that Beriah Magoffin, a vain, weak man, the creature, adjunct, and echo of Breckenridge, filled the office of governor of Kentucky, nominated thereto by Breckenridge's personal intercession. And lastly, to return to the special theatre of this sketch, it was not by accident that Claiborne F. Jackson, the original mover for Benton's destruction, was at this remarkable juncture found occupying the governor's chair, with Thomas C. Reynolds for his lieutenant governor, a native of South Carolina, an acknowledged missionary of the nullification faith to a State that required to be corrupted, and that he had, during his residence, zealously endeavored to corrupt.

We have now reached the turning point in the history of Missouri. The State is about to be plunged into the whirlpool of civil war. Undisguised disunionists are in complete possession of the State government, and the population is supposed to be ripe for revolt. Only one spot in it, and that the city of St. Louis, is regarded as having the slightest sympathy with the political sentiments of the Free States of the Union. The State is surely counted for the 'South' in the division that impends, for where is the heart in St. Louis bold enough, or the hand strong enough, to resist the swelling tide of pro-slavery fanaticism that was about to engulf the State? Years ago, when it was but a ripple on the surface, it had overborne Benton, with all his fame of thirty years' growth. What leader of slighter mold and lesser fame could now resist the coming shock? In tracing the origin and growth of rebellion in Missouri, it is interesting to gather up all the threads that link the present with the past. It will preserve the unity of the plot, and give effect to the last acts of the drama.

The first visible seam or cleft in the National Democratic party occurred during the administration of President Polk, in the years 1844-48. Calhoun appeared as Polk's Secretary of State. Thomas Ritchie was transferred from Richmond, Va., to Washington, to edit the government organ, in place of Francis P. Blair, Sr. The Jackson *regime* of unconditional and uncompromising devotion to the 'Federal Union' was displaced, and the dubious doctrine of 'States' Rights' was formally inaugurated as the chart by which in future the national government was to be administered. But the Jackson element was not reconciled to this radical change in the structure and purpose of the National Democratic organization; and, although party lines were so tensely drawn that to go against 'the Administration' was political treason, and secured irrevocable banishment from power, the close of Polk's administration found many old Democrats of the Jackson era ready for the sacrifice. The firm resolve of these men was manifested when, after the nomination of Gen. Cass, in 1848, in the usual form, at Baltimore, by the Democratic National Convention, they assembled at Buffalo and presented a counter ticket, headed by the name of Martin Van Buren, who had been thrust aside four years previously by the Southern oligarchs to make way for James K. Polk. The entire artillery of the Democratic party opened on the Buffalo schismatics. They were stigmatized by such opprobrious nicknames and epithets as 'Barnburners,' 'Free Soilers,' 'Abolitionists,' and instantly and forever ex-communicated from the Democratic party. In Missouri alone, of all the Slave States, was

any stand made in behalf of the Buffalo ticket. Benton's sympathies had been with Van Buren, his old friend of the Jackson times; and Francis P. Blair, Sr., of the *Globe*, had two sons, Montgomery Blair and Francis P. Blair, Jr., resident in St. Louis. These two, with about a hundred other young men of equal enthusiasm, organized themselves together, accepted the 'Buffalo platform' as their future rule of faith, issued an address to the people of Missouri, openly espousing and advocating free soil-principles; and, by subscription among themselves, published a campaign paper, styled the *Barnburner*, during the canvass. The result at the polls was signal only for its insignificance; and the authors of the movement hardly had credit for a respectable escapade. But the event has proved that neither ridicule nor raillery, nor, in later years, persecutions and the intolerable pressure of federal power, could turn back the revolution thus feebly begun. In that campaign issue of the *Barnburner* were sown the seeds of what became, in later nomenclature, the Free Democracy, and, later still, the 'Republican' party of Missouri. The German population of St. Louis sympathized from the start with the free principles enunciated. Frank Blair, Jr., became from that year their political leader; right honestly did he earn the position; and right well, even his political foes have always admitted, did he maintain it.

Frank Blair was a disciple of Benton; yet, as is often the case, the pupil soon learned to go far ahead of his teacher. In 1852, there was a union of the Free Democrats and National Democrats of Missouri, in support of Franklin Pierce. But the entire abandonment of Pierce's administration to the rule of the Southern oligarchs sundered the incongruous elements in Missouri forever. In 1856 Benton was found supporting James Buchanan for President; but Blair declined to follow his ancient leader in that direction. He organized the free-soil element in St. Louis to oppose the Buchanan electoral ticket. An electoral ticket in the State at large, for John C. Fremont, was neither possible nor advisable. In some districts no man would dare be a candidate on that side; in others, the full free-soil vote, from the utter hopelessness of success, would not be polled; and thus the cause would be made to appear weaker than it deserved. To meet the emergency, and yet bear witness to principle, the free-soil vote was cast for the Fillmore electoral ticket, 'under protest,' as it was called, the name of 'John C. Fremont' being printed in large letters at the head of every free-soil ballot cast. By this means the Buchanan electors were beaten fifteen hundred votes in St. Louis City and County, where, by a union as Benton proposed, they would have had three thousand majority. But the 'free-soilers' failed to defeat Buchanan in the State.

Nothing discouraged by this result, Blair resumed the work of organizing for the future. The Fillmore party gave no thanks to the free-soilers for their aid in the presidential election, nor did the latter ask any. They had simply taken the choice of evils; and now, renouncing all alliances, Blair became the champion and leader of a self-existing, self-reliant State party, that should accomplish emancipation in Missouri. He again established a newspaper to inculcate free principles in the State. By untiring effort, he revived and recruited his party. He gave it platforms, planned its campaigns, contested every election in St. Louis, whether for municipal officers, for State legislature, or for Congress; and always fought his battles on the most advanced ground assumed by the growing free-soil party of the Union. The powerful and rapidly-increasing German population of St. Louis responded nobly to his zeal and skillful leadership. Soon a victory was gained; and St. Louis declared for freedom, amid acclamations that reverberated throughout the States that extended from the Ohio to the lakes, and from the Mississippi to the Atlantic. But, having wrenched victory from a people so intolerant as the pro-slavery population of Missouri, it was not to be expected that he would retain it easily. He was set upon more fiercely than ever. The loss of the city of St. Louis was considered a disgrace to the State; and the most desperate personal malignity was added to the resentment of pro-slavery wrath in the future election contests in that city. The corrupting appliances of federal power were at last invoked, under Buchanan's administration; and Blair was for the moment overwhelmed by fraud, and thrown out of Congress. But, with a resolution from which even his friends would have dissuaded him, and with a persistency and confidence that were a marvel to friend and foe, he contested his seat

before Congress, and won it. And this verdict was soon ratified by his brave and faithful constituency at the polls. Such was the Republican party, such their leader in St. Louis, when the black day of disunion came. And in their hands lay the destiny of the State.

As soon as the presidential election was decided, and the choice of Abraham Lincoln was known, the disunionists in Missouri commenced their work. Thomas C. Reynolds, the lieutenant-governor, made a visit to Washington, and extended it to Virginia, counseling with the traitors, and agreeing upon the time and manner of joining Missouri in the revolt. The legislature of Missouri met in the latter part of December, about two weeks after the secession of South Carolina. A bill was at once introduced, calling a State convention, and passed. The message of Claiborne F. Jackson, the governor, had been strongly in favor of secession from the Union. The *Missouri Republican*, the leading newspaper of the State, whose advocacy had elected the traitor, declared, on the last day of the year, that unless guaranties in defence of slavery were immediately given by the North, Missouri should secede from the Union. And so the secession feeling gathered boldness and volume.

Candidates for the State convention came to be nominated in St. Louis, and two parties were at once arrayed—the unconditional Union party, and the qualified Unionists, who wished new compromises. Frank Blair was one of the leaders of the former, and he was joined by all the true men of the old parties. But the secessionists—they might as well be so called, for all their actions tended to weaken and discredit the Union—nominated an able ticket. The latter party were soon conscious of defeat, and began to hint mysteriously at a power stronger than the ballot-box, that would be invoked in defence of 'Southern rights.' To many, indeed to most persons, this seemed an idle threat. Not so to Frank Blair. He had imbibed from Benton the invincible faith of the latter in the settled purpose of the 'nullifiers' to subvert and destroy the government. And in a private caucus of the leaders of the Union party, on an ever-memorable evening in the month of January, he startled the company by the proposition that the time had come when the friends of the government must arm in its defence. With a deference to his judgment and sagacity that had become habitual, the Unionists yielded their consent, and soon the enrolment of companies began; nightly drills with arms took place in nearly all the wards of the city; and by the time of election day some thousands of citizen soldiers, mostly Germans, could have been gathered, with arms in their hands, with the quickness of fire signals at night, at any point in the city. The secessionists had preceded this armed movement of the Union men by the organization of a body known as 'minute-men.' But the promptness and superior skill that characterized Frank Blair's movement subverted the secession scheme; and it was first repudiated, and then its existence denied. The day of election came, and passed peacefully. The unconditional Union ticket was elected by a sweeping majority of five thousand votes. The result throughout the State was not less decisive and surprising. Of the entire number of delegates composing the convention, not one was chosen who had dared to express secession sentiments before the people; and the aggregate majority of the Union candidates in the State amounted to about eighty thousand. The shock of this defeat for the moment paralyzed the conspirators; but their evil inspirations soon put them to work again. Their organs in Missouri assumed an unfriendly tone towards the convention, which was to meet in Jefferson City. The legislature that had called the convention remained in session in the same place, but made no fit preparations for the assembling of the convention, or for the accommodation and pay of the members. The debate in the legislature on the bill for appropriations for these purposes was insulting to the convention, the more ill-tempered and ill-bred secession members intimating that such a body of 'submissionists' were unworthy to represent Missouri, and undeserving of any pay. The manifest ill feeling between the two bodies—the legislature elected eighteen months previously, and without popular reference to the question of secession, and the convention chosen fresh from the people, to decide on the course of the State—soon indicated the infelicity of the two remaining in session at the same time and in the same place. Accordingly, within a few days after the organization of the convention, it adjourned its session to the city of St. Louis. It did not meet a cordial reception there. So insolent had the secession spirit already grown, that on the day of the assembling of the convention

in that city, the members were insulted by taunts in the streets and by the ostentatious floating of the rebel flag from the Democratic head-quarters, hard by the building in which they assembled.

Being left in the undisputed occupancy of the seat of government, the governor, lieutenant-governor, and legislature gave themselves up to the enactment of flagrant and undisguised measures of hostility to the federal government. Commissioners from States that had renounced the Constitution, and withdrawn, as they claimed, from the Union, arrived at Jefferson City as apostles of treason. They were received as distinguished and honorable ambassadors. A joint session of the legislature was called to hear their communications. The lieutenant-governor, Reynolds, being the presiding officer of the joint session, required that the members should rise when these traitors entered, and receive them standing and uncovered. The commissioners were allowed to harangue the representatives of Missouri, by the hour, in unmeasured abuse of the federal government, in open rejoicings over its supposed dissolution, and in urgent appeals to the people of Missouri to join the rebel States in their consummated treason. Noisy demonstrations of applause greeted these commissioners; and legislators, and the governor himself, in a public speech in front of the executive mansion, pledged them that Missouri would shortly be found ranged on the side of seceded States. The treason of the governor and legislature did not stop with these manifestations. They proceeded to acts of legislation, preparatory to the employment of force, after the manner of their 'Southern bretheren.' First, it was necessary to get control of the city of St. Louis. The Republican party held the government of the city, mayor, council, and police force—a formidable Union organization. The legislature passed a bill repealing that part of the city charter that, gave to the mayor the appointment of the police, and constituting a board of police commissioners, to be appointed by the governor, who should exercise that power. He named men that suited his purposes. The Union police were discharged, and their places filled by secessionists. Next, the State militia was to be organized in the interests of rebellion, and a law was passed to accomplish that end. The State was set off into divisions; military camps were to be established in each; all able-bodied men between the ages of eighteen and fifty were liable to be called into camp and drilled a given number of days in the year; and, when summoned to duty, instead of taking the usual oath to support the Constitution of the United States, they were required only to be sworn 'to obey the orders of the governor of the State of Missouri.' These camps were styled camps of instruction. One of them was established at St. Louis, within the corporate limits of the city, about two miles west of the court-house, on a commanding eminence.

Thus the lines began to be drawn closely around the Unionists of St. Louis. The State convention had adjourned, and its members had gone home, having done but little to re-assure the loyalists. They had, indeed, passed an ordinance declaring that Missouri would adhere to the Union; but the majority of the members had betrayed such hesitancy and indecision, such a lack of stomach to grapple with the rude issues of the rebellion, that their action passed almost without moral effect. Their ordinance was treated with contempt by the secessionists, and nearly lost sight of by the people; so thoroughly were all classes lashed into excitement by the storm of revolution now blackening the whole Southern Hemisphere.

The friends of the Union could look to but one quarter for aid, that was Washington, where a new administration had so recently been installed, amid difficulties that seemed to have paralyzed its power. The government had been defied by the rebellion at every point; its ships driven by hostile guns from Southern ports; its treasures seized; its arsenals occupied, and its abundant arms and munitions appropriated. Nowhere had the federal arm resented insult and robbery with a blow. This had not been the fault of the government that was inaugurated on the fourth of March. It was the fruit of the official treason of the preceding administration, that had completely disarmed the government, and filled the new executive councils with confusion, by the numberless knaves it had placed in all departments of the public service, whose daily desertions of duty rendered the prompt and honest execution of the laws impossible. But the fact was indisputable; and how could St. Louis hope for protection that had nowhere else been afforded? The national government had an arsenal within the

city limits. It comprised a considerable area of ground, was surrounded by a high and heavy stone wall, and supplied with valuable arms. But so far from this establishment being a protection to the loyal population, it seemed more likely, judging by what had occurred in other States, that it would serve as a temptation to the secession mob that was evidently gathering head for mischief, and that the desire to take it would precipitate the outbreak. The Unionists felt their danger; the rebels saw their opportunity. Already the latter were boasting that they would in a short time occupy this post, and not a few of the prominent Union citizens of the town were warned by secession leaders that they would soon be set across the Mississippi river, exiles from their homes forever. As an instance of the audacity of the rebel element at this time, and for weeks later, the fact is mentioned that the United States soldiers, who paced before the gates of the arsenal as sentinels on duty, had their beats defined for them by the new secession police, and were forbidden to invade the sacred precincts of the city's highway. The arsenal was unquestionably devoted to capture, and it would have been a prize to the rebels second in value to the Gosport navy-yard. It contained at this time sixty-six thousand stand of small arms, several batteries of light artillery and heavy ordnance, and at least one million dollars' worth of ammunition. It was besides supplied with extensive and valuable machinery for repairing guns, rifling barrels, mounting artillery, and preparing shot and shell. The future, to the Union men of St. Louis, looked gloomy enough; persecution, and, if they resisted, death, seemed imminent; and no voice from abroad reached them, giving them good cheer. But deliverance was nigh at hand.

About the middle of January, Capt. Nathaniel Lyon, of the Second Infantry, U.S.A., arrived in St. Louis with his company; and his rank gave him command of all the troops then at the arsenal and Jefferson Barracks, a post on the river, ten miles below, the department being under the command of Brigadier General Harney. Capt. Lyon had been garrisoning a fort in Kansas. He was known to some of the Union men of St. Louis; and his resolute spirit and devoted patriotism marked him as their leader in this crisis. Frank Blair at once put himself in communication with Capt. Lyon, and advised him fully and minutely as to the political situation. He exposed to him the existence of his volunteer military organization. At his request Capt. Lyon visited and reviewed the regiments; and it was arranged between them that if an outbreak should occur, or any attempt be made to seize the arsenal, Capt. Lyon should receive this volunteer force to his assistance, arm it from the arsenal, and take command for the emergency. It should be known, however, to the greater credit of the Union leaders of St. Louis, that they had already, from private funds, procured about one thousand stand of arms, with which their nightly drills, as heretofore stated, had been conducted. As soon as Capt. Lyon's connection with this organization was suspected, an attempt was made to have him removed, by ordering him to Kansas on the pretext of a court of inquiry; but this attempt was defeated. Thus matters stood for a time, the Union men beginning to be reassured, but still doubtful of the end. After a while, Fort Sumter was opened upon, and fell under its furious bombardment. The torch of war was lit. President Lincoln issued his proclamation for volunteers. Gov. Jackson telegraphed back an insolent and defiant refusal, in which he denounced the 'war waged by the federal government' as 'inhuman and diabolical.' Frank Blair instantly followed this traitorous governor's dispatch by another, addressed to the Secretary of War, asking him to accept and muster into service the volunteer regiments he had been forming. This offer was accepted, and the men presented themselves. But Brig. Gen. Harney, fearing that the arming of these troops would exasperate the secession populace, and bring about a collision with the State militia, refused to permit the men to be mustered into service and armed. This extraordinary decision was immediately telegraphed to the government, and Gen. Harney was relieved, leaving Capt. Lyon in full command. This was the 23d of April. In a week four full regiments were mustered in, and occupied the arsenal. A memorial was prepared and sent to Washington by Frank Blair, now colonel of the first of these regiments, asking for the enrolment of five other regiments of Home Guards. Permission was given, and in another week these regiments also were organized and armed. The conflict was now at hand. Simultaneously with this arming on the part of the government for the protection of the arsenal, the order went forth for the assembling of the

State troops in their camps of instruction. On Monday, the 6th of May, the First Brigade of Missouri militia, under Gen. D.M. Frost, was ordered by Gov. Jackson into camp at St. Louis, avowedly for purposes of drill and exercise. At the same time encampments were formed, by order of the governor, in other parts of the State. The governor's adherents in St. Louis intimated that the time for taking the arsenal had arrived, and the indiscreet young men who made up the First Brigade openly declared that they only awaited an order from Gov. Jackson—an order which they evidently had been led to expect—to attack the arsenal and possess it, in spite of the feeble opposition they calculated to meet from 'the Dutch' Home Guards enlisted to defend it. A few days previously, an agent of the governor had purchased at St. Louis several hundred kegs of gun-powder, and succeeded, by an adroit stratagem, in shipping it to Jefferson City. The encampment at St. Louis, 'Camp Jackson,' so called from the governor, was laid off by streets, to which were assigned the names 'Rue de Beauregard,' and others similarly significant; and when among the visitors whom curiosity soon began to bring to the camp a 'Black Republican' was discovered by the soldiers,—and this epithet was applied to all unconditional Unionists,—he was treated with unmistakable coldness, if not positive insult. If additional proof of the hostile designs entertained against the federal authority by this camp were needed, it was furnished on Thursday, the 9th, by the reception within the camp of several pieces of cannon, and several hundred stand of small arms, taken from the federal arsenal at Baton Rouge, Louisiana, which was then in the possession of the rebels. These arms were brought to St. Louis by the steamboat *J.C. Swon*, the military authorities at Cairo having been deceived by the packages, which were represented to contain marble slabs. On the arrival of the *Swon* at the St. Louis levee, the arms were taken from her, sent to Camp Jackson, and received there with demonstrations of triumph.

When Capt. Lyon was entrusted with full command at St. Louis, President Lincoln had named, in his orders to him, a commission of six loyal and discreet citizens with whom he should consult in matters pertaining to the public safety, and with whose counsel he might declare martial law. These citizens were John How, Samuel T. Glover, O.D. Filley, Jean J. Witsig, James O. Broadhead, and Col. Frank P. Blair. The last mentioned—Colonel Blair—was Capt. Lyon's confidential and constant companion. They were comrades in arms, and a unit in counsel. Their views were in full accord as to the necessity of immediately reducing Camp Jackson. Defiance was daily passing between the marshalling hosts, not face to face, but through dubious partisans who passed from camp to camp, flitting like the bats of fable in the confines of conflict. Capt. Lyon's decision, urged thereto by Col. Blair, was made without calling a council of the rest of his advisers. They heard of it, however, and, though brave and loyal men all, they gathered around him in his quarters at the arsenal, Thursday evening, and besought him earnestly to change his purpose. The conference was protracted the livelong night, and did not close till six o'clock, Friday morning, the 10th. They found Capt. Lyon inexorable,—the fate of Camp Jackson was decreed. Col. Blair's regiment was at Jefferson Barracks, ten miles below the arsenal, at that hour. It was ordered up; and about noon on that memorable Friday, Capt. Lyon quietly left the arsenal gate at the head of six thousand troops, of whom four hundred and fifty were regulars, the remainder United States Reserve Corps or Home Guards, marched in two columns to Camp Jackson, and before the State troops could recover from the amazement into which the appearance of the advancing army threw them, surrounded the camp, planting his batteries upon the elevations around, at a distance of five hundred yards, and stationing his infantry in the roads leading from the grove wherein their tents were pitched. The State troops were taken completely by surprise; for, although there had been vague reports current in camp of an intended attack from the arsenal, the cry of the visitors at the grove, 'They're coming!' 'They're coming!' raised just as the first column appeared in sight, found them strolling leisurely under the trees, chatting with their friends from the city, or stretched upon the thick green grass, smoking and reading.

## Beaufort District,—Past, Present, And Future

The sovereign State of South Carolina seems from the beginning to have been actuated by the desire not only to mold its institutions according to a system differing entirely from that of its sister States, but even to divide its territory in a peculiar manner, for which reason we find in it 'districts' taking the place of counties. The south-west of these bears the name of its principal town, 'Beaufort.' It is bounded on the west by the Savannah River, and on the south by the Atlantic. Its length from north to south is fifty-eight miles, its breadth thirty-three miles, and it contains about one and a quarter millions of acres of land and water. Considered geologically, Beaufort is one of the most remarkable sections of the United States. As recent events have brought it so prominently before us, we propose to consider its history, capacities, and prospects.

From its proximity to the Spanish settlements in the peninsula of Florida, its beautiful harbors and sounds were early explored and taken possession of by the Spaniards. It is now certain they had established a post here called 'Fort St. Phillip,' at St. Elena,<sup>2</sup> as early as 1566-7; this was probably situated on the south-western point of St. Helena Island, and some remains of its entrenchment can still be traced. From this fort Juan Pardo, its founder, proceeded on an expedition to the north-west, and explored a considerable part of the present States of South Carolina and Georgia.

How long the Spaniards remained here is now uncertain, but they long claimed all this coast as far north as Cape Fear. The French planted a colony in South Carolina, and gave the name Port Royal to the harbor and what is now called Broad River; but they were driven off by the Spaniards, and history is silent as to any incidents of their rule for a century. In 1670 a few emigrants arrived in a ship commanded by Capt. Hilton, and landed at what is now known as 'Hilton's Head,' the south-western point of Port Royal harbor, which still perpetuates his name. The colony was under the management of Col. Sayle; but the Spaniards at St. Augustine still claimed the domains, and the settlers, fearing an attack, soon removed to the site of Old Charleston, on Ashley River. In 1682, Lord Cardoss led a small band from Scotland hither, which settled on Port Royal Island, near the present site of Beaufort. He claimed co-ordinate authority with the governor and council at Charleston. During the discussion of this point the Spaniards sent an armed force and dislodged the English, most of whom returned to their native country. A permanent settlement was finally made on Port Royal Island in 1700. The town of Beaufort was laid out in 1717, and an Episcopal church erected in 1720. The name was given from a town in Anjou, France, the birthplace of several of the Huguenot settlers.

For many years the Spaniards threatened the coast as far north as Charleston, but the settlement increased, and extended over St. Helena and other islands. Slavery was here coeval with settlement, and the peculiar institution was so earnestly fostered, that in 1724 it was estimated that South Carolina contained 18,000 slaves to only 14,000 whites. The slaves were mostly natives of Africa of recent importation, and were poorly adapted to clear up the forests and prepare the way for extensive plantations, but their cost was small, and every year they improved in capacity and value. In the succeeding half century were laid the fortunes of the prominent families who have controlled the district, and often greater interests, to our day. Grants of land could be had almost for the asking, especially by men of influence; and fertile islands were given, containing hundreds and sometimes thousands of acres, to a single family, who have here been monarchs of all they survey, including hundreds of slaves, till the *Hegira* or *flight* A.D. 1861.

When we take into account the salubrity of the climate and the fertility of the soil, we must allow that this district has many natural advantages which can not be excelled by any section of the same extent in this country. A considerable part of the district is composed of islands, which are supposed to be of a comparatively recent formation, many of them beautiful to the eye, and rich in

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<sup>2</sup> See Historical Mag., Vol. 4, p. 230.



agricultural facilities; they are in number upwards of fifty, not less than thirty of them being of large size. Upon the sea-coast are Reynolds, Prentice, Chaplins, Eddings, Hilton Head, Dawfuskie, Turtle, and the Hunting Islands. Behind these lie St. Helena, Pinckney, Paris, Port Royal, Ladies', Cane, Bermuda, Discane, Bells, Daltha, Coosa, Morgan, Chissolm, Williams Harbor, Kings, Cahoussue, Fording, Barnwell, Whale, Delos, Hall, Lemon, Barrataria, Lopes, Hoy, Savage, Long, Round, and Jones Islands. These are from one to ten miles in length, and usually a proportional half in width. St. Helena is over twenty miles in extent, and could well support an agricultural population of twenty thousand. Port Royal is next in size, but, being of a more sandy formation, is not so fertile. These islands are all of an alluvial formation,—the result of the action of the rivers and the sea. There is no rock of any kind, not even a pebble stone, to be found in the whole district.

The soil of these islands is composed mostly of a fine sandy loam, very easily cultivated. In most of them are swamps and marshes, which serve to furnish muck and other vegetable deposits for fertilizing; but the idea of furnishing anything to aid the long over-worked soil seems to these proprietors like returning to the slave some of the earnings taken from him or his ancestors, and is seldom done till nature is at last exhausted, and then it is allowed only a few years' repose. Situated under the parallel of 32°, there is scarcely a product grown in our country, of any value, that can not be produced here. Previous to the Revolution the principal staple for market was indigo, and that raised in this district always commanded the highest price. It was from the proceeds of this plant that the planters were enabled for a long period to purchase slaves and European and northern American productions. Soon after the Revolution their attention was turned to cotton; but the difficulty of separating it from the seed seemed to make it impossible to furnish it in any profitable quantity, for so slow was the process then followed that, with the utmost diligence, a negro could not, by hand labor, clean over a few pounds per day. The genius of Whitney, however, opened a new era to the cotton planters, who were much more eager to avail themselves of his invention than to remunerate him. It was soon perceived that the cotton raised on these islands was far superior to that produced in the interior, which is still called Upland, only to distinguish it from the 'Sea Island.' It was also noticed that while the common variety produced a seed nearly green with a rough skin, the seed of the islands soon became black with a smooth skin; the effect entirely of location and climate, as it soon resumes its original color when transported back to the interior. The cultivation of this variety is limited to a tract of country of about one hundred and fifty miles in length, and not over twenty-five miles in breadth, mostly on lands adjacent to the salt water, the finest 'grades' being confined to the islands within this district. It is true that black-seed cotton is cultivated to some extent along the coast from Georgetown, S.C., to St. Augustine, but a great part of it is of an inferior quality and staple, and brings in the market less than one-half the price of the real 'Sea Island.' This plant seems to delight in the soft and elastic atmosphere from the Gulf Stream, and, after it is 'well up,' requires but a few showers through the long summer to perfect it. It is of feeble growth, particularly on the worn-out lands, and two hundred pounds is a good yield from an acre. An active hand can tend four acres, besides an acre of corn and 'ground provisions;' but with a moderate addition of fertilizers and rotation of crops no doubt these productions would be doubled. If the yield seems small, the price, however, makes it one of the most profitable products known. The usual quotations for choice Sea Islands in Charleston market has been for many years about four times as great as for the middling qualities of Uplands,—probably an average of from thirty-five to forty-five cents per pound; and for particular brands<sup>3</sup> sixty to seventy cents is often paid. The writer has seen a few bales, of a most beautiful color and length of staple, which sold for eighty cents, when middling Uplands brought but ten cents per pound. It is mostly shipped to France, where it is used for manufacturing the finest laces, and contributes largely to the texture of fancy silks, particularly the cheaper kinds for the American

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<sup>3</sup> Among the cotton lately arrived from Port Royal was a number of bales marked with the form of a coffin. It was the growth of 'Coffin's Island,' which is usually of the highest grade.

market. After passing above the flow of the salt water, but within the rise of the tide, there is a wide alluvial range along the rivers and creeks, which, by a system of embankments, can be flowed or drained at pleasure. This is cultivated with rice, and, if properly cared for, yields enormous crops, sometimes of sixty bushels to an acre. The land is composed of a mass of muck, often ten feet deep and inexhaustible, and never suffers from drought. This land is very valuable, one hundred dollars often being paid per acre for large plantations. Much rice land, however, remains uncleared for want of the enterprise and perseverance necessary to its improvement.

Farther in the interior the land is principally of a sandy formation, most of it underlaid with clay. Very little effort is, however, made by planters to cultivate it, although it is very easily worked, and with a little manuring yields fair crops of corn and sweet potatoes. The cereal grains are seldom cultivated, but no doubt they would yield well. A large portion of the main-land is composed of swamps, of which only enough have been reclaimed to make it certain that here is a mine of wealth to those gifted with the energy to improve it. The soil is as fertile as the banks of the Nile, and nowhere could agricultural enterprise meet with such certainly profitable returns. Recurring again to the agricultural capacity of the islands, it is certain that good crops of sugar-cane can be grown on them. During the war of 1812, the planters turned their attention to it, and succeeded well, since which time many of them have continued to plant enough for their own use; but this plant soon exhausts such a soil, unless some fertilizer is used, and they therefore prefer cotton, which draws a large part of its sustenance from the atmosphere alone. The sweet and wild orange grows here, and some extensive groves are to be seen. Figs are produced in abundance from September till Christmas. Gardens furnish abundant vegetables, yielding green peas in March and Irish potatoes in May, while numerous tribes of beautiful flowers hold high carnival for more than half the year.

This seems to be the true home of the rose, which is found blooming from March until Christmas. Many of the rare climbing varieties of this flower, which we see at the North only as small specimens in green-houses, grow here in wild profusion. The grape is represented by many species indigenous to this State alone, and could, no doubt, be cultivated and produced in greater variety and perfection than elsewhere on this continent, as the climate is more equable. A species of Indian corn, called 'white flint corn,' and which when cooked is very nutritious and white as snow, seems indigenous to these islands. It is much superior to the common varieties.

Of the sylvia we will only say, it is equal in value and variety to that of any section of our country. Here is the home of the palmetto<sup>4</sup> or cabbage tree, the only palm in our wide country. The live oak, once so abundant, has, however, been largely cut off, mostly to supply our navy-yards, and some of the ships built from it are now blockading the very harbors from which it was carried. The pitch pine is the common growth of the interior, and under a new system would form a valuable article of commerce as lumber, and as yielding the *now* so much required turpentine. Of wild animals and birds, here are to be found a large variety. The Hunting Islands and others are well stocked with deer. During the winter wild, geese and ducks abound, and a variety of fish, with fine oysters, can be had at all seasons.

We now come to consider the present inhabitants of this district. The whites are almost entirely the descendants of the earliest settlers of this State, who were English,<sup>5</sup> Scotch, and Protestant Irish, with a slight infusion of the Huguenot and Swiss elements. A century and a half has rendered them homogeneous. As there has never been any interest here other than agriculture, and as every man may

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<sup>4</sup> The palmetto is a straight, tall tree, with a tuft of branches and palm leaves at its top. The new growth is the centre as it first expands somewhat resembles a cabbage. It is often used for boiling and pickling. The wood of the tree is spongy, and is used for building wharves, as it is impervious to the sea-worm. It is said that a cannon ball will not penetrate it. It is a paltry emblem for a State flag, as its characteristics accurately indicate pride and poverty. When used for wharves, it, however, becomes a veritable 'Mudsill.'

<sup>5</sup> Before 1700 a colony from Dorchester, Mass., made a settlement on Ashley River, and named it for their native town; afterwards, they sent an offshoot and planted the town of Midway, in Georgia. For more than a century they kept up their Congregational Church, with many of their New England institutions. Their descendants in both States have been famed for their enterprise, industry, and moral qualities down to the present day.

be said to own the plantation he cultivates, there has been as little change of property or condition as possible, and therefore the same land and system of cultivation has passed from father to son through four or five generations. Had there been any emigration or change of population, some alterations, and most likely new enterprise and vigor, would have been infused, and more modern and national feeling have been instituted for their narrow and sectional prejudices. No doubt our national character has been much influenced by the division of land. Where this has been nearly equal, as in our New England towns, a republican form of government has been almost a necessity. But at the South an entirely different arrangement has prevailed. Land was at first distributed in large bodies fitted to accommodate a state of slavery; and the consequence was that a feudal system was inaugurated from the settlement, which has continued with increasing power. This has been one of the permanent causes of Southern pride and exclusiveness.

The inhabitants of South Carolina and Virginia previous to the Revolution were very supercilious towards the North, and even to their less opulent neighbors of Georgia and North Carolina; a feeling which was often the cause of much antagonism among the officers and soldiers during the war. Charleston and Williamsburg gave the tone to good society, and it was haughty and aristocratic in the extreme. While Virginia has for the last half century been in a state of comparative decay, South Carolina has, by its culture of cotton and rice, just been able to hold its own; but the pride and exclusiveness of its people have increased much faster than its material interests. Although the Constitution of the United States guarantees to every State a republican form of government, no thinking person who has resided for a single week within the limits of South Carolina can have failed to see and feel that a tyranny equal to that of Austria exists there. The freedom of opinion and its expression were not permitted. Strangers were always under espionage, and public opinion, controlled by an oligarchy of slave-holders, overruled laws and private rights. Nowhere, even in South Carolina, was this feeling of *hauteur* so strong as in that portion of the State which we are describing. On the large plantations the owners ruled with power unlimited over life and property, and could a faithful record be found it would prove one of vindictive oppression, productive oftentimes of misery and bloodshed. Most of the wealthier planters in the district have residences at Beaufort, to which they remove during the summer months to escape the malaria arising from the soil around their inland houses. This place may be considered the home of the aristocracy. Here reside the Barnwells,<sup>6</sup> Heywards, Rhett<sup>7</sup>(formerly called Smiths,) Stuarts, Means, Sams, Fullers,<sup>8</sup> Elliots,<sup>9</sup> Draytons and others, altogether numbering about fifty families, but bearing not more than twenty different names, who rule and control the country for forty miles around. This is the most complete and exclusive approach to 'nobility' of blood and feeling on our continent. Nowhere else is family pride carried

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<sup>6</sup> The Barnwells can trace their pedigree back about one hundred and fifty years to a Col. Barnwell who commanded in an Indian war. Subsequently the name appears on the right side in the Revolution. This is a long period to trace ancestry in Carolina; for while nearly all New England families can trace back to the Puritans, more than two hundred years, the lordly Carolinians generally get among the 'mudsills' in three or four generations at the farthest.

<sup>7</sup> Some thirty years ago, R. Barnwell Smith made a figure in Congress by his ultra nullification speeches, and was then considered the greatest fire-eater of them all. He was not 'to the manor born,' but was the son of a Gen. Smith, who founded and resided in the small and poverty-stricken town of Smithville, N.C., at the mouth of the Cape Fear River. As his paternal fortune was small, and some family connection existed with the Barnwells, he emigrated to Beaufort, and there practiced as a lawyer. He was followed by two brothers, who had the same profession. He was the first who openly advocated secession in Congress. They have all been leading politicians and managers of the Charleston *Mercury*, which, by its mendacity and constant abuse of the North, and its everlasting laudations of Southern wealth and power, has done much to bring on the present war. Desirous to stand better with the aristocracy, some years ago the family sunk the plebeian patronymic of Smith and adopted that of Rhett, a name known in South Carolina a century previous.

<sup>8</sup> During Nullification times the Fullers were Union men. Doctor Thomas Fuller, who, a short time since, set fire to his buildings and cotton crop to prevent their falling into Yankee hands, is well known as a kind-hearted physician, and better things might have been expected of him. His brother is a celebrated Baptist clergyman in Baltimore. He was formerly a lawyer, and afterwards preached to an immense congregation, mainly of slaves, in his native place.

<sup>9</sup> Many years ago the Elliots were staunch Union men, and Stephen Elliot, a gentleman of talent, wrote many very able arguments against nullification and in favor of the Union. He always thought that Port Royal must some day be the great naval and commercial depot of the South. He may yet live to see his former anticipations realized, though not in the way he desired.

to such an extent. They look with supercilious disdain on every useful employment, save only the planting of cotton and rice. Nothing in any of our large cities can equal the display of equipages, with their profusion of servants in livery, exhibited on pleasant afternoons, when the mothers and daughters of these cotton lords take their accustomed airing. So powerfully has this feeling of exclusiveness prevailed that no son or daughter dares marry out of their circle. For a long series of years has this custom prevailed, and the consequence is that the families above named are nearly of a common blood; and it needs no physiologist to tell us the invariable effect arising from this transgression of natural laws, on the physical and mental faculties of both sexes. In such a state of society is it strange that the present generation should have grown up with ideas better suited to the castes of India than to those of republican America? As a consequence they consider their condition more elevated than that of their neighbors in the adjoining States, and of almost imperial consideration. But no language can express their bitter contempt for the people of the North, more particularly for those of New England birth.

In perusing the history and progress of any portion of our country, the statistics of population become an interesting study. Let us glance over a brief table, showing what the increase has been in this district for the past forty years, and its miserable deficiency in physical means of strength and defense. In 1820 the district contained 32,000 souls, of which there were 4,679 whites and 27,339 slaves, and 141 free blacks. In 1860 there were 6,714 whites and 32,500 slaves, and 800 free blacks, making a total of 40,014,—an increase of whites of 2,035, of slaves 5,161, of free blacks 650:—total increase 7,855 in forty years. Here we have nearly the largest disproportion of whites to slaves in any part of the South. Of the 6,714 whites, about 1,000 are probably men over twenty-one years of age, and it is not to be presumed that an equal number are capable of bearing arms. Is it possible to find anywhere a community more helpless for its own protection or defense? It is one of the truths of science and philosophy that nature, when forced beyond its own powers and laws, will react, and again restore its own supremacy. So we here find a magnificent space of country, rich in all natural requisites, and unsurpassed in its capabilities of producing not only the necessities of life, but its luxuries, having an exclusive right to some of the most valuable staples of the world, which has been for a century and a half the abode of an imperious few, who have, by tyrannical power, wrung from the bones and muscles of generations of poor Africans the means to sustain their luxury, power, and pride. They have also robbed from the mother earth the fertility of its soil to its utmost extent, leaving much of it completely exhausted. This state of things has reacted on them; it has made them proud, domineering, ambitious, and revengeful of fancied injuries. It has hurried them into rebellion against the best government the world ever saw,—and this has at last brought with it its own punishment and retribution. It has placed their soil, their mansions, their crops and poor slaves in the possession of the hated men of the North, and under the laws and control of the government they affected to despise. When the last gun had sounded from the ramparts at Port Royal, and the Stars and Stripes again resumed their supremacy on the soil of South Carolina, a new era dawned over these beautiful islands and waters, and the day that witnessed the retreat of the rebel forces should hereafter mark, like the flight of Mahomet, the inauguration of a new dispensation for this land and its people. Let us, therefore, in continuing our chronicles, cast the horoscope, and, without claiming any spirit of prophecy, show the duties of our nation in this contingency, and the beneficial results that must flow from it, if carried out with the energy, perseverance, and practical Christianity due to our country and the age in which we live.

The accession to any government of new territory brings with it new duties, which it is always important should be performed with energy and decision, so that the greatest good, to the greatest number, may be the result. A good Providence has placed the domain under consideration in our possession. Its political condition is to us unique, and almost embarrassing. If the question is asked, 'Can we hold and dispose of a part, or whole, of a sovereign State as a conquered province?' the answer must be in the affirmative. Government is supreme, and must be exercised, particularly to

protect the weak, and for the general good of the whole nation. Here is a region, as fair as the sun shines upon, now in a great measure deserted and lying waste. What is to be done with it? and what is our duty in this exigency? The first want is a government, for without a proper one no progress can be made. Let Congress then at once establish a territorial government over so much of the State as we now have in our possession, and over what we may in future obtain;—not a government to exhibit pomp, and show, but one practical and useful, with a court and its proper officers. Let every large unrepresented estate be placed in the hands of a temporary administrator, who should be a practical and honest man, and held to a strict account for all properties entrusted to his keeping, and who should act also as guardian to the slaves belonging to the estate. Then enforce the collection of a tax; and if the owner comes forward within sixty days, pays the tax, takes the oath of allegiance, and agrees to remain in the territory and assist in enforcing and executing the laws, during that and the succeeding year, let him resume his property, and be protected in all his rights. But in default of any loyal response from the proprietor, the property should be disposed of, in moderate quantities, to actual settlers, who should be bound to do duty for its defense, whenever called upon.

But then comes the great difficulty, the disposition of the slaves,—the great question which has so long been discussed as a theory, and which now has to be met as a practical measure. Let us meet it as men and patriots, and, rising above the clamor of fanatics, or the proclamations of new-fangled and demagoguing brigadiers, look at the permanent result to our whole country, and the real good of the African race.

Humanity, society, and property, all have claims and acknowledged rights; let them all be considered. It is well known that the slaves on these islands have always been kept in a state of greater ignorance of the world and all practical matters than those inhabiting the border States, or where there is a larger proportion of whites, with whom they often labor and associate. To emancipate them at once would be to do a great wrong to the white man, to the property, in whatever hands it might be, and a still greater injury to the slave. There can be but one way of disposing of this question which will satisfy the nation, and quiet the fears of the conservative, and preserve the hopes of the radical, which is, to pursue a *middle* course—a policy which shall as nearly as possible equalize the question to all parties. Let the slave be retained on the plantation where he is found; and, as no race are so much attached to their own locality, so let them remain, place them under a proper system of APPRENTICESHIP, with a mild code of laws, where every right shall be protected, where suitable instruction, civil and religious, shall be given, and where the marriage rite shall be administered and respected. Under such laws and beneficent institutions, this territory would soon be settled by men from the West, the North, and from Europe, intelligent, enterprising, and industrious, who would retrieve its worn-out fields, and introduce new systems of culture, with all the modern labor-saving utensils. With kind treatment and new hopes, the simple sons of Africa would have inducements to labor and to await with patient hope the future and its rewards. Then would Beaufort District become what the Giver of all good designed it to be—the abode of an industrious, peaceful, and prosperous community. The production of its great staple, 'Sea-Island cotton,' would be immensely increased, and its quality improved, till it rivaled the silks of the Old World. The yield of rice would be doubled, and its gardens and orchards would supply the North with fruits now known only to the tropics.

So soon as the new government was fairly inaugurated, and the condition of the land and its future cultivation settled, a movement would of necessity be made to found here a city which would be the great commercial metropolis of the South.

Charleston was 'located' at the wrong place, simply with the object of being as distant as possible from the Spanish settlements, and has always suffered from an insufficient depth of water on its bars to accommodate the largest class of merchant ships. It has barely sixteen feet of water at high tide, and ships loaded as lightly as possible have often been obliged to wait for weeks to enter or leave the port. A decrease of one or two feet in its main channel would, in its palmiest days, have been fatal to its prosperity. The sinking of a dozen ships loaded with stone has no doubt placed a permanent

barrier to the entrance of all but a small class of vessels. The ships themselves may soon be displaced or destroyed by the sea-worm, but the New England granite will prove a lasting monument to the folly and madness of the rebellion. The destruction of the best part of the city by fire seems also to show that Providence has designed it to be ranked only with the cities of the past.

The productions of South Carolina have always been large and valuable, and since the completion of their system of railroad facilities they have greatly increased; therefore a commercial city is a necessity, and Port Royal must be its locality. Here is the noblest harbor south of the Chesapeake, with a draught of water of from twenty-five to thirty feet, enough for the largest-sized ships, and sufficient anchorage room for all the navies of the world. Our government should here have a naval depot to take the place of Norfolk, since there is no more suitable place on the whole coast. In this connection the name, Royal Port, is truly significant.

The precise locality for the new city can not now be indicated, but we would suggest the point some two miles south-west of Beaufort, which would give it a position not unlike New York. It would have the straight Broad River for its Hudson, with a fine channel on the south and east communicating with numerous sounds and rivers. Its situation on an island of about the same length as Manhattan completes the parallel.

The value of the produce conveyed over the sounds and rivers connecting with Port Royal, by sloops and steamers, must be counted by millions of dollars. We may estimate the crop of Sea-Island cotton at about fifteen thousand bales, or six millions of pounds, and of rice about fifty million pounds. Yankee enterprise would soon double the amount, and add to it an immense bulk of naval stores and lumber.

But this is but a moiety of what the exports would be. A branch railroad only ten miles long would connect this port with all the railroads of South Carolina and Georgia, which, diverging from Charleston and Savannah, spread themselves over a large part of five States. This road would make tributary to this place a vast district of country.

Savannah, which has for the last few years competed with Charleston for this trade, will soon feel the power of the government, and it must yield up a large part of its business to the more favorable location of the new city.

A few short years, and what a change may come over these beautiful islands and the waters that hold them in its embrace! A fair city, active with its commerce and manufactures, wharves and streets lined with stores and dwellings, interspersed with churches and schools, inhabited by people from every section of our country, and from every part of Europe, all interested to improve their own condition, and all combining to add strength and wealth to the Union which they agree to respect, love, honor, and defend!

# The Ante-Norse Discoverers Of America

## I. The Mythical Era

Who were the first settlers in America?

Within a few years our school-books pointed to Cristoval Colon, or Columbus, and his crew, as the first within the range of history who 'passed far o'er the ocean blue' to this hemisphere. Now, however, even the school-books—generally the last to announce novel truths—say something of the Norsemen in America, though they frequently do it in a discrediting and discreditable way. However, the old Vikings have triumphed once more, even in their graves, and Professor Rafn can prove as conclusively that his fierce ancestry trod the soil of Boston as that the Mayflower Puritans followed in their footsteps. It is a dim old story, laid away in Icelandic manuscripts, and confirmed by but few relics on our soil; yet it is strong enough to give New England a link to the Middle Ages of Europe, with their wildest romance and strangest elements. It is pleasant to think that far back in the night there walked for a short season on these shores great men of that hearty Norse-Teuton race which in after times flowed through France into England, and from England through the long course of ages hitherward. Among the old Puritan names of New England there is more than one which may be found in the roll of Battle Abbey, and through the Norse-Norman spelling of which we trace the family origin of fierce sea-kings in their lowland isles or rocky lairs on the Baltic.

But there are older links existing between America and Europe than this of the Norseman. Of these the first is indeed buried in mystery—leading us back into that sombre twilight of 'symbolism,' as the Germans somewhat obscurely call the study of the early ages whose records are lost, and which can only be traced by reflection in the resemblances between mythologies which argue a common origin, and the monuments remaining, which seem to establish it. Yes, America has this in common with every country of Asia, Europe, and Africa: she has relics which indicate that at one time she was inhabited by a race which had perhaps the same faith, the same stupendous nature-worship, with that of the Old World, and which was, to reason by analogy, *possibly* identified by the same language and customs. What *was* this race, this religion, this language? Who shall answer? Men like Faber, and Higgins, and Lajard, with scores of others, have unweariedly gathered together all the points of resemblance between the religions and mythologies of the Hindus and Egyptians and Chinese, the Druids and the Phenicians, the Etruscans and the Scandinavians, and old Slavonic heathen, and found in and between and through them all a startling identity: everywhere the Serpent, everywhere the Queen of Heaven with her child, everywhere the cup of life and the bread and honey of the mysteries, with the salt of the orgie, everywhere a thousand fibres twining and trailing into each other in bewildering confusion, indicating a common origin, yet puzzling beyond all hope those who seek to find it. So vast is the wealth of material which opens on the scholar who seeks to investigate this common origin of mythologies, and with them the possible early identity of races and of languages, that he is almost certain to soon bury himself in a hypothesis and become lost in some blind alley of the great labyrinth.

Certain points appear to have once existed in common to nations on every part of the earth previous to authentic history, and in these America had probably more or less her share, as appears from certain monuments and relics of her early races. They are as follows:—

1. A worship of nature, based on the inscrutable mystery of generation with birth and death. As these two extremes caused each other, they were continually *identified* in the religious myth or symbol employed to represent either.



2. This great principle of action, developing itself into birth and death, was regarded as being symbolized in every natural object, and corresponding with these there were created myths, or 'stories,' setting forth the principal mystery of nature in a thousand poetic forms.

3. The formula according to which all myths were shaped was that of transition, or *the passing through*. The germ, in the mother or in the plant, which after its sleep reappeared in life, was also recognized in Spring, or Adonis, coming to light and warmth after the long death of winter in the womb of the earth. The ark, which floats on the waters, bearing within it the regenerator, signified the same; so did the cup or horn into which the wine of life was poured and from which it was drunk; so too did nuts, or any object capable of representing latent existence. The passing into a cavern through a door between pillars or rocky passes, or even the wearing of rings, all intimated the same mystery—the going into and the coming forth into renewed life.

4. But the great active principle which lay at the foundation of the mystery of birth and death, or of action, was set forth by the serpent—the type of good and evil, of life and destruction—the first intelligence. It is the constant recurrence of this symbol among the early monuments of America, as of the Old World, which proves most conclusively the existence at one time of a common religion, or 'cultus.' It was probably meant to signify water from its wavy curves, and the snake-like course of rivers, as inundation seems to have been, according to early faith, the most prolific source of the destruction of nature, and yet the most active in its revival.

There are in Brittany vast lines of massy Druidic stones, piled sometimes for leagues in regular order, in such a manner as to represent colossal serpents. Those who will consult the French *Dracontia* will be astonished at the labor expended on these strange temples. Squier has shown that the earth-works of the West represent precisely the same symbol. Mexico and South America abound, like Europe and the East, in serpent emblems; they twine around the gods; they are gods themselves; they destroy as Typhon, and give life in the hands of Esculapius.

In the United States, as in Europe and in the East, there are found in steep places, by difficult paths, always near the banks of streams, narrow, much-worn passages in rocks, through which one person<sup>10</sup> can barely squeeze, and which were evidently not intended for ordinary travel. The passing through these places was enjoined on religious votaries, as indicating respect for the great principle of regeneration. The peasants of Europe, here and there, at the present day, continue to pass through these rock or cave doors, 'for luck.' It was usual, after the transition, whether into a cave, where mysteries, feasts, and orgies were held, significant of 'the revival,' or merely through a narrow way, —to bathe in the invariably neighboring river; the serpent-river or water which drowns organic life, yet without which it dies.

In England, at a comparatively recent period, and even yet occasionally in Scandinavia, the peasantry plighted their troth by passing their hands through the hole in the 'Odin-stones,' and clasping them. Beads and wedding rings and 'fairy-stones,' or those found with holes in them, were all linked to the same faith which rendered sacred every resemblance to the 'passing through.' The graves of both North and South America contain abundant evidence of the sacredness in which the same objects were held. I have a singularly-shaped soapstone ornament, taken from an Indian grave, whose perforation indicates the 'fairy-stone.' The religious legends of Mexico and of Peru are too identical with many of the Old World to be passed over as coincidences; the gold images of Chiriqui, with their Baal bell-ringing figures, and serpent-girt, pot-bellied phallic idols, are too strikingly like those of *Old Ireland* and of the East not to suggest some far-away common origin. I have good authority for saying that almost every symbol, whether of cup or dove, serpent or horn, flower or new moon, boat

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<sup>10</sup> An Inquiry laid by me it few years ago before the Historical Society of Pennsylvania elicited information as to several of these 'gates' in that State. I have not the work by me, but I believe that FALES DUNLAP, Esq., of New York, asserts on Rabbinical authority, in an appendix to *Sod or the Mysteries*, that the Hebrew word commonly translated as 'passover' should be rendered 'passing through.'

or egg, common to Old World mythology, may be found set forth or preserved with the emphasis of religious emblems in the graves or ruined temples of ancient North America.

The mass of evidence which has been accumulated by scholars illustrative of a common origin of mythologies and a centralization of them around the serpent; or, as G.S. Faber will have it, the Ark; or, as some think, the heavenly bodies; or, as others claim, simply a worship of paternity and maternity,—is immense. Why they should claim separate precedence for symbols, all of which set forth the one great mystery how GOD 'weaves and works in action's storm,' is only explicable on the ground that 'every scholar likes to have his own private little pet hypothesis.' Enough, however, may be found to show that this stupendous nature-worship *was* held the world over,—*possibly* in the days of a single language,—in America as in ancient Italy, or around the sacred mountain-craggs of India; in Lebanon as in Ireland, in the garden-lands of Assyria, and in the isles of the South.

Yet all this is as yet, for the truly scientific ethnologist, only half-fact, indefinite, belonging to the cloud-land of fable. The poet or the thinker, yearning for a new basis of art, may find in the immense mass of legends and symbols an identification between all the forms of nature in a vast harmony and mutual reflection of every beautiful object; but for the man of facts it is unformed, not arranged, useless. We know not the color of the race or races which piled the Western mounds; their languages are lost; they are vague mist-gods, living in a dimmer medium than that of mere tradition. So ends the first period of intercommunication between Asia—the probable birthplace of the old mythology—and America.

## II. The Chinese Discoverers Of Mexico In The Fifth Century

But there is a second link, ere we come to the Norsemen, which is strong enough to merit the favorable consideration of the scientific man, for it rests on evidence worthy serious investigation. I refer to the fact that the Chinese-Annals, or Year Books,—which, according to good authority, have been well kept, and which are certainly prosaic and blue-bookish enough in their mass of dry details of embassies and expenditures to be highly credible,—testify that in the fifth century the Chinese learned the situation of the great peninsula Aliaska, which they named Tahan, or Great China. Beyond this, at the end of the fifth century,—be it observed that the advances in discovery correspond in time in the records,—they discovered a land which Deguignes long after identified with the north-west coast of America. With each discovery, the people of these new lands were compelled, or were represented at court as having been compelled, to send ambassadors wife tribute to the Central Realm, or China.

But there had been unofficial Chinese travelers in Western America, and even in Mexico itself, before this time. Those who have examined the history of that vast religious movement of Asia which, contemporary with Christianity, shook the hoary faiths of the East, while a higher and purer doctrine was overturning those of the West, are aware that it had many external points or forms in common with those of the later Roman church, which have long been a puzzle to the wise. To say nothing of mitres, tapers, violet robes, rosaries, bells, convents, auricular confession, and many other singular identities, the early Buddhist church distinguished itself by a truly catholic zeal for the making of converts, and, to effect this, sent its emissaries to Central Africa and Central Russia; from the Sclavonian frontier on the west to China, Japan, and the farthest Russian isles of the east. On they went; who shall say where they paused? We know that there are at this day in St. Petersburg certain books on black paper taken from a Buddhist temple found in a remote northern corner of Russia. It was much less of an undertaking, and much less singular, that Chinese priests should pass, by short voyages, from island to island, almost over the proposed Russian route for the Pacific telegraph to America. That they *did so* is explicitly stated in the Year Books, which contain details relative to *Fusang*, or Mexico, where it is said of the inhabitants that 'in earlier times these people lived not according to the laws of Buddha. But it happened in the second "year-naming" "Great Light" of Song (A.D. 458), that five beggar monks, from the kingdom Kipin, went to this land, extended over it the religion of Buddha, and with it his holy writings and images. They instructed the people in the principles of monastic life, and so changed their manners.'

But I am anticipating my subject. In another chapter I propose, on the authority of Professor Neumann, a learned Sinologist of Munich, to set forth the proofs that in the last year of the fifth century a Buddhist priest, bearing the cloister name of Hoei-schin, or Universal Compassion, returned from America, and gave for the first time an official account of the country which he had visited, which account was recorded, and now remains as a simple fact among the annual registers of the government.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

## The Spur Of Monmouth

'Twas a little brass half-circlet,  
Deep gnawed by rust and stain,  
That the farmer's urchin brought me,  
Plowed up on old Monmouth plain;  
On that spot where the hot June sunshine  
Once a fire more deadly knew,  
And a bloodier color reddened  
Where the red June roses blew;—

Where the moon of the early harvest  
Looked down through the shimmering leaves,  
And saw where the reaper of battle  
Had gathered big human sheaves.  
Old Monmouth, so touched with glory—  
So tinted with burning shame—  
As Washington's pride we remember,  
Or Lee's long tarnished name.

'Twas a little brass half-circlet;  
And knocking the rust away,  
And clearing the ends and the middle  
From their buried shroud of clay,  
I saw, through the damp of ages  
And the thick disfiguring grime,  
The buckle-heads and the rowel  
Of a spur of the olden time.

And I said—what gallant horseman,  
Who revels and rides no more,  
Perhaps twenty years back, or fifty,  
On his heel that weapon wore?  
Was he riding away to his bridal,  
When the leather snapped in twain?  
Was he thrown and dragged by the stirrup,  
With the rough stones crushing his brain?

Then I thought of the Revolution,  
Whose tide still onward rolls—  
Of the free and the fearless riders  
Of the 'times that tried men's souls.'  
What if, in the day of battle  
That raged and rioted here,  
It had dropped from the foot of a soldier,  
As he rode in his mad career?

What if it had ridden with Forman,  
When he leaped through the open door,  
With the British dragoon behind him,  
In his race o'er the granary floor?  
What if—but the brain grows dizzy  
With the thoughts of the rusted spur;  
What if it had fled with Clinton,  
Or charged with Aaron Burr?

But bravely the farmer's urchin  
Had been scraping the rust away;  
And cleansed from the soil that swathed it,  
The spur before me lay.  
Here are holes in the outer circle—  
No common heel it has known,  
For each space, I see by the setting,  
Once held some precious stone.

And here—not far from the buckle—  
Do my eyes deceive their sight?—  
Two letters are here engraven,  
That initial a hero's might!  
'G.W.!' Saints of heaven!  
Can such things in our lives occur?  
Do I grasp such a priceless treasure?  
Was this *George Washington's spur*?

Did the brave old *Pater Patrioe*  
Wear that spur like a belted knight—  
Wear it through gain and disaster,  
From Cambridge to Monmouth flight?  
Did it press his steed in hot anger  
On Long Island's day of pain?  
Did it drive him, at terrible Princeton,  
'Tween two storms of leaden rain?

And here—did the buckle loosen,  
And no eye look down to see,  
When he rode to blast with the lightning  
The shrinking eyes of Lee?  
Did it fall, unfelt and unheeded,  
When that fight of despair was won,  
And Clinton, worn and discouraged,  
Crept away at the set of sun?

The lips have long been silent  
That could send an answer back;  
And the spur, all broken and rusted,  
Has forgotten its rider's track!

I only know that the pulses  
Leap hot, and the senses reel,  
When I think that the Spur of Monmouth  
May have clasped George Washington's heel!

And if it be so, O Heaven,  
That the nation's destiny holds,  
And that maps the good and the evil  
In the future's bewildering folds,  
Send forth some man of the people,  
Unspotted in heart and hand,  
On his foot to buckle the relic,  
And charge for a periled land!

There is fire in our fathers' ashes;  
There is life in the blood they shed;  
And not a hair unheeded  
Shall fall from the nation's head.  
Old bones of the saints and the martyrs  
Spring up at the church's call:—  
God grant that the Spur of Monmouth  
Prove the mightiest relic of all!

## The Fatal Marriage Of Bill The Soundser

Reader, possibly you do not know what a 'Soundser' is. Then I will tell you. In the coastwise part of the State of New Jersey in which I live, numerous sounds and creeks everywhere divide and intersect the low, sea-skirting lands, wherein certain people are wont to cruise and delve for the sake of securing their products, and hence come to be known in our homely style as Soundseres. The fruitage afforded by these sounds is both manifold and of price. Throughout all the pleasant weather, they yield, with but little intermission, that gastronomic gem, the terrapin; the succulent, hard-shell clam, and the 'soft' crab; the deep-lurking, snowy-fleshed hake, or king-fish; the huge, bell-voiced drum, and that sheen-banded pride of American salt-water fishes, the sheepshead. During the waning weeks of May, and also with the continuance of dog-days, this already profuse bounty receives a goodly accession in the shape of vast flocks of willets, curlews, gray-backs, and other marine birds, which, with every ebb tide, resort to their shoaler bars and flats, to take on those layers of fat which the similarly well-conditioned old gentleman of the city finds so inexpressibly delicious. When the summer is once, over, and while the cold weather prevails, they furnish another and quite new set of dainties. Then the span-long, ripe, 'salt' oyster is to be had for the raking of their more solidly-bottomed basins; and all along their more retired nooks and harbors, the gunner, by taking proper precautions, may bring to bag the somewhat 'sedgy' but still well-flavored black duck, the tender widgeon, the buttery little bufflehead, the incomparable canvas-back, and the loud-shrieking, sharp-eyed wild goose. All this various booty is industriously secured by the 'soundseres,' to find, ere long, a ready market in the larger inland towns and cities. But united to this shooting, fishing, and oyster-catching, they have another 'trade' whose scene is on the waters, though it connects itself with the sea, rather than the sounds, and *this* is 'wrecking.' They are prompt for this service whenever the occasion requires; indeed, I sometimes think they prefer it, dangerous though it be, before all others. Inured as they are to every sort of exposure, they are of course a tough and rugged race; and what with their diversity of occupation, calling, as it does, for a constant interchange of the use of the gun, net, boat, fishing line, and some one or other arm or edge tool, they are usually, nay, almost invariably, handy and quick-witted.

By far the most notable 'soundser' our neighborhood ever bred was my hero, BILL. Physically, at least, he was a true wonder. He stood full six feet two, weighed eleven score pounds, and at the same time carried no more flesh than sufficed to hide the exact outline of his bones. Another man so strong as he I have never seen. I have repeatedly known him to lift and walk off with anchors weighing five and six hundred weight; and those big, thick hands of his could twist any horseshoe as if it were a girl's wreath. Certainly he was not in the least graceful; that 'ponderosity' of his could in no way be repressed. But he was still of rude comeliness, his shape being squarely fitted and tolerably proportioned, while his broad, red-maned visage wore a constant glow of plain, though sincere, kindness and good-humor.

As his physical man was uncommon, so he had uncommon mental endowments. He was the only 'soundser' I ever knew who understood farming. He had inherited a farmstead of some twenty-five or thirty acres, and this he soon had blooming as the rose. When occasion required, he wrought on it, day and night. He divided it, with truest judgment, into proper fields, experimented successfully with various kinds of novel manures (most of which he obtained from the sea), grew stock, planted, in rotation, and, with only here and there a sympathizer, gave in his full adherence to the theory of root culture. And he was a mechanic. He could build house or barn to the last beam, and ship or boat to the last joint; nay, he once devised the model of a self-righting life-boat, which I have often heard shipmasters, and even real shipwrights, descant upon in the highest terms of praise. Moreover, I can affirm that he was a navigator. It is true that the *science* of seamanship, as set forth in books, he had never mastered. But he knew right well what winds of a certain force and direction foretold,



what waves of a certain height and aspect meant; and this knowledge, combined with a squint, now and then, at his pocket compass, sufficed to enable him to take a vessel with safety anywhere along our coast.

But while my old pal showed high abilities in other arts, as a 'soundser' and wrecker he was not to be matched. He brought to the first of these pursuits a clearness of observation which would have met the approbation of many an acknowledged man of science. He knew every sort of food which bird and fish fed upon, where it was to be found, and the circumstances favorable to its production. He knew why the game resorted to certain spots yesterday, and avoided them to-day; what circumstances—and they are very many—impelled it to joyousness or quietude; and what were most of its minor instincts. And all this was done *thoroughly*, withal. There was no haphazard or uncertainty in any of his conclusions. Taking thought of sundry conditions, he could tell at any time when such a thing was applicable; how many sheepsheads one could catch in the sounds; whether the *honk* of the wild goose, flying overhead, announced that he was on his way to a fresh-water pool or a bar of gravel; whether the black ducks were cooling their thirsty gizzards in a woodland pond, sitting scattered about the marshes, or huddling together on the bosom of the sea. In a word, his mind had gathered unto itself every law, of the least importance, affecting the existence of such wild creatures about us as cost any pains to bring to hand; and thus he was literally master over them, and held their lives subject to his will. That this power was really surprising, will hardly be disputed; and since we, his associates, could in no way possess ourselves of the like, it passed among us for something almost miraculous.

Still, brilliant 'soundser' as old Bill was, he was far greater as a wrecker; since I am now about to relate an occurrence in the line which proves him a veritable hero. As is perfectly well known, our American coast is often the scene of fearful storms, which deal out wide-spread destruction to mariners. With us, these gales are commonest in February, and hence this month is held in marked dread. Some years ago, in the season referred to, a storm burst upon our shores, whose like only a few of the older among us had ever known. After fitfully moaning from the northward and eastward for a day or two, the wind, one morning, finally settled due north-east,—thus sweeping directly upon the land,—and blew a hurricane. It was excessively cold, too, yet not so cold but that a fine, dry snow was falling, though from the fury of the wind this could settle nowhere, but was driven, whirling and surging, before the blast in dense clouds. In short, it was a time of truly unearthly wildness; and our hearts sank the deeper in us, since we knew what ere long must inevitably occur. At last, within an hour or two of nightfall, the sound of a ship's bell, rung hurriedly, pealed towards us along the uproar of the tempest, and by this we were made aware that a vessel had been wrecked on a certain shoal rising up in the ocean, about two miles from that part of the beach nearest our village. To go to the rescue of this vessel, at this time, was absolutely impossible. For, to say nothing of the wrath of the winds, the air was so thick with snow that, in the speedily advancing hours of darkness, in which we should not fail to be entrapped, we would be powerless to find our way at sea a foot. There was no help for it; the poor victims of the shipwreck must that very night know death in one or another most terrifying shape, 'if it was the will of the Lord.' With this mournful conviction, about twenty of us gathered at old Bill's house with the closing in of a darkness as of Tartarus, and kept its watches. The anger of the storm abated in no way whatever till morning, and then the sole change that took place was a somewhat thinner aspect of the driving snow. Yet, even when this was discerned, every man of us hastened to draw over his ordinary winter garb an oil-cloth suit which enveloped him from head to foot, and soberly announced himself ready to do his duty in the strait. That we should be exposed to the greatest dangers was absolutely certain; and whether a single survivor of the terrors of that awful night yet clung to the few frail timbers in the sea, for us to rescue, none but Heaven knew; still, the manhood of each demanded that what was possible to be done in the matter we should at least attempt.

And so we started; the leader being old Bill, who to some end, that I could not then divine, bore a boat-sail bundled on his back. Our first business was to make way to our surf or life boat.

This lay about three miles from the village, reckoning as the crow flies, and was sheltered under a rude house which stood on the shores of a bay opening by an inlet into the sea. Our common way of gaining this house was through a circuitous passage of the sounds; but these we soon discovered, in consonance with a previous prediction of old Bill's, were entirely frozen over save in certain parts of their channels; and hence, this route being unnavigable for such boats as were at hand, which, without exception, were light gunning and fishing skiffs, we were forced to avail ourselves of a barely practicable land track of which we knew, and which, as it led about among the marshes, was also circuitous. And the necessity of choosing this land path added to our difficulties, in that we were forced to provide ourselves with a small batteau and drag it behind us, to be able to cross many ditches and sloughs with which it was barred, and which, particularly along their edges, were never really frozen. After toiling and battling for a long period, and at the same time having to face the most painfully cutting wind that burst unobstructedly over the level area of the marshes, we at last reached the house wherein the life-boat lay, and when old Bill had scrutinized its oars, and stored it with a mingled collection of cordage, canvas and spars, we ran it into the water. But now another trouble arose. The bay, like the sounds of which indeed it formed a part, was covered with ice,—either in solid sheets, or that thick slush, peculiar to ocean estuaries, which is chiefly known as 'porridge ice,'—and, from its comparative shallowness, covered so densely, too, that if we had trusted to getting our boat out of it by sheer rowing, it would have taken us the entire day so to do. In this emergency nothing would serve but that we must advance bodily into the water, and, crushing and clearing away the ice with our feet, drag the boat, in a depth at least sufficient for her to float, to the entrance of the inlet, where the current ran so strongly that no ice could gather. After a severely trying amount of labor, this point was finally gained, and we stood fairly in front of the tall, thundering breakers; whereupon each man nimbly jumped to his place in the craft, that of steersman being the post of old Bill.

As we gave way on our oars, we shot along the inlet without much difficulty; and presently old Bill announced that, he caught a faint sight of the wreck in the distance—to all appearance 'most all gone but the hull.' But we had little or no opportunity to indulge in speculation or remark on the discovery, for in a moment or two we began to oppose the wildness of the open main, and the hour of our real trial set in. For the first time we could now appreciate the full force of the gale. Good Heavens, how it blew! The waters seemed alive and in direst convulsion. Everywhere huge walls of breakers were constantly upheaved to be felled and shattered with a roar as of some terrific cannonade; while the air became the arena for a helter-skelter tossing of sheets of spray, clots of froth, and spirits of brine, which plentifully assailed our poor boat in their madness, and, besides partially filling her with slush, encased every man in a complete coating of ice. If our craft had not been modeled with the very highest degree of skill, and if our steersman had not been one of a thousand, we could have made no headway at all in this appalling tumult. As it was, our advance was of the weakest, and its success seemed very doubtful, let our efforts be what they might. Not but what we could sufficiently hold our own in the swirl of the vanquished waves; but when they swooped upon us in their full stature, they not only sent the boat back as if she had been a mere feather, but with a second's awkwardness on the part of old Bill they would have flung her clean over from stem to stern, and our places among the living would have been vacant. Having strained every nerve for nearly two hours, we were still but part way through the breakers, while some of the men began to complain of fatigue; with which old Bill seized a favorable opportunity to put the boat about, and we were swept ashore on the beach as in the twinkling of an eye. Here, we secured our boat by hauling her high and dry on the strand; freed her from the slush and water which had gained in her bottom; and then retired to the leeward of a range of sand hills near by, to recruit our energies.

With full leisure to ponder over the difficulties confronting our expedition, some few of the crew now began to 'speak it foully,' and even to emit gruff proposals to return homewards. But to these waverers old Bill at once administered the sternest rebuke; and, as they at last held their peace, he averred with a gay smile (for he dearly loved the presence of danger, and could never be brought

to look on it other than as a rough sort of irresponsible horse-play, over which he was sure in one way or another to gain the mastery), that he had now weighed all the conditions of the pass, and that the next time we attempted it we should assuredly prevail. This assertion, coming from such a source, encouraged one and all very greatly; and ere long we cheerfully launched our boat once more, and again began to tug at the quivering oars. In a very little while it became apparent enough that the tactics that Bill intended to adopt in our present venture were very different from those put in practice with the last. Instead of boldly facing the breakers as he had heretofore done, he now began his maneuvering by laying us directly in the trough of the sea,—planting the boat a little crosswise, however, so as to prevent an untoward swell from riding over her side and thus filling her,—and the instant he saw an advancing breaker beginning to fracture, as a prelude to its downfall and destruction, he boldly sped us, when the thing was at all practicable, straight in the teeth of the gap, and as it proceeded to widen, we shot through it, with the surf leaping and tossing on either hand high above our heads. This stroke could have been possible only to a steersman possessed of herculean strength, combined with the rarest daring and coolness; and, as the result of these qualities, it was exceedingly effective. It lessened the danger of our being capsized almost entirely. Indeed, the sole mishap that was threatened by so doing, was the liability to being swamped by the falling fragments of the breakers; but this peril old Bill declared we might safely trust he would also avert. It being the nature of humanity to experience a mood of high exaltation with the surmounting of any serious obstacle, we now worked our way with minds light and cheery, and with all thoughts of anything like fatigue completely forgotten. Though our course was on the whole a zigzag one, and though we certainly met with one or two serious rebuffs, we were constantly gaining headway, and in something over an hour forced the last line of the breakers, and stemmed what on ordinary occasions would have been simply the blue body of the Atlantic. But even here a huge commotion was reigning, though our progress was far less tedious than it had previously been; and with about another hour's labor we were alongside the wreck, and had climbed to her deck.

The plight of the vessel was mournful enough. She had evidently been built for a three-masted schooner, but, as Bill had observed when he first obtained a view of her, everything about her was well-nigh gone save her hull. Her bulwarks had been thoroughly crushed, and so the sea had successively torn away her boats, shivered her galley and wheelhouse, and filled her cabin and hold. Her masts were also destroyed, the fore and mizzen masts being carried away from their steepings, and the main-mast broken completely in twain just above the cross-trees. But a sight still more desolate, as well as harrowing, yet awaited us, as, in overhauling the sail-encumbered shrouds of the partially standing mast, we discovered several ice-bound figures rigidly hanging therein, which, being cut away and lowered to our boat, proved to be the body of a negro perfectly stark and dead, and three most pitiable white sailors, whose life was so far extinguished that they could neither move hand nor foot, nor utter more than the feeblest moans.

When we had covered the face of the dead and sheltered the well-nigh dead as best we could in the bottom of our boat, of course our chief thought was to return to the shore as swiftly as possible. But on this head there was no call to entertain the smallest solicitude; for after old Bill, from a motive that we could not yet name, had 'stepped' a mast through one of the foremost thwarts of the boat, and rigged a sail all ready to be spread, we cast off from the wreck, and presently, dropping into the full strength of the wind, were swept onward like an arrow, with scarce the least use of any other oar than that in the hands of our stalwart steersman. Speedily crossing the outer waters, we leaped and bounded over the breakers; and when old Bill, as we were rushing along the inlet, gave orders for the hoisting of the sail, we not only hastened to obey him, but immediately saw an all-important reason for the command. For we were now about entering the ice of the sounds; and as the boat flew in its midst, her stiff, tight sail drove her through the stubborn obstruction as easily and in much the same manner as the steam plow rips up the matted bosom of the prairies. In due season we reached the landing where we usually disembarked from the sounds, and where we found a wagon awaiting

us, to which we bore our sad freightage, and led the way for old Bill's house. On arriving, we laid the corpse in an outbuilding and carried the sailors into a bedroom. But what was to be next done? To tell the truth, most of us knew no more than so many children. But here our leader again showed his knowledge. Strongly condemning the lighting of a fire in the apartment,—which some one was about to do,—he set us busily at work bringing him a good supply of tubs, and buckets of cold water, into which he dipped the naked persons of the sufferers; and as this treatment, combined with a patient, gentle chafing, which was also administered, at last restored the flow of their vital forces, he gave them a few spoonfuls of broth apiece, and, while they looked a gratefulness they could nowise express, lifted them like babes with his giant arms to warm beds, where they fell into what was at first a fitful, broken slumber, but finally a childlike, placid sleep. They were saved!

If the reader is now curious to know why a man like old Bill was not a patrician and captain in the campaign of life, rather than the mere private and plebeian he was, I can answer that there were several things which impeded that consummation. His character, though of wonderful height and force in some respects, was, after all, without true discipline, and presented many glaring incongruities. Thus, whatever he had of what could really be named ambition was satisfied when he had surprised us 'soundsers;' and our praise—and we lavished it upon him in full measure, as we knew he liked it—was all the praise he seemed to desire. Then, he was altogether one of us in his notions of pleasure and recreation. Like the rest of us, he cordially appreciated the sparkling product of the New England distilleries, and far more than any of us—to such a pitch did his animal spirits rule—he relished our broad sea-side jokes and songs, and as well our rattling jigs and hornpipes. As for others attempting to elevate him to a more exalted station, the thing was simply impossible. When led of his own accord to seek other society than ours, he could by no means content himself with the companionship of staid practical persons, who on account of his latent worth would have readily countenanced, and with the least opportunity even served him, but he invariably paid his court to adventurers; such creatures, for instance, as seedy 'professors' of one kind or another, who, in the inevitable shawl and threadbare suit of black, were constantly dismounting at the village tavern, with proposals either to 'lecture' on something, or 'teach' somewhat, as the case might happen to be, and who, having no affinity whatever with the brawny, awkward Viking who fondly hung on their shabby-genteel skirts, amused themselves at his greenness, or pooh-pooh'd him altogether, as they saw fit. And when, as it not unfrequently happened, official and influential individuals at a distance were moved by the story of his renown to pay him their respects in person, and listen courteously and gravely to his opinions, his discrimination stood him in no better stead, for as soon as he possibly could he bent the conference towards a sailor's revel, and astonished his stately visitants by singing the spiciest songs, and sometimes even by a Terpsichorean display in full costume; for he was excessively proud of his accomplishments in this line, and implicitly believed that the shaking of his elephantine limbs, and the whirling of his broad, coatless flanks, formed a spectacle so tasteful and entertaining, that no one could fail to enjoy it to the utmost. Assuredly I have now said enough as to old Bill's incapacities for a grander role in life. In reality that part of a lofty manhood to which he at first sight seemed fitted, was not his; for, properly speaking, he was not an actual man, but a boy—a grand and glorious boy, if you will, but yet a very boy; and at length he met the fate of a boy, as we shall learn.

Once more we were engaged upon a wreck. But this time it was in no hyperborean tempest that we were called forth, but when the very sweetest airs of June were blowing. The case demanding our aid was that of a wrecking schooner which had gaily left her moorings in New York harbor to pick up a summer's living along the coast, but had inadvertently cut up some of her capers rather too near our beach, and so with one fine ebb tide found herself stranded. As it was an instance of sickness in the regularly graduated and scientific college itself, our whole shore was intensely 'tickled' at the accident. And again, as this doctress, like many another ailing leech, was quite incapable of curing her own suffering, her toddy-blossom-faced bully of a New York captain was pleased to salute old Bill with cup high in air, and beg that he would take a sufficient force and heave the distressed

craft into deep water. Thus a crew of us were called together and set to work at the vessel. As the weather was so warm and beautiful, and as bed and board were at this time to be had on the beach, we agreed among us that our convenience would be the better served by taking up our temporary quarters near the scene of our labors. Now, the place where we were offered the necessary accommodation consisted of an ancient plank-built tenement, which stood behind a sand-ridge that a far younger Atlantic than ours had piled up, and then, retreating, abandoned. In winter this rude domicile was bare and tenantless; but in the summer months it was usually occupied by some thriftless gammer or gaffer from the main-land, who, having stocked it with a few of the coarsest household goods, and whatever provisions came to hand, offered entertainment to such wreckers and 'soundsers' as happened to be in its vicinity. The present incumbent of the hostel was a woman, claiming to be a widow, of the name of Rose; bearing in most respects no resemblance whatever to any of her predecessors. Where she was born, or had hitherto resided, none of us knew: all that gossip could, gather was that she had unexpectedly descended from a passing vessel with her effects and entered directly the abandoned house. When questioned as to the scene of her earlier life, she vaguely gave answer that she had disported herself largely in 'Philadelphy;' but as no 'Philadelphy' woman that ever walked through a doorway was or is able to compound a chowder or bake a clam pie worthy of the name, and as Madame Rose understood how to prepare both these luxuries to a charm, her statement must have been false; she was, undoubtedly, a 'coast-wise' lady, and one who knew who Jack was as well as he himself did. Her appearance was, on the whole, agreeable. She was tall, slender, of regular features, and, though indisputably on the shady side of forty, was still free from any signs that would proclaim her charms to be on the wane. I remember in particular that she had long, white and regular teeth, thereby strongly contrasting with our native women, who as a rule lose their teeth early. Her manners were very novel to us. She was invariably of a simpering, ducking turn, and interlarded her curt speech with curiously hard words. In dress she carried matters with an incomparably high hand. She wore hoops 'all day long,'—a freak then never even so much as thought of in our village,—adorned her fingers with many rings, and her throat with large florid brooches, and in the evening, after having brought her household duties to a close, sat here or there with her sewing, in silks (though perhaps not of the newest), or other highly-civilized stuffs.

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