

"Then sir," she said, "permit me to say I am a Mason's widow, and my poor son in prison is a Mason's son—with this declaration I leave your office."

That moment the Secretary's manner was changed to that of the most courteous interest—he entreated her to be seated until he could write a line to the Secretary of State. In a few minutes he presented her with a note to the Secretary recommending her to his sympathy and friendship. The Secretary of State received her most kindly, and gave her a letter to the commandant at New Orleans, directing him to procure her a free passage to Vera Cruz by the first steamer. Through the agency of the two Secretaries, the lodges placed in her hands three hundred dollars, with a talismanic card from the Grand Master at Washington, and the widow left the city.

When she reached Pittsburg, the stage agent seeing the letter she bore from the Grand Master, would receive nothing for her passage—the captain of the steamer on which she embarked for New Orleans, no sooner deciphered it than he gave the best state-room he had, and when she reached the Crescent City she had two hundred and ninety dollars left of her three hundred. She there waited on the General in command of the station, with the letter of the Secretary of State, who immediately instructed the Colonel in command of the forwarding troops to see that she had a free passage to Vera Cruz by the first steamer. By all the officers she was treated with the greatest politeness and delicacy, for they were all Masons, and felt bound to her by ties as strong and *delicate* as those which bind a brother to a sister, and rejoiced in the opportunity afforded them of evincing the benign and noble principles of the Craft.

After a passage of five days she reached Vera Cruz, and having a letter from the commandant at New Orleans to the American Governor, she sent it to him, enclosing also the talismanic card she received from the Grand Master at Washington. The Governor immediately waited on her at the hotel, and offered her a transport to the city of Mexico by a train that would start the next morning. The Colonel commanding the train kindly took her in charge, and afforded her every facility and comfort on her journey, providing her with a carriage when the country was level, and with mules and palanquins over the mountains. Within ninety miles of the city, they were overtaken by a detachment of dragoons escorting a government official to the General in command. Anxious to get on faster, she asked permission of the Colonel to join the detachment, and though informed of the danger and fatigue of hard rides day and night on horseback, he was willing to brave all, that she might sooner see her son. The Colonel then provided her with a fleet and gentle-gaited Mexican pony, and she assumed her place with the troops, escorted by the officers, and never flagged till the towers of Mexico were in sight.

She reached the city on the second day's battle, and in the heat of the battle attempted to enter the gates. An officer instantly seized her bridle, and told her she must wait until the city was taken. "Oh! sir," she exclaimed, "I cannot wait one hour in sight of the city that holds my son a prisoner—I must see him." "The city must first be taken, madam," he again replied with emphasis. "I cannot wait, sir," she replied, "my son, my only son, may be ill—dying—in chains—in a dungeon—one hour's delay may remove him from me. Oh! I must go to him—I will enter the city." "Madam," said the officer, "you cannot reach it but by crossing the battlefield—you will surely be killed." "Sir," said the lady, "I have not travelled from Virginia to the gates of the city to fear to enter them—thanks for your kindness—a thousand heartfelt thanks for you and the officers who have been so kind to me. I shall always remember these officers with the most grateful feelings of my heart—but don't detain me longer. Yonder is a gate that leads to the city. I will enter it in search of my dear boy." And on she sped, but ere she reached the gate another officer rode up by her side and admonished her of her danger and imprudence. "Sir," she replied, "this is no time to talk of prudence and fear—my son, my only son, is a prisoner in chains. I am told that Santa Anna is in the midst of yon glittering group. I will seek him and place in his hand the talismanic card I bear—he is a Mason, and will heed me." "War destroys all Brotherhood," said the officer, who was not a Mason. She made him no reply, but watching her moment, struck her pony and darted across the field of death. At that moment the masked battery that mowed down one-half of the Palmetto regiment, opened—yet right across the gory field she was seen galloping on her white pony, avoiding the retreating platoons by a semicircle around their flank—the next moment she was seen coursing over the ground in the rear, the battery in full play. Hundreds seeing her, stopped, forgetful of the storm of the iron balls that howled around them, to follow with their eyes what seemed to them an apparition. All expected to see her fall every moment, but on she went with fearless air. "The woman's love for her son has made her wild," said the officer who attempted to arrest her flight. "She will surely be killed," exclaimed another. "A mother's love is stronger than the pains of death," exclaimed a soldier. "The god of battle will protect her," exclaimed a Tennessean, "she will reach Santa Anna." The