

## THE DAUGHTER OF THE SOUTH.

Paul Maston was one of America's most brilliant journalists. Like Norman, of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, he always travelled in state. He had interviewed great students and great sciolists, great rulers and great upstarts, great statesmen and great political knaves; great ecclesiastics and great sinners. He was in touch with all the celebrities of the Old World and the New. Maston was in his thirtieth year. Picture a man, tall and powerfully built; strong, intellectual face; brow arched, yet full; hair dark and slightly streaked with gray, and you will have before your "mind's eye" Paul Maston, the great American correspondent. Though he had marched, with the tread of a king, through the courts of the Old World, his free spirit remained unchanged. He was known, admired and loved by the people of America. In diplomatic circles in Washington he was a great favourite. A distinguished statesman, famous as an author and orator, asked him to go South to make a special study of the Race Problem. His editor-in-chief also wished him to interview "The Daughter of the South."

On the threshold of her Atlanta home, Paul Maston looked for the first time into the eyes of "The Daughter of the South."

The mental photograph he had made of her when her name was first heard in the North, represented her to be a "blue-stocking," a heavy-jawed, stern visaged, cold-eyed, strong, indeed, middle-aged woman. What a charming disappointment! He found her to be the fairest handiwork of God—a beautiful, high-spirited, and wonderfully gifted young woman.

Eulalie Danton—"The Daughter of the South"—as she was lovingly called by the people of the Southern States, was in her twenty-third year. She was a student, a lover of books, and had a special aptitude for the study of those questions which are generally supposed to be the property of men. She was a great admirer of the late Henry W. Grady. Her "Gradyism," which was the fire of her genius, attracted almost universal attention to her luminous magazine articles.

Maston wondered why one so young could have won the heart of the South.

"It's rather peculiar," said Paul to himself, "that a people, a nation, usually gives some pet name to great public characters. Probably it's the same feeling that prompts the mother to endearingly 'nickname' her child. I believe 'The Daughter of the South' is deserving of her name," said Paul as he entered her drawing-room.

Over the mantel there hung a picture of Jefferson Davis; on one side of it a battle scene, on the other a fine crayon of General Lee. A short distance to the left of this last picture was a soldier's battered hat and tattered suit of grey; to the right a wreath of flowers enclosing a motto, while above the centre picture many swords were crossed in peace.

"Poor old Jeff; brave old South," murmured Paul.

"I can read your thoughts, Mr. Maston," said Eulalie.

"Yes, you saw me looking at the picture," he replied.

"The embodiment, the memory of a lost cause," said the girl. "But we will not talk about that, Mr. Maston."

"Oh, no! no! we won't talk about that. My mission is not a secret to you. You have fixed ideas about the South; you write about it. Tell me what you propose to do! What is your plan?"

Eulalie paused before replying. She then slowly and deliberately said: "I will not waste time in speaking of details. Disfranchise the negro. The North murdered the South by giving the negro a vote. Believe me, the peace of the South and the safety of the Republic depend upon the disfranchisement of the negro."

"Why not go back to shackledom?" asked Paul.

"Because," answered Eulalie, "the New South does not even dream of shackledom. The lash, the manacle and the bloodhound belong to the dead South."

"Well, disenfranchise the negro," said Paul. "What then?"

"What then?" exclaimed the girl. "You ask what then. Why, this—only this: What the war failed to bring about would be brought about—a true union between North and South."

"It would be disruption," said Paul.

"No fear of it," answered Eulalie. "The new South knows how to care for the negro."

"But what about the negro himself?" asked Paul.

"You mean to say—would the negro give up his vote without a struggle?" said Eulalie.

"Exactly."

"Well, I don't know about that," answered the girl, doubtfully. "But," she said, "if he struggles, the North can teach him the necessity of his disfranchisement as it taught us the—or rather to realize—the heinousness of the sin of slavery."

"I am sorry to hear you always say North and South. Why not say the Republic or the Nation," said Paul.

The girl passionately cried out, "Why do I say that? Why do I say North and South? Why, because there is a North and there is a South. Just as Irishmen say there is a Great Britain and there is an Ireland." With a ring of bitterness in her grand voice she repeated, "Yes, there is, alas! There is a North and there is a South."

"But there is a United States,"

"Yes, in name. Union brought about by force. Moral means, not forcible ones, should consummate union. There is union, but there is also division. Division there shall be so long as thoughts of a negro majority ruling the south

haunts our minds. An ignorant negro majority in power; think—think of that!" A crimson wave swept over the girl's cheeks and brow as she ceased speaking.

"Your mind, I fear, exaggerates the case," exclaimed Maston; "why, the negro has a soul. He is a man. That sounds trite and worn out. But, after all, there is something in the idea of the Brotherhood of Man. The negro is here to stay. His race is a fruitful one. He is ignorant, you say. Who made him so? Is he as ignorant to-day as he was a generation ago? O'Connell called our own Fred. Douglas 'the O'Connell—the black O'Connell—of America.' In Rome I saw a full-blooded negro-priest standing on the altar of St. Peter's. The negro youth are slowly creeping into our colleges. Give them a chance. Educate the negro. The State, the Church, have much to do. And above all," continued Paul, lowering his voice, "keep the females of the race pure. Do this, and in time the home of the black may not suffer, if it now suffers, by a comparison with the so-called Christian home of the white."

"You are very earnest," said Eulalie; "but do not think me rude if I tell you that I have heard all that very, very often. Moral means and poor old Father Time. Yes, time, time, time. But what about this generation, and the next, and the next?"

"This generation," answered Paul smilingly, "will take care of itself; the others are yet unborn. When they see the light they, too, will be able, I hope, to take care of themselves."

Eulalie was about to laughingly retort, when Paul checked her by saying, "Seriously, Miss Danton, we must admit that if there is such a thing—and who doubts it—as a Race Problem, the solution has not yet entered into practical politics. It is a very delicate question to consider. The Southern white will never be satisfied with any measure that does not rob the negro of the privileges of American citizenship."

"And you, of course," said Eulalie, "think that the North will never do that."

"Yes," answered Paul, "that is my belief. Here all men should be free. Our country is supposed to be the home of the afflicted of all nations. We should not commence by persecuting our own countrymen—contrary to the spirit of our constitution and to the voice of reason."

"Well, Mr. Maston, I see you are growing restless and—"

"Oh! no, no," said Paul; "but I fear that I have wearied you, and we must not exhaust our subject in the very first interview."

As Paul rose to leave, Eulalie said: "If you come, say in a few days, I will lead you in a gallop 'over the hills and far away.'"

Paul accepted the invitation, bowed himself out, and, after a brisk walk, reached his hotel. His room was in darkness. Lighting a gas jet, he jotted down notes of his interview with "The Daughter of the South," and commenced to write his first article on the Race Question.

He never wearied of writing; but the ink did not flow quite so freely to-night as it did heretofore. He thought a great deal more of a sweet Georgian face than he did of the Race Question. But his hand had not lost its cunning, and before midnight his MSS. lay sealed and addressed upon the desk. Fond of a nocturnal stroll, he placed his MSS. in his pocket and slowly wended his way toward the post-office. Leaving the office he turned, after passing through a long street, to the city's limits. The scent of the fields was borne upon the breeze, and the trees of the forest—Nature's tall sentinels—gently swayed to and fro. He loved the weirdness and the death-like stillness of the night. He stood on the roadside and looked back at the city's lights. The musing mood was upon him. He was not altogether a dreamer, but the twinkling lights, seemingly so far away, were mutely, but eloquently, preaching to him of the various phases of life. A strange sense of loneliness came over him. He took off his hat and looked up to heaven. He hardly knew what words were about to spring to his lips. But his musing, his dreaming was not allowed full sway. The clatter of a horse's hoofs upon the hard roadbed brought his thoughts and himself to earth. Lightly leaping a narrow ditch he placed his back against a fence and quietly waited the coming of the horse. The moon, escaping from a cloud, while it lit up the road, did not dispel the shadows in which he stood. He did not wait very long. Full into his sight a milk-white steed, bearing a fair rider, came flying down the road. His active mind was not slow in identifying the rider. He knew not why, but he could not resist calling out, "Miss Danton! Miss Danton!"

Quickly reining in her steed, the girl immediately replied, without the slightest trace of fear, "Who calls! Is it you, Mr. Maston?"

Paul came to her side and, looking up at her said, "A strange hour for a gallop?"

Eulalie laughed cheerily, and said: "Yes, a strange hour. But, do you know, I gallop in the night; sorry am I to confess that I sleep in the morning, and I write or read in the afternoon."

"But is it not dangerous to gallop in the night?" asked Paul.

"Oh, no; not at all. I am like Moore's lady who went safely through the Green Isle, though bedecked with jewels. No hand has ever been raised against me in the South," said Eulalie.

Paul laughed, and said: "You ride through a country largely inhabited by negroes; yet you say you cannot exist unless the negro is placed under a ban. To my mind your

safety lies in the fact that the negro is socially and politically free."

"Come now, Mr. Maston," said Eulalie, "You are not reasoning well. The negro socially free. Your Northern hotel-keeper does not think so."

"In the North there are, as elsewhere, some ignorant men," said Paul.

"Then we are all hopelessly ignorant," exclaimed Eulalie, with the slightest suggestion of mischief in her face. "But oh! see," she continued, "there is the silver streak of dawn and I am still far from home. I will say good-night, or, rather, good morning." She was about to start off; but, turning in her saddle, she cried out; "Come this afternoon, if you are not busy, and we will have our gallop."

Paul readily assented, while cordially bidding her good morning.

The sun had peeped over the horizon and was on its way westward before Paul closed his eyes in sleep. In the afternoon, after luncheon, he made his way through grassy fields and thick forests to the house of Eulalie Danton. Two horses were tied to the gate, while a little distance off Miss Danton was talking to a negro boy. When she saw him she started in pleased surprise.

"Ah, that's good; you're on time," she said.

"Yes," he answered, and for the life of him could not say more.

Ah, ha! Poor Paul. Thirty years of bachelorhood and not even a thought of it, and now—and now—the flood.

They mounted and rode along leisurely, the little negro lad watching them and cunningly shaking his head. Paul broke the silence. Describing a circle with his right arm, he said:

"See, all is calm and beautiful here. The valleys and the hills with their load of vegetation repose in peace, yet at any moment the crack of doom may sound upon the stillness of this utopian scene."

The girl wondered why he spoke in such a forced, strained way. The conversational tone and manner were wholly wanting in all that he had said. She was about to open her lips, when, as if Maston had spoken in a prophetic spirit, a piercing cry of anguish echoed about them. Again and again that terrible cry, laden with the despair of a human heart, fell upon their ears.

"It is Lizette," cried the girl. "I know her child is dying. Follow me?" Side by side their horses turned from the road, leaped a hedge and bounded toward a low cabin, nestling on a small hillside. Dismounting at the open doorway, they saw a young negress convulsively pressing the dead body of a child to her heaving breast. No need to question the cause of the cry that had startled them.

"Oh, Missey, Missey," said the negress mother, "de Lawd am good and dat's de fac'. But he am de only child an' it am mighty hard."

"Poor, dear Lizette," cried Eulalie bending over her. They listened to the mother's tale, and, with words that promised assistance and sounded of faith, they left her with her head resting upon the form of her sacred dead.

The sun was setting and, as if to manifest the glory of its dying, brilliantly hued clouds, purpled the hilltops and flung patches of crimson and gold upon the dark, velvety sward of the forest. The sight of this magnificent panorama of Nature made the riders forget the sorrow-stricken negress. Paul was the first to think of her, and turning to Eulalie, he said:

"Did you notice her tears?"

"Yes," answered Eulalie, mournfully.

Maston rather injudiciously remarked "They were crystal drops—not ink drops."

"I know that, Mr. Maston," said Eulalie, reproachfully. "And knowing that," said Paul, "knowing that the chords of human passion are just as finely and as delicately strung in the negro's heart as in ours, you persist in treating him as if he were soulless."

"No, no! Don't say that," said Eulalie, her voice quivering with deep emotion. "You don't understand me; you do not understand the South. When any human being suffers, I suffer. Ah! you don't know me—you don't know me!"

"I do, I do," asserted Paul. "I have not been here very long, but I have been here long enough to have lost my heart to the 'Daughter of the South.'"

Maston leaned over to her as he spoke.

The girl trembled in her saddle. Without a word she placed her hand in his. Their horses were very close together. Thoughts of Maston and herself, of the South, her hopes, her ambition, of her future and of her present position, swiftly flew through her mind. She had never loved any man. Until now she was heart-free. Was she so still? The greatest, the noblest, the holiest affection of her life came in a moment. She marvelled at its suddenness. It was all so strange. In other affairs, in the study of her favourite subject, in all the practical concerns of life her methods of self-analysis were always satisfactory. Just now her mind seemed to be dazed. Finally she gave up thinking about it. All this time Maston watched her patiently. When her eyes met his, he said in a nervous, jerky way:

"Miss Danton, we understand each other. I think we understand each other. Tell me," and he paused, "is it to be yes or no? You need not doubt me."

The girl looked steadfastly into his eyes for a few moments, and then hurriedly, brokenly said:

"I trust you. Some other time, not now, I will say yes or no."