

—the confidence of his teachers, the respect of his fellow-students.

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The summer holidays have come and both Bob and Frank are at home; one the pride and joy of his widowed mother; crowned with the highest laurels in his class; the other the sorrow and disgrace of his doting father, branded with the shameful mark of an expelled student. Frank took up immediately the management of the paternal estate, while Bob lived the fast life of a gentleman of leisure.

Soon the mutterings of war's awful thunder disturbed the tranquility of Frank's life. A military company was formed of the young men in his neighborhood and for the position of captain two names were proposed Bob Stafford and Frank Stevens. The outcome of the voting was never for a moment in doubt and Frank was chosen captain and Bob lieutenant. The thought that poor Frank Stevens had defeated him served but to fan into a fierce flame the smouldering coals of hatred in Stafford's heart.

The war began. Stevens marched gaily away at the head of his gallant little band of boys in gray. The company was stationed at Fort Blank, the most important post in the lines of fortifications along the Thomson River. The Union forces were slowly but surely advancing until one day late in August their advance guards were within a few miles of the fort.

Stevens had had occasion several times to reprimand Stafford because of his lax discipline. Of course Stafford obeyed, but it was the obedience of fear, not of respect. At last a plan dawned upon him by which he could forever ruin Stevens without great danger to himself. He

called to his assistance an old soldier who had been a roustabout on his father's plantation. Whatever scruples the old fellow may have had were quickly silenced by a few dollars, and the knowledge that at last he was to have revenge upon Stevens who had often sent him to the guard house for intoxication.

Like Benedict Arnold in the revolutionary days, Stafford opened communications with the Federal commander with the object of betraying the fort. But he forged Stevens name to the letters and used the old soldier for his messenger. All was progressing nicely, until one evening when final arrangements were to be made, the sentinel on guard saw a soldier moving stealthily away from the fort. He challenged him, but received no answer. The soldier began to run, another challenge, a sharp report and then the sound of a body falling heavily was heard.

When the corpse of the soldier was brought within the fort a search was made of his clothing. A packet of letters was discovered giving all the information regarding the fort, and signed with the name of Frank Stevens, captain in the 12th regiment of Virginia C. S. A.

The young officer was immediately arrested and confined, and precautions were taken to prevent the capture of the fort. Stevens was to be tried by court martial on the first of September.

Indignation at his arrest caused Frank to be morose and sullen. His superior officer believed him in no way capable of such an action, but in the face of such damning testimony he was forced to treat Stevens as a traitor.

The days passed with tortuous slowness until the morning of the