

A LUCKY MISTAKE.

Within a month after Fort Sumter was fired on, two young men from Pennsylvania enlisted in the Union army.

I succeeded in passing the Confederate lines and entered the city of Vicksburg, where, dressed in civilian's clothes, I was reasonably free from suspicion.

I passed the guards safely, and was, perhaps, a third of the way to camp, when I heard a sharp "Halt! Who goes there?"

"Neither," I answered, "but I am staying at Vicksburg."

"How came you so far from the lines to-night?"

"I was just wandering around, and thought I would go on until I reached the outer guard," I answered.

"This is very strange—if true," said my questioner, turning to his comrades.

"We will just take you into camp and sit that yarn down," said the one who spoke.

I squeezed through the window and dropped to the ground.

"A friend," I answered, "Give the countersign." "Cartridge."

"Pass on!" On reaching the corner I whistled softly, and in answer a negro came up and said interrogatively: "Massa Tom?"

"Yes," I replied. He threw a long cloak over my shoulders and started on the street at a sharp gait.

I followed him perhaps half a mile, when he stopped before a plain brick house, unlocked the door, and bade me enter.

He had scarcely glanced round the dimly-lighted hall before the mysterious "Mabel," accompanied by a young lady taller and darker than herself, hurriedly entered from an adjoining room.

I only heard my benefactors say, "Oh, Tom. Thank heaven!" before her companion, with who glared and half-hysterical cry, threw her arms about my neck and showered tears and kisses upon me in most embarrassing profusion.

I was utterly dumfounded. Finally, collecting my thoughts, I turned from the excited and half-crying woman I held in my arms to the one I partially knew, and said: "My dear Miss Murfree, you have saved my life, and I am bound, as an honorable man, to tell you that you have made a strange mistake in thinking you knew me."

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Queen Elizabeth, despite her bloody nature, trembled at the sound of the word "death"; and Talleyrand shivered and changed color at the same word.

Peter the Great could scarcely be persuaded to cross a bridge, and whenever he placed his foot on one he would scream in terror.

As we must account for every idle word, so we must for every idle silence.—Benjamin Franklin.

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