

ADVENTURES

OF

LENA ROUDEN

A

"SOUTHERN LETTER CARRIER,"

OR

REBEL SPY.

A STORY OF THE LATE WAR.

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"SO this is your prisoner," said Captain Sawyer, approaching me.

"Yes," I replied, "this is my prisoner, and the boys are advancing with quite a company of 'she devils' just like her."

"What is your name?" said the captain, addressing the woman I had in charge.

"Taint Union," was her sharp reply.

"No, I should judge not, but you do not look like such a formidable creature as you have been represented to be. I don't think I would be afraid of you if I were to meet you alone and unarmed."

"Now, see here, captain, suppose you loose these yere hands and see just what I do 'mount to. You'uns aint got no steam-boat on the Mississippi that 'mounts to more 'n me; you're just afeard of a woman, 'you blue-coated Yankee;' I dare you to untie these hands and see what I 'mount to."

"No, I thank you, not to-day," said the captain. "You can proceed to prison with her; you can put them all in the church."

there will be more room there, and perhaps that building may have a good effect on these unruly dames."

As I opened the church door I said, "I see your 'regiment' of women are coming; what did you expect to make by recruiting these women?"

"What did I expect to make? I expected to send your Yankee souls to perdition and sink your miserable bodies out of sight—take possession of what remains of my house and hunt up my starving children and make them comfortable as I can with what I can steal from you, as you have stolen from me and my neighbors, you abominable blue-coated thieves."

"You are an amiable talking woman," I replied; "I wonder how a rope would fit your neck; perhaps a necklace of this kind would be soothing to your nerves. How would you like to leave this rebel country and cross the river Jordan?"

"Oh, I aint no objections to that, only I don't want to go too far ahead of you, for I shall wait on the bridge of Jordan until you come along, and if I don't push you off, my name aint Lena Rouden; I don't believe you'll tie my hands there, 'cause there won't be a half dozen blue coats there to help you, and you're too big a coward to try it alone—aint you now?"

"Oh," said I, "I would as soon attempt to tie a wild tigress."

Over a hundred women were let into that church—just such desperados as Lena Rouden; nearly three hundred had enlisted under Captain Rouden, and were arming themselves as best they could, and making every preparation for battle, when we commenced making our arrests; they all seemed quite in earnest and were very enthusiastic in trying to recruit an army that would drive out the "northern invaders," as they called us.

A few days after securing these Amazons, a terrific storm swept over us which lasted far into the night. All the evening I had heard, when the thunder would permit, singing and loud

cheering at the church, though no light was within. About ten o'clock I distinctly heard screams, struggling and groaning, and on my approach to the prison I found everything in confusion, and Lena Rouden was being very rudely handled by the guards. She had been singing and dancing all the evening for the amusement of the men, while the women had broken open a window in the rear of the church, and the most of them had made good their escape. Lena was hand-cuffed and a ball and chain attached to her ankle. She bore it like a true soldier, promising, however, to add this small insult to the many injuries she had received at our hands. She said her account was a long one, against us, and that she would be even with us some day.

A day or two later I approached the prison and found an unusual crowd at the door. I was surprised to find a woman lying in a heap on a wheel-barrow.

"There," said Lena to me, "they have tuck and tied her hands and feet together like she were a sheep, and toted her off on a barrow to the slaughter-house—thar's Yankee politeness, thar's civility to a lady like her."

"Who is this woman?" I said, addressing the sergeant in charge.

"She is a she devil, who tried to shoot a Union soldier."

"Yes," exclaimed the woman, "I tried to shoot a blue-coated Yankee, but I failed and killed a much more valuable beast—I killed my own cow while he was milking her. They did not take the cow, because they could not keep her; they left her for me to look after, and then came twice a day and took her milk. It was all I had, Mrs. Rouden," said she, "all I had to keep me from starvation. I must fight or die, and I did fight. I gave him forewarning if he did not leave the cow alone I would shoot—and I did shoot, and killed my poor half starved cow."

"Now," said Lena, defiantly, "be you a goin' to put Moll

Gallispie, one of the richest women in Clarksville, in prison for shooting her own cow."

"'Tis not her fault she did not kill a man," said I, soothingly.

"Oh, if I could only kill every Yankee in the State of Tennessee, I would be willing to die in prison—on the gallows—or of starvation, if you like," said our last prisoner as she was untied and put in prison.

Lena now commenced questioning her with regard to her children.

"I saw them all cared for by the Sisters of Mercy, except the baby—I could learn nothing of *it*," said Mollie.

"*It*, great God, Mollie! did you not know that 'it' died of starvation? *It* and nine other nursing babies were all buried the same day. My poor baby's burial case was the corner of an old soldier's blanket, not even a rough pine box was allowed us. Our dead were put into the wet ground and covered any way at all. Moll Gallispie, do you think there is a God above us who will allow such things to go unpunished? John Rouden's youngest child starved to death, and the other seven saved only by the kindness of the Sisters of Charity. There were between thirty and forty families huddled together under the trees in the midst of a pelting storm, like so many cattle; robbed of our homes, which had been burned or pillaged, and left without food or shelter. My black nurse left us in search of food, and poor baby starved for want of her, and I could not save it. Do you know," she said, turning fiercely upon me, "do you know that I had eaten nothing but raw green corn, too young for your use, since I was driven from my home, until I was served my prison fare in this church?"

I could not but feel sad for these poor women as I saw the prison door closed upon them; they certainly were sufferers, and they had a right to feel that they were unjustly treated.

About ten days previous to the opening of my story, I had been down in Arkansas overseeing the posting of bills in that part of the country, informing the people that if they gave aid or comfort to the rebel army, they would be treated as prisoners and their property confiscated. I had one posted on the Rouden plantation, but Lena hastily tore it down, picked it to pieces and scattered it to the winds.

"Do you think," said she, "that I would refuse 'aid and comfort' to a confederate soldier, while your bloated northern invaders are helping themselves to all I have? I reckon you don't know *me*? If I had a dose of poison to waste on you I'd give it you with every mouthfull you eat that ever belonged to me, and I'd willingly share my last crust with a confederate who is bravely defending my home and children."

The soldiers who accompanied me could scarcely restrain themselves, they were so anxious to demolish her home and drag her off to prison. The next night an accusation was gotten up and her house was ransacked in search of rebel soldiers; she did not submit more tamely than before, and the result was that her house, though a stone one, was burned out, and she and her children shared the fate you have heard described. All the people too old, or too young, to live on roots and corn-stalks, were starved. It was hard, yet not in my power to prevent it.

Mrs. B. F. Mason had been a prisoner for some time, confined in the room where Lena now was, and at night when I once visited the prison, she was praying for the peace of all parties to be restored. She prayed for all sick and wounded soldiers and prisoners, whether Union or confederate, "For," said she, "in the midst of so many we know not our friends from our enemies."

Lena frowned upon her with the glare of a wild Indian, and with the leap of a tiger she sprang the length of her chain, and

shaking her hand defiantly, she threatened to strangle her immediately if she ever dared pray, in her presence, for a northern invader.

There was something wild and untamable in this strange woman, and something so dignified, withal, that I became much interested in her. I asked Moll Gallispie some questions concerning her.

"Oh," she said, "we are not surprised at anything she may do; she was a wild Indian when John Rouden married her," and I listened to many little anecdotes concerning Lena.

One day there came to the prison door a very old and decrepit negro woman inquiring for Lena Rouden.

"She am my old missus," she cried, "and she neber could manage widout me. 'Pears like she aint no lady—dat is white folks lady—but she hab de blood ob royalty in her waines for all dat. She am de gran' daughter ob a Cherokee chief, an' she allers had dat proud, cranky spirit dat neber could be tamed. Yer can broke her heart, Cap'n," said she, "but yer can't humble her for all dat."

The meeting between Lena and her dear old "Rhoda," as she called her, was truly sad to see.

"Dem chil'rn all gone—dat bressed baby dead—gor a' mighty help us! Massa gone to war, and poor missus in prison. Lor' a massy! wat hab dis yer war brung 'bout, all for dese wufless niggers? Gor a' mighty! if dis am freedom, I don't want no mor' freedom."

At length Lena was released and left us, but old Rhoda remained while we were in Clarksville, making herself generally useful about our quarters. From her I learned the history of Lena.

She was born at Fort Gibson, in Arkansas; her mother was the daughter of a Cherokee chief, and was called Rose. She

married an educated pale-face, named Le Beau, who had been employed by Government to transact business with the Indians. Rose had never been a huntress, or joined in the open-air sports of her tribe, but had generally employed herself ornamenting the badges or belts given by her father to his warriors, in honor of their feats of valor. Rose was always as gentle and amiable as a white woman.

In due season Lena was born, and named by her father after his mother; "And," said Rhoda, in a confidential under-tone, "when I fust come to Missus Lena, she had kept and showed me de board she war' strapped onto, and de fawn-skin she war' wrapped in when she war' born."

When Lena was about five months old, the hunting-grounds of the Cherokees were invaded by unfriendly Indians, and after bravely fighting to defend their homes, the unfortunate Cherokees were driven out to make room for the Fox tribes. Like most Indians, in taking flight they had dispatched messengers to inform those at home to beat a hasty retreat.

Rose, who had been deserted in the beginning of the danger by her pale-faced husband, walked one whole day and night with her little Lena strapped to her back. Tired nature failed her just as they were overtaken by her father's warriors, and after bequeathing her child to the young chief, Red Hand, who had loved her with all the wild passion of his soul, she kissed her child and died.

Lena lived with her Indian friends, wild, happy and free as air until she was eleven years of age. During this time the pale-faced population had thickened around them, and Lena having white blood in her veins, it was thought advisable by her guardian that she should be placed where she could have the advantages of a good English education.

Many Indians, at that time, were not only reconciled to white

civilization, but became more or less civilized themselves, as did the Senecas who remained in Western New York. Lena was put in charge of a Baptist minister, named Moore, at a Mission near Lebon, Arkansas.

"Offen," said Rhoda, "offen hab she tol' me she neber could forget dat journey to Lebon. On hos-back, wid her baby-board and fawn-skin strapped behin' for luggage, she felt like she war started on a journey in search ob de spirit ob her dead modder."

It was several days after her arrival at her new home, before she could be prevailed upon to sit down comfortably in the house. She looked upon it as a sort of prison. At length her prejudices were overcome, and she would eat at the table, if no strangers were by, and, to oblige Mrs. Moore, she slept in a bed, but no one could prevail upon her to wear a white woman's dress—that was altogether too "barbarous" a practice for her to conform to.

If pressed hard to study, she would run like a wild deer to where her pony was grazing, and ride, "bare-back," through the forest for hours, snuffing the fresh air in great delight. She soon became noted throughout the country, both for her wild recklessness as a rider, and for her success as a huntress. She would hunt all day, and at night give her game to some poor white family, not that she had any particular regard for white folks, but her mother had loved them, and she did it for her sake.

Nearly a year after the arrival of Lena at the Baptist station in Lebon, a large number of Indian children were removed from that station to the Government School at Washington.

Notwithstanding Lena knew that her guardian, the noble Red Hand and several of his warriors, had often visited Washington, and although her impression was that it was one of the grandest hunting grounds in the world, still Lena positively

refused to go with the other children to that place to school. To avoid too much trouble in the matter, she fled to the forest, where she remained for several days after the departure of her friends. When she again returned to the Moore family she once more refused to eat at table or sleep in a bed, so distressed was she at the loss of her companions.

When about thirteen years old, Lena met Sam Hildebrand, a true specimen of a young Arkansas hunter, and on whose father the celebrated "Arkansaw Traveler" undoubtedly called when he became the hero of the song. The Hildebrand homestead needed no roof in dry weather, and in a rain storm they could not manage to put one on, as all the members of their numerous family were busy keeping their scanty supply of goods and furniture on the dry side of the cabin.

Sam was bold and venturesome, handsome, agreeable, and always gentle and brotherly to Lena. She would ride, race or hunt a deer with him—she would chatter, laugh and dance with him; "And," said Rhoda, "I reckon she liked him a heap sight better'n dem Moore girls."

One day, while on a wild-goose-chase, they rode into a town in the midst of which stood a grand circus tent, from the top of which floated an immense American flag. The curiosity of both was immediately excited, and they determined to investigate the thing and pass their opinion upon a real show.

Learning that the price of the "red keerd," that admitted them inside, cost twenty-five cents, they beat about their pockets to see what they could raise. Lena had a silver quarter of a dollar, but Sam's pockets furnished little beside tobacco and fish-lines. He had with him, for a saddle, a very valuable coon-skin; this he offered at the door of the ticket office, and was unceremoniously refused. A skirmish followed, in which several of the circus men were badly dealt with. The proprietor, coming

to the rescue, listened to the story of Sam and Lena, and at length said, while shaking him cordially by the hand, "Let the brave fellow go in," and they made a triumphant entry into the presence of a sea of faces encircling a ring of mounted riders whose glittering garments and lightning steeds quite charmed our young adventurers. For the first time in her life, Lena was ashamed of her riding—she would make no more brags—she could neither ride on one foot nor jump through a hoop.

When Mr. Moore learned of the innocent adventure of Lena and her companion, he gently punished her by confining her several days in a dark closet, keeping her on the sumptuous fare of bread and cold water.

Lena's inheritance, as the grand-daughter of a chief, was about twenty thousand dollars, aside from her lands. Red Hand, the brave, furnished her with all the money she could need—her round of shopping, usually, was not so extensive as that of a Broadway belle; on her bill was sometimes gay colored ribbons and beads, but always "ammunition;" she not only used very freely herself, but she usually furnished Sam Hildebrand with a large share of his. It was a very common thing for Lena to kill quantities of game, and, loading her horse with it, take it to the family of the Hildebrands, or a family of Needhams, who lived near by, and in many respects were very like them.

When Lena came upon "bee-trees," she would inform these families of their whereabouts. Mr. Moore affected great contempt for Mr. Needham, having on several occasions, in a charitable and christian manner, "as becometh a servant of the Lord," accused him of the small sin of stealing; he therefore forbade Lena to approach the house of the Needhams, but Lena, like many a true child of nature, took more kindly to sinners than saints, and heeded not the remonstrance of her teacher in the Lord, but continued to visit whom she liked.

Whenever Mr. Moore learned of Lena's supplies being taken to his poor neighbors, he would repeat the, to her, delightful orders for a few days' confinement in her favorite closet, and when kept over Sunday here, she would ask him to put his Sunday blessing on her bread, and try to turn her water into wine, like they had at the meeting house.

Mr. Moore was not satisfied with "taking" enough from the poor Indians to make him a rich man in worldly goods, but he envied his poor neighbors the game and wild honey in the forest.

One of the Yankee peddlers who was in the habit of visiting Mr. Moore's house two or three times a year, and sometimes giving Lena trinkets, was one day given, by her, a piece of gold money, for which, in return, he gave her a pair of martingales just as he bade her adieu. Lena examined them, and, after due consultation with her friend Sam, concluded as she could see no "use" they could be put to, they must necessarily be ornamental. She wore them gracefully suspended around her neck whenever she was riding. A few weeks later Sam met a white government officer whose horse wore martingales; he made all the observations possible without being inquisitive, and returning to Lena he triumphantly taught her the "use" of her ornament.

Lena was about fifteen years old when Mr. Moore made his last, most determined, but unsuccessful attempt to compel her to wear the dress of a white woman. His daughter, Elsie, was about her own age and size, and she used every argument in her power to get her to wear one of her dresses, just for one day, or to exchange clothing for a few hours, but all to no purpose. Lena was disgusted with the long draggling skirts worn by white women, and insisted that if they did not give her handsome Indian dresses she would dress in coon-skin.

Mr. Moore was receiving a thousand dollars a year for keeping

Lena, and so far he had been unable to show the Indians any improvement in her toward civilization, but Lena expressed herself quite contented if they would let her have her own way. She would not be friendly with the Moore girls, they were constantly annoying her with falsehoods, and often took her money. She was unable to count it, but placed it in rows on the bottom of her pine chest, and she could always tell if it were gone without her consent.

On one of her hunting expeditions Lena met a stranger who begged of her a silver trinket she wore suspended to her neck; in return he gave her a pocket looking-glass. This was the first thing of the kind she had ever possessed; "And," said Rhoda, "she set great store by it;" it was far more valuable to her than money, and no one could induce her to part with it.

One evening when she was out hunting, there came up a terrific storm, and Lena was thrown from her horse, he being frightened by lightning. She was launched into a pond of water, and when she recovered her horse, her gun and looking-glass were gone. She afterwards found her gun, but the irrecoverable and inconsolable loss was her looking-glass; it was weeks before she abandoned the search for it.

After a very successful hunt she was one evening taking a load of game to the Needham family, when she came upon three hungry travelers, who asked her to stop and cook some of her game for them. She cheerfully did so. They seemed very much pleased with her and made themselves decidedly agreeable. They came from Green county, Kentucky, and tried to prevail upon her to go home with them. One of them was a single man, and when he returned to his home, he, in his enthusiasm, pictured to John Rouden, a neighbor, the beauty of this young Indian girl. John listened to his description of her wonderful feats as a marksman, and of her leaping from the

ground into her saddle, and her flight beyond their reach when he had proposed to carry her off by force if she did not consent to go with them.

Young Rouden determined when he again visited that portion of the country to see this wonderful Indian girl. Not long after, he visited Lebon and called to see Lena. He was politely informed by Mr. Moore that Lena did not receive company. Moore looked too much to his own interests to be willing to lose a charge that paid him so handsomely, and he entertained the hope of bringing about a marriage between Lena and his eldest son, who was studying for the ministry. Young Rouden was determined not to be put off, and looked about for some other way of bringing about his object. The following Sunday there was to be a large number of people immersed in the river, and John Rouden determined to remain. He was acquainted with the Campbellite preacher, who lived at the nearest station, and here he remained until Sunday. Unfortunately, when he returned to Lebon, the first man of whom he made inquiry concerning Lena proved to be young Moore, who took occasion to publicly insult him before a large number of people, and was immediately razed to the ground for his politeness. John was duly arrested and lodged in prison. A stranger stood no chance for justice here. Young Moore must be defended whether wrong or right, for the young preacher had the sympathy of the public.

When the trial came off John Rouden was fined five hundred dollars and costs, and was to be confined in prison until it was paid.

Lena, upon hearing of this, concluded she would pay whatever the law required to release the man who had whipped her mortal enemy. She hated young Moore with all the deadly hatred of her race. She asked Morton, the lawyer who had

defended Rouden, to accompany her home and count out the money required to free him. When set at liberty, John went immediately to Lena, and taking her by the hand he said:

"I thank you, my brave girl, for your generosity. I have no money now, but I am young and strong—I will soon earn it, and, believe me, I shall return at my earliest opportunity and pay you my indebtedness."

Lena looked upon him with great admiration. She thought she had never before seen a handsome white man.

"You need not thank me," she said, "nor need you go away to earn money to pay me. I have money enough for both of us; we will be married, and then we can share it together. We will ride and hunt together always."

Taking both her hands in his, John exclaimed, "With all my heart, my dear girl, if that suits you I am agreed. Let us proceed to business at once."

Lena put on her handsomest Indian dress, and they went immediately to the Campbellite preacher and were married—Lena holding a bow and arrow in her hand meanwhile.

The Moores were inconsolable at the loss of Lena's money, which had been a great temptation to them. They stayed several days at the house of the preacher, until John succeeded in getting Lena to adopt a white woman's dress—it was truly ludicrous to see how she was overcome with shame and mortification when she had really donned herself like a civilized woman. She refused to part with her gay striped petticoats, but carefully packing them, took them with her, and would often afterwards put them on and admire herself in them.

From here they went to Memphis, and John commenced the raising of horses and mules.

"'T war' jus' afore her fus' chil' war' born," said Rhoda, "dat Massa Rouden foch me home—he tol' me when he bought me

in New Orleans dat my business war' to make a lady ob Missus. I'd belong'd to a powerful rich French family in dat place, an' hab allers bin ladies' maid; dar' was nuffin wuff knowin' 'bout white folks ladies dat I didn't un'erstand. Massa Rouden war' makin' money mighty fast. Jus' afore I come dar' Massa had brung home a han'sum blue silk dress fur Missus, an' it war' made mighty nice, an' de fus' time Missus wore it war' to a camp-meetin' in dat neighborhood. Missus hab a powerful han'sum hoss an' saddle, de finest dat Massa Rouden could fin', an' Missus would not go to de camp-meetin' widout she could git to 'tend de races, an' ride on de course. Would yer believ it, Cap'n, she rode right into a water-mellon stan' an' 'bliged de steamboat man, dat she war' ridin' wid, to treat to de mellons? Yer should a seen dat yar' dress! She tuck de mellon right into her lap, an' cut it up an' pass it 'round. De dress war' dun gon'—spilt. Den Massa Rouden foch de dress to me an' said, 'what kin yer do wid it, Rhoda?' I said, 'Nuffin', Massa, 'cept to wash it.'

"One day Massa foch home a new fangled lamp, wid burnin' fluid to use into it; it did gib a powerful han'sum light. Missus jus' went to fill it one day an' sot de house afire, an' burned it to de groun'. Lor' bress yer, Cap'n, she neber could do nuffin' but ride a hoss' back, shoot a gun, or row a boat.

"Wal', I hab a powerful hard time a teachin' ob her. I tol' her jus' how to behabe, but she didn't mos' allers do it. Her fus' two chil'rn war' girls—she sot great store by 'um, but she didn't want anoder girl. Now yer see, Cap'n, dat I tol' her dat de fus' time she hear a robbin sing in de spring, ef she lay down an' roll ober tree times, an' 'wish,' de wish would come to pass, sart'n sure.

"One day a spruce lawyer come home wid Massa Rouden an' stay ober Sunday. Massa foch Missus a new silk dress an' a

white crape bonnet, wid powerful han'sum roses on it. I jus' fix her up mighty fine to 'tend meetin, wid dese gem'un; she jus' look like she war' a white folks lady. She didn't git outside de gate, Cap'n, 'fore she lay down in de middle ob de road an' roll ober tree times. Wal', Massa Rouden tought she war' dead, sart'n sure, an' he call for help; de New Orleans gem'un swar she hab a fit. Lor' a massy! how dey did laugh when she jump up an' koch me by de sho'ler an' holler, 'I wished it might be a boy, Rhoda, I did, sart'n sure!' Wal', it *war*' a boy, bress de Lor'! but yer should a see'd dat white bonnet an' dem fine roses I sot such store by!

"Massa Rouden hab a sister libin' in Memphis dat war' powerful shame' ob Massa's Indian wife, 'til Massa make so much money he git a powerful sight ob silver plate, an' nice tings in de house, an' Missus wore de finest ob dimuns, an' laces, an' know'd better dan to chop up water-mellons in good silk dresses—why, den it 'pears like she warn't so shame'; but when dar' war' comp'n'y by, she allers 'pear'd to look for my Missus to do suffin powerful bad.

"My Missus hab chil'rn, 'pears like, dreful fast, but she neber would nuss 'um 'cause she couldn't tuck 'um wid her when she go a huntin', an' rowin' an' racin'. She war' one day rowin' a skiff 'cross de riber when she see'd a feller we call French Will, an' he axe her for a ride; she tuck him in de boat an' 'cross de riber. He ax' to borrow my Missus' dimun' ring, an' Missus tuck it off her fing'r an' gib it to him. Massa Rouden's sister see'd it on his fing'r one day, an' Lor' a massy! yer should a hearn de powerful muss she kicked up 'bout dat ring.

"It war' 'bout two year 'fore dis yere war broke out dat Massa bought a big plantation for raisin' stock, down in Arkansas, whar' (dat is bery near whar' Missus war' born) he built a powerful han'sum house, an' de cul'd folks all hab good quar-

ters—dems de niggers dat he tuck wid him. Missus war' as happy as a canary-bird. She jus' dun gon' an' say she war' de greates' lady in de lan', ef she couldn't read. She say Injun chief neber read, an' she neber would stan' it to learn 'ob poor white trash. When Massa Lincum dun gon' to de white house, yer should a hearn my Missus puttin' on airs ober Missus Lincum. Lor' bress yer! she warn't no whar'. 'Pears like I did feel dreful bad for Massa Lincum 'cause he couldn't hab such a powerful proud woman for his wife as my Missus war'.

"Yer see, Cap'n, de fus' year we warn't disturbed by dis yere war, an' one year ago Massa Rouden hab ober two hundred mules, an' 'bout fifty hosses, an' a powerful heep ob oder stock. 'Bout dis time de Union sol'iers cum 'long an' dey help demselv to a par ob mules, or a hoss; den dey tuck a par ob hosses an' fibe or six mules, 'til dey war' 'all gon'; den dey tuck de chickens, hogs an' de cows; den dey come in de house an' tuck blankets, provision an' sich, 'til de house war' stripped ob ebery comfort, an' ebery time some ob dem wufless niggers would toat along wid 'um 'til de quarters war' clar'd out.

"Wal', my Missus couldn't stan' dat; yer see, she jus' make Massa Rouden 'clar dat kitchun' powerful quick; she jus' tol' him ef he didn't jine dat confederate army, she would do it herself, an' she begin scrubbin' up her ol' gun, an' shootin' at a mark. Wal', he jus' go an' jine de army at Nashville, under General Hood, an' we neber hear nuffin from poor Massa since.

"Wal', tings went a heep sight wus arter Massa lef—yes, a heep sight wus dan dey did afore. De niggers all lef but Nancy, de wet-nus, de cook an' me. We all stick to Missus 'til yer burn de house down de oder day. Dat war' hard, Cap'n—dat were powerful hard—to drike a woman wid eight chil'rn out into de peltin' rain wid no whar' to put thar' heads.

"I jus' tuck an' toated off to git suffin for 'um to eat, an' so

did Nancy. She said she couldn't nus de chile widout suffin in her own stomach; but, Lor' bress yer! Cap'n, dey wouldn't gib us a scrap for de starwin' white folks; dey would jus' gib us what we could eat ourse'vs, but dey, it 'pears like, war' glad to see Missus an' her chil'rn starwin'.

"Gor' a mighty, Cap'n! I hope I neber will see sich a woeful sight agin as dem white folks. Ol' an' young, rich an' poor, all starwin' out in de rain. I 'spected de Lor' to free us, an' do it well; I neber 'spected de debil to took de job an' make sich wicked work ob it. De Lor' neber would a starw'd dat baby boy dat Massa Rouden lub so much, an' lef him to be buried as Massa bury his cattle. Lor' bress yer, Cap'n! my Massa bury his niggers jus' as 'spectable as white folks, an' he allers war' a good Massa to us, an' de Lor' should a been a good Massa to his chil'rn, but de debil did it all. I kin swar to dat; de debil hab charge ob de job, sart'n sure." And old Rhoda flung her apron over he head and was silent.

When Lena was released from confinement, she found she could not leave Clarksville without a pass from head-quarters. She sat down on the ground, resolutely refusing to ask of a northern invader the privilege to walk on southern soil. It was with some difficulty that old Rhoda, with my assistance, secured a pass for her mistress.

Just after the battle of Murfreesboro I was out on a foraging expedition, and halted near a small dilapidated looking house in an isolated place. Presently a shabby old wagon, behind a miserable skeleton of a horse, driven by a little decrepit negro boy, and freighted with two miserable looking women, drew up in front of it. The women alighted, and one of them opened the door of the cabin, and returning to the wagon she uncovered the body of a dead man. The two attempted to remove it from its resting place, but finding themselves unable, they held a

short consultation, after which I was startled by a familiar voice calling me. "See here, Mr. Blue-coat, I think I've seen you before. I don't often ask favors of men who wear your color, but I want you to help move this body into the house."

I was stretched full length on the ground, under a shady tree, but I arose from my resting-place and approached the women. Judge of my surprise when I discovered Lena Rouden! She had recognized me at once, and heaped upon me a series of invectives.

"Here is more of your 'devil's business,' this woman's only son has been killed by the 'blues,' and I am going to help her bury him."

I called some of my men and had the body removed and placed where they desired. I doubt if I would have so soon recognized Lena's face if I had not heard her voice; it was much changed—there was terrible agony there, and on inquiry I found her arm had been broken. I prevailed upon her to allow me to dress her wound for her, but being no surgeon I could not set the bone properly. I begged of her to go back with us to Clarksville and let the surgeon attend to it for her.

"No," said she, "I don't believe I could use my arm if a Yankee were to mend it for me."

She made inquiry after Rhoda, however, and seemed grateful that the dear old soul was comfortable. Before I left her I learned the fact that Lena had overtaken this poor afflicted woman, who was trying to get possession of the body of her son; she did what she could to assist her, but when they were coming up a steep hill the wagon had tipped over and rolled down an embankment, and in trying to save the body she had been thrown out and had broken her left arm. I regretted that I could not order my men to dig a grave and bury the poor boy, whose mother was so sadly lamenting over, but it was impos-

sible—"such is war"—we must not give aid or comfort to our enemies—we cannot treat them with common christian charity.

Not long after, considerable confusion prevailed in camp, and I soon learned that a rebel spy had been arrested, and was to be tried for life. Now, when I learned this terrible spy was Lena Rouden, I began to think that hereafter I would be surprised at nothing in this world. She was searched, and letters destined for General Price, were found upon her person—letters and papers that would have been of great importance to him had they ever reached him. When I found an opportunity to speak with her, she told me she had gone directly, "when released" from our camp, to Murfreesboro, and offered herself as a volunteer in their army; at first she was rejected, and after urging herself upon them she had at last been accepted as postman or letter carrier. She had been gradually trusted with more important papers until she had now been captured. She was proven to be a spy, but somehow she got clear; I could not possibly see how, but it seemed to be the object of the officers to clear her. She was imprisoned, however, and kept under confinement for some time.

While here, her arm was set by a surgeon; it was nearly two months since it was broken, and it was in a terrible condition. During all this time her hair had not been combed. A young man, who was just convalescing after an illness, was kind enough to comb the tangled masses, and when well combed, brushed and plaited, she was much improved in looks. She was exceedingly grateful for young Boyd's kindness to her, and would often converse with him about the war and its results.

"Oh," said Boyd, "this war will never end while there is a slave on this continent."

"What will the niggers do when they are free?" queried Lena.

"Do! Just the same as white folks—become citizens of the United States!"

"And vote for the president?"

"Yes, vote for the president and all the other officers, and hold offices too!"

"Hold office! Sam Boyd, do you think my niggers are agoing to hold office over me—a woman—and vote for officers, when I can't?"

"But I expect women to vote one of these days; one progress generally follows another."

"Well, then, give me that newspaper and show me how to read; if I've got to come to votin' I can learn to read." And she really did learn to read very well before she left prison.

It became necessary for some one of our regiment to go to Vicksburg and Cape Girardeau with important dispatches. I accepted the office and bade the boys good bye.

Before leaving, I called at the prison and made my adieus to Lena, who expressed herself sorry to part from me, and who was expecting soon to be set at liberty herself.

I had been gone some time, and was rather successful as an adventurer. At Shilo I had dressed as a rebel and when necessary joined the rebel skirmishers. In one instance I was slightly wounded, and was taken to the hospital to have my wounds dressed. While in this place, Lena passed my bed twice, and it was difficult for me to sufficiently hide my face to hinder her from recognizing me. She was acting as nurse, and seemed a very kind and gentle one, which greatly surprised me. I had never before seen the gentle, womanly side of her nature, the true motherly qualities—and she possessed many, untamed Indian as she had always appeared to me to be. I soon recovered, and not long after made my escape. While lying in the woods waiting for the friendly shelter of night, in which to

travel, I saw the solitary figure of a woman close upon me, and soon discovered that it was Lena, and made no attempt to avoid her. She was a pitiable looking object. As soon as I spoke to her she knew me, notwithstanding I was dressed in the gray uniform of the southern confederacy. She claimed to admire me very much more than in blue, and promised not to expose me. I told her I had seen her in the hospital and dared not let her recognize me.

"Ah!" said she, "you thought I would expose your deception. You thought I would tell them you were a blue-coat. You forget that I am under many obligations to you. I have foolishly accepted too many of the kindnesses you have offered me when I was in distress, and I could not injure you."

"I tuck and ate with a squad of Union men last night," said she, "and let them make me comfortable. They were agoing to search me before I left, but I told them about all they would get for their trouble would be a squad or two of genuine southern 'gray backs,' and they left me alone. One on 'em shuck me by the shoulders and sent me out. I had not gone three mile afore I met a company of grays; they were looking for the very men I had tuck my supper and breakfast with, and when they asked me if I had seen them, how I cussed my greedy stomach that it had been so willing to accept Yankee food. You see, Cap'n, the Indian in me won't let me turn agin a man I have tuck and 'eat' with, if I was starving."

"So," said I, "you did not expose the whereabouts of our boys, eh?"

"No; I tole 'em I allers steer clear of blue-coats and don't want to see 'em."

She told me that she had just seen her children, who were in a convent in Tennessee, with the Sisters of Charity, but she could hear no tidings of her husband. She was constantly

trying to enlist, in hopes of meeting him, but the "cowardly men" refused to fight with a "brave woman" like her. As she turned to leave me, I said:

"I presume you are the bearer of important dispatches, Lena?"

She immediately measured the distance between us, as if to be sure that she was safe in a flight, if necessary, and then tartly said:

"Yes, I am; and I s'pose you're the same?"

She accompanied the question with such a look that I took in the matter of strength with her quite as hastily as she had counted on distance with me. I nodded assent, and we both indulged in a hearty laugh, and bidding each other good morning, we made a safer distance between us as soon as possible.

While in Vicksburg, not long after, I heard there was a rebel spy in prison, and that it was a woman, and that she was soon to be tried for her life. With some difficulty I obtained a pass and went to the prison to see her. I waited some time at her door for admittance, but was denied. At length the door was opened, and as an old, gray-haired man came out I saw Lena, with a ghastly look upon her face, throw herself upon the floor. The door closed; she had given strict orders that no one was to see her. I immediately followed the old man and questioned him, only to learn that he had been the bearer of a message from John Rouden, in his dying moments, to his wife Lena. He had been killed at Nashville, Tennessee. I waited about the prison until the hour of trial, hoping to make Lena see me when she came out, but she took no notice of any body or any thing.

"Ah!" exclaimed the officer in charge, with much apparent satisfaction, "she is frightened at last! She is actually scared! See the creature tremble in every limb!"

A ghastly pallor overspread her features, and the wild, unearthly gleam that flashed from her eye was almost terrifying to those near her.

At her trial she was asked if she was ready to die.

"Yes," she replied, "if the Great Spirit calls for me; I have little to live for, but I do not care to give up my life to a set of northern invaders who have already taken all I had on earth that was near and dear to me—my home, my children and my husband."

Here a spasmodic quiver closed her mouth, but no tear was visible.

"I have nothing left now for you to rob me of except my life. You are not entitled to it, nor were you entitled to my home; but you were just cowardly enough to take it, and I don't know that it is so much worse for you to shoot me than to kill me with destitution and starvation. I should think persecuting, robbing and shooting women would just be the style of bravery your kind of people would indulge in."

The chaplain of an Iowa regiment had caused her arrest, and after swearing against her life, he very patronizingly told her that if she would confess all he would pray for her soul's salvation!

"Eh?" said she, "if my soul can't be saved without your prayers, 'taint worth saving; just spare your breath, sir, and if it will help your own soul, it will do better than I think. I believe it would take more praying to save your soul than it costs blood to support the Constitution of the United States. I am told that my property was wanted to support the Constitution; now my life is wanted to support the Constitution. The lives of the men of the best blood in the south are all sacrificed to support the Constitution of the United States. S'pose you

try "Log Cabin Bitters" awhile and see if that won't strengthen the Constitution that is so feeble."

This irony seemed to relieve her oppressed spirit. She was at length cleared, and, when released, she shook hands with me, and we now conversed freely without feeling like grasping at each other's throats.

"You look well," said she, "but not so well as you did in gray. If you would only dress in that uniform for something besides deception, I'd die for you. I am sorry you are an abominable blue-coated Yankee."

She avoided the mention of the death of her husband, and I forebore to grieve her afresh by alluding to it.

At the battle of Franklin, Tenn., I caught sight of a woman carrying ammunition to the artillery men, on the enemy's side, and I guessed it was Lena; I afterwards learned from herself that I had guessed rightly.

"I always make myself useful, when I can, to the brave confederates," she said. She had been several times a prisoner. "But," said she, "I am sometimes glad to be taken prisoner, I can get a comfortable meal, and that is quite as necessary to my constitution as blood to the Constitution of the United States."

She said she enjoyed being court-martialed when she had nothing but friendly letters from private parties to soldiers, or from soldiers to friends. It was really a treat to her to enjoy their disappointment at not finding anything important to make a sensation over.

On the 2d day of July I took passage at Memphis, on the Pembina, for Vicksburg. When started on our journey I lighted a cigar and sat down to enjoy it while looking over the Chicago papers. A Mississippi steamer is not usually the most quiet and retired place I could choose for study or thought, but this one seemed unusually noisy and confusing. Shout after

shout followed laughter and loud converse. At length I threw down my paper and repaired to the "Ladies' Cabin," from which the noise seemed to proceed. In the far end of this room sat a woman, in a faded, ragged, threadbare brown cotton dress. Her unwashed toes protruded from the remnants of her shoes; a thin, ragged shawl was tied over her left shoulder, and served as a sling for her right arm. On her head still remained a small portion of what had once been a shaker (sun hat,) split from front to crown, leaving the top of her head quite bare and showing the untidy condition of her uncombed hair; no curtain screened her neck, and a piece of soiled cotton tape was strapped over the top and tied under the chin.

"Mrs. Jeff. Davis," said one of the party present, "a representative of southern aristocracy."

"A regular swamp queen," said the second.

"Where are you from?" asked a soldier quite near her.

"Where are *you* from?" she returned, and I discovered by her voice that it was Lena Rouden.

"I am from Iowa," said the man.

"Thank God, I am not from that place."

"No, you don't look like an Iowa woman."

Just here the clerk of the boat, John Gunn, came in.

"What's going on here?" he exclaimed, and the crowd fell back at once. After collecting the fare from the rest, he approached Lena:

"Your fare, madam."

"Who do you call 'fair'? I aint in the habit of being called *fair* now-a-days."

"Your ticket, madam; your ticket, please."

"Ticket to what?"

"Ticket for your ride on this boat."

"You don't charge a woman for sitting in your house, do

you? When I had a house I never charged any one for a seat or a meal of victuals, either."

"This is not a house; you are now riding on a Mississippi steamboat, and I want the price of your passage."

"Well, why don't you get it, then? I have to help myself to all I get—nobody gives me anything, and I don't ask them for anything either."

"Where are you going?" said Gunn.

"Down the river."

"How far?"

"Oh, you needn't stop on my account; I'll get off when I get ready."

"Where did you come from?"

She raised her "well" hand, and, pointing through the door, said, "Over there."

The clerk left the apartment. Supper was soon called, and when all were comfortably seated at table, the clerk walked the whole length of the table, followed by Lena, and politely offered her a seat beside his own. A shout went up that would have done justice to an Indian war dance.

"Do you intend to allow that beggar at the first table?" said a tawdrily-dressed damsel, whose waterfall of curls fell limp over her well stuffed bust.

A glance of hatred flashed from Lena's eye, that was rather intimidating to the speaker.

"I shan't spile that paint on your face," said she, as she arose from the table, "and I'll not trouble you by getting too near you," and lifting a plate of crackers and another of dried beef from the table, she emptied them into the sling on her arm, and, seizing four biscuits, hurried out of the cabin with the air of Red Jacket himself.

I was disgusted with many of the remarks made by both men and women on this unfortunate person; but I remained quiet until I had concluded my meal, not without a great sacrifice, however.

I was glad to escape to the clerk's office. Here I told John Gunn who and what Lena Rouden was, and begged him to treat her kindly, for she had suffered much, and was a far better woman than she represented herself to be.

He gave her a comfortable state-room, and ordered beefsteak and coffee to be sent there. I thanked him, for I felt sure she was hungry and would need it. In the evening she once more made her appearance in the ladies' cabin, and when the crowd began to collect about, and quiz her, she put on the most idiotic look conceivable.

"Where were you born?" said one.

"Born? what do you mean by that?"

The heroine of the supper-table threw up her jeweled hands, with a dear little screech, and exclaimed, "Oh! she don't know what 'born' means!"

"Where did you live when you were a child?"

"Who tol' you I was ever a chile?"

The captain came and seated himself by her side. "Have you no money to pay your fare?" said he.

"Yes," she replied, and gave him a one dollar confederate bill without signature. "I hope that'll serve yer, for it's the last of my fortune," and she accompanied these words with a sigh of regret, as she reluctantly handed it to him.

"Keep it," said the captain, laughing heartily, "keep it until it become more valuable to you, for I am afraid it never would be to me."

"I suppose you represent the southern confederacy?" said one of the men with an impudent stare.

"Do I look like I do?"

"Tell us, what is your name?"

"'Twas burnt up by the 'blue-coats,' when my deeds and papers were burnt in my house."

"She had better be searched," interposed a chaplain, "she may be one of those southern spies."

"She don't know enough for that," put in the heroine.

A lame man approached very near to her, and after looking her steadily in the eye, said, "She is a dangerous person. I would not trust her. I think she ought to be searched."

Lena looked him calmly in the eye, and said with perfect unconcern? "Go ahead and search—search all night. If yer supper warn't satisfactory, you'll find a healthy squad of 'gray-backs' for 'desert.' They're the only thing you'll find on me that aint too much wore for yer use. Them shoes might sarve a 'critter back-soldier,' but they aint valuable for walkin'."

The lame man and the chaplain fell back disgusted, and just now the piano was opened and the before-mentioned "heroine" was gallantly led up to preside over it.

The concert was opened with "We will rally 'round the Flag, Boys," and was followed with "war songs" until the list was completely exhausted, and they were compelled to repeat their opening song, "We will rally," etc. When they had concluded, Lena broke out with a shrill voice and sang—

"We will rally, boys, we'll rally,
For the Lincolmites have come!"

Half a dozen men rushed towards her and threatened to throw her overboard. The clerk and captain both interfered, and I myself appealed to their humanity. Could they be so cowardly as to so ill-treat a woman? But they would not be pacified until the captain had promised to put her off the boat as soon as he conveniently could.

John Gumm and myself prevailed upon Lena to go into her state-room and lock herself in. She did so, and remained undisturbed the remainder of the journey. Her meals were sent to her room.

It was about seven o'clock in the morning when we reached Vicksburg. A fearful confusion prevailed throughout the city. We had heard at our last stopping place that Vicksburg had surrendered on the morning of the Fourth of July, but felt but little confidence in the report, as our authority was somewhat unreliable; but when we discovered the American flag floating from every prominent point, our enthusiasm got the better of us, and we joined in the general excitement. As soon as our boat reached the levee we sprang ashore and were warmly greeted by those who were on the lookout for our arrival.

In all this confusion Lena had entirely escaped my mind, until I came suddenly upon her at one of the street corners, being rudely dragged off to prison.

"What are you doing with that woman?" said I to the man who had her in charge.

"Taking her to prison, sir; she is a d—d rebel spy, just come in on the Pembina. The chaplain here is our witness against her. We have already found on her person two letters addressed to rebel officers, and we will no doubt find more when she is properly searched."

I really could do nothing, and thought it best to say nothing at present; but I kept as close a look out after her as it was in my power to do.

When lodged in prison, every particle of covering to her body was searched, except the bandage on her arm. This was completely saturated with blood. Her hand was much discolored, and appearances indicated that the arm must come off to save her life.

It was not possible for me to be present at her trial. The evidence against her was not sufficient to warrant her being put to death, as only private letters were found upon her. However, she was returned to prison to await her sentence, which would be decided upon in three days.

On the evening of the second day I visited her. She looked unusually bad, and had left her supper untasted. I begged of her to take her coffee.

"No," said she, "I have eaten my dinner, and it may be my last, whether the blue-coats put me to death or not."

She then showed me her arm. When the men had arrested her they had handled her so roughly that the splints upon it had made an incision, which had not only been very painful, but had thoroughly stained the bandage with blood. The surgeon had been sent to amputate it, but she had begged him to let it remain until she had learned whether she was to live or die.

"For," said she, "you don't want to waste so much time spillin' rebel blood!"

Lena felt rejoiced at his willingness to comply with her request, for the papers, that most certainly would have cost her her life, were strapped on her arm under the bandages, and must have been immediately discovered by the surgeon.

"What have you done with them?" said I.

"Eaten them!" she replied. "Eaten five pages of foolscap, saturated with my own blood! God help me, if I am ever called upon to take such another morsel into my stomach! I cannot eat or drink; I cannot sit or stand; nor can I sleep! And if I should throw it off my stomach I would be compelled to do like the dogs—'return to my own vomit!'"

I shuddered for the poor woman, and I doubted if many more would have done this.

"Are you not afraid, Lena, that you will die of indigestion?"

"Wal, I may die eatin' of 'em, but I certainly would have died if I hadn't! 'cause they were just what your abominable northern invaders were lookin' for! They are just as rabid to git to spill my blood as they were to git to burn my house, and the surgeon would have discovered them. I am chained to the floor where I cannot even reach the windows, and I could do nothin' else. I don't know as my life is so important but I might give it up. I believe I would be glad to die if I had no children. I feel like's I want to live and look after them. Anyhow I'd rather kill myself than give your infernal blue-coats the favor of killin' me. If I was only a good big shell, now, I'd take pleasure in bein' surrounded by them 'critters' to-morrow and just bustin' myself and walkin' through a whole regiment and layin' of 'em out! I've been lookin' for that old witch that 'sot up' Cinderella! I don't want to be no princess, or ride in a gold coach, I just want to be a good big 'shell,' and I'll manage the rest!"

Lena heaved a sigh, and seemed actually to be grieved at being unable to accomplish this piece of witch-craft.

The next morning Lena was liberated, and I did not see her again until the day before the battle of Cape Girardeau. At this time an old decrepit woman, who trembled at every step, and whose right arm was in a sling, attempted to cross the lines. In her left hand was an enormous bundle of herbs, on her back was strapped a package about the size of a knapsack, and on the top of that a big bundle of roots.

"What have you got there, old dame?" cried the guard.

"Secession pills!" she promptly replied.

"Hey! What in thunder is that?"

"Oh, let her go," said his companion, "she is an old doctor

woman who has been back and forth ever since we've been around these parts."

"Never mind!" said the first speaker, "I'll just see what she's got in that pill box!" and seizing the package, he opened it, just as myself, with several other officers, reached them.

The "secession pills" proved to be "rifle bullets," and the trembling old doctress was no other than Lena Rouden!

Neither of us spoke or seemed to recognize the other. She was taken in charge, but as she was so old and feeble, with one arm broken, she was not put under close confinement, but only left in care of a guard. That night she limped out to where the horses were grazing, and watching her opportunity, she sprang upon the back of one of the fleetest and dashed out of sight before the guard had time to recover from his astonishment!

The battle of Cape Girardeau was the last engagement I took part in.

At the close of the war, I returned to Chicago, and was glad to be once more able to settle down with my wife.

I had often amused my wife and her friends with my experience in the war, but nothing interested her more than the story of Lena Rouden.

One Saturday, (about four years after the war,) my wife called at my place of business about six o'clock in the evening, and I accompanied her to the library rooms of the Young Men's Christian Association.

When we entered, we found Brother Moody talking to a respectably dressed woman, whose back was towards us.

"I am an entire stranger in these parts," she said, "and I must have a place to stop over Sunday. I expected to meet a woman here who knows all about Chicago, and who has my clothing and what little money I have in her possession, but

she has failed to reach here, and I have nowhere to go. I had the pleasure of hearin' you preach in Nashville once, Mr. Moody, and when the man at the depot tol' me to come to you, I felt like thar' war' one person in Chicago that I could come to that I'd see'd before."

"What do you want me to do for you?"

"I was tol' that you could send me to a respectable boarding house; that's all I want. I can pay for my lodging, thank God! I have money enough for that!"

Mr. Moody shook his head.

"How do I know who or what you are? Have you no letters of recommendation with you?"

"I am a book agent, and can show you the names of the firms where I get my books."

"That will not do! I cannot vouch for your respectability! I do not know but you are a regular tramp!"

"Mr. Moody, a man that I met at the depot this morning, tol' me that he had come to you, an entire stranger, and that you had helped him to a good job of work and recommended him to a boarding house."

"I can do that by a man, but not a woman; it would not do!"

"If I war' down south, I would go into the first house I come to and ask for a lodging, and I'd get it; but I don't know anything about your northern ways, and I could not do it here."

Her voice had a strange familiarity in it, and I walked around so as to be able to see her in the face. Grasping her hand, I exclaimed:

"Lena Rouden!"

She was quite overcome with joy at seeing me. I introduced her to my wife, and we asked her home to stay over Sunday. Our lodgings were limited but we had a spare room to offer her.

Mr. Moody now offered to recommend a boarding house if I would vouch for her respectability. I did so willingly, but insisted on her accompanying us home until Monday.

After our evening meal, we sat down for a wholesome chat. My wife was much amused with her. She found her more original than she had anticipated, although she had listened to so much concerning her.

To draw her out, she said, "My husband tells me you have had many severe trials, brought upon you by this cruel war—we all know how to sympathize with you. My husband was absent from me several years, and my only brother died in the hospital from the effects of a wound he received at the battle of Chattanooga. Nearly every family at the north suffered, more or less, from the loss of friends in the army."

Lena waved her hand scornfully. "You'uns don't know anything about trouble here. We'uns down south, who not only lost our friends, but our property, our homes, and our 'cause'; we'uns know what poverty, wretchedness and trouble *is*—brought on by war. Oh! it's a fine thing for you'uns to sit in your comfortable parlors and read the descriptions of battles fought—to have nothing to do but weep, and shroud yourselves in han'some black crape when you hear that your friends have been killed—to make songs about the 'Vacant Chair,' and 'I cannot sing the old songs,' and the like; it's all very fine, and I s'pose very sad. We'uns must listen to the awful roar of battles—we'uns must hear the shrieks of the shell and the groans of the dying—we'uns must submit to the scourge that follows the battle—we'uns must see our homes in flames, children trodden down in our streets, or left to starve; happy homes deserted; no time to weep, and no crape to drape ourselves in. We'uns know what war *is*! Not being able to sing them old songs don't trouble we'uns much. *One vacant chair at a well-*

spread table 'aint our grief—missing *one* from our family circle 'aint our fix. I miss all the comforts of this life—I am a stranger to home. I am a wanderer in a strange land, and in want of that key to comfort—money. I must go to work and make money, and make a home for my children."

I looked at her frail shrunken figure and at the white threads creeping out here and there from under her glossy black hair, and, although the fire of ambition was in her eye, and an endless amount of energy was in her voice, still I knew she had a "hard road to travel," before her, if she expected to make a home for her children.

I concluded here that I would leave nothing undone to assist her. I asked after her children. She said the youngest girls were in a convent in Kentucky, and her oldest was with a dress-maker in the same town; her oldest son was with a farmer in Missouri, and the youngest, little Ezza, had gone to sea and died on ship-board. Here she sighed deeply and was silent several minutes, apparently intent on watching the man from the window who was lighting the street lamps.

When she seemed once more ready to resume conversation, I asked if she had made a successful escape from Cape Girardeau, where I had seen her last in the role of doctor. She indulged in a hearty laugh, and proceeded to tell me she had succeeded admirably.

"I was once more arrested in New Orleans and tried as a spy; they cleared me, though. I 'spect General Butler was too busy stealing spoons to hang a woman. There warn't no money in that, no how. They stuck that old 'oath of allegiance' afore me and wanted me to *swar* to it. I jus' tol' 'um I hadn't any stock in that oath, and didn't intend to take any; I tol' 'um I didn't *swar* to be true to no white man, or nigger, nor no white man's government. I tol' 'um this country belonged to my

forefathers long afore a white man sot foot onto it, and if there was any swarin' to be done, or oaths to be taken, the white trash belongin' to Uncle Sam jus' wanted to *swar allegiance* to the noble red man. They sot me down for a fool and let me go. I reckon they warn't fur ahead.

"From New Orleans I started for the interior of Missouri with very important dispatches. On this journey I took great pains to avoid dangerous places, but I suffered more for food than at any time previous.

"The portion of country through which I went had been thoroughly overrun with 'blue-coats,' and there was nothing left for the people to eat.

"One night I went to the quarters of some refugees and negroes, who were living in huts together, and sleeping on straw, like so many pigs. They didn't even take clean earth to sleep on. We supped on miserably cooked beans, without tea or coffee.

"Just over the hill, near Farmington, was a small squad of soldiers guarding a new supply of rations until it could be removed to the fort. The fort was an old Campbellite church, about a mile away, and was filled with 'blue-coats.'

"While eating our beans we talked of the pleasure it would afford us if we could just get to cook some of that hominy and coffee, and make a hearty meal off it. I felt like I would be young once more, and I decided to make a bold struggle for some. I first buried my papers, and then, when the dark began to come on, I put on an old nigger blouse, blacked my upper lip to look like I had a mustache, and putting on an old plantation hat, I went in my bare feet to the camp of soldiers, and told them I war' sent to tell them that General Price was to surprise them that night. There was just enough 'blues' left to guard the fort; the forces had all been called off the

day before, and this news created quite a panic. The guards left the rations and made a hasty retreat to the fort. When it was quite dark we went and carried off all the provisions we could and buried them under the straw. I took my breakfast off boiled hominy and a splendid cup of coffee, and taking possession of my papers, I was two miles on my journey before day-light. Soon after, I fell in with another just like myself, a homeless, friendless wanderer. We accompanied each other several days. She didn't tell me where she was going, nor did I tell her my business. One day we walked all day without seeing a house, after we left our lodging place; at night we came to an old, deserted-looking cabin, and found it quite empty. We really could not find a green corn-stalk for our supper, and hungry and tired we lay down on the hard floor, with no covering over us, barring the roof, which we could have counted all the stars through, if there had been any. 'Twas the darkest night I ever see—'twas so dark you could feel it. All the early part of the evening we could hear canonading in the distance, but it finally ceased and we fell asleep. It must have been about midnight when we awoke, hearing a noise that sounded like the loud breathing of a man, but it got quiet after a time, and we fell asleep again and did not wake until day-light, when we found the dead body of a Union soldier lying across the door-way; he must have been a picket, who had been shot, and dragged himself here to die. Much as I hate a Union soldier, I did feel a heap of pity for this poor critter, who must have had friends weeping for him somewhere, and who never could have known what became of him; he was so young looking, too, poor fellow.

"Wal, about eleven o'clock that day we got our breakfast of wild grapes and sallet, and, using our hands for cups, we drank 'old Indian coffee' out of the nearest brook.

"Well, I disposed of my papers—this time without trouble, and made my way back to Memphis, where the charitable northerners had got up 'aid societies.' I was offered a good living if I could earn it; that suited me—I am always ready for work. They paid women the extravagant sum of *ten cents a piece* for making shirts, and twenty-five cents a pair for that article of clothing so necessary to a *white man*, called *pants*. Now, there was business—there was *money-making* business—but I couldn't sew. I couldn't use my right arm yet, but I was paid twenty-five cents a day for carrying the goods back and forth. I couldn't support more than a dozen children at that, you see, so I left my girls with the 'Sisters,' and promised to pay what I could for their keeping.

"I told you before, my oldest boy went up into Missouri with a farmer, and little Ezza staid with me and sold cigars on the steamboat landing. He was a right smart chance of a chap, and if he want suited to stay in Memphis, he would jump aboard of a steamer and sing, and dance, and sell cigars for the captain, and pay for his keeping, and mighty good clothes, too. He'd often fetch me home a present, and sometimes he would go and take presents to his sisters. Oh, he was a real John Rouden, and he'd have made a powerful man, if he'd a lived. Wall, he took to cigar making, and I reckon he kept time with them chaps in the factory. I got tired of toating bundles from shop to house, like a chained bar' and making a dollar and a half a week, with corn meal at three dollars a bushel; so I told 'em if they'd fix me up comfortable I'd try my *only* hand at peddling books for them.

"Well, they fixed me up, I can't say very comfortable, but I looked better than I did when I rode down with you on the Pembina, and I started out with the 'Life of Stonewall Jackson,' and a book called 'The Lost Cause.' I traveled round

and round them parts and always made from fifteen to twenty dollars a week. In about three months they paid me three dollars a week and my expenses, and thought they did a big thing, and it was better than nothing, for I could save a little, after buying clothes, to give to the 'Sisters' for my children.

"Well, each time I went out further and further until I went through Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri and Arkansas, and then started out on a trip to Texas—I was doing well. When I was getting off a wagon one day, with my well arm full of books, I lost my balance and fell to the ground, giving my back an awful strain. I started toward New Orleans, and each day my back grew worse and worse, until, when I reached New Orleans, I was compelled to go to the City hospital. I expect the doctor's treatment was good, but Lord save us from such fare! I thought prison fare might be bettered, but this beat all. I could not eat weak soup and stale crackers; I wanted corn meal, and they didn't have it. General Grant was at New Orleans, so I sent him word I wanted some corn meal and chickens, and he was good enough to send them to me. I staid there five months before I was ready for work again. When I got back to Memphis I found little Ezza had gone to sea; you see he got into a fandango with a little colored boy, who struck my Ezza first; there was too much Indian in my boy to stand that, and after a good bit of squabbling, Ezza left town, and left a little nigger behind him without any nose on his face.

"Well, I toated round, here and there, but did not go so far away from home again. I'd been gone sometime when I came home the evening before 'Good Friday,' in 1865. Good Friday morning I went to the convent chapel to attend mass with my children; I spent the day there, and slept under the roof with my children for the first time since you made a bonfire of my house. I couldn't help it, I cried half the night, and I

prayed, when I went to bed, that the Great Spirit would open the ground for miles, at Washington, and swallow up our enemies and that abominable Constitution.

"It was eight o'clock Saturday morning when I presented myself at "Head-quarters of the Aid Society." The rooms were full—all waiting for the superintendent. Presently he came in with a doleful look on his face and a morning paper in his hand.

"What's the matter?" said we'uns.

"He shook his head and said: 'We have the sad news of the assassination of Abraham Lincoln.'

"A shout went up from a dozen women. I didn't make a noise, but the joy would flash from my eyes, and I was arrested with the rest and confined in the 'lock-up.'

"The next Monday we were all hand-cuffed and taken to Mississippi and left in the road, and ordered not to come back to Memphis."

"Well, we went hungry enough for a few days, when I had an offer for my land at one dollar an acre, and I took it! I sold four hundred and fifty acres, and took it corn meal at two dollars and a half a bushel, and 'Linkum juice'—we'uns called it—'Sorgum' you'ns call it—at six bits a gallon, for the benefit of them poor starvin' critters.

"I left them and went out book peddling for myself. Well, after a bit I got myself dressed quite nice like, and didn't starve or suffer with cold as I used to when you knowed me."

"After a bit I came further north and made St. Louis my head-quarters, and bought my books there. I got to see one of the Sisters and tried to have my children removed to that place. I canvassed the country all around them parts and did well. Finally I got word that my children would be removed to a convent in Kentucky, not far from Cincinnati. So I went

there and made that place my head-quarters, and got to see my children quite often. I canvassed the country/around them parts. And I must tell you that while I was in Cincinnati I came across an old German named Osburn. He was a gardner in Palmyra, Missouri. He was a good Union man, and General McNeil set considerable store by him. Well, one day he was missing, and nothing could be found of him but his old hat in the cornfield. All the secessionists were suspected of his murder, and a great many arrests were made. General McNeil went to Knoxville with nine thousand men and gallantly fought General Porter, and defeated his thirteen hundred! I always noticed that when they were ten to one the Yanks came out victorious! Well, he took three hundred prisoners, and he ordered fifteen of them to be shot for the disappearance of old Osburn! He had several outsiders arrested, among whom was a stranger from Illinois, named Crumb, who was visiting his lady-love, Molly McCoy, and he was shot with the others. There was one man among them who had a wife and nine children, like old John Rogers. Well, his wife went to McNeil and tried to get him cleared, but McNeil loved *tragedy* too well for that; he wan't clearing men while he had ammunition to shoot them, if he had any kind of an excuse to do it. We all felt bad for that poor woman. Finally a poor orphan boy, named Allen Baker, about eighteen years old, offered himself in his place; he said he had no friends to mourn for him, and there was nothing in this world that he loved, to leave behind him, except his grand-father's old rifle. McNeil was unwilling to 'trade,' but seeing he was the youngest and handsomest fellow of the two, he finally did it. You must remember little Johnny Lake, at Memphis? Well, his father was among them, and Johnny went with him and saw him die, then buried him, poor boy; and Ben McCullough was another of them, he was

one of the bravest men in the southern army; it was him that bore the 'bonny blue flag' so long at Kirksville.

"Well, all these men, twenty in all, were shot for old Osburn, and five years after I met him in the streets of Cincinnati; he had been down to Pennsylvania having a good time. I got tired of the book trade; it's a business that is overdone now-a-days; I'm selling Mark Twain's 'Innocents Abroad,' and I've been doing well, I expect it's because I'm so much of an *innocent* myself. I've been back and forth from Cincinnati to St. Louis, until now I have made my first appearance in Chicago."

On Monday I accompanied her to the rooms of the Young Men's Christian Association. Mr. Moody kindly sent her to a respectable boarding place, where she obtained board at the moderate sum of six dollars a week. He then turned her over to Miss Miller to furnish her with some lucrative employment, who sent her to one Mr. Jones, who gave her the very agreeable business of distributing from door to door his "wonderful invention" in the shape of baking powder. It was a most excellent thing; he had spent years of his valuable time in inventing and perfecting this wonderful article, for the sole benefit of the public. He himself could not possibly gain anything except a "great name," as his baking powder was to be distributed free of charge to every house in Chicago where people would be liable to purchase large quantities thereafter. Lena was to impress it strongly upon the minds of the recipients of this inestimable gift, that it was done for the great good of the human race, and not to build up a business for Mr. Jones.

Lena looked upon the whole thing with suspicion. Her Southern prejudices gave her very little faith in "Yankee inventions"—the cook on her plantation having used cream

and soda in the stead of this "stuff," and she put in a protest against the whole thing.

She went back to Miss Miller with a wry face, and begged to be given something else; but nothing else presented itself, and she reluctantly returned to the humane Mr. Jones. He could not possibly decide upon her wages until she had been tried, and he had learned whether she had an "especial talent" for this particular calling.

On Tuesday morning she started on her doubtful errand through the broiling sun. She had generally confined herself to the country or small towns in the heat of summer, but the heat at the South had never overpowered her as it did in Chicago. She toiled up the front steps of handsome residences, and when the door was opened and her errand made known, she would sometimes be kindly treated, but more often the door was slammed in her face. In some instances, when she was tired beyond measure, and would have given thanks for five minutes' rest, she was left standing in the hall while the "lady of the house" satisfied her curiosity.

"Whose baking powder did you say this was?"

"Mr. Jones', madam."

"Ehm, do you belong in Chicago?"

"No; I am a stranger here."

"Ah, I thought so. Where are you from?"

"I'm from the sunny South, madam."

"From the South, eh? Well, I hope you are not one of those horrid rebels."

"I wish you a good morning, madam," and she would bow herself out and climb another pair of steps. At one door she was met by the "lady of the house," who said to her,

"What do you charge for this baking powder?"

"Nothing, madam. It is a present to you. I wish you

to give it a fair trial, and if it pleases you you can then buy it."

"Are you sure it is good?"

"Yes, madam; it is considered one of the best things ever manufactured."

"Well, I don't like to spoil a pound or two of good flour to try it. When will you be around again?"

"I don't know, madam."

"Well, if I spoil the flour I shall expect you to pay for it."

"Certainly, madam." And the door was closed.

Lena was just shutting the front gate when the door once more opened, and a shrill voice rang in her ear. "See here, peddler;" and Lena once more struggled up the front steps.

"I am going to make apple dumplings for dinner. Do you think this powder would make good apple dumplings?"

"Splendid, madam."

"Well, you may give me another package; and do you think it would make nice sponge cake?"

"It is good for anything, madam."

"Well, you may leave me another package for sponge cake. And I am going on the South Side to-morrow, to visit my sister, and you may just give me a package for her to try."

At length, on Adams Street, a man came to the door.

"Can I see the lady of the house, sir?"

"No, you can't. What do you want with her?"

"I wish to give her a package of baking powder, sir, to try."

"She don't want any of your stuff. When my wife wants baking powder I'll buy it for her. Who are you that you dare come swooping into people's houses, ringing the front door bell?"

"I am a woman, sir, and I hope I know enough to behave myself, and I wish you could do as well."

"See here, peddler, you just 'git' down those front steps, or I'll kick you down."

"I don't believe you'd want to kick another woman if you kick me, sir; and I'll just go down these steps when I get a good ready."

These are a few samples of the abuse she received.

She had canvassed the most respectable part of the West Side when Saturday night came. She then repaired to South Water Street, to see Mr. Jones, who gave her the liberal sum of sixty cents per day, and charged her with stealing three packages of powder. Three dollars and sixty cents a week for wages, with board at six dollars—washing and car fare not yet considered—was not the most flattering prospects she could desire, and she concluded not to be patronized any longer by the great philanthropist Jones.

She had some trouble at her boarding place, and, altogether, she was not entirely pleased with Chicago.

The following week she took from the "Union Publishing Company" a book entitled, "The Advance of Chinamen in America," and went directly to Aurora. She stopped a few days there, and went to Elgin. In this place there was not one house where they would keep over night a book pedlar from Chicago. She was therefore compelled to return to Aurora. The man of the house where she boarded soon drew out of her the fact that she was not only from the South, but that she was in heart a "rank rebel."

A man called Smith, a boarder, wished Lena to be driven from the house, he so thoroughly detested rebels.

The "landlord" entertained Lena with an account of his experience in the "Underground Railroad." He had helped over two hundred negroes to escape from slavery. Lena thought this unjust to the owners. A few days later Mr.

Smith was missing at the breakfast table, and there was an unpaid board bill of considerable length left behind.

The landlord remarked that he would have it to settle at the day of judgment.

Lena inquired if "his God" looked after his board bills?

"Certainly," he replied, "God did look after all these things."

"Well," said Lena, "what account will you give of them niggers you run off from their masters?"

She was obliged to abandon the cause of the Chinaman. "The heathen Chinese" was unpopular throughout the country. She once more returned to Chicago and took an agency for the Florence Sewing Machine. Now she began to realize a good profit on her labor. Now she began to think of a home for her children. The three youngest girls were under fourteen, and she hoped soon to be able to live under the same roof with them.

She was attended with equally good success up to October, 1871. About the first of the month she called and spent an evening with us. She said she was not sick, but she was depressed in spirits; not, however, from want of success in her business, but from the overcharged state of the atmosphere. She said the air was charged with "terror."

The season had been unusually cool and delightful during our usually "heated term," but it had been attended with an unusual drouth as well, and the elements at this particular time seemed positively to invite a conflagration. Lena said this was what the "Red Men" called "fire weather." This was the most dangerous season of the year on the prairies; this she gave as a reason why the Red Man never built permanent houses. The North was a fine hunting-ground, and good for summer, but between heat and frost a sea of fire usually swept the

prairies. The South was a better home in the winter, and it was a natural fruit country—a “garden of Eden.” She had heard it said among the Indians that every half century the Northwest was all swept clean by this sea of fire, and this was why there were no trees of any size throughout so large a portion of it; “and what small trees we have,” she remarked, “are always near a stream or pond of water.” The Red Man understood the elements well enough to escape to a place of safety in season to avoid these seas of fire, and, before civilization interfered with nature, the “animals” would, by instinct, leave in season to avoid it. She said if we but observed the state of the atmosphere, we could as well prepare ourselves for the “prairie fires” as for a rain-storm or the snow in winter. She said she had known an “old aunty” in the South who had prophesied during the war that the whole Northwest would one day be destroyed. When this great fire came, she was over a hundred years old, and remembered hearing Indians tell of these dreadful fires.

I told her we had just been reading Mr. Edward Power’s book on the “Artificial Production of Rain,” and that I thought science would one day bring about a relief for this much dreaded scourge.

She then spoke of her business. She had a large number of machines out to be paid for in monthly installments, and she would make a reasonable profit on them, giving herself a good income. She intended visiting her children before cold weather set in.

On Saturday, the seventh of October, she walked all day, making her collections, and, being much fatigued, retired early. She boarded on East Adams street, and the window in her lodging-room looked west. She awoke not far from midnight; her room was flooded with a wild, unnatural light; perfect

confusion prevailed in the streets. She arose, and looking from her window, the whole of West Chicago seemed in a blaze.

Hastily dressing herself, she went below stairs, and accompanied some of the boarders to the terrible scene of distress. She soon found plenty to do. She met a mother with two babes in her arms, and, first relieving her of one, she assisted her in removing what goods she could.

The fire was an enormous one, extending over full twenty acres of ground. The houses were principally wood, and burned and spread with great rapidity. It had started two blocks west of the South Branch of the Chicago river, in a line a little south of the center of the West Side of the city, and extended to the river. It was an alarming fire, particularly in the present state of the atmosphere. The streets were filled with leaves that had fallen from the shade trees—not from frost, but “drouth,”—that burned like scraps of paper, and seemed liable to spread the disaster by being lifted by the wind and borne out to new quarters.

Hundreds of families were left in the street, without homes. Lena did what was in her power to assist these poor people, and on Sunday morning, when the fire had ceased to spread, but was yet burning in some lumber and coal yards on the river bank, she went amongst the few friends she had made in Chicago and got relief for several suffering women and children.

All day Sunday the scene of the terrible disaster was visited. So large a fire had never been in the West, and the sympathies of the people were called out to these poor sufferers.

On Sunday night Lena once more retired early, hoping to refresh herself by sleep, for she was thoroughly exhausted. I make no doubt but that she would have succeeded admirably had not that “notorious” Chicago lamp outwitted Mrs. O’Leary’s

cow. A most vicious lamp it proved to be, and a most unfortunate beast was that much lamented cow, who offered herself as a sacrifice for the O'Leary family on the "Altar of Fame!" Alladin's lamp is lost in insignificance beside this lamp of Mr. O'Leary's! The popular Mrs. O'Leary cannot be called to account for not having her lamp trimmed and burning! It was an expensive lamp—much too expensive for a woman living in the retired manner in which Mrs. O'Leary lived! It has cost more money than all the lamps in England! It was not only a very witty but an exceedingly mischievous lamp! It decided not only to do an unusual amount of burning itself, but to spread an infection that should—like the plague in the novel—"Sweep the earth clean!" And when it was at last overcome and extinguished, it left more people in the darkness of poverty and wretchedness than can be lighted up again in years! And yet the job was not so badly done; for hundreds of families who had never known the comforts of a home up to this time, are now keeping comfortable homes, and having got a fair start in the world, it is to be hoped that they may succeed in keeping it and becoming good citizens.

It certainly was a most wonderful lamp, if indeed, it ever did exist. In fact, this is a subject that I have allowed my mind to get up a little rebellion of its own upon. However, I think I before mentioned that Lena retired at an unusually early hour on this most memorable of nights, hoping thereby to refresh herself; but she was not destined to sleep.

Notwithstanding the fact that the "origin" of the fire is quite as uncertain as that of the "first families" of some of our shoddy aristocracy, nevertheless, the fire did originate about nine o'clock in the evening, six blocks south of the original fire and two blocks west. It spread with the rapidity of a fight in a procession on St. Patrick's Day! The flames

seemed determined to reach the heavens. They shed a fierce lurid glare over the earth as we viewed it. The moon was lost in oblivion. Now they burst forth as though Vesuvius had a rival in the midst of our city, and they would subdue themselves as if gathering their forces for a more fiendish attack.

The general alarm was given about half-past nine, which seemed to create a terrible panic. The wind was blowing unusually strong from the south-west, and people were rushing to the scene on every hand. Carriages were filled with gentlemen and ladies, express wagons were freighted with people, and the street cars going in the direction of the fire were crowded to overflowing.

Lena arose from her bed, and from her window contemplated the scene. She felt safe herself, because the fire was west of the river; but she knew she was needed in the midst of the suffering. She was soon dressed, and elbowing her way through the crowd, she succeeded in crossing Adams street bridge to the West Side. She hastened to the house of one of her friends that stood in a direct line of the fire as it advanced. The poor woman's heart was filled with terror. She had a year old baby and a lame child of three years, and her husband had just been buried. Lena took both children from their mother and said she would keep them at her boarding place until she called for them. With her whole heart the trembling mother thanked her, and bidding her "God speed," she returned within to save what she could from the house. The mother followed Lena within an hour and brought a large package of clothing for the children, and pausing to kiss her babies only, hastened back to secure a trunk filled with valuables that she had left with a friend.

Lena watched from her window the progress of the fire. It spread more and more rapidly until it reached the burnt dis-

trict on the north, it came east furiously to the water's edge. Lena looked, half fearing, yet unwilling to acknowledge it possible for the fire to cross the river and come on the South Side. Now she saw it creeping nearer and nearer Van Buren street bridge. The wind had risen so fiercely as to become almost a tornado, and large firebrands were scattered blocks away. She was thankful that the wind blew more north than east, for it would certainly cross the river if it did not.

"God help us!" she cried, "Van Buren street bridge has caught, and a burning vessel is floating towards Adams street bridge!"

Alas, the fire has reached the South Side on Van Buren street! The gas works have ignited. A terrible explosion is heard, and the gas works have spread a sea of fire all about it! On, on it leaps from roof to roof, from cornice to cornice, like the leaves before the wind in an autumnal forest! Now a fearful panic prevails. People rushed madly along while they could cross Adams street bridge, but alas, it too is burning!

The police were busy calling on people who were sleeping soundly, and the houses burning over their heads! 'Twas coming, coming in a direct line towards her house! Now she understood that she could no longer wait for the return of the mother of the children; she must move them to a place of safety immediately. She had a friend on the North Side, nearly two miles away, who resided on the lake shore, near Ogden Park. Here she decided to go, and made preparations accordingly.

That evening I had attended a Sunday evening lecture on the South Side, and on my return the crowd had kept me from crossing the river. In fact, I had a better view of the fire, from where I was, than I could have had on the opposite side of the river. When the gas works exploded I was in an unsafe

position, and with difficulty succeeded in extricating myself. I hastened toward Adams street bridge, but to my horror, I found it burning! I retreated down Adams street with the tide of people as they rushed hurriedly along. I reached Lena's residing place just as she came out of the door with both children in her arms. She said there was not a man in the house who was able to walk, and she must move the children at once. She had packed a satchel with her most valuable papers and goods and was anxious to take it and the children's clothes. I took the oldest child and the parcel; Lena carried the satchel and baby. We hastened on until we reached the court house. Here we paused for breath, and during the interval, I met with a friend who advised me about the removal of his goods and family to the West Side. Leaving Lena and the children sitting on the steps of the east wing of the court house to wait for me. I accompanied him to a livery stable to procure a team. He had already tried several places, but being unacquainted, had failed. Everything was out before ten o'clock that night, except the choicest teams. Everybody and everything had gone to the fire. Some were moving people and goods from the burning district, but more went to see the terrible conflagration. I succeeded, however, in procuring a team for my friend at the moderate price of fifty dollars, and returned to Lena and her burdens. The streets were now thronged with people hurrying in every direction. When I reached the court house, I found the square filled with people with trunks and bundles. I took my little charge and hastened down Randolph street, and reaching my place of business, I opened it and left our baggage. We now made all speed possible, and soon reached our place of safety for the children. As we approached the house, we discovered a very large fire in front of us in the vicinity of the water works. The wind was blowing this from

us. This last resort was surely a place of safety. With some difficulty we succeeded in awakening the inmates of the house, and the exhausted little children were glad to get into a comfortable bed as soon as their hunger had been appeased. Lena's friend had a nursing baby of her own, so that she had the wherewithal to satisfy the hunger of both children. We paused a few moments to refresh ourselves, after our tedious trip, and then returned to my office. Lena desired to remove her satchel and the children's clothing to the safe quarters of her friend.

As we crossed the bridge we were able to see that the fire was making rapid progress in our direction, and when we came into Randolph street, we found it had already reached the magnificent stone front, fire-proof building on the south-west corner opposite the court house, and it was a sad sight to contemplate. From the richly ornamented windows poured forth a tongue of fire, that, like a hungry wolf, seemed lapping in all directions in search of food. Now from the window in the center of the mansard roof came forth a woman and two children; soon followed a man, and his wild gestures betokened the terrible agony of their situation. Alas, the "fire fiend" has followed them! The flames come leaping and hissing after like an enraged serpent! The mother clasps the children in her arms and in a furnace of fire sinks from view! The roof has fallen in, and showers of sparks and firebrands are deposited in the court house square. The people run frantically in all directions; some with their parcels already burning in their hands. The Chamber of Commerce is now in flames, and the court house dome has caught the infection. The court house bell, from the moment the general alarm was given, has belled in perfect madness until now, its tongue is silenced forever?

"Look, Lena!" A little patch of the cornice on the eaves of

the Sherman house has caught, and the wind fans it into a flame—it spreads; it leaps from one end to the other; a fresh tornado comes—with difficulty I succeed in holding on my hat—Lena's veil is rudely torn from her head and borne out of sight.

"We are not safe here," said I, and we made haste to my place of business. Lena seized her baggage, and bidding me "good night," went with the throng down State street toward the North Side.

I secured my most valuable books and papers, thrust them into an old satchel, and attempted to pass up Randolph street to cross over to the west side of the river. As I came in contact with the fire, I found the heat too terrible to endure. The air, where the wind was not blowing, was laden with the most intense heat. Little explosions were heard in all quarters, and portions of sidewalks were torn up; and the flames would pour forth apparently from the sewers. I looked in astonishment; but when I remembered the explosions at the gas works I was able to realize the situation. The gas in the pipes would ignite with the heat, and this undoubtedly caused those terrible currents of foul and heated air that at times would nearly consume us.

The fire swept across Randolph street several blocks in advance of me; the prospect was uninviting; I could not continue my course; I saw quantities of people retreating toward the La Salle street tunnel, and I determined to go there. The inmates of the Sherman house came pouring forth into the street as I passed quite safely toward La Salle street.

A tornado now overtook me that was perfectly overwhelming; some were thrown down and blown about promiscuously, some were carried safely before the wind around the corner toward the tunnel; I caught hold of a column that supported

a doorway, and was obliged to drop my satchel or lose my hold. I felt as though I was before the canon's mouth in a terrible battle. Oh, the heat is so intense, my hair and my face are scorched, my hat gone! Surely, surely, I cannot hold my breath another moment and live! Ah! thank God it is over! the heat has arisen above my head. I look in vain for my hat and satchel; both are gone from my gaze. I hurry around the corner and in two minutes am safe inside the tunnel. My God! what a looking set of people! covered with soot and ashes, crowded in with trunks, bundles, books, small safes, and everything that could be made to hold valuables. After I left the entrance it was perfectly dark; the gas was destroyed both on the South and North Sides.

With considerable difficulty I forced my way through the tunnel. The fire had already crossed the river; Clark and State street bridges were both burning, and Wells street bridge was now becoming dangerous. I looked at my watch; it was three o'clock. It seemed like a month since I left home at seven. Dare I pass over and attempt to cross Indiana or Kinzie street bridge? I thought of the danger I had just passed through at the corner of La Salle and Randolph, and my heart almost failed me. I made the effort, however. Oh, how densely the streets were crowded! Goods were being hurried into carts or carriages; all were on the wing.

I had seen people at the south fly from their homes like frightened birds as our army advanced, but that was not to be compared with this.

I succeeded in getting safely to Kinzie street, and crossed the bridge with a thankful heart.

Ten minutes' walk brought me to my own door, where my poor frightened wife was in the agony of despair about me. I told her as quickly as possible what had detained me, and she

bid me sleep after drinking a cup of tea she had hastily prepared for me. I willingly drank the tea, and lay down, but I could find no sleep. There was not one quiet place in Chicago that night. People were out looking; people were inquiring the way to their friends; people were everywhere except in their beds.

At daylight I arose and accompanied my wife to the Randolph street bridge. Such a sight met our view as I never hope to see again: a sea of fire extended from south to north as far as the eye could reach. The very heavens seemed heated to a blaze. One single block on the corner across the bridge was the only thing we could see standing for miles that was not on fire or already burned out.

The fire had passed a mile beyond Lena's last resort. "You must go and look for her at once," said my wife, "and bring her and the children to me; I will care for them."

We returned home, and taking a strong but gentle horse, I bade my wife a good morning and started out on my errand.

I looked at Kinzie street bridge; it led into a fiery furnace. Indiana street was not more inviting. I proceeded to North avenue bridge, and succeeded in crossing with great difficulty. The tide of human faces was coming west. On, on they struggled, and launched themselves on the safe side of the river. The sidewalks were filled with goods and household furniture, with families sitting on the ground by their side, like emigrants on the old battery in New York when a ship had arrived. I was obliged to turn north after crossing one street on Indiana. It was now half past nine o'clock; the heavens were black as ink here; the sun, struggling through the blackness, looked like as it did at the time of the eclipse, when that ghastly "gangreen" had overspread the earth. There was terror in the sky, terror in the atmo-

sphere, terror in the wind and terror in the faces of the people. On, on they rushed like an immense drove of cattle which had just overtaken a piece of freshly-killed beef, with eyes dilated and nostrils distended; they pant and struggle to make more rapid headway. On, on they go, anywhere, anywhere, out of the fire.

Taking my way north, I am compelled to fall into line with the immense procession, several blocks from the fire, the wind is laden with heat and sand that is ruinous to the eyes of both man and beast. In the centre of the street is a regular line of teams; on each side are others who hope to break in soon. These march slowly as if to a funeral song. Each side the throng is hurrying past us; now we are compelled to halt two or three minutes; now we move on once more, fifty or sixty feet; once more we halt. Now I watch the singular looking mass as they pass us. Here a little child shrieks for her mother, and falls to the ground; some one lifts her by the arm and bids her move on or the crowd will trample her down. She clings to the lamp-post, and in the agony of her soul is crying "Mother!" when the procession moves on and she is lost to my view. Another halt; and two young women, with heads bare, have between them an aged and infirm woman, who is struggling hard to keep on her feet; strong arms are around her waist; loving hands assist her; gentle words encourage her, and she is slowly borne along. My horse has three minutes' walk, and another halt; An old lady, whose step is yet firm, and a young girl just in her teens are assisting a white-haired man, who seems convulsed with rheumatic pains; slowly they pass out of sight. How strangely the deserted buildings look; doors and windows open; furniture scattered here and there. Everything wore an abandoned look. Now I turn east; here I meet the children from the Orphan

Asylum; the Sisters of Charity are vainly trying to keep them in a line of procession. How this reminded me of the war! The Sisters were always caring for the children. Soon come the patients from the hospital of the Good Shepherd. Poor sad looking creatures! Some lying in beds on wagons, others sitting, like sheep going to market, in the bottom of the wagon. These, too, were in care of the Nuns and Sisters. Soon followed the priests and brotherhood. Once more I turn north; I wait some time before I can join in the procession; just behind me is an immense beer wagon laden with an elegant piano and immense mirrors, pictures and gilded tables; the driver is cursing in a fearful manner; some one has come too near his load. In front of me is a small wagon, heavily loaded; a wheel gives out; the large articles and the wagon are removed; the rest is driven over, and the procession moves once more. Suddenly another halt, and the pole of the beer wagon is nearly driven through the back of my buggy.

The fire has reached the lake in a line directly across the city in an angular direction. I cannot reach Lena's friend; a river of fire is between us; I reach Lincoln Park; it is filled with women and children watching their goods. I see Lena—no, it is a stranger! I approach as near as I can every group where I can see children, but in vain. I drive to the lake; the shore is lined with a wall of goods as far as I can see. I follow the lake shore drive several miles out and look as I go in vain for Lena. Now I return once more and go through Lincoln Park towards the front entrance; I look at my watch; it is one o'clock; leaving the west gate I approach the entrance towards town; a few leaves are burning at my right hand, as though some one had thrown down a cigar or match; on my left a parcel of goods has caught and is now rapidly burning; a cloud of dust is between me and the entrance; I look up to

see from whence come the burning leaves that are dashed into my face, and find several trees on fire over my head; a blaze passes through a grove before me; I look back and find that the fire has reached several rods behind me; now comes a tornado of wind, sand and burning leaves; I turn my horse carefully; the avenues are filled with people who are now compelled to abandon the goods that they only a few hours ago paid an exorbitant price to have removed here. In the excitement at the west gate, I overtook a woman vainly trying to drag a trunk in one hand and a child, apparently three years old, completely exhausted with hunger and fatigue, in the other. Her face was the picture of agony; women, children, old and crippled men fled past her; her knees seemed to bend under her with her own weight; a shower of burning leaves was dashed over her; she paused, undecided what to do.

"I will take yourself and child, but I cannot take your trunk," said I to her, as I stopped my horse beside her.

"Oh, I cannot leave my trunk, and my husband will come here to look for me," she said, in great distress.

"Give me your child, then," and I gave her my card to enable her to find me when she wished the boy, and I took him in the carriage beside me.

I could do no more for Lena now, so I turned my horse towards home.

In order to recross the river, I was compelled to go several blocks farther north of the bridge I had crossed in the morning, and I found the rush just the same. Slowly, oh, so slowly, I moved along with the procession. I was more than two hours going two miles across the city. The streets were yet completely thronged, and after we came to the open prairie the wayside was strewn with broken furniture. At length I came to the bridge. Here I discovered the cause of the halts

in the procession; only one team was allowed to go on at a time, and two or three feet must be given between each team. This bridge was so far north of the city that it had no sidewalks on it, and the people were compelled to walk each side of the horses.

A woman and child came to me as I stood awaiting my time. They had waited more than an hour; the woman was timid and not strong enough to attempt anything so perilous. She begged me to take her and her child into my buggy. I did so, and as we started on the bridge, a man put one arm around my horse's neck, the other around the waist of his wife, and in this way went in safety to the West side!

I hastened home with all possible speed. My wife was disappointed at not seeing Lena, but took great interest in the poor little frightened child I had brought with me. I returned my horse to the stable and ordered him to be refreshed, as I might need him again. I ate my dinner with a relish, but we could not prevail upon the child to eat one mouthful.

My eyes, my hair, and my clothing were completely filled with a dirty sand, that it was almost impossible to remove. At length I lay down on a couch, and explained to my wife the fearful scenes on the North Side.

"What has become of Lena?" she inquired.

"There is but one resort for her, and that is the 'Sands' in Ogden Park."

"That is a very narrow strip. I am afraid the heat would overcome them there. Think of those poor babies, out all day in this furnace of fire. Oh, it is terrible!"

Several of our friends now arrived, and we were busy trying to comfort them. Wife was cooking and dish-washing constantly. Eight o'clock arrived, and I determined to take one more look for Lena. I drove directly over Indiana street

bridge. I could see the distance of nearly half a block ahead of me. Everything had disappeared that looked like Chicago, except our Nicholson pavements; they were in perfect order. the edges of the blocks where the composition was worn, were charred and burning, but they were not injured in the least. On each side the cellars were throwing up flames and smoke that would sometimes reach entirely across the street.

It was most singular, but in no case did I find the street obstructed by the debris, as is usually the case. The buildings had burned so rapidly that they had fallen within and left the street perfectly clear.

The horse, which seemed equal to the emergency, behaved himself with becoming dignity, and in a few moments we reached the Sands. Our road had indeed been a strait and narrow path, and if by chance, any accident had tipped us out of it, we could hope for nothing but a fiery grave!

The Sands were completely dotted with piles of furniture, charred over or still burning. On we went, down to the water's edge. Here I found several carriages taking in people who had been sitting the most of the day in the lake, with wet blankets over their heads. I went from group to group of people, until I nearly reached the end. The wind was blowing the smoke and heat from the coal yard, across the slip, so strongly that it was but little better than the streets I had just passed. At last I found Lena, who had taken shelter under a broken wagon, just down to the water's edge. Her clothing was wet to the waist. Poor baby was sleeping from sheer exhaustion. It had not had a mouthful since morning. The lame child was weeping bitterly, with pain and hunger, and Lena welcomed me most cordially. Removing the children, we seated ourselves in the buggy and hastened home. Oh, how thankful we were to arrive safely on moist earth once more!

"There!" said Lena, pointing behind us, as we reached the bridge, "that is the very 'hell' old Mr. Moore used to describe to me when he preached, but he didn't say I'd have to come to Chicago to pass through it! I'm glad its over with, and I don't think I'll ever be called upon to go again!"

When we reached home, my wife was overjoyed to see us. The babies must be attended to first. Poor little yearling drank of warm milk, and enjoyed her bath wonderfully. She gave us no trouble, but went to sleep at once when she was made comfortable. I went down to the West Side burnt district and left word with the police that I had the children, and inquired for the mother of the two that Lena brought.

When I returned home we begged Lena to tell us her experience of "this day."

She said, "I did not retire when I returned, but watched the progress of the fire and decided to once more remove to the West Side, but before I had got the children dressed, the fire had passed up to the lake and cut off all retreat in that direction, and was making rapid strides east. There was nothing but the Sands left, and to this we went. I passed back and forth several times, bringing not only my own goods, but helping my friends to remove theirs. But when the worst came, the heat was like to consume everything. The wind was filled with fire-like halestones, and the heat was beyond endurance. We were at last obliged to abandon our goods and go to the water's edge. I sat in it up to my waist, and held them two children in my lap and a wet blanket over our heads. The lake was full of people just as far as they could get into the water. Some were taken off in boats, and amongst those were my friends, but before I could get aboard with the two children, the boat was overladen with Irish, who plunged in regardless of all else but their own safety, and I was compelled to go back to my

blanket. The goods took fire all around us, and added to our terror. If a dry spot was left on the blanket over our heads it was sure to catch on fire. This lasted nearly half the day."

"Oh, how terrible!" said my wife: "what a length of time to be in such a suffering condition."

"We had our fun, though," said Lena. "I always find something to help me through these tight places. When the fire began to abate somewhat, I took notice of all the people near me. On one side was a rich banker and his family; on the other was a family of six children, their parents and grand mother."

"Oh, Bessie," said one, peeping from under her blanket, "is not this dreadful?"

"Yes, Minnie; but then we'll have something 'true' to tell our grand children, when we get old, won't we, Min?"

"I laughed in defiance of the fire."

The next morning we were awakened early with women ringing the door-bell, who had come to see if their lost children were here. I pitied the poor things when I saw how overcome they were with disappointment at not finding the dear ones.

"Ah!" said Lena, "this reminds me of my prison days down South, every time a fresh supply of prisoners was brought in; 'twas sad to see the people come to see if their friends were among them."

It was Tuesday night before the mother of the children arrived, and she was then brought by a police officer. She had been quite insane, but seemed now to be more rational. We made her as comfortable as we could under the circumstances.

Lena was left with nothing in the world but the wet clothing she had worn home. My wife gave her something to relieve her; she was busy two or three days getting the mother and

her children comfortable quarters and something from the relief fund to start them with.

Lena now looked her own prospects over; and they were not particularly bright. Nearly all the sewing machines she had sold and secured so much a month on were now destroyed by fire. All her income was gone, and she was destitute of all that would make her comfortable. She was too proud to go with the throng and beg clothes at the relief depot. She had a friend on the West Side, Mrs. Leland; to her she went for aid and advice. She talked of leaving for Cincinnati, but must have something to wear first. Fortunately Mrs. Leland had supplies from the Louisville relief, and made her somewhat comfortable. She secured a pass and went to Cincinnati, but did not remain long. On her return she came to my home, and I bade her stay until she could do something for herself.

I said, "How strange it is that I should have seen her in so many hard struggles in the war, and now help her through the Chicago fire."

"Ah!" said my wife, "what a sad and eventful life Lena has had."

"She has, indeed," I replied: "it would make quite an interesting story if written."

"Now see here, Captain, s'pose you write it for me, and I'll have it published and sell my own history. I could make something for my children."

I laughed at the idea, and said if I got no employment I would.

Lena now commenced to canvass for the Davis Sewing Machine, and succeeded admirably, but she needed money. Once more she visited her friend Mrs. Leland, who wrote a note to Mr. Bouton, asking aid from the Stewart fund for Lena. Mr. Cartland, of the Florence office, and Mr. Moffitt of the

Davis machine, both approved, and each wrote recommending her.

Lena urged me once more to write her adventures; and I finally commenced my work, as I had found no business to employ more than half my time.

Mr. Bouton's agent called on Lena; was shocked to learn there was Indian blood in her; did not know whether Indians were to be tolerated at all; and proceeded with the following questions:

"How old are you?"

"Where were you born?"

"How many children have you?"

"When were you married?"

"When did your husband die?"

"Why don't you marry again?"

"What do you expect us to do for you?"

The next day brings another agent, and the same questions are repeated until ten visitors have called upon her.

One has forgotten to ask how old Lena was, and in what State she was born, and Lena concludes that she must make a report to Mr. Bouton and inform him of the inefficiency of his agent.

"Will you have furniture for housekeeping?"

"No; I am a book and sewing machine agent, and have no time to keep house. I want money, and nothing else will do me."

"What will you do with the money?"

"Get my book printed."

"Oh, a rebel story, printed at our expense?"

"Yes, a rebel story."

"Can't we buy you a sewing machine?"

"No, I don't want one; and if I did I would get one without your aid. I want money."

"Shall we not pay your board until spring?"

"No; I want nothing but money."

She got her money. Mr. Bouton gave her one hundred dollars, and that is her first payment on the printing.

I am aware of the fact that some of my comrades will not admire a book written by *me*, a "Union soldier," bearing such a title as this does, but I have tried to do right in the matter.

"No matter at all, you know,
Whether I'm wrong or right,
My sympathies always go
For the under dog in the fight."

OLIVER OUTWEST.

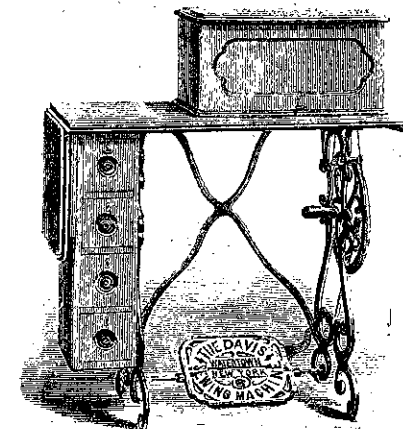
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