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AN HUMBLE HERO.

BY THOMAS P. MONTFORT.

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CHAPTER VIII. A CRUEL AWAKENING.

What did it mean?

This was the question Sim Banks asked himself as he sat there holding that note in his hands, reading over and over the few lines it contained. What could it mean, and who could have written it?

Though Sim pondered these questions long, he was able to find no answer to them. The whole affair was wrapped in a thick and impenetrable mystery which he could not solve. He felt, however, that there must be something dark and unpleasant back of it all, and a sensation of uneasiness took possession of him. After his experiences of that day, which had been a day of events in his uneventful life, he was in a state of mind to expect all manner of curious and unaccountable happenings.

Could it be possible that Louisa had an important secret that she was keeping hidden from him? Could it be possible that she and some man had formed a friendship, or at least an acquaintanceship, the existence of which they had guarded so well that he had never even so much as suspected it?

That the author of the note was a man he was assured from the first. The strong, bold chirography and the language of the note convinced him of that. This much, and this much only, was clear to him.

The thought that his wife and some man should be linked together by a secret which no one else must share made his heart sick. To his mind it

seemed as if he had been deceived. He had trusted her, and she had deceived him. He had trusted her, and she had deceived him. He had trusted her, and she had deceived him.

"Not even your hanging over the fence and making love to Mary Mann?"

"I never done it, Louesey, an anybody that went an told you any such a thing told you a p'int blank lie. I never made love to nobody in all my life but you."

"That will do for you to tell, but you can't fool me. If you were not making love to Mary Mann last night, why were you with her?"

"I was jest passin' along the street, an she called to me."

"And you stopped?"

"Of course. What else could I do?"

"Nothing but stop and make love to her."

"I tell you I never done any such a thing as make love to her. You ask her if I did."

"Mrs. Banks tossed her head disdainfully."

"I'll be apt to ask any woman such a thing as that, and that woman in particular."

"Waal, you needn't then. But it was jest like I say. I never dreamed of makin' love to her."

"But you stopped there with her and hung over the fence and talked to her?"

"Waal, s'pose I did. I couldn't help myself. I couldn't jest walk on an leave her while she was talkin, could I?"

"Certainly not when her talk was so sweet and interesting. You must have found it real pleasant to have her assure you that I didn't love you, but that she knew some woman who did."

"I didn't find it pleasant, an if I had I wouldn't 'a' done the way I did."

"Wouldn't have staid to listen to her?"

"I wouldn't have let on that I didn't understand what she meant an discouraged her ever 'way I could."

"By hanging over the fence and talking back to her?"

"If I did hang over the fence an talk back to her, I never said nothin out of the way an nothin to be ashamed of, nary a word."

"Some people haven't a very keen sense of shame."

"Sim paused for a moment. Then he said very soberly:

"Louesey, you don't love me. If you did, you wouldn't never believe the lies somebody's gone an told you when I tell you they are lies. A woman that loves her man ain't never a-goin to believe some old long tongued tattler as ag'in him. It's a gospel truth, if ever I spoke one in my life, when I say I never made love to Mary Mann, an I'd swear to it on a stack of Bibles a hundred feet high. You ain't got no right to accuse me of any such a thing."

"But you have a right to accuse me of something just as bad?"

"I ain't never accused you of nothin Louesey, an you know it."

"And what am I to think when you and some woman have not only one secret, but many secrets, between you that I am not allowed to share?"

"He looked at her in astonishment. "Me an some woman have secrets?" he repeated. "What do you mean by that?"

"I mean just what I say. Last night was not so long ago that you should forget what took place then."

"I don't understand you. I've never had a secret from you in all my life, much less a secret between me an any woman."

"Are you so sure of that?"

"I am."

"Then you must have forgotten Mary Mann."

"Sim's face flushed instantly, and his head drooped. He had forgotten Mary Mann, but now he remembered her, as well as his meeting with her the night before. It was the memory of that meeting that made him blush, and he blushed, not for himself, but for her."

"And your meeting with her last night," Louisa added after a pause.

"Who told you about that?" Sim asked incoherently, thus admitting the truth of the charge.

"Then you did meet her?" Louisa said.

"Yes, but it was not my fault. Who told you?"

"It doesn't matter who told me. Although you say you have never had a secret from me, I am certain you would never have been the one to tell me that."

"You're mistaken thar, Louesey. Thar ain't no reason on earth why I should not 'a' told you, an I'd 'a' done it. Nothin happened at that meetin, so far as I'm concerned, that I'd be ashamed to tell to the whole world."

"Not even your hanging over the fence and making love to Mary Mann?"

"I never done it, Louesey, an anybody that went an told you any such a thing told you a p'int blank lie. I never made love to nobody in all my life but you."

"That will do for you to tell, but you can't fool me. If you were not making love to Mary Mann last night, why were you with her?"

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"Waal, s'pose I did. I couldn't help myself. I couldn't jest walk on an leave her while she was talkin, could I?"

"Certainly not when her talk was so sweet and interesting. You must have found it real pleasant to have her assure you that I didn't love you, but that she knew some woman who did."

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"Some people haven't a very keen sense of shame."

"Sim paused for a moment. Then he said very soberly:

sure of her gratitude at least, he added: "But he ain't never goin to say it no more, I bet. I done settled him for that."

"Yes," she said; "but you've gone and set everybody else to talking. I wish you had let Jim Thorn alone."

Sim was amazed, and the look on his face showed it.

"Why, my land, Louesey," he exclaimed, "you ain't a-min to say I done wrong in knockin Jim Thorn down, are you?"

"You had better not have done it," she replied, "and I wish you hadn't."

"Waal, I'll be blamed! Why, Pap Sampson an Hicks an Jason an all the rest, they all 'lowed I done jest right, an ever 'one of 'em said he'd 'a' done jest like I did if he'd 'a' been in my place. Lord, I was countin shore on you bein pleased 'cause I tuck up for you that a-way, an now you don't think I ort 'a' done it! 'Pears like can't never t'ime I do please you, Louesey, an ev'rythin I try to do somethin for you I seem to make a mess of it."

Sim's voice was so pathetic and his disappointment so evident that, in spite of her ill humor, Louisa was touched. She looked at him, and there was an expression of pity and something like sympathy in her eyes. Slowly and sadly she said:

"Sim, it is a sad thing to say, and you may think it cruel, but God knows it is true. It would have been better for us both if we had never met."

"Louesey!" Sim exclaimed fearfully, starting to his feet, all in a tremble.

"What is that you say? Surely you don't mean them words?"

"I do, and what I say is true. It would have been far better for us both if we had never, never met."

He stared at her a long time in silence, and he noticed that her face was painfully white and drawn. His too, he knew, bore the marks of a great dread and fear.

"Louesey," he said, his voice husky and scarcely audible, "for God's sake, don't say that! Remember, you are my wife. Please take back them words. Say they're not so."

"I cannot, Sim, I cannot, for I would only be lying if I did."

She folded her arms on the table and dropped her head on them and began to sob. Sim stood watching her, a sickening dread stealing over him. Unconsciously he hesitated for a moment, then went to her and put out his hand and began to stroke her hair. She drew away from him, and a cold shudder ran over her. He stood aloof and looked on her, his face painfully white and drawn and a hard, tense sensation clutching at his heart.

"Louesey," he said presently, "what does this mean? Why do you treat me like that?"

She made no reply, but continued to sob. He reached out his hand again and placed it gently on her head, and again she shrank from him as though his touch were poison. Her action cut him deep, and a pain, sharp and poignant, passed through his soul. When he spoke again, his voice was low and husky.

"Louesey," he said, "is it true, as Mary Mann says, that you don't love me none?"

She did not answer, and when he had waited a moment he repeated his question. This time she looked slowly up until her eyes met his. From that moment there was no need for her to speak. In her eyes he only too plainly read her answer to his question. Slowly, as one in a dream, he turned to leave the room. There was a queer sensation of emptiness about his head, and everything around him bore a strange air of unreality. At the door he stopped and put his hand up to his forehead and for a full minute stood like one dazed. Then, turning his eyes once more on his wife, he said:

"My God, Louesey, you are killin me! You have broken my heart. Oh, please, please tell me it is not true, that look I saw in your eyes, and that you do love me!"

She did not raise her head, but between her sobs he heard her murmur:

"I can't, for I don't love you!"

Without another word he passed from the room and went staggering uncertainly down the walk to the street. He felt that he had received a death-blow, and in reality he had received that which was far worse, for death would have brought an end to pain and suffering, and this brought pain and suffering only.

At the yard gate he stopped, and, leaning heavily against a post, he looked back at the house.

Through the window he saw his wife sitting as he had left her, and a great yearning came over him to take her in his arms and hold her to his bosom and kiss her. But the next moment he remembered the words she had spoken and the look she had given him, and, laying his head against his arm, he said sadly:

"But she is not mine! She is not mine!"

"For God's sake, don't say that!"

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Miscellaneous Reading.

WHALEY'S GREAT TRIUMPH.

Columbia's Olympia Mill Stands Alone, Superior to All.

Charleston News and Courier.

The Olympia Cotton mill, in Columbia, is the largest cotton mill under one roof in the south, and one of the largest cotton mills in the world. It is the first cotton mill in the United States built for the employment of electricity generated by steam and not by water. It is the highest type of mill in construction, equipment and in the adaptation of electricity to the solution of problems of economy in the business of cotton manufacturing.

About four years ago, Mr. W. B. Smith Whaley read a paper before the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, in which he compared the relative cost of power transmitted by steam and by electricity and the advantages that would result from the use of electricity derived from generators directly connected to steam engines. The general opinion of mill engineers was that the use of electricity in cotton mills, "although possessing features of advantage over other systems of transmission, they were thought to be of insufficient value for warrant the increased cost of the electric system over the others which had been employed." Mr. Whaley had demonstrated, however, the advantages of the electric system by a practical test of steam and electricity working in two of his mills, side by side, and determined upon the plans for the construction of the Olympia mill, which marks the most important advance in mill construction that has ever been made.

The results which he has obtained have so impressed the manufacturing world that at his invitation the General Electric company sent a company of distinguished manufacturers and engineers to Columbia this week to inspect the Olympia mill.

They spent two days in the thorough examination of the mill, and were entertained by Mr. Whaley at an elegant banquet in Columbia on Wednesday night. In the opinion of these very practical men, Mr. Whaley has accomplished one of the greatest triumphs of engineering skill of modern times, and has built the model cotton mill of this progressive generation.

The ordinary layman is impressed by the Olympia mill because of its immense size; the expert engineer is impressed by it because of the application of power and the economies of operation. The mill is 553 feet long and 151 feet wide and contains four floors and a basement, each story being 18 feet high. The engine room is 120 feet long and 50 feet wide, and the boiler room is 140 feet long and 40 feet wide. The walls of the mill are 43, 39, 34, and 25 inches thick at the first, second, third and fourth floors, respectively. The absence of heavy transverse walls in the construction of the mill reduced the cost of the mill building 10 per cent.; the adoption of the electrical system saved 66 per cent. of the cost of belts and ropes; "the saving due to these three items was sufficient, it is said, to more than pay for the cost of the electrical equipment of the mill." And the same electrical plant with which the mill is equipped is sufficient to light the town and operate a street railway without in any way interfering with the operation of the mill. Deducting the cost of the cottages occupied by the operatives of the mill and the excess of power generated by the power plant of the mill not required for its operation, but available for uses outside of the mill, the cost of the mill per spindle is \$13.54, as compared with a cost of \$15 per spindle in one of the best of the New England mills.

All of these things are of special interest to technical students and mill experts; the general public is only interested in the broad fact that the Olympia mill is the most completely appointed cotton manufacturing establishment in the country, and the newest and best product of modern engineering skill. The people of South Carolina, and particularly the people of Charleston, have cause for congratulation in the fact that the genius under whose direction this mill was constructed is a native of Charleston. We are making progress, indeed, when the mill builders of New England acknowledge, as they so cheerfully did at the dinner in Columbia on Wednesday night, that Mr. Whaley has set a new mark in modern mill construction. It would be a proper tribute to his ability and skill if the mill owners of New England should invite him to build a modern mill in New England after the Olympia pattern.

Not only is the Olympia mill the most modern in all its construction and appointments; but Mr. Whaley has provided for the best possible care of its operatives. He has built a village of 225 cottages, furnished with electric lights, which will be supplied by the company at the cost of production, and equipped with all the modern conveniences, his idea being that the better the treatment of his employees the better their service.

Twelve years ago Columbia was the dearest town in the South. Its people had no faith in themselves. Nearly all of them were croakers, and they croaked and croaked. About five years ago Mr. Whaley went to Columbia and opened an office. He was a modest young fellow with a purpose. He saw that there was an opportunity of building up a great manufacturing centre at Columbia. Some of "the old souls" were astonished at his rashness, and did not take kindly to his schemes. There were a few men, however, who were willing to back him, and to risk everything they had in a supreme effort to build up Columbia, while the crowd went by on the other side. They

stuck to him, they had faith in him, they signed all his notes when he found it necessary to give notes, and they have triumphed with him. Twelve years ago the total amount of wages paid out in Columbia to the operatives engaged in a single small manufacturing industry, which was all that Columbia had, was \$1,200 a month; today the amount paid out in Columbia to the operatives in the manufacturing establishments exceeds \$60,000 a month. Houses are going up all over the city, the prices of real estate have more than doubled in the last five years, new and modern hotels have been opened, the streets have been paved, the city is supplied with a splendid system of electric cars, the stores are crowded with customers, the railroads have kept up with the actual requirements of the business of the city, the population has increased at a most encouraging rate, and the croakers are nearly all dead, thank God!

Mr. Whaley is entitled to a great deal of credit for what he has done to inspire the people of Columbia with a proper respect for their own advantages; but he would protest, we are sure, that without the loyal support of the handful of men who have worked with him he could not have accomplished the upbuilding of the community. His triumph is all the greater because he is so ready to share the honors of his successful industrial campaign with his associates.

THE PROMOTION OF FUNSTON.

President McKinley Thought the People Demanded it.

This interesting article on the promotion of Funston is from the New York World:

It is a favorite saying with people close to President McKinley that when he has a question of public policy to decide the president "has his ear to the ground." By that they mean Mr. McKinley is waiting to see how the public, as reflected in the newspapers, feels on the proposition before him.

The president is an omnivorous reader of newspapers. He goes through hundreds every week. About the only irritation he ever displays is when the newsman who supplies him with papers, is late. If the train bringing the New York papers is behind time the president is one of the first in Washington to know about it. He insists that his morning newspapers shall be at the White House on time. If they are not, it is quite likely there will be some lively telephoning between the executive mansion and the newsman.

Mr. McKinley does not confine his newspaper reading to the papers of his own party. He reads all kinds of opinion and averages it up to suit himself. He does not patronize the press-clipping bureaus to any extent. He wants his news first hand. He not only desires to see what the editors are saying about the policies he has in mind, but he looks to see how the news is handled. He knows all about headlines and news position. He remarks if a certain piece of news in which he is interested is run on the inside pages. He does not read his papers for news. He knows the news he wants to read before he begins. What he is after is public sentiment.

His course after Funston captured Aguinaldo illustrates his methods. For two or three days after that exploit all the president read was Funston matter. Great piles of papers were taken into him with the Funston matter marked around with black pencil. He took up each paper, read what the editor and people thought should be done for Funston, and passed on to the next. He saw then that there was an almost unanimous opinion that Funston should be generously rewarded. Secretary Root and officers of the war department were opposed to doing much for Funston. Last Saturday Mr. Root and General Corbin said when the department closed that nothing would be done for sometime. That evening the president asked Mr. Root and General Corbin to come to the White House.

"I shall appoint General Funston to a brigadier generalship," he said to the astonished secretary of war and adjutant general. "The people demand that he shall be rewarded."

There was nothing for it but to assent. Then the president asked the two visitors to take dinner with him, and they talked of other things. The appointment was made at 10 o'clock.

It was the same with Aguinaldo. The president still has "his ear to the ground." He is reading what the great newspapers of the country say on the subject of the Filipino leader's treatment.

While he goes through the larger newspapers every day, his field day is Sunday. At the beginning of each week he gives to Secretary Cortelyou a list of the subjects in which he is interested. The newspapers are given to clerks, who go through them and mark on the subjects and news of each paper on the comments selected. They use heavy crayon pencils, and draw big, black lines, so that the president can pick out the articles he wants to see at a glance. On Sunday morning the great pile of marked papers is brought into the president's office. Then, in his velvet coat, and smoking one of the three cigars he allows himself each day, he goes through the paper after paper, throwing those he has finished in a heap on the floor. Sometimes he makes a note or two, but generally he carries all he wants to retain in his memory. He spends from one to three hours at this task. When he has finished he knows the newspaper sentiment of the country thoroughly.

A close friend of Mr. McKinley, who has little time to read the newspapers, said that he got about all of his newspaper gossip from the president. He said that when they were together the president would frequently tell of this

or that news story or editorial he had read, analyzing the motives of each paper with that keen insight his years in politics have given him.

THEY'LL FIGHT TO THE END.

Boers Concentrating Their Powers of Offense and Defense.

The transference of the seat of government of the South African Republic from Pietersburg to Leydsdorp in the Zoutpansberg by the vice-president, General Schalk-Burger, indicates the beginning of another and probably the last stage of the South African war.

Having made up their minds to resist to the end, whatever it may be, the Boer leaders have had a consultation at which they have formulated their plan of campaign for the coming winter. Generals Botha and De Wet are reported to have met, after which the latter returned south of the Vaal and was last heard of at Vrede in the Vesamel Breg, in the northeast corner of the Orange River Colony. A British force had been sent from Harmsmith with the object of dislodging him; but the result is not yet reported; nor is General Botha's whereabouts stated, though it may be surmised from the fact that the railway between Natal and Johannesburg was attacked at three points on the same day.

It would seem that the Boers have for some time been collecting great quantities of cattle and sheep in the fastnesses of the Zoutpansberg where also they have ample supplies of ammunition, and intend making it a point of ultimate resistance as well as a base of present operations. On the railway into Selati Valley toward Leydsdorp from Komatipoort, several thousand wagons forming the rolling stock of the Transvaal railways were concentrated after the evacuation of Pretoria, ready to be destroyed in the event of a British advance, and by that road much of the stores landed at Delagoa Bay were sent up to Leydsdorp. Considerable quantities were also sent into the Zoutpansberg from Pietersburg, to which place they were carried by rail from Pretoria before the British arrived there.

The advantage to the Boers of the Transvaal under the new plan of campaign is that so long as they can keep the British out of the mountains the British horses will have nothing but the withered grass of the veldt and forage imported at great cost and trouble to feed upon, while their own horses are fattening on the fresh grass of the valleys, from where they can issue whenever the opportunity to make a raid presents itself.

The Free State burghers under President Steyn and De Wet have evidently decided to make the northeastern and eastern part of their country the field of operations, combining with the Transvaalers a general plan of operations against the British communications all along the line. Lord Kitchener will have an opportunity, with the fresh troops and remounts he is receiving, of showing his capacity for dealing with the remnant of the Boer forces still in the field, and putting an end to a war now well into its second year after almost universal opinion had, at the start, given it not more than a few months' duration.—New York Sun.

SOUTH CAROLINA NEWS.

W. S. Lee Murdered.

W. S. Lee, a merchant of Whitmire, was murdered in his store sometime during Thursday night. Mr. Lee's body was not found until Friday morning. The circumstances showed that he must have been awakened during the night, either to wait upon a pretended customer or to investigate suspicious noises in the store. His head was crushed in with a scantling. The store was robbed of goods, money and pistols. At last accounts the people of Whitmire were engaged in an effort to capture the murderer or murderers.

Statesburg Correspondence of The News and Courier: A young gentleman from the North, who is visiting a friend here, is very much impressed with the density of the colored population. He walked into the depths of the Wateree swamp and standing, as he thought, all alone on a bridge spanning one of all lakes, he picked out a stump some distance off on the edge of the water to try his new gun on and see how it would scatter. As he aimed, and just as he was going to pull the trigger, the stump jumped up, waving an arm, and yelled: "Don't shoot me!" He then said to be the ubiquitous Cuffee "fishin'."

Dr. J. H. O. Landrum Dead.

Dr. J. H. O. Landrum died at his home in Campobello, Spartanburg county, last Saturday, after an illness of several weeks. He was first attacked by a carbuncle, from which blood poisoning resulted. Dr. Landrum was one of the best known and most valuable citizens of Spartanburg county. He was 70 years of age. In his day he was conspicuous as a soldier, legislator, patriot and historian. In the latter capacity he performed distinguished service, rescuing from oblivion many Revolutionary facts and also leaving an elaborate published history of Spartanburg county. The interment of Dr. Landrum took place at Mount Zion churchyard on last Monday.

Pensioners For Negroes.

The records of the pension department in Columbia show that three Negroes have applied for pensions on account of their services in the war and that their applications have been approved by their county boards. One of the applicants sets forth that he was a free Negro at the time the war broke out, and the record on file in Columbia sets forth that he did enlist for service. Quite a number of Confederate veterans hold that no Negro was really a Confederate veteran, and that no Negro should be pensioned as such.

Camp Sessions, at Abbeville, on last Friday, adopted the following: "Resolved, That while we do not object to some aid being furnished to colored persons who were disabled in the war, in meritorious cases, we disapprove of the granting of pensions to any person not regularly enlisted in the Confederate army, and we protest against the enrollment of such names on the pension rolls."

Evans a Candidate.

Says a Spartanburg special of April 13 to the Atlanta Daily News: Two announcements have been made this week in regard to the race for Senator McLaurin's position. Ex-Governor John C. Sheppard, of Edgefield, who has been urged to run, said here yesterday that he would not be a candidate for the senate; but if he made a race for anything it would be for the only place for which he has been defeated—governor. He said the senatorial race was going to be one of the worst scrambles ever seen in this state. Ex-Governor John Gary Evans, of this city, has announced that he will probably be a candidate for the senate. The politicians think the man for them to watch is Congressman Latimer. He is regarded as Senator Tillman's choice and is a popular man.

Murder, Suicide or Accident.

On Saturday afternoon at 3 o'clock, Captain John J. Griffin, commercial agent of the Norfolk and Western railroad, was shot to death in the room of Major Bernard B. Evans, in Columbia. Major Evans was arrested shortly afterwards and committed to jail. The story of the tragedy is told in the dispatches as follows: "Evans and Griffin were alone in Evans' room, and occupants of adjoining apartments were at dinner. Major Evans summoned a physician, saying that a man was hurt in his room. Dr. R. W. Gibbs found Captain Griffin lying in a dying condition and speeches on Major Evans' bed. A 4-calibre Colt's revolver bullet had entered just above the left nipple.