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HORSE SHOE ROBINSON

A Tale of the Revolutionary Struggle In Upper Carolina.

By JOHN P. KENNEDY.

CHAPTER XXXIX CONTINUED.

The country over which Mildred was now to travel was calculated to tax her powers of endurance to the utmost. It was a dreary waste of barren wilderness, covered with an endless forest of gloomy pine, through which a heavy, sandy road crept in lurid and melancholy shade. Here and there a miserable hut occurred to view, with a few ragged inmates, surrounded by all the signs of squalid poverty. The principal population were only to be seen along the banks of the rivers which penetrated into this region, some twenty or thirty miles distant from each other. The alluvial bottoms through which these streams found a channel to the ocean, were the only tracts of land of sufficient fertility to afford support to man—all between them was a sterile and gloomy forest.

Still, these regions were not deserted. Bodies of irregular troops, ill-clothed and worse armed, and generally bearing the haggard features of disease, such as mark the population of a sickly climate, were often encountered upon the road, directing their wearied march towards the headquarters of the republican army. The rigors of the southern summer had not yet abated; and it was with painful steps in the deep sand amid clouds of suffocating dust, that these little detachments prosecuted their journey.

Mildred, so far from sinking under the weariness and increasing hardships of her present toils, seemed to be endued with a capacity for sustaining them much beyond anything that could have been believed of her sex. Her courage grew with the difficulties that beset her. She looked composedly upon the obstacles before her, and encountered them, not only without a murmur, but even with a cheerfulness to which she had hitherto been a stranger. The steadiness of her onward march, her unrepining patience, and the gentle solicitude with which she turned the thoughts of her companions from herself, and forbade the supposition that her powers were overtaxed, showed how deeply her feelings were engaged in her enterprise, and how maturely her mind had taken its resolution.

"One never would have guessed," said Horse Shoe, towards the close of the second day after they had entered North Carolina, "that a lady so daintily nursed as you was at home, Mistress Mildred could have ever borne this here roughing of it through these piney woods. But I have made one observation, Miss Lindsay, that no one can tell what they are fit for till they are tried; and on the back of that I have another, that when there's a great stir that rouses up a whole country, it don't much signify whether they are man or woman they all get roused alike. 'Pon my word, ma'am, I have seen men—who think themselves sodgers too—that would be onwilling to trust themselves at this time o' year through such a dried up piece of pine barren as we have been traveling over for two days past."

"You remember the fable of the willow and the oak, Mr. Robinson," replied Mildred, smiling; "the storm may bring down the sturdy tree, but the supple shrub will bend before it without breaking."

"I'm not much given to religious takings-on," said the sergeant, "but sometimes a notion comes into my head that looks a little that way, and that is when God appoints a thing to be done, he gives them that's to do it all the wherewithals. Now, as Major Butler is a good man and a brave sodger—God bless him!—it does seem right that you Mistress Lindsay—who, I take on me to understand enough of your consarns and his'n, without offence, to say has a leaning towards the major—I say it does seem right and natural that you should lend a hand to help him out of tribulation; and so you see the cause being a good cause, the Lord has given you both wisdom and strength to do what is right."

"We owe, sergeant, a duty to our country; and we serve God and our country both, when we strengthen the hands of its defenders."

"That's a valiant speech, young lady, and it's a noble speech," said Horse Shoe, with an earnest emphasis. "I have often told the major that the women of this country had as honest thoughts about this here war, and was as warm for our cause as the men; and some of them, perhaps, a little warmer. They could be pitted against the women of any quarter of the aqueous globe, in bearing and forbearing both, when it is for the good of the country."

"Henry is asleep on his horse" said Mildred, looking at her brother, who now, jaded and worn with the effort of travel, was nodding and dropping his head forward, and almost losing his seat. "What, Henry, brother!" she added, loud enough to rouse up the young horseman. "My trusty cavalier, are you going to fall from your horse? Where is all that boasted glorification upon which you were disposed to be so eloquent only a week ago? I thought a man on horseback was naturally proud; I fear it was only on holiday occasions you meant, Henry. Haven't you a word for a sunny day and a dry journey? You lag more like a miller's boy with his bag of meal, than a young soldier setting out on his adventures."

"Ah sister," said Henry waking up, "this is nothing put pine—pine—and sand, without end. There is no game in the woods to keep a man on the lookout, except here and there a herd of wild hogs, that snort and run from us, like a squadron of cavalry, with their bristles set up on their backs as fierce as the back fin of a sunfish. There is not even grass to look at; you might see a black snake running half a mile amongst the trees. And then there are such great patches of burnt timber, every trunk staring right at you, as black as thunder. I'm tired of it all—I want to see the green fields again."

"And, in truth, brother, so do I; but not until we can bring merry faces to look upon them. How far are we from Tarborough?"

"We should be drawing nigh to the town," replied Horse Shoe, "for you may see that we shall soon be out of these woods, by the signs of open country ahead. The last squad of sodgers that passed us, said that when we came to the farms we shouldn't be more than five miles from the town, and the sun isn't above an hour high."

"In the hope of being soon housed, then, Mr. Robinson, I may confess to you I am somewhat weary; but a good night's rest will put me in fair condition for tomorrow's ride again."

After the lapse of an hour, the party were safely sheltered in a tolerably comfortable inn at the village; and Mildred, aided by the sedulous care of Henry, found herself well bestowed in the best chamber of the house.

CHAPTER XL.

From Tarborough our travelers continued their route towards the Pedee, by the main road which led through Cross Creek, a small hamlet on Cape Fear river, near the site of the present town of Fayetteville. The general features of the country were even more forbidding than those I have already described as characteristic of this portion of North Carolina. Even to the present day, cultivation has done but little to cheer up the natural desolation to those tracts of wilderness which lie between the rivers. But at the early period to which the events I have been detailing have reference, the journey undertaken by our little caravan might be compared to that which is now frequently made through the more southern extremity of the Union from the Atlantic to the Gulf of Mexico, an attempt seldom essayed by a female, and sufficiently trying to the hardihood, of the stoutest travelers. The forethought and attention of Horse Shoe Robinson, however, contributed to alleviate the pains of the enterprise, and to enable Mildred to overcome its difficulties.

In the present alarmed and excited state of this province the party were less liable to interruption in this secluded and destitute section of the country, than they might have been, had they chosen a lower and more populous district, and the consciousness that every day's perseverance brought them nearer to the ultimate term of their journey, gave new vigor, at least, to Mildred's capacity to endure the privations to which she was exposed. But few vestiges of the war yet occurred to their view. The great wilderness, like the great ocean, retains no traces of the passage of hostile bodies. Some times, indeed, the signs of a woodland encampment were visible in the midst of the forest, on the margin of some sluggish brook or around a sylvan fountain where the impression of recent hoof-prints, the scattered fragments of brushwood cut for temporary shelter, and the still smouldering ashes of camp fires, showed that masses of men had been in motion. The deer fled, too, with a more frightened bound towards their coverts, as if lately alarmed by the pursuit of the huntsman; but the images of devastation, which are associated with the horrid front of war in the mind of all familiar with its ravage, were absent. The eternal, leafy shade high arching over the heads of the wayfarers furnished no object for human vengeance; and it still sighed in the fanning of the breeze, as of old it sighed before man claimed dominion in the soil it sheltered. A far different scene was shortly to be looked upon by our venturesome friends.

Several days had again passed by, for the journey through the wilderness had been slowly prosecuted, when Robinson, towards the approach of evening, announced to Mildred his conjecture that they were not far off the Pedee. The banks of this river had been the scene of frequent hostilities and the war that had been carried on here was of the most ruthless kind. The river is characterized by a broad, deep, and quiet stream, begirt with a vegetation of exceeding luxuriance. Its periodical overflow seems to have poured out upon its margin a soil of inexhaustible richness, that, for a mile or two on either side, forms a striking contrast with the low, barren sandhills that hem in the river plain. Along this tract of level border, all the way to the Atlantic, are found, as is usually the case throughout the Carolinas, the large plantations of opulent gentlemen, who, by the cultivation of rice and cotton, turn the fertility of the soil to the best account. These possessions, presenting the most assailable points to an enemy, and, indeed, almost the only ones in which the great interests of the province might be wounded, were, during the whole of that bloody struggle which distinguished the days of the "Tory Ascendency," the constant objects of attack; and here the war was waged with a vindictive malignity, on the part of the British and Tory partisans, that is scarcely surpassed in the history of civil broils. The finest estates were sacked, the dwellings burnt, and the property destroyed with unsparing rage. The men were dragged from their houses and hung, the women and children turned without food or raiment into the wilderness, and political vengeance seemed to gorge itself to gluttony upon its own rapine.

The thoughts of Robinson had been, for some days past, running upon the probable difficulties that might attend the guise in which he was now about to return to his native province. This was a subject of some concern since he ran a risk of being compelled either to desert his charge, or to bring his companions into jeopardy, amongst the many persons of both armies who were, at least by report acquainted with his name and his military connections. He had explained to Mildred the necessity of his appearing in some definite character, associated with the object of her journey, and of which, upon emergency, he might claim the benefit to retain his post near her. This matter was summarily settled by Henry.

"In general, Mr. Horse Shoe, you can call yourself Stephen Foster; you know Steve; and you can say that you are Mr. Phillip Lindsay's gardner. Isaac, here, can let you enough into the craft to pass muster, if any of them should take it into their heads to examine you. Mind that, Isaac; and recollect, old fellow, you are only sister Mildred's waiting man.

"Sartainly, master," replied Isaac.

"And sergeant I'll tell you all about Steve; so that you can get your lesson by heart. You have a wife and five children—remember that. I'll give you all their names by-and-by."

"Thanks to the marcies of God, that ar'n't my misfortune yet," said Horse Shoe, laughing, "but, Mr. Henry, I have got conscience enough now for any lie that can be invented. The major and me talked that thing over, and he's of opinion that lying, in an enemy's country, is not forbidden in the Scriptures. And I have hearn the preacher say that Rahab, who was not a woman of good fame no how, yet she was excused by the Lord for telling the king of Jericho a most thumping lie, consarning her not knowing what had become of the two men that Joshua, the judge of Israel, who was a general besides, had sent into the town to reconnoitre; which was a strong case. Mister Henry, seeing that Rahab, the harlot, was a taking of sides against her own people. So, I like your plan and I'll stick by it."

This being agreed upon, it became one of the amusements of the roadside to put the sergeant through his catechism, which was designed to make him familiar with traits of private history relating to the Dove Cote and its appurtenances, that he might thereby maintain his identity, in the event of a close investigation. Horse Shoe was but an awkward scholar in this school of disguise, and gave Henry sufficient employment to keep him in the path of probability; and, indeed, the young teacher himself found it difficult to maintain an exact verisimilitude in the part which it was his own province to play in this deception.

On the evening to which we have alluded, the sergeant finding himself within a short distance of the district of country in which he was almost certain to encounter parties of both friends and foes, adopted a greater degree of circumspection than he had hitherto deemed it necessary to observe. His purpose was to halt upon or to obtain accurate information of the borders of the forest, and endeavor to obtain accurate information of the state of affairs along the river, before he entered upon this dangerous ground. Like a soldier who had a rich treasure to guard he was determined to run no hazard that might be avoided, in the safe conduct of the lady in whose service he was enlisted. In accordance with this caution, he directed the cavalcade to move onward at a moderate walk, in order that they they might not reach the limit of the woodland before the dusk of the evening; and also in the hope of finding there some habitation where they might pass the night. They had not advanced far in this manner before the sergeant descried, at some distance ahead, a small log hut standing by the roadside, which, by the smoke that issued from the chimney, he perceived to be inhabited. Upon this discovery, he ordered the party to stop and await his return. Then giving spurs to his horse he galloped forward, and, after a short interval of absence, returned, made a favorable report of his reconnoissance, and conducted his companions to the house.

The little cabin to which Mildred was thus introduced was the homestead of an honest Whig soldier, by the name of Wingate, who was now in service, under the command of one of the most gallant partisans that any country ever produced, Francis Marion, then recently promoted to the rank of a brigadier. The inmates were the soldiers's family, consisting of a young woman and a number of small children, demonstrating by their appearance a condition of exceedingly limited comfort. The hut contained no more than two rooms, which exhibited but a scanty supply of the meanest furniture. The forest had been cleared for the space of a few acres around the dwelling, and these were occupied by a small garden or vegetable patch, meagrely stocked with scattered and half parched plants; and by a cornfield, along the skirts of which some lean hogs were seen groping with a felonious stealthiness. A shed, in the same enclosure, formed a rendezvous for a few half-starved cattle, that probably obtained their principal but slender support from the neighboring wood. Add to these a troop of fowls, that were now at roost upon one of the trees hard by, and we have, probably, a tolerably correct inventory of the worldly goods of this little family.

The woman of the house was kind and hospitable and her attentions were in no small degree quickened by the application of a few pieces of money which Mildred insisted upon her receiving—much to the discomfiture of the dame's self-possession—the boon consisting of hard coin, to an amount of which, perhaps, she had never before been mistress.

Mildred was exceedingly fatigued, and it was an object of early consideration to furnish her the means of rest. Our hostess, assisted by old Isaac, and officiously but awkwardly superintended by Horse Shoe, began her preparation for supper, to the abundance of which the provident sergeant was enabled to contribute some useful elements from his wallet. In one of the apartments of the hut, a shock-bed was spread for the lady, and by the assistance of her cloak and some other commodities which had been provided as part of her traveling gear, she was supplied with a couch that formed no ill exchange for the weariness of her long inhabited saddle. Use and necessity are kind nursing-mothers to our nature, and do not often fail to endow us with the qualities proper to the fortune they shape out for us. This was not Mildred's first experience of a homely lodging since she left the Dove Cote; and, as privation and toil have a faculty to convert the rough pallet of the peasant into a bed of down, she hailed the present prospect of rest with a contented and grateful spirit.

The supper being despatched, our lady was left alone with her hostess, to seek the repose of which she stood so much in need.

The sergeant now set about making provision for the rest of his party. This was done by erecting a shelter beneath one of the trees of the forest, opposite to the door of the cabin. It was composed of a few boughs stacked against the trunk of the tree, sufficiently covered with leaves to turn aside any rain that might happen to fall. Under this cover Horse Shoe appointed that he and his comrades should pass the night enjoining them to keep a regular watch for the security of the lady, whose welfare was now the object of his most sedulous attention. All these preparations were made with the exactness of military rule, and with a skill that greatly delighted Henry.

The long summer twilight had faded away. Mildred had been, from an early period, in the enjoyment of a profound slumber, and Henry and his negro ally were seated at the front of their sylvan tent. The sergeant had lighted his pipe, and now, taking his seat upon a log that lay near his post, he began to smoke in good earnest, with a mind as free from anxiety as if universal peace prevailed. In the sedate enjoyment of this luxury, he fell into a descant on matters and things, interlarded with long and strange stories of his own singular adventures, which he told to the no small edification and amusement of Henry and the negro.

The habits of the experienced soldier were curiously illustrated in the thoughtful and sober foresight with which Robinson adapted his plans to the exigencies of his condition, and then in the imperturbable light-heartedness with which, after his measures of safety were taken he waited the progress of events. His watchfulness seemed to be an instinct, engendered by a familiarity with danger, whilst the steady and mirthful tone of his mind was an attribute that never gave way to the inroads of care. He was the same composed and self-possessed being in a besieged garrison, in the moment of a threatened escalade, as amongst his cronies by a winter fireside.

"In this here starlight, Mister Henry," he said, after he had puffed out two or three charges of his pipe, "I can't see your eyes, but by your yawning, I judge you are a little sleepy. Take my advice and turn in. A sodger ought to snatch his rest when he can get it. I'll keep guard over our young lady; the Lord protect her, for a most elegant and oncommon precious young creature! Fling your great coat upon the leaves, and go at it, my lad, like a good fellow."

"If I was at home Mr. Horse Shoe, at the Dove Cote. I could sit up all night listening to your stories; but I believe I am bewitched tonight, for my eyelids, this hour past, have been snapping like rat traps. So, I'll just stretch out for an hour or so, and then get up and take my turn at the guard."

"Don't trouble your head about watching," replied Horse Shoe, "you are not old enough for that yet. At your time of life, Mr. Lindsay, a good night's rest is the best part of a ration. And tomorrow, if I'm not mistaken, you will have need of all the strength you can muster tonight. As for me, it isn't much account whether I'm asleep or awake."

"Not so fast, sergeant," rejoined the youth, "I'm an older soldier than you take me for; Stephen and I have watched many a night for racoons. No no, I'll have my turn towards morning. So, you and Isaac take the first part of the night between you, and if anything should happen, call me; I'm one of your minute men. So good night. My horse trots harder that I thought he did."

It was not long before our boasted minute man was locked up in a spell apparently as profound as that which the legend affirms assailed the seven sleepers; and Isaac, not even waiting for the good example of his master, had already sunk upon the ground, with that facility which distinguishes his race, the most uncaring and happiest of mortals.

CHAPTER XLI.

Our fortress is the good green wood,
Our tent the cypress tree,
We know the forest around us
As seamen know the sea.

We know its walls of thorny vines
Its glades of reedy grass,
Its safe and silent islands
Within the dark morass.

—BRYANT.

The faithful Horse Shoe being left to himself, replenished his pipe, and, taking his rifle in his hand, paced to and fro upon the border of the road, holding communion with his own thoughts, carefully weighing the probabilities connected with his present singular expedition, and revolving after his own fashion, the fortunes of Arthur Butler and Mildred Lindsay.

It was within an hour of midnight when the sergeant's meditations were interrupted by the tramp of a horse approaching the hut at a gallop. But a few moments elapsed before a traveler, who, in the starlight, Horse Shoe could discern to be armed, drew up his rein immediately at the door of the dwelling, against which he struck several blows with his weapon, calling out loudly at the same time,—

"Mistress Wingate—for God's sake, open your door quickly! I have news to tell you, good woman."

"In the name of mercy! who are you?" exclaimed the voice of the dame within, whilst a note of alarm was also heard from her fellow-lodger.

"What do you mean by this racket and chatter?" demanded Horse Shoe, in the midst of the uproar, at the same time laying his hand upon the stranger's bridle rein. "What brings you here, sir?—stand back; the women in that house are under my charge and I won't have them disturbed."

"If you are a friend to Mistress Wingate," said the horseman sternly, "speak the word; if an enemy, I will shiver your skull with the butt end of my musket."

"Don't be rash good fellow," replied Horse Shoe; "I take it you and me are on the same side. What's afoot that you stir in such a hurry?"

"The Tories are afoot—the devil's afoot! Open, mistress Wingate—open to Dick Peyton?"

"The Lord preserve us!" ejaculated the mistress of the hovel, as she opened the door; "Bloody Spur, is it you? What ill luck brings you here tonight?"

"A gang of Tories, Mistress Wingate, from the Black River, under that cut throat Fanning, crossed Pedee this morning at Lowder's Lake. They have been thieving and burning as far as Waggamaw, and are now on the road home by the upper ferry. They will be along here in less than half an hour. Your husband, Bob Wingate, and myself, were sent out by General Marion this morning to reconnoitre the roads. We fell in with the ruffians, after sunset, below Lumberton, and have tracked them up here. Bob has got a pistol shot through his arm. He was lucky enough, however, to escape their clutches; but believing they had a spite against him, and would ride past his house tonight, he told me to call and give you warning, and to help you to drive the cattle back into the swamp."

"How many mought there be friend?"

"Between two and three hundred, at least," said the trooper; "we counted fifty in the vanguard—those that followed made a long column of march. They have stolen a good many horses and cattle, all of which are with them, and several prisoners."

"What, ho! Isaac, Henry Lindsay; fall to, and saddle, boys," shouted Horse Shoe. "Miss Mildred, it will not do to stand. I am sorry to break in upon your rest but you must be ready to move in a few minutes."

Everything about the hut was now in confusion. Henry and the sergeant were equipping the horses, whilst Isaac was gathering up the baggage. Bloody Spur—to adopt the rider's nom de guerre—had dismounted, and was busy in removing the few articles of value from the hut; the mother and children, meanwhile, were pouring forth loud lamentations.

Mildred, in the midst of this scene of uproar, hurriedly made her preparations for departure; and whilst she was yet engaged in this care, a confused murmur was heard, at some distance up the road—and the rattle of sabres, as well as the hoarse voice and abrupt laughter of men, announced that the freebooters were at no great distance from the dwelling.

"Merciful heaven!" exclaimed Mildred, giving way for the first time to her fears; "they are fast approaching and we shall be captured."

"Sister," said Henry, with scarcely less alarm, "I will die by your side, before they shall hurt a hair of your head."

TO BE CONTINUED.

—Columbia Record: Just now the penitentiary holds a number of new prisoners of more than usual interest. The first of these the newspaper man was shown today was young Harry Dean, as handsome as an Apollo. He comes in from Spartanburg on a life sentence for homicide, and it saddens one to reflect on how those dancing eyes will be dulled, and how the hard lines will be chiseled into that fresh young face by relentless prison life with its monotony and hardship. Harry Dean doesn't look like a murderer. By his side in Dean's cell stood young John Nall, the North Carolinian, whose life sentence the supreme court recently refused to interfere with. Nall is only twenty-two years old. He got into trouble over in Darlington about a year ago while drunk with his companion, Bob Smalls, and they killed a negro in brutal circumstances. Coming out of the prison Bob Smalls was pacing a walk with Fisher and O'Day, the last two recently sent in for safe cracking although North Carolina had also claimed them. Smalls is also a young man and he has created a particularly favorable impression since he has been at the penitentiary. He is a hard worker. He is to go back to Darlington in a short time to be resentenced. Smalls' only hope lies in the pardon board. Much feeling was aroused in Darlington by the case and Smalls had to be brought here for safe keeping. Taking a sunbath on a pile of logs at the end of this walk, sat R. A. Adams, the Colleton county white man who, in a passion, hunted up his kinsman, Henry Jacques, and killed him with a shot gun as a result of a family row. He is under sentence of death, though the execution has been deferred in remarkable ways a number of times. A short time after sentence was pronounced against him he escaped jail, and carrying his shot gun into the fields with him, made a crop for his wife and children while a heavy reward was out for him. Then he was captured in a spectacular way, but after the supreme court passed upon his appeal adversely Judge Townsend, instead of resentencing the prisoner, granted him a new trial on alleged after discovered evidence. The supreme court later upset this, which again raised the curtain in front of the gallows for Adams. Recently Adams' attorney secured a stay pending an investigation of the merits of the after-discovered evidence. Hoyt Hayes, the young Oconee county mountaineer sentenced to hang for the murder of his bride wife but who he claimed committed suicide while in a delicate condition, works in the kitchen. This case has attracted attention throughout three states, because of the peculiar circumstances surrounding the alleged murder. Both the solicitor and the trial judge have declined to recommend that Hayes be pardoned, and when Governor Heyward commuted Hayes' sentence to life imprisonment a numerously signed petition came to him from Oconee asking him to resign as governor. But the governor places much store by the report of the handwriting expert, Mr. Carvalho, who pronounced as genuine the note purporting to have been written by the woman just before the shot was fired, and in which she spoke of death being preferable to the pain she was undergoing. Hayes' friends are confident that the governor will pardon Hayes before a new governor is inaugurated next January. And there is reason to believe these hopes have good foundation. The penitentiary people don't appear to like Hayes. He hasn't got an engaging way about him.

☞ Women know at first sight the character of those with whom they converse. There is much to give them religious height to which men do not attain.

Miscellaneous Reading.

AS CHRISTENSEN SEES IT.

Senator From Beaufort Gives His View As to the Dispensary Situation.

Senator Nells Christensen of Beaufort and Representative J. Fraser Lyon of Abbeville, were both orthodox dispensary men when they were appointed to membership on the dispensary investigating committee; but as the result of their investigations, the views of both have materially changed. Representative Lyon gave an intimation of what he thinks in a letter already published in another column, and Senator Christensen, who is editor of the Beaufort Gazette, sizes up the situation in his paper as follows:

Effort to Pack the Convention.

"Senator Tillman, the avowed leader and manager of the dispensary forces, has called on his followers all over the state to go into the club meetings on April 28th and elect dispensary delegates to the county conventions. The county conventions will be expected to pack the state convention with dispensary delegates. The state convention, probably under Tillman's personal leadership, may be expected to secure every strategetical advantage for the dispensary. The dispensary forces have an old and experienced organization and a veteran leader. He expects every man in his ranks to rally to his call. Large financial interests are involved, industrial enterprises and a host of personal interests are involved and these too will rally.

"Now, how should the opponents of the dispensary state ring meet this purpose to pack the conventions? It is our idea that they should demand simply that no action be taken by the convention to prejudge the issue. The primary is the battle ground. It would be unjust to gag the people, or in any way commit them on this issue through resolutions of party conventions. The Democratic clubs and conventions are, as far as this issue is concerned, simply managers to arrange for a fair contest."

The Issue.

"The coming campaign is going to be a hard fought one. The issue will be between the state dispensary and county dispensary. We will have the contest in this county, because candidates for the legislature will be asked to declare themselves. The candidates for governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, and perhaps others will be called on to face the issue. This being the case it is very important that the issue should be understood.

"In the first place license is not propsed by anyone.

"In the second place both the county dispensary and the state dispensary leaders favor allowing the counties to choose between prohibition and dispensary of one kind or the other—this is, all the leaders except Blease, who wants to take away the right to vote a dispensary out of a county.

"So the fight narrows down to a question between county and state dispensary. It is a contest between a people's dispensary and a ring dispensary.

"We are for a people's dispensary. We are disgusted with the ring management. We want the people of Peaufort county to run their own dispensary. They won't stand for rings. Give them the right to elect their own board of control. They will not tolerate graft. The combination in Columbia is too big, it is too far away, let us have something we can manage, where we can manage it.

"This county is not ready for prohibition. It wants a dispensary, but it does not want that corruption up in Columbia that has been growing bigger and worse each year for thirteen years. Cut that out. It is too much for liquor, too much for bottles, too much for labels, it squanders the biggest part of the profits. A people's dispensary, at home where the people can watch it would be able to make much larger profits than the graft ring in Columbia has made.

"Do not mix the issues. It is the people's dispensary against the ring dispensary with the choice of prohibition if you like it best."

LYON HITS BACK.

Abbeville Representative Makes Spirited Reply to Tillman's Criticism.

To the Editor of The State.

The offer of your columns to me to reply to Senator Tillman's interview in yesterday's issue, is accepted. I shall try not to be burdensome to either yourself or a long suffering public.

I do not think the public interested in the senator's opinion, either of my course in the dispensary investigation, or as to whether it was sneaking and cowardly to address my reply to an attorney, in response to an inquiry, giving my reasons for delay, and allowing that letter to be published. However, I do not wish to take the senator at a disadvantage, and if he thinks it more in keeping with his idea of fairness, he may treat my letter as if it were addressed to him personally, with each statement therein reiterated.

Senator Tillman says, "I have not attacked the investigating committee. I only warned it in a friendly spirit." His reference to the committee in his address stands for itself, and I scarcely think he can expect that this latter statement can be understood as being consistent with the former. In my opinion it will be a very indulgent person who does think so.

The senator made the wonderful discovery that the $700,000 worth of claims against the state board are valid and binding, or they are not. Perhaps the entire committee will agree to this statement when they know the senator has said it. But when he says: "They are not, because the whisky was bought contrary to law, and the state is not legally bound for payment," I hesitate, for I have no facts to base such conclusion on the opinion of a person, himself under investigation, and know of no law limiting the amount of stock, save the version as cited by this same person. I am not familiar with a law that expressly limits the amount of goods that may be on hand to $400,000. I have read 'An act relating to dispensary profits,' acts 1902, page 1102, in which it is provided that the directors of the dispensary shall pay to the state treasurer by January 1, 1904, all the school funds reported by them in excess of $400,000 and making provision for ascertaining quarterly thereafter, the net profits accruing to the state. No doubt the senator will cite accurately the law he refers to.

It is somewhat a surprise to know that the senator has spoken in such strenuous language, because the public has been notified, at his request, that we are investigating the piano matter. He characterizes this as a dirty and cowardly insinuation. I agree with him that it is rather a dirty looking thing all the way through, and I may have acted cowardly, but the senator cannot flatter himself that it was an insinuation. On the other hand it was a plain statement that the piano matter was under investigation, because it came to us that it was possibly a "rake off"—a sufficient reason for investigating it. We have investigated at least one other transaction, somewhat similar to the piano matter. This latter was investigated largely for the reason that the senator publicly expressed his suspicion about it. It is only suspicions that we have to commence on, and it is not my purpose to tell about suspicious transactions that are being probed, unless those under investigation ask for information at a time when it may safely be given. I would suggest, however, if information is not really desired, it may be well not to be too inquisitive, for someone else might be offended.

The interview has represented the senator as saying that my pretext for delay is that I may look into the records of the Mill Creek Distilling company, to see whether there are any credits. Is it not a little strange that the senator should thus refer to Mill Creek when no mention of it is made in my letter? The statement in this respect is the product of his own fertile imagination. Is it not singular that he should associate in his mind Mill Creek distillery and rebates? This of itself would warrant the committee in looking for "a nigger in the wood pile" in the back yard of the Mill Creek distillery.

But now comes the startling denial that he ever said anything about returning rebates. It may be interesting to read his interview along with his sworn statement before the committee.

Interview.	Sworn Statement.
"Mr. Lyon heard my testimony in Columbia and he knows I said nothing about returning any money, for I never received any."	"But for the fact that Hubbell credited me I could not have started the dispensary at all. When we looked through it he said: 'This purchase is subject to a rebate, because of the fact that the Mill Creek company is a member of the liquor trust.' * * * 'Well, I said, I don't want any dealings with rebates; you keep that as a bonus for the accommodation you have given me in selling me liquor at a fair price, and assisting me in my effort to start the dispensary.'"

I take it that the senator does not desire to quibble and I prefer to believe his sworn statement true, especially as the act under which we are proceeding makes false swearing before the committee perjury. Such being the condition of affairs, I think we have reasonable grounds, and it is our duty, to probe this matter as we have been doing and are continuing to do.

The senator avows he has a friendly spirit towards the committee. Leaving aside the suddenness of his recollection of this fact and acting upon his avowal as if it were true, I suggest that if he has any more letters in his possession of similar nature to the one Mr. Fant wrote him some years ago, he will confer a favor by delivering them to the committee before we learn of such letters and the affairs to which they relate, through some other source. What we need most is facts and not "friendly advice."

So far as the lawyers are concerned who represent the claims held up and the persons under investigation, I will say that when they write me letters they will receive a courteous and frank reply and each of them may expect to be treated in a respectful manner when they appear before the committee.

In the event some other person may wish to find out something about the investigation and prefers not to use the newspapers as a medium of correspondence, just let him write a polite inquiry, if he can and a courteous reply will be returned. If such persons should be afraid of getting unpleasant information and objects to the reply to his inquiry being made public, he will be accommodated upon request.

In conclusion let me thank you for the use of your columns and ask you, if I am not too inquisitive myself, whose cur was it that yelped the other day somewhere up between Charlotte and Greenville?

J. FRASER LYON.

Abbeville, April 10th.

UNCLE JOE CANNON.—Joseph G. Cannon, speaker of the house, will be seventy years of age on May 7. On that day a monster reception will be held in Washington in his honor, and he will be the guest of the house of representatives. The affair is being planned on an elaborate scale, and the function will undoubtedly be one of the biggest of its kind ever held at the National Capitol. The president, vice president, senate, cabinet, United States supreme court and public officials generally will be invited.

Although approaching three score and ten, the grizzled veteran from Illinois is hale and hearty, and, as the statehood insurgents discovered to their sorrow, he is as full of fight as ever. To a group of his friends, recently, the speaker confided that he only had two ambitions yet to be gratified. The first was to serve another term as presiding officer of the house. "If I should again be selected as speaker," he said, "I would then be willing to retire and let somebody else take charge."

The second thing that Uncle Joe wants to accomplish, or help accomplish, is this: He wants to see a bill passed fixing the salaries of senators and representatives at $15,000. "The present salary is not adequate," he said. "It should be three times the present amount." It is understood that since he became speaker it has cost Mr. Cannon $4,000 a year to live.

Some people insist that the Illinois veteran wants to be president. He was asked recently if this report was true. All he said was "Scat."—Washington special to the News and Courier.

TILLMAN AND A CRANK.

Senator Receives a Visit From Gentleman Just From Asylum.

Senator Tillman's reputation as the champion of the down-trodden and afflicted and the foe of strength and wealth improperly and illegally conducted, says a Washington correspondent, has become so general that he is constantly in receipt of letters imploring his aid, besides visitors who wish to see him with long stories as to wrongs they have suffered. In these days of rebate warfare the South Carolina senator has little time for such things, but he gives it as freely as his duties permit.

A few nights ago he was sitting in his unpretentious hotel apartments with his daughter and a newspaper friend. A bellboy brought a card to the door and it showed the name of a man from North Dakota. The senator directed that the visitor be shown up. He was a fine-looking, splendidly dressed fellow, with a fur collar on his overcoat. He sat down in the chair offered to him and began his story:

"Senator, I have just gotten out of an insane asylum up in Canada. I come to you to help me get justice. First they put me into a private sanitarium against my will and kept me there three weeks. I sent to the American consul at —— and asked him to come to my aid. He wouldn't do it. When I did get out I went to the Canadian authorities and tried to get justice for detention in the sanitarium. Instead of getting justice they put me into an insane asylum at —— and kept me there forty-five days. I, at last, got word to my brother, who took me out."

By this time there was a queer feeling chasing around the spinal cords of some of those present, although Senator Tillman appeared as nonchalant as usual.

"My friend," he said, "this is a matter for the senators from your state to look after."

"That may be true," went on the visitor, "but they say that you are not frightened by anybody or any power if you think a wrong has been done, and I want your help. You see there are many other Americans imprisoned there, and what is happening to them is enough to set the country on fire. I tell you it is horrible. The United States consuls failed to do their duty."

"That fact, with the names, ought to be reported to the state department for investigation" stated Senator Tillman. "I do not see where I could be of much benefit to you under the circumstances. Here's my newspaper friend. Write the whole story up and give it to him. He will spread it over the country for you."

The newspaper man promised to do this and gave his address.

But the visitor was not so easily gotten rid of it. "And do you know," he went on in a quiet manner, using good language, "there is a cure for most of those poor people in that asylum and others. If they could be pardoned by the government—if you could use your influence to have them pardoned—they would regain their normal senses and be all right. You see," and the voice of the man dropped low, "these people have committed secret murder. Nobody knows it but themselves. They are afraid to come out for fear of being prosecuted and hanged. They stay on and suffer the tortures they are forced to undergo, but if they were pardoned they could come out and be free."

Senator Tillman looked queerly at the visitor as he went on, and the newspaper man saw that there ought to be a quick thought put in.

"Now," said the correspondent, "that is a very important matter, a great story, but Senator Tillman has nothing in the world to do with it. You write the whole thing up tonight and send it to me at my office as quick as you can get it. The sooner you get to work the better," and he arose and opened the door for the stranger to hurry out and get to work on the story, which he agreed to do.

"If that chap sends his card up here again, don't receive him," the senator gave instructions, and there was a feeling of relief when the visitor had gone.

Remarkable Man, This One.

A farmer came to town with the snowstorm the other morning and inquired the way to the county clerk's office. There he sat down and warmed himself at the radiator.

"Be you the man that fixes the tax lists?" he inquired of Mr. M. M. Moody, the county clerk.

"Well, yes; if there's anything wrong they're filed here and submitted to the board of equalization," said the official. "I suppose there's a mistake in yours?"

"Yes."

"I've got $400 worth of notes the assessor didn't get."

"What!" cried Moody, springing from his chair.

"I've got $400 worth of notes the assessor didn't get."

Moody looked at his deputy.

"What did you understand him to say, Charley?" he asked, in agitation.

"He said, I thought, something about $400 worth of notes getting away," replied the deputy, "but I was busy and maybe I didn't hear him right."

Moody looked apologetically at the farmer patriot.

"Would you mind saying that again friend," he said, slowly; "the wind was making so much noise I'm afraid I misunderstood you. Wait a minute. I want to see a man."

The clerk returned in a few minutes with the sheriff.

"Newt," he said, "this man"—indicating the patriot—"is going to make a statement. Watch closely what he says. And, you too, Charley."

The visitor looked around in a mystified way at his three auditors.

"I don't know what's the matter with you fellers' hearing," he remarked loudly. "But I'll do my best to make you understand. When the assessor was at my house last fall I wasn't home. My wife listed the property at $198. When I got back I found there was $400 worth of notes she didn't know about. I want to put 'em in."

That was clear enough for a Digger Indian to comprehend. The three men gathered around the patriot and wrung his hand. The sheriff said he'd take him to dinner. The clerk told him if he'd stay over night he'd chaperone him to the theatre and settle his reckoning at the best hotel. The deputy clerk offered to escort him to his house and show him his new baby. The patriot wondered.

"You see," exclaimed the county clerk, "such a thing never happened before, and in all human probability never will again. You are a man among men, you are, and before the week's out you'll be the most famous citizen in the county. Are you sure you don't want to reconsider your statement?"

The patriot replied that he was standing pat. His name is G. W. Haley, and he lived back in Liberty township. Haley is about fifty-five and belongs to the Christian church. His profession is the raising of watermelons.—Kansas City Star.