

Hearts

Courageous

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 HALLIE
 ERMINIE
 RIVES

CHAPTER VII.

AND you will not stay?"

"I cannot, mademoiselle."

They stood a little way from the inn porch between low box rows, and the young Frenchman's eyes looked back the stenciled moonlight.

"Yet," Anne continued, "last time we met, monsieur, I should not have deemed it too much to ask of you. There are those of your sex who would not scorn the tedium of an evening with me. Would I had spared my invitation and my blushes!"

"Cruel! When you know I would give so much—anything—for an hour with you."

She touched his sleeve lightly. "We shall sit before the fire," she said, "and you shall tell us tales of France and of the life in your own country. 'Tis chilly here."

"Mademoiselle, I cannot. I have a tryst tonight."

"With beauty? Then will I not delay so gallant a cavalier."

She left him and walked toward the porch, but her steps lagged. Turning, she saw him standing still, looking after her, then came back, facing her fingers together.

"You will not stay?"

He shook his head.

"I know why you go," she said after a moment's pause. "I heard it—I saw it."

"You saw?"

"The quarrel in the parlor. I was in the courtyard by the window. I know what you would do."

He looked at her uncertainly, his eyes dark and bright.

"'Twas a craven thing," she went on, "a dastardly sneer at a brave, true hearted gentleman. My Lord Fairfax is old, and the cowards, the pitiful cowards who know him and have eaten at his table, they sat and heard and tittered behind their hands. But you must not fight! You must not!"

"And why not?" he asked. "An old man, a noble bailed by a swine! Should not such be resented by gentlemen? And shall I, who have struck that scoundrel, refuse to meet him?"

"He has killed before!" she cried.

"He has the quickest rapier in Virginia. It would be murder."

"Mademoiselle, I ask you—would you have me fear?"

"'Tis no question of courage," she went on hurriedly. "Must not I, who saw it, know that? Only you of them all dared to resent it. Monsieur, you are brave."

"Mademoiselle!"

"But it was in my lord's cause, and I ask it for his sake. If—if you fail, he would sorrow for it till his death. And—"

"And you?" He had bent forward eagerly. "Would you sorrow, mademoiselle?"

"My lord's grief would be mine."

The young Frenchman drew a deep breath. "That is all?" he said sadly.

"I am nothing but a shadow—passing stranger, whose coming or going cannot make your heart beat one bit faster or more slow? Because our ways have crossed but once, shall you tell me I cannot know your heart? We are like stars, mademoiselle, we human ones—little stars wandering in a vault of blue. When one star has found its mate, about which God has made it revolve, shall the star refuse to obey because it has never known that star before? Have I found the one woman in the world for me, and she does not see the divine in it?"

Somewhere far away a whippoorwill began to call, a liquid gurgle through the clapping dark. There came the stamping of horses and a whiny from the stables.

"Tell me, am I no more to you than that stranger passing by?"

Anne's voice held a tremor, but she spoke earnestly and softly: "You are more than that. You are one who once guarded me from danger—one whom I have this evening seen do a gentle deed that I shall remember always."

"Ah, it was nothing," he answered.

"Was it more than any gentleman might do? They were not gentlemen there. But I would be so proud of it, mademoiselle, if it made you care ever so slightly, as I have said. If it made you think of me not as a stranger, but as suddenly a little nearer, a little closer than all else besides. Do you remember what I told you that day as we rode in the wood? That a man has a want for two things—a cause to fight for and some one to wait for him? It is now the time now, and I must go, mademoiselle, out into the moonlight. I should go joyful if you but told me that last want was mine. You—you cannot give me that?"

Anne did not answer, but she was trembling with a new sense of intoxication.

"I ask you to give me a token, something to carry with me as I ride to keep the memory of always, to—"

"Monsieur?"

"I love you!"

"No, no!" she cried. "I cannot listen!"

"I love you!"

"Stop!"

"Once to touch your lips!"

He was leaning near her, so near she

could feel his breath warm upon her cheek. In a sudden surge of revolt she thrust out her arm as if to further the distance between them.

"No!" she cried. "No! How dare you ask me that? How dare you?"

"Ah, mademoiselle!"

"Count you me so cheap?" she asked, turning half way, but she did not hasten. He dropped on one knee and lifted the hem of her skirt to his lips.

She let her hand fall upon his head with a fluttering gesture. Then, as he started up with a joyful exclamation, she ran back toward the porch.

Standing with bared head in the moonlight, he saw her pause on the threshold—saw the heavy door close behind her.

"You coud!" bubbled a furious voice behind him.

The young man turned composedly as the figure came out of the darkness of the highroad behind him.

"Ah, my Jarrat," he said, "is it you, then?"

"Look you!" Jarrat's voice was hoarse with passion. There are some things that are denied you. This is one. Be warned!"

"Warned? And by you?" laughed the other. "You lay a law for me? Wherefore?"

"Our compact!"

"And do I not hold to it, monsieur? Did you not tell me to search out the bright eyes and red lips? Did you not say to me that love was fair in the middle plantation? Did you not whisper of proud ladies waiting to be kissed?"

Jarrat burst into a laugh.

"You! Why, you pitiful fool! So this is the why of such brave daring! Insults, forsooth, and duels with gentlemen! A fine nobleman it is, to be sure! Think you the toast of Virginia is to be charmed by your tinsel swash-buckling? Think you that Mistress Tillotson would lower her eyes to you?"

"She has already lowered her eyes to me, monsieur."

"I tell you I will have you keep your clerk's face elsewhere!"

"Clerk?" repeated the young man.

"No, no. Not a clerk; a nobleman, a marquis—one of the high blood—a title guaranteed me this morning by my lord the Earl of Dunmore."

"So that is it," he cried the other fiercely. "You think to wed a lady by this brave masquerade. You dream!"

"Not by this masquerade—no," said the Frenchman, a brightening stain coming to his face. "By only my heart. By only what it holds, monsieur. I said she had already lowered her eyes to me. Yes, the fairest lady in Virginia, and still she does not guess of my title and of my bargain this morning with his excellency! Ah, such happiness! I did not even dream it would be so—that she would regard me, me just as I am. When his excellency has returned—when I am a nobleman—I shall have this to remember—that it was so. That when she first gave me her hand to kiss it was to me, just to me, M. Armand—for to the marquis which I shall become."

"A title," prompted Jarrat, "good only so long as I please."

"You will not tell her otherwise. No. Because you wish me to carry out this purpose—this pretty play the plan of which has so favored the noble earl in the fort yonder and made him smile upon you and swear you were fit for a cardinal. You would not cloud this beaming favor of his with early failure. No, you will tell no one. A man serves either love or ambition, and your ambition is master. And I? I am not worthy to kiss her hand. No one on earth, rich or proud as he may be, could think himself that. But I could offer her more than you. For if I had the whole world I would give it all—wealth, name, ambition—just to be but a vagabond on the street with her! No, you will not tell her, monsieur, that I am not what I may come to seem. You will not tell her."

Jarrat's face purpled.

"Beware, you spawn!" he said in a choked voice. "On other points you are free while you serve in this. But go not far along the way you have chosen—with her. She is not for such as you."

"She is for whom she loves," answered the young Frenchman.

The clatter of horses sounded, and the lank figure of Henry came from the stable yard leading two mounts.

As the pair took saddle and rode away Jarrat stood looking after them down the highroad.

"So the lady has lowered her eyes to you?" he scoffed, with a dark smile on his arrogant lips. "And I dare not spoil your gay masquerade? I wouldn't give a pistol for your chances with Foy. He will end you as he would undo an oyster. You made a mistake, my new laid marquis, in soaring so high, and a worse one in bragging of it. But for that touching scene in the yard I had stopped that blundering idiot, but now he may spit you and welcome!"

The rattle of departing hoofs had scarce died away when Anne crept softly down the stair of the inn. She had donned a long cloak, and from under the edge of its hood, drawn over her hair, her blue eyes looked out with a feverish brightness.

The hall was lighted with a great lantern, whose yellow flood added to

the flower white pallor of her countenance. The clock was striking 10. The soldiers had sought the fort to gain early rest, and the townfolk were gone home. The long parlor was still and dark. Through the open door Anne could see the litter of tankards and pipes and a lean dog, stretched with black muzzle laid to the threshold, asleep.

She slipped through the door and to the highroad, and then, with tremulous fits of fear at the shadows, ran at her best pace toward the fort. It was a good half mile, and she reached it out of breath. A sentry at the gate stopped her, and to him she said she wished to see the governor on important business.

"I know not if he will see you," he objected doubtfully. "It is late, and the march is to begin at sunup."

"But he must see me," she told him. "Tell him he must!"

He left her for a moment, then, returning, led her across a court of hard beaten earth into a log building containing a single room. At the far end was a table strewn with papers and maps. A sword rack was nailed to the wall.

In an armchair before the table, his plumed hat and sword tossed across it, sat the governor, heavy, coarse featured, with reddish, muddy skinned complexion under a black curled wig. He was pig necked and his eyes were bloodshot.

She came into the center of the room and courted slowly, while the earl rose clumsily, his red eyes flaming over her lithe young beauty, and sat down again, tilting back his chair.

"Your excellency," she began, "will pardon this intrusion and my haste. A duel is to be fought this night on Loudon field, and I—I appeal to you to prevent it."

"A duel?" The earl bent his bulky neck. "I faith, this is not the court at Williamsburg. I have weightier redskin matters at present to fill my time. But 'tis truly a desperate encounter. All cause such a pretty interest from Mistress Tillotson. And what fight they over, pray? I warrant me they have seen your eyes—eh?"

"At the King's Arms tonight," she said, flushing, "an affront was offered to a gentleman who was absent."

"Who was this gentleman?"

"Colonel Washington."

"The Mount Vernon farmer whom the rebels bespeak to drill their hindes. Humph! And whose was the affront, eh?"

"Your excellency's aid, Captain Foy." The governor slapped the table, highly amused.

"'Twas Foy? 'Od's fish, but he has a high stomach. He carries a pretty point, though, and has used it too. He can take care of himself. And why think you I should trouble myself over such playful bloodletting, mistress? Soldiering makes one not so squeamish. Haith, but I have had affairs in my day. When I was a brow young blade—aye, and there were pretty eyes went red then, too," he added, with a boisterous laugh.

Anne's fingers quivered with resentment, and storm came to her eyes.

"Your excellency," she cried, "the thing was but a trick to wound and flout a loyal hearted gentleman!"

"Ah, indeed! And who this time?"

"My Lord Fairfax."

The earl chuckled in his chair. "So the baron took up for his farmer friend, eh?" he asked, shaking his sides. "I scarce assume that Foy is going to fight the old man."

Anne had drawn herself up, her face pale with this added humiliation. She replied with dignity:

"No, your excellency. The affront was answered by a French gentleman named Armand."

At the name the governor dropped his feet shuffling, and a quick gleam darted across his florid face.

"Armand?" he cried. "The devil, eh? Foy to fight him? He struck the bell for the orderly as he spoke."

"It shall be stopped," he went on. "An affront to Lord Fairfax, you say—a king's man, aye, and a loyal. Loudon field, is it? Foy shall be disciplined, the rascal! I thank you, mistress, for this information. I shall send at once and put a stop to the meeting."

He was leading her to the door as he spoke, not waiting her thanks, and as she went out she heard him rumbling angry instructions to his orderly.

Before she had gone from view of the fort gate four mounted men poured out and clattered down the highroad at a planter's pace.

Later, in her own chamber, Anne opened her window and, leaning far out on the ledge, gazed into the night.

"Like little stars," she murmured, "wandering in the blue." Then, after a pause, "A little nearer, a little closer than all else besides."

"I like not these night affairs," spoke the lieutenant. "Dew is slippery, and the light deceives. I have known of accidents."

Foy cut in with a laugh of contempt. "I'll be an accident I faith," he said, "if I send not his soul a-scurry to hell for that glass!"

"I mind me that fight at Minden," said the lieutenant musingly. "'Twas no white night such as this, but black as the Earl of Hell's riding boots. Roots and slimy grass and—"

Foy cursed him, with his hand shaking on his rein. "Let that alone for now!" he snarled. "They lied in they said he slipped. They lied! 'Twas fair, I tell you!"

"Aye," said the other, surprised.

"'Twas a fair thrust. None doubted it."

"Where are your wits?" said Ralph, reining close. "Know you no better tople? When you have tried the young upstart, Foy, we shall have a toddy tonight. This air has an age."

A lantern had been set at the byroad, and at this Henry and Armand turned into the open space. The curving road on the higher Blue Ridge slope had been delicately grayed with a gossamer mist creeping up from the late downs. Here it had risen thicker, curling more deeply against the ground and sopping the air with the smell of wet beech bark. With the sailing moon above, it was like going in some murky, dull toned world where near things were shadowy and far vanished into opaque whiteness.

The other party was in waiting, the horses, in charge of a groom, tethered near by under clusters of black scarred, white stemmed birches, which stirred dimly as if afraid. Through their moving branches fitful flashes of fog-mixed moonlight filtered whitely on Foy, striding up and down, slashing off goldenrod heads with his sword and listening to the rustle of late rabbits, scurrying.

"Gentlemen," said Henry gravely, "know you no means by which this meeting may be avoided?"

"The young cock's crowing less loudly, eh?" Foy turned to his seconds with a rolling laugh.

A quick word of anger was on Armand's lips as he faced Henry, which died as Burnaby spoke:

"Let him to his knees and ask Captain Foy to use his riding whip instead of his sword."

The Frenchman's laugh rang out clearly and loud. "I have seen M. le Capitaine ride. If he uses his sword as poorly as his whip—"

"Damnation!" said Foy. "Measure those swords, Ralph, and be quick about it."

Henry held Armand's coat and waistcoat after he had stripped them off and stood, slight and young, in his shirt. He looked at him with rising pity. All Virginia knew of Foy's sword skill. He had a black record in the army of Duke Ferdinand of Brunswick, and these tales had been whispered wide in Williamsburg. There he had come to no open quarrel as yet and was made a boon companion by such pot tipsters as Burnaby and lesser toad eaters like young Brooke. But the better class gave him a cold shoulder as unworthy to mix with gentlemen of character and would have needed little to have named him to his face for a sneaking whelp that smelled strong of the hangman.

The young Frenchman took Henry's hand between both his own. "I have been so occupied these last three hours," he protested contritely. "Have I said to you that you are generous and kind to assist thus in the affair of a stranger? Have I said that I was grateful?"

"Colonel Washington," said Henry, "is my best friend. An I had been in the inn parlor, sir, I had drunk that toast with you."

The night was very still. Scarce a leaf stirred in the vagrant breeze or shivered in the haze. Only a dull humming chirr of night insects from the thicket and drifting across this—a gold snake on a sad carpet—the rich, plaintive bubble of a whippoorwill.

"Gentlemen," cried Ralph, "is all ready?"

"Have you no command, monsieur?" Henry asked.

The young man's eyes were soft as he shook his head. "How sweet it sings!" he said, "Listen!"

It died, and the tapping of a bell, very faint and far and tenuous, came over the still valley. Henry knew the sound. Away to the eastward on a high knoll, stood a long, low structure of limestone, with a wide veranda. Perched upon its roof were two wooden belfries with alarm bells, which had been hung twenty years before, after Braddock's defeat, when the Indians turned their tomahawks against the white chief that dwelt there. The Indians had been driven westward long ago, but the bells still rang whenever the master, with yelping hounds or by flaring torches, came back to his lodge.

At this moment, while Armand stood in the moonlight with a naked sword in his hand, my Lord Fairfax, for whose affront he stood, was come again saddened to Greenway Court.

Foy's voice broke in, sneeringly wrathful. "Are we come to string beads?"

"En garde!" cried Armand, turning sharply, and the two blades rang together with a clash.

Foy's attack was wonderfully strong. He had the trick of carrying the head well back and resting the whole weight of his body upon the left leg, a sign of one whose learning had been without masks. The other's method was as different from that of his antagonist as night from day. He fought far forward, engaging much with the point.

A maitre d'escrime might have seen in his action some of the freedom and directness which later gave Bertrand, the greatest fencing master of Europe, the surname of the "Terrible." But to the watchers it seemed to be utterly without method—barren of rule—to be loose, uncontained. He possessed the appearance of a child at careless play with a serpent, not conscious of its sinister intention.

A pain came into Henry's dark eyes and a paler tinge to his cheeks. He groaned inwardly as Foy suddenly came at Armand, pressing him back in a furious chasse-croise, first the right foot forward, then the left.

The lieutenant stood close to Henry, his lips parted, watching. "They say Foy was taught of Angelo," he whispered, "and that the pupil could best his master. Your friend is in evil case."

So indeed it seemed. Foy was a brute, and he fought like one, with face distorted and breath rattling with rage. He came on with the lunge of a hunt-

er at a boar, his blade hate heavy, and the very fury of his rush sent the young Frenchman back to the verge of the bushes.

Armand returned with a stop thrust, parried a lunge and answered by a riposte. Then for a moment there was nothing but the du-tac-au-tac of slim steel, cutting wayward blue white flashes where the milky light caught its edge.

"End the cub, Foy," cried Ralph with an oath, "and let us to town! You could have spitted him forty times!"

"By heaven!" suddenly burst out Henry. "Bravo!"

The Frenchman's blade, beating up a flaconnade, had nicked a crimson gash on Foy's shoulder.

The latter, smarting from the prick and enraged beyond measure, came on again cursing, his chin set forward from his neck and a fleck of foam on his lips.

Armand had changed his tactics. He still had the appearance of looseness and lack of close defense; but, strangely enough, Foy's point, though wielded by the redoubtable swordsman that he was, had not so much as slit a ruffle of his shirt. He was untouched, immaculate, careless and debonair.

Now he became of a sudden winged. He turned, circled, was here and there with the rapidity of an insect. The fight turned this way and that, crushed the bushes, was all over the ground. There was a maze of pricking, whirling arrows of sulphur colored flame in the moonlight. Foy's breath was coming hoarsely in his throat like that of a strangled dog. Armand began to laugh outright as he thrust and parried.

The lieutenant wedged an exclamation amid the flick and scrape of steel. Foy's face was become a welter of sweat and rage. This was a sort of fighting new to him. He tried every attack, every feint, double engage, coupe—each ineffectual. Armand, nimble, laughing, began to hum a tune as he ran.

Nothing could have been better calculated to goad his adversary to point of impotency. Already Foy had begun to cut and lunge in utter, whirling madness. Ralph no longer called to him to end the matter. All alike saw that such ending was fast coming into Armand's power alone.

Again and again Foy laid his guard open to Armand's thrust, taking no thought, but still the Frenchman withheld it. Instead his leaping point slashed the other's coat to flapping ribbons, pricked him on the thigh, in the armpit, in the hand—wasp stings that drew blood and rage, but harmed not.

At the first spurt of crimson Ralph leaped forward, crying that it was enough, at which Armand politely lowered his blade, but Foy reviled his second with such curses that he went back to his station gritting his teeth.

The lieutenant raised his hand, withdrawing his eyes an instant from the combatants. Henry listened, and his ear caught the tattoo of hoof beats flinging over the road, mixed with the falling of a lash upon horse's flanks—a frenzy of impatience in the sound. As it came nearer Ralph turned his head with a quick gleam of relief.

At the same instant Armand, swerving far forward, wounded his antagonist in the right wrist, and, Foy's fingers twisting on the hilt, with a sweeping twist sent his sword rattling a good ten feet away.

Foy was after it to snatch it up, with a snarl more like a wild beast than a man, when an officer, at a gallop, leading three soldiers, broke into the clearing and spurred fairly between.

"Stop!" he shouted, out of breath. "Stop! In the governor's name!"

Armand tossed his sword to the ground.

"Hell and fury!" foamed Foy as he sprang back, slashing at the horse's legs. "Out of the way, curse you!"

The animal plunged aside, and Foy came at Armand like the madman he was.

The officer threw himself off the horse too late as Henry rushed forward. Armand stood perfectly still, his hand pressed to his side, where a stain was spreading crimsonly among the white ruffles.

"Bear witness," Ralph said with coolness, turning to the soldiers, "that Captain Foy is not himself for liquor."

"There has been no liquor drunk lately. You meant murder!" Henry turned fiercely upon Foy, who, his rage sullenly sobered, stood biting his nails.

"Enough, gentlemen," interrupted the officer. "There will be time for that. I have his excellency's orders to bring all here in his command to the fort. Captain Foy, Mr. Ralph, lieutenant, I call on you to accompany me without delay to town!"

"You are hurt, monsieur," cried Henry, throwing an arm about the young Frenchman, who staggered slightly.

"Sir, you will not leave him so, bleeding, here by the roadside? Greenway Court is not far distant. In the name of humanity I ask you to assist me to take him where he can have proper attention for his wound."

"I have imperative orders, sir, Mount, gentlemen."

"Well to leave him to the dogs!" burst forth Foy in a sudden simmer of white fury as he turned in his saddle. "And you, you upstart rebel, Virginia would long have been the easier for your gibbeting!"

Their hoof beats grew fainter, then were gone in blankness and echo, and Henry, feeling the young man's form grow suddenly limp, laid him gently down upon the turf.

The baron had driven from Winchester that night with a hurt in his gallant old breast. When he settled back in his seat his hands trembled greatly, clasped atop his sword. The huge chariot, drawn by four wild ponies that would go at any gait except trot together, swung swaying from its leathern springs, and the road seemed very long.

"Are we almost there, Joe?" he asked

er more than once.

And the old negro ribs behind him would reply stoutly. "Almost dar, Mars' Torn; almos' dar."

The fog, fold on fold, shut out the beauty of the way. Lower in the wooded valley the shadows lay very thick, like dead men strewn on a battle field. Riding, he heard the leaves fall like the illusions of youth, like his pinness, like glory, like power.

"Almost there, Joe?"

"Almost dar, Mars' Torn; almos' dar."

Up the craggy way a flicker of light stabbed down through the drab-laced tree tracteries, and the chariot, turned in to the clearing amid clamorous dog-work the cloistered silence of Greenway Court. A negro came out, bent back the dogs and let down the step, and the old man descended, leaning on Joe's arm.

Joe brought my lord his stupper of venison and bordenaux, standing behind his chair till his master was done. This was not long tonight.

My lord took up a book, but threw it down again. Then he lit his pipe and sat long silent till the fire dome blackened. Joe came in, piled pipe knots on it and went shuffling on again. The hounds yawned about the hearth or whimpered softly in their dreams.

Crackling steps roused them, and they scrambled out to bay and sniff and yelp, when the negro clucked them back.

A heavy tread stumbled up the steps. An aged mastiff, curled under the old man's chair, hunched shoulders growing, and the baron, sitting by the dead hearth, with the ashes fallen from his pipe, turned his head.

Henry stood on the threshold, carrying Armand in his arms.

As his bearer stood, rocking, the young man stirred, opened his eyes wide on the baron and thrust down his legs. "My lord," he cried gaily, but with weakness and husking breath, "I come early to—keep—my—appointment." He took a step and lurched forward on to the floor.

Lord Fairfax stood up like a blasted tree with two dead boughs left swinging. "Great heaven! The lad! Has Foy killed him?"

"Not yet," Henry answered. "No fault of his, my lord."

The baron shouted for his servants and for cloths, hot water and lily vinegar. "He must have a leech," he said.

"I will ride myself for the doctor at Ashby's Gap," Henry answered. "But I will dress the wound first." With Joe's help skins were spread on one of the couches and Armand laid thereon. Then, with a woodsman's knowledge of wounds, Henry drew his knife and cut away the clothing.

"It is not mortal?" asked the old man anxiously.

"No. But 'twas a foul lunge. Think not he was the poorest swordsman. Never was such a skill seen in the Virginia as he showed this night!"

"Is it so?"

"Sir, he held that rat's life on the point of his steel. I swear to you he could have run him through a score of times an he would. They stopped the duel—soldiers from the fort—and that red devil of Dunmore's attacked him when he had thrown his weapon by and was empty handed."

"Ah!" cried the baron.

At length Henry stood up. "I am off to the Gap now. I shall no return with the doctor, since I must go on to Williamsburg tomorrow. But or safety's sake I shall pray him speed."

A struggle showed in the baron's face. No one had ever gone unheeded from his door. He kept open table at the Winchester courts, fed the poorer settlers with his own produce and would have filled the ragged lat of a beggar with guineas. One passionate hatred he had—hated against the enemies of his king. All were alike to him, high or low. The times, growing beyond him, had put forward patriots. But, all alike, he deemed them vipers that bit the hand that fed them.

As Henry approached the door my lord was fidgeting in his chair. The hand was upon the latch when he could restrain himself no longer.

"Joe," he thundered, "fetch a stirrup cup! You may be a rebel, sir, but, blast my whips and spurs, you shall drink before you go! I could wish you were not an enemy of the king."

"Not of the king," said Henry, and smiled. "Not of the king, but of the king's rule."

A gleam of fierceness, of the uncompromising principle of his life, shot from under the old man's brows. "I hold with no disloyalty."

"I hold," said Henry in a low voice, "with my friend Colonel Washington."

"I abet no treasurers," flamed the old man.

Henry's eyes hid a sudden gleam of satiric humor. He stretched out the glass the negro had brought him and proffered it to his host.

"I mist decline," he said, "to accept hospitality from any man on earth who has sought to say against the character of Colonel Washington."

The baron stood for a moment with his jaw dropped, then coughed. "God knows"—he said, his voice shaking like a child's—"God knows I—"

But he got no further. "My dear Lord Fairfax!" exclaimed Henry, and drank the glass at a draft.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

By the Tonic Route.

The pills that act as a tonic and not as a drastic purge, are DeWitt's Little Early Risers. They cure Headache, Constipation, Biltousness, etc. Early Risers are small, easy to take and easy to act—a safe pill. Mack Hamilton, hotel clerk at Valley City, N. D., says: "Two bottles cured me of chronic constipation." Sold by Hood Bros., Benson Drug Co., J. R. Ledbetter.

DeWitt's Little Early Risers
 Small pills that act as a tonic and not as a drastic purge.