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[WHOLE NO. 209.]

THE WIDOW'S LAST TRIAL.

"He was the only son of his mother, And she was a widow."

"And to-morrow you are to be taken into the firm as a partner." This was uttered by an aged female, sitting with one of her withered hands clasped in that of her son, a young man of two-and-twenty, who sat looking in her face, with eyes beaming with affectionate interest. "This fully repays me, my beloved son, for all I have suffered."

For a moment the son's features appeared clouded with sorrow; he thought what that suffering had been; of the years long past, when the mother now sitting beside him, so beloved, had submitted to toil and privation, enduring all things for his sake; his eyes glistened with tears, till brushing them away hastily, a smile broke over his countenance.

"True, mother," he said, "but let these recollections be forgotten now. The memory of the past we will bury in oblivion, and think only of the days to come."

"But you will not allow prosperity to harden your heart, William; you will not let your good fortune make you high minded, and forget Him, who has been a friend in the hour of trouble?"

"No mother, I will not forget that I am the child of God—yet should temptation assail me, I have only to think of your precepts and example, and they would always deter me from doing wrong. But think, mother," he continued, a bright gleam lighting up every feature, "how happy I shall be, in being enabled to place you in the sphere of life to which your virtues entitle you. If you knew how often busy fancy has pictured this hour, how often I have dwelt upon the idea of one day being able to place you in a home equal to your merit, you would not wonder, that now, when I see my wishes on the eve of accomplishment, it should subdue me."

"Nor do I, nor do I, my son," the mother said, with tearful eyes; "but you think more favorably, my boy, of your aged mother than she deserves. I doubt not many will think, and say, the old woman has now more than she merits; and really, though I am proud of your advancement, I should not murmur, at never having a more comfortable home than the present one you have provided me."

The night was pitchy dark, not a star being visible, while the wind blowing in fitful gusts, portended a storm of unusual violence.

"'Twill be a stormy night, I fear," said the young man, rising and going towards the door to look out. "The river is already swollen, and if the rain falls, as it did the other evening, I fear much damage will ensue. You heard of the poor fellow drowned in the canal last night?"

"Yes, the mother replied; I hope he had friends to care for him. 'Tis a dreadful death to die," she added, musingly.

"They say not," said William, "many who have encountered it, assert the being brought to, is the most painful part to endure."

"It may be so," the mother answered; "but I fervently trust no one dear to me may ever be submitted to the experiment."

A vivid flash of lightning, followed by the low, rumbling thunder, caused William now to retire and observing again that the river would be very high, he closed the door.

It was now the usual hour for family worship. The mother had seated herself in a corner of the fire-place, with her features settled into a look of devotion, while the son, with a corresponding gravity, walked toward the stand on which the family Bible was placed, and opening the sacred volume, began reading a chapter. Religion with them, was not the cold expression of the lip alone. It was the incense of the heart. It was a beautiful sight, that aged mother, and only son, bending their knees, and lifting up their voices to the Most High. Perhaps the events of the day had given a deeper tone of tenderness to William's voice and feelings; certain it was, he had never prayed more fervently than on that evening; and when they separated for the night, the poor old woman looked forward to the bright vista of the

future, with full confidence of its meeting her most sanguine anticipations.

The mother of William had been left a widow while he was in his second year. By dint of hard labor, she had managed to keep her boy at school, until he arrived at his fifteenth year, when she obtained a situation for him with a merchant. William's good conduct and steady application to business, won him the favorable opinion of his employer. The merchant was a man of great benevolence; he could appreciate merit in whatever station it was to be met; and when he saw the lad supporting an aged mother out of his earnings—never mingling with the low and vicious, and practising a fidelity in business unusual in one so young, it was impossible to avoid feeling an involuntary respect for his character. William was aware of the merchant's kindness; he knew that his salary exceeded that given to other boys; still he never presumed upon the merchant's disinterestedness, but was alike respectful to his employer and their customers. On the day in which he was introduced to the reader's notice, he had been offered a share in the merchant's lucrative business. Never had his brightest visions pictured such a result; but even then, when it would have been natural to suppose him greatly elated by his good fortune, he thought only of his mother; and while his expressions of gratitude were poured in eloquent language into the ear of his benefactor, there was a mingling of thanks that she would be the reaper of his unexampled kindness.

To-morrow! who may boast of to-morrow?

The widow and her son parted from each other with happiness bright in the perspective. The storm of the preceding evening had been succeeded by a morning of unusual mildness for the season, for it was the middle of January; and telling his mother he would not return to dinner, but that she should see him early in the evening, William bade her farewell.

It was at the close of the day, that a traveler went forth to view the picturesque and beautiful falls of the Genesee. He proceeded slowly, gazing upon the surrounding country, with the eye of a connoisseur; and had gained the point at which the fall could be seen to the greatest advantage, when his attention became engrossed by an object of exceeding interest. Near to the aqueduct was a young man employed in endeavoring to collect some drift wood. He had stretched forth his arm to seize a floating log, when, the place being slippery, he lost his balance, and fell into the water. At first the stranger thought him justly punished for his temerity, and felt inclined to smile at what he deemed his fool-hardiness; but soon other feelings predominated. The river was very high and the current, running strong, soon brought the rash youth toward the rapids.

Who, oh! who may paint the anguished feelings of that hapless being, knowing himself doomed to inevitable destruction! On, on the rapids drove him. There was not a ray of hope to cheer his drooping heart; but as the moment of impending fate drew near, desperation gave him strength to grapple with a death-grasp; on the top of the falls he stood bolt upright upon his feet, and giving one wild dreadful shriek, went over. Faint and dizzy, the traveler had closed his eyes to shut out the dreadful sight. He knew that the hapless being had seen him, that the last agonizing appeal the unfortunate youth had made for aid, was to him, and sick at heart he returned to the hotel.

When the melancholy fact became spread through the town, it was said to be a poor youth who had been in the habit of nightly carrying a supply of drift wood to his mother. All spoke highly of his devotion to her, and of his subsequent good conduct. It was mentioned that his prospects had improved, and many conjectured that the force of habit, more than actual necessity had occasioned the fatal catastrophe. Reader, the poor drowned youth was the widow's only son!

Not many days after, a coffin was seen slowly emerging from the widow's now desolate mansion. The body of the young man had been found many miles below the spot at which he perished. Not a trace of his once pleasant countenance was perceptible; but his clothes were identified by many. There was one who would have recognized him under any circumstances—the heart-broken mother. When all shrank and turned away in horror from viewing the sight of his mutilated limbs, she clung to them, and wept over the body in the most bitter agony. The earth closed over his loved remains. It was the WIDOW'S LAST TRIAL.

Conscript and Exemption Acts.

The following, from General Order No. 82, are the regulations of the Secretary of War under the conscript and exemption acts recently passed by Congress: *Commandants of Conscripts and Camps of Instruction.*

1. An officer, styled the commandant of conscripts, will be appointed for each State, who will be charged with the supervision of the enrolment and disposition of conscripts. He will establish one or more camps, in which conscripts will be assembled and instructed, and may recommend for appointment a Surgeon, a Quartermaster, a Commissary, and the requisite number of Drillmasters for each camp. If more than one camp be established, he may also recommend a commandant for each camp not under his own immediate command.

2. A hospital will be established and huts for winter quarters constructed at each camp, and all conscripts assembled at the camps will be promptly vaccinated, if it has not already been done.

3. The commandant of conscripts will require from each camp a report on the first Monday in every month, showing the expenses of the preceding month, the number of conscripts in the camp, the number received and sent away during the preceding month, the regiments, battalions or companies to which they were sent, the number transferred to the navy, the number of sick, the nature of the diseases, and the number of deaths. He will make a consolidated monthly report to the Adjutant and Inspector General of the army.

4. The commandants of conscripts east of the Mississippi river will receive orders only from the War Department, and will not be interfered with by General commanding departments or armies in the field. West of the Mississippi they will report to and receive instructions from the Commanding General of the Trans-Mississippi Department, who will require them to conform as nearly as possible to this order, and to the regulations prescribed for commandants east of the Mississippi. He will make a consolidated monthly report to the Adjutant and Inspector General of the army.

5. The commandants of all regiments, battalions, squadrons or unattached companies which were in service on the 16th of April, 1862, desiring to receive conscripts, may transmit, through the Adjutant and Inspector General of the army, statements of the strength of their commands, to the commandants of conscripts in their respective States, who, unless otherwise ordered, will, as far as practicable, distribute the conscripts of the State among its regiments, battalions and companies thereof, in proportion to their respective deficiencies.

He will consult the wishes of the conscripts in assigning them to companies or regiments, so far as may be consistent with their proper distribution, and will not separate men from the same county, district or parish, if it can be avoided. The same rule will be observed by the commandants of corps in assigning conscripts to companies.

6. Conscripts for cavalry will only be taken from those who furnish their own horses. No conscripts can be assigned to companies mustered into service since the 16th of April, 1862.

7. The commandants of conscripts are specially enjoined to pay unceasing attention to the health, comfort and instruction of the conscripts under their command, and to bear in mind that the efficiency of the army and the safety of the country depend in a great measure upon their faithful discharge of these duties.

III. Enrolment of Conscripts.

All white male residents of the Confederate States, between the ages of 18 and 40, not exempted by act of Congress, or not already in the service, will be enrolled. Persons liable to enrolment may be enrolled wherever they may be found.

IV. Undomiciled Foreigners.

1. Foreigners not domiciled in the Confederate States are not liable to enrolment. Domicil in the Confederate States consists in residence with intention permanently to remain in those States, and to abandon domicil elsewhere. Long residence of itself does not constitute domicil. A person may acquire domicil in less than one year, and he may not acquire it in twenty years' residence. If there is a determination to return to the native country and to retain the domicil there, no length of residence can confer domicil.

The principal evidences of intention to remain are the declarations of the party, the exercise of the rights of citizenship, marriage and the acquisition of real estate, but the intention may be gathered from other facts.

2. The enrolment will be made by the enrolling officer of the State, if the Governor thereof will permit them to act under the orders of the commandants of conscripts, and application will be made by the said commandants for such permission. If it be declined, the commandant will report the fact to the Adjutant and Inspector General and ask for the employment of Confederate officers for the purpose of making enrolments. If the Governor consent, but the enrolling officers of the State be found unable or unwilling to discharge their duty efficiently, the like application will be made to the Adjutant and Inspector General, and in such event, a commissioned officer for each Congressional District, and a non-commissioned officer or private for each county, city, town, district or parish, will be assigned to such duty.

In making such assignment, officers and men disabled by wounds from active duty in the field, and acquainted in the localities in which they are required to serve, will, as far as practicable be selected. The commissioned officers in each district will superintend the enrolments and collection of conscripts therein. Non-commissioned officers and privates, while so employed, will be allowed pay as extra duty men. The enrolling officers of the States, if employed, will be paid the compensation allowed by the State laws for similar service.

The Commanding Generals of armies in the field will order such commissioned officers, non-commissioned officers and privates as they think qualified to be enrolling officers or drill officers and who are unfit for active service in the field, to report to the commandant of conscripts in their respective States, who will order such of them to duty as may be required, and report the remainder by letter to the Commandant General as needed for each service.

8. Enrolments for particular regiments, battalions

squadrons and companies in service on the 16th of April, 1862, may be made by officers detailed for the purpose by the Commanding General of a department of an army in the field; but such officers must report to the commandant of conscripts in their respective States, receive instructions from him, and assemble their conscripts at such point as he may designate. Conscripts enrolled without reporting to such commandant will be deemed to be enrolled for general service, and shall at any time be transferred, on their own application, or on the application of commandants of corps needing conscripts, to such corps.

V. Exemption.

The exemption act will be construed prospectively, and does not authorize the discharge of any one enrolled or in service prior to 11th day of October, 1862.

VI. Bodily and Mental Infirmary.

1. Questions of bodily and mental incapacity will be decided by Surgeons employed for the purpose, by virtue of the act of Congress approved on the 11th of October, 1862.

Three Surgeons in each Congressional District will be recommended by the commandants of conscripts to the Adjutant and Inspector General for employment, under the foregoing act; and the said commandants will establish in each county, city, parish or district, a place of rendezvous for the examination of conscripts enrolled therein.

2. That three Surgeons employed in each Congressional District will constitute a Board of Examination for the District; and one or more of them may act at any place of rendezvous therein. They shall fix days for the examination of conscripts in each county, city, parish or district, and give at least ten days' notice thereof by publication in one or more newspapers, circulating in the Congressional District, and by notice posted at the principal places of public resort.

3. The enrolling officer for the county, city, parish or district shall attend at such examinations, and enroll and send to the camp of instruction such persons as are examined and found by the Surgeon to be capable of bearing arms. The standard of bodily capacity shall be that established by General Order No. 58, modified by the omission of the third paragraph, which authorized the enrolment of persons not equal to all military duty. No person will be enrolled as a conscript who is not capable of bearing arms.

4. Persons deemed incapable of bearing arms shall be reported by the examining Surgeon to the Board of Examination, who shall determine the questions of exemption, and grant certificates thereof. The certificates shall specify whether the incapacity is temporary or permanent, and if permanent, the party shall be exempt from future examination, unless specially ordered by the board. So soon as the Examining Board shall be organized in any Congressional District and shall enter upon the discharge of their duties, no other mode of examination for persons in that district will be pursued, and the decision of the examining Board will be deemed final.

5. The fact that a person has been discharged from service for physical disability or other cause, does not of itself exempt from enrolment as a conscript.

6. If any enrolled person is unable to attend at the rendezvous on account of sickness, he will send to the Examining Surgeon a certificate specifying the cause of absence, and its probable duration, from some respectable physician resident in the county, city, parish or district in which the rendezvous is situated. The examining Surgeon shall send the certificate to the commandant of the nearest camp of instruction and if the person mentioned therein shall not report himself for examination at the said camp within a reasonable period, or send to the commandant of the camp a renewal of the certificate, showing his continued disability, he shall be deemed absent without leave.

7. A compensation of \$4 per diem, while actually employed, will be allowed to each of the Examining Surgeons, and will be paid on their certified account by the Quartermaster of the nearest camp of instruction.

VII. Friends, Dunkards, Nazarenes and Mennonites.

All persons of the above denominations, in regular membership therein on the 11th day of October 1862, shall be exempt from enrolment, on furnishing a substitute, or on presenting the enrolling officer a receipt from a bonded Quartermaster for the tax of five hundred dollars imposed by act of Congress, and an affidavit by the Bishop, Presiding Elder, or other officer whose duty it is to preserve the records of membership in the denomination to which the party belongs, setting forth distinctly the fact that the party on the 11th day of October, 1862, was in regular membership with such denomination. The affidavit must be taken and certified by a Justice of the Peace, or other officer appointed by the law of his State to administer oaths, and his authority to administer oath must be certified by the Clerk of a Court of Record, under the seal of the Court.

All Assistant Quartermasters, to whom the said tax is tendered, will receive and receipt for it and pay the same into the Treasury of the Confederate States; without unreasonable delay. The enrolling officer will receive the receipt and forward it to the commandant of conscripts, by whom it will be forwarded to the Quartermaster General, who will charge the Assistant Quartermaster with the amount received by him.

VIII. Provision against Extortion.

1. When application for exemption is made by any shoemaker, tanner, blacksmith, waggon-maker, miller, mill engineer or millwright, not in the employment of any company or establishment, but working for himself the party seeking exemption shall state in writing, under oath, that he is skilled and actually employed in his said trade; that he is habitually engaged in working for the public; that the products of his labor, while exempt from military service, shall not be sold, exchanged or bartered for a price exceeding the cost of production and seventy-five per cent profit thereon; and that he will not, by any arrangement, shift or contrivance, evade the law, or receive a greater price or reward than it allows.

2. When application is made to exempt superintendents and operatives in wool and cotton factories and paper mills; and superintendents and managers of wool carding machines, shoemakers, tanners, blacksmiths, wagon-makers, millers, mill engineers or millwrights, not working for themselves, but in the employment of some company or establishment, the president or some