

know those clouds will break—the storm will pass—the sunshine beam again, and men, rejoicing, gaze upon its golden light.

I have been sick, and still am weak in body, though my soul is strong and firm in the eternal truth which God has written on my heart, and breathed upon the winds which sweep along the fields. I feel a glorious reverence for the future hours; a holy joy that makes me sometimes think I almost stand in the bright reality of my hopes. My spirit seems to drink the inspiration of the scene, and I scarcely feel the weakness of my body. I am ready, waiting for my task. *I shall not have long to wait.* The harvest is ripe, and the husbandman is almost ready. *He has gazed over the field, and found that all was good.* I but await his mandate. How I want to see you now. I have no words to tell my yearning after friends and home. Oh, I would love to gaze upon them now; to hear the tones that taught my infant lips to utter father, mother, sister, brother. But this may not be. God be with and bless them. As I cannot see *you*, please accept, in these brief lines, the love and affection of a son and brother. When next I write, I shall have news of more importance. Good-bye, and may God bless and prosper you, one and all, now and ever, is the wish and prayer of him who here subscribes himself.

Your friend and brother,

J. EDWIN BYRON."

#### CHAPTER IV.

There was weeping and sore trouble at Pedee when the news came from Harper's Ferry of Brown's battle and surrender. At first, the brief statement was made by telegraph that a crazy man, supposed to be "Ossawatimie Brown," had captured the Government Arsenal, and with less than twenty men, white and black, was holding his assailants, Virginia chivalry and United States marines, at bay. The public *supposed* who this rash raider was, but many at Pedee *knew* it to be Brown, and anticipated the catastrophe, next day announced, that Brown had been captured, with nearly all his men who were not slain in the fight. Painter, Maxson, Gill, Townsend and their families, as well as many others, mourned the inevitable doom of their friend Brown, in whose character, glowing with purity of intention, self-abnegation and christian heroism, they saw not a flaw; while several youthful maidens of grace and refinement, sorrowed for betrothed ones butchered at the Ford, groaning under wounds in the cells of Charlestown jail, or flying outlaws, with every man's hand against them.

But while these lamented, the Pharisees of Pedee took early steps to clear their skirts of all complicity with Brown. Accordingly, a public meeting was called in Pedee township, which "resolved," with more zeal for appearances than for

geographical truth, that Maxson did not live in Pedee township, and that the odium of harboring Brown's men, while training for Harper's Ferry, did not rest on the shoulders of that township. Thus, ere the Democratic rooster crew thrice, or even once, over the alleged responsibility of the anti-slavery party for Brown's misadventure, (which the leaders of that party, by the way, falsely, cowardly and sneakingly denied,) he had been denied by some, if not the chief of his disciples. Maxson, whose farm was situated partly in Springdale and partly in Pedee, but whose house was in the latter township, was astonished to hear how easy a landslide his premises had made, and in his subsequent communications with the spirit of John Brown, which he avers he constantly holds, he has dated his missives to the spirit-land from Springdale, instead of Pedee.

As soon as it became known that Barclay Coppic had escaped from Harper's Ferry to his home at Pedee, Gov. Wise, of Virginia, made a requisition on Gov. Kirkwood for the return of Coppic to Virginia. This requisition was defective in form and in substance, probably intentionally made so, in order that a warrant should be refused, and then a clamor made over it, for the purpose of "firing the Southern heart." At all events, Coppic was not surrendered under it to the Virginia authorities. On the contrary, the young men of Pedee formed themselves into a military company for Coppic's protection, which numbered seventy-five active members, not including those who were *ready* to act, but did not attend its meetings. This company, the members of which were all well armed, had its ramifications in various parts of the surrounding country, and a sharp look-out was kept on the movements of Mr. Camp, (the Virginia officer charged with Coppic's capture,) who was evidently a placid gentleman, worried by no passion for seeing strange and noted places, for he never as much as made his appearance within ten miles of Pedee, though that settlement then, next to Harper's Ferry and Charlestown, engaged public attention more than any other.

As soon as the requisition for Coppic reached the Governor at Des Moines, the following despatch was sent, post-haste, to Pedee :

“DES MOINES, Jan. 24, 1860.

MR. PAINTER:—There is an application for young Coppic from the Governor of Virginia, and the Governor here will be compelled to surrender him. If he is in your neighborhood, tell him to make his escape from the United States.

YOUR FRIEND.”

Who despatched the courier with the above advice, (which Coppic followed so far as to leave Pedee soon after,) is not positively known to the writer, but probably Col. Ed. Wright and Hon. J. W. Cattell knew something about it, and it was said that Mr. Grinnell had his best horse lamed on the occasion.

Before their execution, Cook and Coppic each communicated with their friends at Pedee. Coppic's letter, which is quite long, is dated Dec. 10th, 1859, six days before his execution. It contains no evidence of fear on the part of its writer, but is devoted to the correction of false statements and impressions made by the newspapers, his wishes as to the final disposition of his body, apologies to friends for not writing to them individually, commendations of the sheriff and jailer who had him in custody, and allusions to the bounteous fare provided for him and his fellow-prisoners, chiefly by sympathizing friends at a distance. He says, “To-day we have received a box of nick-nacks from Philadelphia, and some of the citizens here send us in a pie now and then; so you may know we live fat, but it is only fattening us up for the gallows,—rather poor consolation.”

Cook's letter is written the day before his execution, and is as follows :

“CHARLESTOWN JAIL, VA., Dec. 15, 1859.

*Mr. and Mrs. James Townsend and family :*

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—I have time only to scratch a few words of remembrance, as a token that the happy past—your generous friendship and your love—is not forgotten by the stranger to whom your affection gave the endearing name of son and brother,—that the memory of all your kindness is still fresh and green upon the page of his memory.

We struck a blow for the freedom of the slave. We failed, and those who are not already dead, must die, and that upon the scaffold. One more day, and the scenes of life for me will close forever.

Remember me kindly, when I have passed the vale of shadows, where I hope in a few years to meet you. Accept my love, my God-speed and my last farewell. In the soul's affection, now and ever yours, JOHN E. COOK.”

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