

*The Forayers; or, Raid of the Dog Days — Introduction
and Chapter One*
William Gilmore Simms

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INTRODUCTION.

HISTORICAL SUMMARY.

The reader who has done me the honor to keep progress with me in the several journeys which I have made into the somewhat obscure regions of our historical romance — who has, in brief, read my novels, the “Partisan,” “Mellichampe,” “Katherine Walton,” and “The Scout,” will remember that I have endeavored to maintain a proper historical connection among these stories, corresponding with the several transitional periods of the Revolutionary war in South Carolina. While the “Partisan” opened the drama with the fall of Charleston, the “Scout” closed with the siege of “Ninety-Six;” an event which, though it left the victory in the hands of the British, left them, at the same time, in a condition of such feebleness, as to render their temporary triumph of little value to their fortunes. The post was abandoned as soon as rescued from the besiegers, and Lord Rawdon, apprehensive of dangers which were sufficiently apparent upon the horizon to every veteran eye, took up his line of march, with all possible expedition, for the Low Country, and the securities of the seaboard.

The “Partisan” closed with the melancholy defeat of the first southern continental army under Gates, at Camden. “Millichampe” illustrated the interval between this event and the arrival of Greene, with the rude material for the organization of a second army; and was more particularly intended to do honor to the resolute and hardy patriotism of the scattered bands of patriots, who still maintained a predatory warfare against the foe among the swamps and

thickets, rather keeping alive the spirit of the country, than operating decisively for its rescue. “The Scout,” originally published under the name of “The Kinsmen,” occupied a third period when the wary policy of Greene began to make itself felt, in the gradual isolation and overthrow of the detached posts and fortresses which the enemy had established with the view to overawe the people in the leading precincts of the state; while “Katharine Walton,” closing the career of certain parties, introduced to the reader by the “Partisan,” and making complete the trilogy begun in that work, was designed to show the fluctuations of the contest, the spirit with which it was carried on, and to embody certain events of great individual interest, connected with the fortunes of persons not less distinguished by their individual worth of character, and their influence upon the general history, than by the romantic circumstances growing out of their career.

This narrative brought down the record to a period, when, for the first time, the British were made to understand that the conflict was doubtful; that their conquests were insecure, and that, so far from extending their arms over the interior, it became a question with them whether they should be able to maintain their hold upon the strong places of which they had so long held possession. Their country-posts had mostly fallen into the hands of the partisans, and such as remained were momentarily threatened with like fortune. To maintain themselves in Charleston and Savannah, the necessity was pressing that they should contract their powers, and concentrate their forces. Reinforcements from Europe were hardly to be expected. The British empire was in a state of exhaustion and the army of the invader was now half made up of the provincial loyalists. It is proposed, in the present story, to resume the historical narrative at this period; making it subordinate, however—as has been the plan of the preceding volumes—to other events, in which the writer will naturally seek to illustrate the social condition of the country, under the influence of those strifes and trials which give vivacity to ordinary circumstances, and mark with deeper hues, and stronger

colors, and sterner tones, the otherwise common progress of human hopes and fears, passions and necessities.

The operations of the British in South Carolina, after the abandonment of Ninety-Six, were contracted almost entirely within that section of country, which is enclosed by the Santee, the Congaree, and Edisto rivers. They were wholly concentrated in the alluvial regions, or what is called the Low Country. Here, Rawdon proposed to keep his forces in hand, ready for emergencies, and hoped, undertaking no enterprises, to make a sufficient stand against the American troops. But, even for this, it was soon found that his strength was inadequate, and that Greene was confident enough to offer him battle on the Edisto. With a melancholy instinct, warning him of humiliating reverses, Lord Rawdon anticipated the mortification of final defeat, by yielding the command of the army to Colonel Stewart, retiring himself, after a brief pause at Orangeburg, to the walls of Charleston, where, he lingered only long enough to stain his good name by the sanguinary execution of Hayne, and then departed for Europe.

One single farther statement will suffice to put the reader in possession of the relative position of the opposing forces. The numerical strength of Greene and Stewart was nearly equal. Apart from the garrison at Charleston, and a detachment under Colonel Cruger, slowly approaching from above, the army of Colonel Stewart may have numbered from fifteen hundred to two thousand men; that of Greene was fully the latter number, but mostly composed of militia. But, though Greene lacked in regular infantry, he was more than a match for his opponent in cavalry. In this respect, he was well served. There was no better cavalry in the world, and it grew more numerous every day, by accessions from the country gentry.

It will be seen from this statement, that Greene, though not unwilling to fight, was yet in no condition to invite the combat except on his own terms. For this, Rawdon and Stewart

were equally unwilling. Strongly posted as they were in Orange burg, it would have been madness in Greene to have forced the trial of strength upon them, and Stewart, left suddenly in command, felt too heavily the weight of responsibility upon him, to undertake any bold adventure. There were reasons for his forbearance, other than his own sense of responsibility, which sufficiently excused his apathy. But these reasons will properly find development in the course of our story. It is then understood that our narrative opens at the moment when Rawdon is preparing to yield the care of the army to the charge of his lieutenant, at the moment when, approaching Orangeburg as a post of rest, after the retreat from Ninety-Six, after the abandonment and destruction of Camden, after the loss of almost all of their posts in the interior, the British, after an exhausting march, weary and desponding, are seeking to snatch a momentary rest from fatigue and danger—not willing to seek their foes, and scarcely able to cover themselves from pursuit. They were soon to be strengthened by a body of thirteen hundred men, chiefly loyalists, under the command of Cruger, late commandant at the post of Ninety-Six; but of his approach, as yet, they knew but little, and had every reason to apprehend that he might be cut off, burdened as was his train by clouds of fugitive Tories, with their families, from the upper country, and followed closely by Pickens, one of the most famous partisans of Carolina. Nothing, indeed, saved, them but the exhausted condition of Pickens's cavalry, which, to use his own language, “could neither get up with the enemy, nor get away from him.” To excuse the lack of enterprise in both armies, it is only necessary to add that hunger and nakedness were at work among them. Provisions could not be procured on any terms. The country was exhausted; and very cheerfully would both parties have taken the field for food, when they would have hesitated to do so for more noble considerations.

But we may safely leave it to the novelist to pursue the narrative in place of the historian. Enough has been shown of the chronicle to place the reader in full possession of the relative strength and condition of the contending forces. The Americans are gaining

confidence with every moment of pause; the British, gathering themselves up for the last struggle, prior to their expulsion from a region, of which, for a long season, they had enjoyed the pleasant fruits. Suspense, anxiety and apprehension, like so many heavy clouds, to say nothing of a long and scorching summer, hung over the fortunes of the contending armies, and seemed to paralyze their energies.

But the partisans have their work to do in spite of these discouraging influences. They were allowed no such respite as was accorded to the regular army, and throughout the whole exhausting period of summer, their cavalry was kept in motion startling the British with incessant alarms; hovering about their posts, snatching up their convoys, and occasionally cutting off their detachments. In this sort of work, we find all our great captains of partisans equally engaged, Marion, Sumter, Pickens, Lee, Maham, Harden, the two Hamptons, Horry, Taylor, and many others. By these, even under the blazing heats of July and August, the country was literally swept, as with a fiery besom, through all that region the boundaries of which have already been described. This was the famous campaign of “The Dog-Days,” a season proverbial for the wonderful endurance and audacity of the partisans, when the regular troops -of neither army could make a day's march, without the loss of numbers perishing from the heat. In the retreat of Rawdon from Ninety-Six, more than fifty soldiers dropped dead upon the march; and subsequently — but we must not anticipate. We have already trespassed somewhat, in these slight glances at the province which we propose to assign to our story.

THE FORAYERS

CHAPTER I.

'BRAM'S CABIN IN THE SWAMP.

THE district of Orangeburg, in South Carolina, constitutes one of the *second tier* (from the seaboard) of the political and judicial divisions or districts of that state. It is a vast plain, with a surface almost unbroken, in the southern and western portions, by elevations of any sort. In this region, it is irrigated by numerous watercourses, rivers, and creeks, that make their way through swamps of more or less width and density. These are all thickly covered with a wild and tangled forest-growth, skirted with great pines, and dwarf-oaks, to say nothing of a vast variety of shrub trees; the foliage of which, massed together by gadding vines, usually presents, in midsummer, the appearance of a solid wall, impervious to sight and footstep.

The precinct received its first European settlers in 1704. These, originally the subjects of the prince of Orange, naturally conferred his name upon the district. But the settlements were not confined to this people. Along the Santee, the Congaree, and Edisto, there were Huguenot and English families, that came in afterward; and, occasionally, a small group of Scotch, and protestant Irish, might be found, occupying tracts which were comparatively isolated from all others.

These several settlements maintained each its original national characteristics; and, even at the opening of the Revolution, there had been little or no amalgamation among them. They did not even associate; and the only cementing agency which they acknowledged, bringing the several parties into social relation, grew gradually, in the growth of a native population. The children of all parties spoke the English language, and this proved a bond of union, in the absence of other ties, of a strength sufficient to neutralize, in a great degree, the original antipathies of the parent stocks.

Near the creeks and rivers, the settlements were, naturally, most numerous; and, speaking with regard to the standard acknowledged among the people, these watercourses were comparatively thickly inhabited. Along the Santee, for example, and the two great lines of thoroughfare from Charleston to the Congarees, the sound of a horn, in times of danger, could bring out, almost anywhere, a score of mounted men; though we need scarcely inform our readers, in respect to a region so lacking in homogeneity—during the revolutionary period—that the same means would be just as apt to find them divided very equally into opposing parties. The French, or Huguenot settlements, would be sure to wear whig colors; so also the Irish; the Scotch and English were mostly dogged loyalists; while the German population were nearly equally divided in sentiment between the colony and the crown.

Of the native born, a vast majority were patriots, particularly the younger men; and these, necessarily brought together from all the settlements, blended the otherwise adverse national sentiments of the original stocks, into that rare sort of union, which Anacreon Moore rather fancifully describes as the “one arch of peace.” To this mingling of their young, was due, in some degree, the occasional forbearance of the parents; many of whom, on both sides, took parole or protection, and forebore the field ; as much because of the committal of their sons, as because of any selfish apprehensions of their own.

There was still a fair proportion, however, who felt, or acknowledged, none of these restraints; and who, whether from a natural and earnest sentiment of loyalty, or because of their full faith in the powers of the German sovereign on the throne of Britain, to coerce his rebellious subjects into obedience, joined the banner of the king as soon as it was unfurled, and proved themselves as fierce and unsparing, as if they dealt only with their natural enemies. It is not our purpose here to indicate the various causes which led the people to choose opposition on either side; but, we may add, that, as in all such cases, there were baser motives also at work; there were private feuds to avenge, hot rivalries to assuage, and

plunder to be won. It may be that the progress of our history will unfold all of these motives in turn.

There is a small watercourse, buried in swamp and thickly fringed with a natural and noble forest-growth, which, rising at nearly equal distances between the Santee and the Edisto, finds its way at last into the latter river. This stream goes still by the old rustic title of the Four-Holes swamp. In the times of which we write, it was one of the places of refuge for the outlying patriot. The settlements along its upland margin were infrequent; and, though skirted by one of the common thoroughfares of the county, the region was of too suspicious a character to suffer the traveller to linger as he rode. There was nothing to woo the lover of the picturesque in the prospect around him, and curiosity had but little motive to pierce the dark and silent recesses of those thickets which seemed impenetrable from without; and the mysterious stillness and obscurity of which, were well calculated to arm the instincts of the way farer with a tremulous sense of danger. He rarely suffered himself or his steed to pause and bait as he sped over the route, so long as the gloomy shadows of this great thicket were cast upon his path.

It is to this very region, however, that we propose to conduct the reader now. We shall penetrate the silent and shadowy fortress of swamp and forest, following a footpath which you would scarcely discover for yourself; the traces of which, from without, are quite undiscernible by the uninitiated. We enter a creek, breaking boldly through a fence of willows. Our steeds leave no track in the water. We follow the stream for fifty yards, and knee-deep in the swamp we are surrounded by a wood of cypresses. Before us another fortress of forest spreads away, thick and matted. We press boldly up against it, and a faint gleam of light appears, as shining through a crevice, on our left. We descend, following this gleam. It opens sufficiently to admit of our passage through a copse of cane and willows over which hang great branches of gum and tupola. We pass a hammock, thickly covered with

woods. And still our way lies through water. The path grows sinuous and would be lost, but for certain marks upon the branches of the trees under which we are required to move. *You* would not see these marks. No one could see them, were they not shown; or decipher their mystic uses, were they not explained. They have been carefully made, not only to escape the casual glance, but to shape, step by step, the-course of him who has been taught the cipher. The refuge has been often sought. It has hitherto justified the hope of security which it promised. The spot was long known and honored after the Revolution, as “Bram Johnson's Castle.”

But we have not reached “Bram’s Castle” yet. There is Still a tract of wood and water to be passed. The refuge is one designedly difficult of access, and even to him who knows the indices by which to find it, the way is circuitous and the paths difficult. But we will suppose these to be overcome. The region has been laid bare since the war, and many have been the curious spectators whom the familiar scout has conducted to the curious hiding-place of the patriots. Let us penetrate at once to the recess, supposing the difficult progress to be overcome, and emerging suddenly from the thicket and swamp, upon a hammock, an islet of the swamp, covered with mighty trees, pine and beech, a sandy spot, high, dry, and sheltered, as if a retreat for the *Genius Loci*, whom we will suppose a bearded Druid, brooding in silence while he grows to stone, and the gray moss winds about him, a natural shroud for the High Priest of a perished people.

It was on the afternoon of one of the hottest days of June— one of the hottest months in Carolina—in the year of grace one thousand seven hundred and eighty-one, that a horseman made his way along the route described, and penetrated to the little swamp islet, or hammock, upon which the cabin of ‘Bram Johnson stood. The stranger was very certainly a military man, though it would be difficult to describe his costume as a military uniform. He evidently belonged to the irregular service. His clothes were of a dark blue, and consisted of

an overall, or hunting shirt, of linen or cotton material. His small clothes were of the same material, and leggins, of blue also much after the Indian fashion, completed his outfit. The cap which he wore was of common fur, without feather. He carried a broadsword at his side, and pistols, doubly shotted, filled his holsters. His steed was a glorious black, without spot upon all his body, one white star excepted, which was conspicuous upon his right fore shoulder. The rider was of vigorous build, not so heavy as compact and symmetrical; some five feet eleven inches high, erect of carriage, and probably twenty-seven years of age. He had a finely-formed oval face, well bronzed, cheeks full, chin prominent, and eyes gray and searching as the eagle's. The forehead was broad, the head high, and the chestnut curls escaped beneath his cap, and hung loose and long upon his shoulder. Clearly, there was need for shears and razor, the beard being quite as long and massive as the hair.

Our horseman had penetrated all the avenues leading to the hammock of 'Bram Johnson, without disturbing any echoes. He stopped his steed when about to emerge upon the banks, and alighted where he stood, fastening the animal to a swinging bough that hung above the creek. With his sabre in his hand the rider quietly ascended the hammock, and made his way forward, with the stride of one quite sure of his ground, and without apprehending interruption. He was clearly one of those in possession of the "*open sesame*." He passed quietly but confidently among the great beeches, cypresses, and sycamores, which covered the islet, until his eye caught glimpses of a vein of smoke that rose from the cabin of 'Bram Johnson. Then he paused for a moment, and, stealing from tree to tree, as if suddenly counselled with the necessity of caution, he continued to press forward, in this stealthy manner, until the wigwam of the negro stood full in sight before him. It was a very sultry afternoon, as we have said, on one of the hottest days in our hottest month. The present season was, if possible, far hotter than usual; and, in that dense empire of shrub and forest,

where the winds could at no time penetrate with vigour—where they could not course or sweep, but only trickle; as it were—the atmosphere weighed like a coppery fluid upon the universal nature. The stranger had sensibly felt its pressure, and his movements had been slow accordingly. The perspiration streamed from his brows, and the blood throbbed violently in the veins upon his forehead. But the sight that met his eyes seemed to make him forgetful of his own exhaustion. A smile curled his lips, and rested upon his noble features, like a soft sunset upon a happy landscape. It was evident that his was a lively nature, keenly susceptible of the playful and the humorous. He paused, and the words rose to his lips as if spoken in the ears of a companion.

“Now, look at that rascally negro. There he sits, drowsing in the sunset, mouth wide, and every sense steeped in forgetfulness. An alligator might take him as he sleeps, and make his first mouthful of him before he could open his eyes. Yet is he set to watch and wait. He has gorged himself with terrapin and rice. He has probably had a fat possum for dinner ; or possibly
has contrived to pick up some luckless pig, straying out of hearing of Holman’s sty. He, at all events, will contrive to feed and fatten though his master starves.”

Thus saying, the stranger quietly drawing his sabre, smote a hickory shoot from a neighboring tree, and thus armed he approached the sleeping negro. ‘Bram [Abram] was a portly fellow, loosely clad, a white homespun shirt and duck trowsers constituting his only covering. The shirt was open at the breast, displaying a broad massive trunk, like that of Hercules. The sweat rolled down from his face and neck, or stood out upon his skin in big bead-like drops that glistened like oil. His deep breathing was like that of a young cayman, crying for his supper. Never was being more happily unconscious of what the morrow was to bring forth. A smart stroke of the hickory over his shoulders suddenly enlightened him. A

second brought him to his feet, and fairly opened his eyes. Rubbing his irritated shoulder with one hand, while he threw out the other in defence, he cried—

“Wha’ de debbil dat! who dat, I say, da hit maussa nigger wid hick’ry?”

The stroke was repeated, and the fellow opened his eyes this time to a full knowledge of the person in whose presence he stood.

“Ki! Mass Willie, da you?”

“And this is the way, you rascal, that you watch the camp when I am gone?”

“Psho, maussa, I bin see you all de time! I know he bin you from de fuss [first].”

“Then you must have a famous passion for hickory, you rascal, to receive three cuts of it before letting me know that you were awake.”

“Psho! de hick'ry aint hutt [hurt].”

“Ah ! will you try a little more of it?” But the black retreated, rubbing his shoulders afresh.

“Tank you, Mass Willie; but ’scuseme, ef you please; no more dis time. Next time maybe, I will tank you for anoder tas’e [taste].”

“You will get more than a taste, 'Bram, if I catch you another time, sleeping in broad daylight, when your business was to keep close watch until Ballou came in. Suppose the tories had found you out?”

“Oh! maussa, he bin so hot dis ebning, and I jis bin loss myself wid sleep when you bin coming. I no bin quite ’sleep neider, for I t’ink I bin yerry de hoss, and t’ink I bin see somebody cross my eye jis when you come up on de hammock. I dont t’ink I bin loss myse’f ’t all.”

"Shut up, and don't lie to me, 'Bram! But this sort of watching will never do! Suppose it had been one of Carmichael's t ories instead of me?”.

“How tory guine fin’ he way yer, Mass Willie?”

"How did we find our way here?"

"Oh, we' berry differen' sort of people, maussa. We hab sense, maussa. More dan dat, enty I know dem tory is all gone up de country wid de red coats."

"But they are coming back as fast as possible, and some of them will no doubt arrive in Orangeburg to-night or to-morrow."

"Ki! you say so, maussa?"

"Yes, indeed, you rascal; and if this is the way that you watch when you are sent out, we shall have a round chance of being taken,—every mother's son of us, by Coffin's cavalry, or Fisher's scouting parties."

"Wha' de use for you talk so, Mass Willie, when you knows its onpossible. How dem poor little carrion hoss of Coffin guine run we down? How dem dutty [dirty] nigger of Fisher guine fin' we out? Enty I know he can't come it, try he bes'; as for dem cabalry of Coffin, he gone up t'ree week ago. I shum [see um] when he pass t'rough Orangebu'g. He bin down, some of dem, to young missis place, and bring off heap of corn and fodder. I speck Pete Blodgit will tell you all 'bout it when you axes um; dat is, if he aint too big a rascal' and I'm jubous 'bout he rascality — dat same Pete."

"What do you know about it, 'Bram?"

"He *sell* de cawn and fodder, maussa, to de redcoat. He git de money for 'em."

"I know that already. But did you learn how much he sold?"

"I bin watch close. He sell heap. De redcoast feed dere t'ree days; den he carry off t'ree, sebben, five, eleben wagon loads of cawn and fodder — all up to Orangebu'g."

"No, nonsense, 'Bram. I know you don't love Pete Blodgit, but that's no reason why you should lie about him. How many wagon-loads were carried off?"

"I speck he hab seben or eleben, maussa, da's a trute."

"Seven — or eleven!"

“Yes; de cawn bin at de bottom, de fodder on top. I can’t tell how much, but Pete get money for ‘em. I see de goul’ in he hand, more dan I kin count.”

“That, too, I know; but can you guess how much?”

“He hab he han’ *full* — more dan full! I see day! But I can’t count ‘em, whay I bin hide!”

“Where did you hide to see all this?”

“Bury up in de fodder in de loff [loft]. I lay down wid my mouth ‘pon hole in de floor, an’ I bin look t’rough the floor ‘pon Pete Blodgit and the o’d’ly sargen’ where him an’ Pete bin down in the stable. He git he han’ full of goul guinies; dat I know; and he hab han’, maussa — you ebber bin obzarb Pete Blodgit han’, maussa! — he hab hand like shubble [shovel]!”

“I believe you are right, ’Bram, about the measure of his hands, but—”

“To be sure, I right! He heb em like shubble, for true; and he kin shet he han’ on wha’ he git, maussa, I tell you. Ha! dat Pete Blodgit, maussa; —keep you eye ‘pon ‘em! You guine fin’ ‘em out yit, some day. He’s a most dutty rascal.”

“Hush, ’Bram: no more of that. I will keep my eye upon both of you. And now, what of Ballou? Has he been drinking again?”

“He guine ebber lef’ off drink, maussa, so long as Jimmaker run? Jim Ballou *mus*’ drink if he hab Jimmaker. He soak all day las’ Sunday.”

“Was he sober the day when he went off?”

“I speck so; but dere’s no telling, maussa. He so usen to drink, dat, drunk or sober, he hab he leg always.”

“You were down at Holly-Dale, ’Bram, and saw Henry.”

“Nebber see Mass Henry; he bin gone somewhar’. See Miss Bertha. He [she] ax ‘bout you, maussa! Ha! You bin look ‘pon em when he ax ‘bout you, wid he eye look down,

and de red kibber [cover] all he face, you feel warm all 'bout de heart. He's a most beautiful gal child, is Miss Bert'a."

"Did you see the old gentleman?"

"Wha'! de cappin? Enty he cuss me, for d—n bull-head son ob a buffalo! Look yer, Mass Willie, keep you eye shap 'pon dat same ole Cappin Trabis. He hab heep o' dealing wid deb tory in de Fork. He eat dinner wid dem redcoat in de garrison at Orangebu'g. He git British guineas and hish price for ebbry t'ing he kin sell in Orangebu'g. You t'ink he hab good feeling for you, Mass Willie, cause you fadder and him bin togedder in de ole Cherokee war! —you t'ink he look kin' 'pon you when you gone to see Miss Bert'a? nebber blieb em! He's no better, I tell you, dan a d—n tory."

"Silence, sir. No more of this."

"I can't silence, maussa! Look you, enty I look 'pon em, arm in arm, walking de piazza wid dat Dick Inglehardt. You know Dick Inglehardt. Enty he tory to de backbone? Well, you know wha' he go for when he gone to Holly-Dale?"

The negro watched the effect of his information upon his master's visage. He did not deceive himself in the conjecture that what he said would make the other look grave. With a subdued voice, the master inquired:—

"Was Richard Inglehardt at Holly-Dale when you were there the other day?"

"To be show [sure] he bin day! Big as a general, walking up and down de piazza, as who but he!"

"Did he see *you* 'Bram?"

"Catch me at dat, Mass Willie! Oh! no, when I shum, I back into de bush. I know bery well, ef he see 'Bram, he say to hesef— 'Bram maussa no far off. He bin day heap o' times lately, I speck. I shum riding out from Orangebu'g wid de ole cappin. Bote of deb ham shot in de eye."

“What! drunk?”

“Jis’ dat, and not’ing else; but ‘twas arter dinner, Maussa close on to sundown, and when a genpleman has a sawt o’ right, you know, to onsettle his standing wid a sawt o’right, you know, to onsettle his standing wid a sawt o’ sentiment.”

“You are getting equally elegant in your modes of thought and speech, Abram; and if you would only drop your habit of swearing, there’s no telling the degree of elegance to which you might arrive. But let us look into your cabin. I want my homespun.”

“Wha’! you guine a’sguising yourself agin, Mass Willie. I speck you guine right off now to Hollydale. You mus’ look sharp ‘bout you ef you guine dere.”

“No matter where I go, ’Bram; it is not exactly my cue to let you know all my movements.”

“Ha! you better! you better tek [take] me wid you. You git in trouble some day, when ’Bram aint close by to help you out o’ de ditch. Dem tory will sure for fin’ you out, some day, t’rough all dat ‘sguising; and taint yaller homespun, and coonskin cap, and bushy wig and whisker wha’ guine hide you from ‘em, when you stan’ up so straight in your mocksens, and show sich legs as dat t’rough your leggins.”

“You are a cunning rascal, ’Bram,” replied the other with a smile, laying his hand upon the negro’s shoulder kindly as he spoke, while the latter applied his key to the padlock. The door of the cabin was open, and the two went in together.

When, after a space, the master reappeared from the cabin, he was completely disguised in the rude, simple garments of the poorest sort of countrymen. He had, besides, taken the precaution to stain his face and hands, with a thin decoction of some native roots from the woods, so that the fair white and red of his complexion were hidden in a gipsy sort of bronze, which, to any but a very close examination, would seem natural enough.

We do not care to report the further dialogue between the parties. It will not concern our narrative. The master extended his hand.

“And now, ’Bram, I must leave you. I must ride to Pete Blodgit’s to-night. Take care of yourself, and do not leave the cabin on any account till Ballou returns. One or the other of you must be here always. I have dropped a letter in the hollow for Colonel Singleton. Should he come while you are here, or any of his officers, say to him, or them, that the Great Buffalo means to lie down for awhile, and rest upon the hills.”

“De high hills, Mass Willie.”

“Ay, ay, the high hills of Santee; and say further, that the Gamecock want them to hear his crow, and join him for a great flight below.”

“I comprehends, maussa. I knows. De Gamecock—“

“I only wish you to repeat what I say, ’Bram; it is not necessary that you should comprehend it. If you have one fault, ’Bram, more than another, which I could wish you to correct, it is that of being a little too wise for your master.”

“Oh! psho, Mass Willie. Git out! Don’t be poking fun wid a sharp finger at your nigger. But, one ting, Mass Willie. I yer say day hab mak’ you promoted. You’s a ginneral now, or somet’ing or udder like it.”

“Only a major, ’Bram; only a major!”

“But dat’s de nex’ ting, or mighty close on to a ginneral, I’m a t’inking.”

“Good-bye, ’Bram!” — offering his hand.

“God bless you, Mass Willie; God for ebber bless you, and sen’ you safe, wid a warm spur, trough de berry camp ob de enemy.”

The prayer may be more reasonable than you dream of, old fellow. Good-bye, ’Bram.”

He shook the negro's hand affectionately and departed as he came. 'Bram followed him to the edge of the hammock, and when he had gone from sight — buried in the thick woods in front — and when his horse's tread could be heard no longer, the faithful slave murmured, with half a sigh, a tear glistening in his eye as he turned back to his cabin:—

“God breaa he heart! God bress he heart! I lub ‘em like my own chile But I always fear’d when I shum go off widout ‘Bram. I knows wha’ he is, for running he hoss ‘mong dem tory. He aint fear’d of dem tory no more dan I fear’d of grasshopper. Le’ [let] any of dem speak to him wid sassy tongue, and how he will smash he teet’. Ha! I ‘member dat scrimmage by M’Code ferry; den de one down by Lenud’s; den up ag’in in Lynch’s; I yer de ole Gamecock say, hese’f, dat Willie Sinclair is all h-ll for a charge! I so wish I bin wid em.”

But we will leave the slave to his meditations, while we follow the footsteps of his master, whose present occupation, we may whisper in the reader's ear, contemplates equally his own and the affairs of the partisan cavalry under the command of Marion.