

rather than withdraw a charge, which he believed to be true, that he had made against an officer. He was actuated by his convictions then, and I believe he was inspired by the same high motive when he fired the shot that slew the assassin of Lincoln. He believed it was better to disable Booth — for that was his intention — than to permit him to shoot Lieutenant Doherty, which evidently in another moment he would have done.

I have read with intense and ever-increasing interest the "Life of Abraham Lincoln," and as it is destined to become a classic and make history, even the most humble individual who appears in its pages should have dealt out to him a full meed of justice. I am sure no persons have a more earnest desire for this than the authors.

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METHODIST PARSONAGE, DUNGANNON, ONTARIO.

An Anecdote of the Blairs.

MR. FRANCIS P. BLAIR, SR., already a prominent figure in national history in the days of Andrew Jackson, was the father of Montgomery Blair in the Cabinet of Mr. Lincoln, of Frank P. Blair, Jr., a major-general in the Union army and the commander of a corps of Sherman's forces in his famous march from Atlanta to the sea, and father-in-law of S. P. Lee, an admiral in the United States navy.

It was the daily habit of Mr. and Mrs. Blair, each of them then approaching their eightieth year, to ride around the country, along the byways, and off the public roads. This couple were known by all the country folks for miles away from their home, which was at Silver Spring, the famous and historic spot where the destiny of so many men in public life was fixed or changed. The roads leading into the city of Washington were well guarded; so well, that the pickets were very near each other. These pickets were changed every day, and of course the guards who saw this couple ride one day and who had become acquainted with them would be displaced on the morrow and new men would take their places. It so happened that Mr. Blair had adopted the idea of wearing a short green veil over and around his high hat, so as to shade his eyes in the strong sunlight which was reflected from the sandy roads under a summer sun. For the same reason, Mrs. Blair wore a bonnet coming far over her face and hiding her features. In this odd and unique style of dress they roamed and rode at will, far and near, as they had both been accustomed to do for a quarter of a century preceding.

It so chanced that one picket, who happened to be on duty a number of times at different places, was struck with the queer appearance of the couple, which did not at all comport with the fine-blooded horses they rode,¹ and becoming gravely suspicious, he determined to report them at headquarters as worthy of being looked after. This done, the order went out the next day that this was a case to be carefully examined, as many spies were known to be prowling about in search for news to be sent across the lines to the enemy. A sagacious and faithful man was specially detailed on a certain day to guard a particular road which it was

known the "suspects" must take on their return across the country. When the suspicious couple at length came in sight of this picket, after the order "Halt!" had been given, the usual questions were put, as follows: "Where are you from?" "Where are you going?" "Have you anything contraband about you?" etc. All these inquiries being responded to in a satisfactory way the picket then broke out abruptly with other questions not on the regular list, and began thus, "Well, who are you, anyway?" The old gentleman, who up to this time had done all the talking on his side and had responded to all inquiries, and who had much quiet humor in him, turned to his wife with the remark, "Betty, who are we?" With a smile the old lady turned to the picket and replied, "Well, guard, what would you think if I said we had a son who is a Cabinet minister, and another son who is a major-general, and another son who —" The guard, not waiting for any more, quickly interrupted with the report, "And I suppose you will say another son who is an admiral!" "Yes," responded the old lady, "an admiral, also." "Well, now, old woman, that is coming it a little too strong. If you had left out the admiral, I might have believed you; but as it is, I think you are both subjects for the headquarters; and so come along." There was no course but submission, and the three rode along some distance, the prisoners in front of their captor, and all the way the latter kept a watchful eye upon the supposed spies.

At length a group of officers approached, each making a salute and halting to speak to the captured rebels. "Why," said one of these officers to Mr. Blair, "what does this mean? You in the hands of a military guard? One might suppose you were prisoners and on your way to headquarters." "Well," said Mr. Blair, "so we are." The officer, quickly turning to the soldier, demanded to know what he had been doing. Much abashed and crestfallen, he explained to his commander in an undertone, "Well, sir, when I questioned the old man I believed him to be all right; but when the old woman told her darned story about her having one son in the Cabinet, and one son a major-general, and then on top of that added another son an admiral, I thought she was yarning, and I would not believe anything but that they were real spies, and I arrested them on the spot."

I tell the story as it was told to me by Mr. Blair himself immediately after the incident.

Eliza Clagett Allen.

NEW YORK CITY.

"The White League of New Orleans."

A LETTER has been received by the editor from Mr. F. R. Southmayd, formerly of New Orleans but now residing in Chicago, in which he refers to Mr. Cable's story, "The Haunted House in Royal Street," published in THE CENTURY for August, 1889. He denies that the White League ever had a badge of any kind. He also says that it "was not the organization of a political party"; also that the purpose of the White League, as declared in the second article of its constitution, was to "support the constitutions of the United States and of the State of Louisiana, and to

¹ Mrs. Blair, who was a superb equestrian even up to the year of her death, at this time was riding "Black Sluggard," the war-charger used by Major-General George A. Stoneman in

his renowned raid around Lee's army and afterwards presented by him to General Frank P. Blair, Jr., who gave it to his aged mother.