

# At Swords' Points;

OR,  
A SOLDIER OF THE RHINE.

By ST. GEORGE RATHBORNE

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## CHAPTER XXII.

### Just Before the Explosion.

It was the British surgeon, Sir Noel. At sight of this man Paul felt a wave of relief sweep over him.

Of course the sudden and unannounced arrival of Sir Noel upon the scene gave the major still another setback.

It seemed as though he were fated never to get those words of command beyond the portals of his lips.

And he knew Sir Noel, too, knew that the foreign surgeon was in high favor with the commandant, even as he had been with Marshal MacMahon before the latter's state of health compelled him to relinquish the command to a successor.

What business had this Englishman here anyhow—no one had invited him, and it was none of his affair that the military authorities of the French stronghold on the Moselle chose to make an arrest.

Was Sir Noel alone? Paul could not hear the expected swish of garments such as might betray the coming of those who represented the gentler sex; but this was not to be wondered at in the least, since the German guns kept up a pretty constant growling away off beyond the forts, and the explosion of shells grew more and more frequent in the streets, occasioning considerable excitement among the crowds.

At the same time some intuitive sense told him she was coming, this girl in whom his whole soul was wrapped up.

Hildegard did not understand fully what message the white-faced nun brought Sir Noel in the hospital, but she caught a name, Paul's, and understood that he was in danger of his life, and had sent for the bluff, obliging Englishman to come to the rescue without delay.

When she saw him start forth perhaps she feared, poor girl, that the man she loved had been maimed by one of the exploding bombs and lay upon the street with shattered limbs, his life passing away.

Indeed, at such a time it was easy enough to imagine anything in the way of horrors.

Unable to withstand the eager desire to be of some assistance to Paul in his hour of need, she had started after them.

Nothing had as yet occurred to change her ideas as to what had happened.

So that when she reached the open doorway and glanced into the lighted room with eyes filled with expectations of seeing horrors, the first object upon which they rested was Paul, standing there apparently in a fair state of health, the shock to her nerves was severe indeed.

Doubtless the presence of the soldiers would explain the situation clearly enough, especially when she saw the belittling attitude of the major.

Sir Noel had partly lost his breath in his dash from the hospital and the succeeding hasty climb of a flight of stairs. Doubtless he managed to gather enough breath to address the major and ask what it all meant, and the gentlemanly character of his request again touched the major in his weak spot, politeness.

He begged to assure monsieur that he was only present in the discharge of his duty, having received information of the most positive kind that the etage was shelter for a nest of German spies, who had long been sending information as to the weakness of the brave defenders of Metz in the line of provisions—sending these traitorous reports by some secret underground wire or the use of carrier pigeons trained for the purpose.

"Of course, they will have a hearing!"

The major cast a furtive glance at the One Who Must Be Obeyed, and the quick signal which the countess made gave him his clue.

"Certainly, monsieur. In the morning, if they are able, they shall appear before the military drum head court, convened for just such purposes as this by our commandant, and the truth will either liberate or send them to the Court of Execution."

Paul noted that there was a clause in his declaration, which somehow he could not avoid emphasizing, a clause of considerable importance, since he believed the major's design was that they should never live to reach the prison.

"Sir Noel, step this way, please," he said.

It was at this critical juncture that a movement at the doorway drew the attention of the countess, and she became aware for the first time of Hildegard's presence.

The sight sent the hot blood leaping in bounds through her veins—nothing must be allowed to stand in the way now—the presence of this German beauty who had won what she had used in vain to possess, was a premonition of coming disaster, unless she could push the major into the breach.

Meanwhile Paul confided to the Englishman his suspicions as to the fate he supposed had been mapped out for him while on the way to prison.

Once Sir Noel grasped the idea the

danger was far less threatening than before, for he could possibly invent some way of defeating the evil designs of the plotters.

Hildegard now knew all. She had recognized the disguised countess with contempt and scorn in her eyes, and the presence of the stalwart soldiers told the rest.

But when she saw Beatrix, looking so lovely, with the startled look upon her face, the tears of distress in her beautiful eyes, Hildegard almost wished she had been more discreet and remained at her duties in the hospital, for it was absurd to realize that the mention of Paul's name had acted so upon her heart as to bring her in great haste to this apartment to find that he had doubtless been enjoying a delightful tete-a-tete with this /s>al little beauty at the time the soldiers came.

This bold American had won her love—in her maidenly eyes he was everything that could be deemed manly, and in dreams at least he had told her the charming things which his eyes betrayed whenever they met—as she bound up his wounds after the duel with Conrad she had been thrilled when their hands chanced to come in contact, and ever since then a delicious hope had found lodgment in her heart that they might be nearer and dearer than friends.

This was now apparently scuttled forever, and she must summon the pride which belonged to her by birth, in order to conceal the intense misery the death of her hopes caused.

Well, the major had received his little curtained lecture, and was primed up for the boiling point.

When he left the countess and turned upon the others who formed part of the dramatic personae connected with this closing scene in the play, Rhinelanders knew they must look out for squalls, for the major was galled to action and meant to enter upon the warpath.

Paul saw this and nerved himself for the encounter.

The bombastic major, having wheeled with military precision, bore down upon Paul, who awaited his approach, supported by the doctor.

It was a moment of considerable suspense.

Much would depend upon what the major was about to say, and hence Paul eagerly awaited for him to speak, hoping to discover a peg upon which to hang their expectations.

It was to Sir Noel he addressed himself.

"Monsieur, already the execution of my duty has been delayed too long. Whatever protest you may desire to make, it must be presented to the higher officials. I am sent to make the arrest, and wish it distinctly understood that already both of these gentlemen are prisoners of war."

Sir Noel recognized the fact that a point had been made in the case, but he was too smart to betray the slightest uneasiness, since that would be aiding the enemy.

At least there was hope, because the major had not proven a bully, who would hustle his prisoners away with all haste.

Through his own pride of manner and speech the Frenchman might be unhorsed in the joint—men as gallant as he have many times gone down before the rude plunge of adversity.

"Monsieur le major," said the Englishman slowly, "I would not wish to interfere with your duty as a soldier. I have every respect for your army and for you individually. But this man is my friend. I am his sponsor before the commandant, and you as a gentleman would not blame me if I endeavored to the best of my ability to free him from his wholly unwarranted detention. You know that he has been placed upon his sacred parole—you are not ignorant of the fact that he has been given the entire freedom of the city, and hence as much right to be in this particular spot as any Frenchman among you. I desire to make this point particularly plain in order that whatever happens you may not have cause to regret having done the wrong thing."

The major smiled and bowed.

"What you say is very true, monsieur, but that liberty of which you speak expires whenever the person on parole breaks his given word of honor. We have abundant reason to believe this party has done this unpardonable thing of conspiring with certain spies, the enemies of our country, to betray our weakness to the Germans. I recognize the point your make, monsieur, but it does not swerve me one iota from the course mapped out for my observance. Unless you can produce something stronger your friend must return to his cell and stand before the drumhead court."

Hildegard had turned very white at these words, but she did not altogether lose hope.

The impatient countess, who secretly feared Sir Noel, here uttered a sentence in a low tone, doubtless with the intention of hastening action in the game.

"Immediately it shall be done," returned the major, once more raising his sword and half turning to address his men.

If a trump card remained to be

played now was the time for its appearance.

A word of command and the giant guards closed in around the prisoners. Sir Noel still stood by Paul, and even saw this significant move without showing the white feather.

He put his hand to his pocket and drew out a folded paper.

The countess, seeing the action, felt that there was danger of defeat even though she could not guess the nature of the bolt that threatened.

How deliberately Sir Noel unfolded his paper.

"Ah! monsieur le major," he said. The stout soldier, not daring to look toward the countess, turned his head. At sight of the paper his eyebrows went up in token of surprise.

"Then he met the doctor's magnetic eye, and was obliged to pay attention—the influence of mind over matter is always paramount.

"I have here a little document," pursued Sir Noel, waving the paper.

"So I perceive, monsieur."

"Which is signed by the commandant, with whose signature you are doubtless familiar.

"Oh, very, monsieur."

"Will you kindly give me one minute. I am desirous of saving you from committing a folly that might wind up your military career in anything but a blaze of glory. I wish you to read this document, which perhaps has not its equal in all Metz at this moment."

"I am honored, monsieur," bowing and taking the paper, while the countess glided nearer, the look of awful determination still upon her face.

Paul believed it wise to keep one eye on her, not knowing what a desperate woman might attempt when brought to bay.

And somehow he had a presentiment that, while it looked as though this might be Aimee's game, there was a setback in store for her that would end in her overwhelming defeat.

As the major read the document she looked surprised, even puzzled.

"May I ask what you find, M. le Major?" asked the Englishman, quietly.

"It is surprising—I have here a pass written in the commandant's own hand allowing the bearer, Sir Noel Travers, surgeon, with his companion, the liberty of the city of Metz, and commanding that under no conditions shall he be restrained or prevented from going or coming at will. It is astounding, very."

Paul breathed easier.

He had heard the magic words and comprehended the nature of the miracles that had been wrought in his behalf, thanks to the coming of the Englishman.

"You have no reason to doubt the genuineness of the document, major?" pursued Sir Noel, with the convincing manner of a lawyer.

"None at all—I would be willing to stake my life upon that," came the reply.

"Fool, fool, don't you see the trap?" cried the countess, firmly.

But Sir Noel was appealing to all that was best in the major's composition—his pride as a soldier, and the subordination of all other feelings to duty toward a superior officer as laid down in the manual of arms.

"Then you can consider that this gentleman is the companion mentioned in that document I claim for him the same rights I myself possess, and let any man arrest him at his peril. Monsieur le Major, tell me, is he free to go with me?"

The soldier's face was almost purple from the violence of his emotions, but with an effort he gasped:

"There is no other resource—he is free."

(To be continued.)

## FAMOUS COOKS OF PARIS.

Genius in the Culinary Art as in Other Things.

In a recently published book on culinary art Dr. Lemaunier, a physician of Paris, gives several interesting items regarding well-known chefs. He mentions the melancholy death of Trompette, the celebrated cook to the Duke of Noailles, who, in a fit of ambition, deserted his aristocratic master for the luxurious but plebeian kitchen of Gambetta. He never forgave himself this base and sordid action, and died in a state of melancholy. After Trompette comes a long list of illustrious men who have raised French cookery to its well-deserved reputation.

The Maison Doree gives \$15,000 a year to Casimir Moisson; the Baron de Mohrenheim had in his kitchen two brothers, the Fauvets, who never separate; the Duchess of Alba, cousins of Empress Eugenie, has for her chef George Bouzon, who was a great favorite of Napoleon III.

The cook of Nicholas II, gets \$45,000 a year; he is an Alsatian of the name of Krantz and enjoyed such privileges under Alexander II, that he was allowed to carry a sword, and what is more, to retain his French nationality. The cook of the King of the Hellenes took all his degrees in the university, but in 1858, carried away by his love of the art, he entered as cook in the Comte de Chambord's house, whence he passed into the kitchen of the Duchess of Parma, the mother of the Princess of Bulgaria; and now he caters for the palates of the royal family of Greece.

Chevalier, who learned his art at the Jockey Club, under the celebrated Jules Gouffe, began his career in the royal house of Sweden and is now with that of Roumania.

A maker of epigrams is one who seeks to clothe the wit of others in his own language. The result is sometimes called original.

## POLITICS AT MANDALE.

By W. H. DUFFY.

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All during the sixty days strenuous efforts had been made on the part of the majority to elect a senator, but during the campaign of the fall before it had been openly stated that the legislator of the coming session who did not go home "fixed" for life would be foolish. Both sides were expected to see enormous sums of money, and the senatorship was expected to be the prize of the man who was willing to pay the most for it. This was the sentiment of a large number of people during the campaign.

Long before the first ballot for the senatorship had been cast on the second Tuesday of the session, the leaders of the majority had decided that as they had elected a majority of the members of the body, there would be no necessity for them to buy the votes already theirs. They held that the men could not have the "gall" to go back on the constituents who had elected them, and besides, a clean election would give their party a large amount of prestige, as it would serve to give a knockout blow to the rumors of corrupt uses of money in legislative halls, when their party was in control.

When the first ballot was cast, the votes of the majority were badly scattered, but day by day, as the balloting proceeded, and the session came near to an end, it was evident that the votes of the majority were simmering down to two candidates, but it was also evident that this state of affairs was the result of the clever wire-pulling of the opposition, as the candidates were old rivals and one would never give way to the other.

The minority, on the other hand, had been hanging closely together, and it was clear that they were being maneuvered by a clever political schemer. During the early part of the session that had cast their 35 votes for former Representative Moore, a man who had borne a spotless reputation, but on the 45th day of the sitting they switched and cast their vote solidly for a man who had the reputation of being the smoothest politician in the state—John Flaherty—who since his defeat for Congress four years before had held a fat federal position and had built up a political machine powerful in its environment. When the minority switched to Flaherty the leaders of the other side began to look worried, for they knew that the skillful politician would stop at nothing to secure an election.

Thus it went on during the remaining days of the session, enough members to cause a deadlock or elect the minority candidate, remaining stubborn and mean, on account of not receiving the price for their vote.

The session had just taken a five-minute recess, after a twelve hours' sitting, and the members were just getting back to their seats from the saloon across the street. The floor of the House was crowded with lobbyists, for the minority who had been brought from all parts of the state to lend "moral courage" to the men who were to be purchased, and was immediately whispered around that Flaherty had fixed the insurgent members of the majority and that he would be elected on the next ballot.

The session was called to order, and an intense quiet seemed to come over the packed throng.

"We will now proceed with the two hundred and eighteenth ballot for the election of a United States senator to represent the state," began the president.

"I demand a call of the house," shouted a senator who was seated with the majority. Everyone knew that this was merely a subterfuge to gain time, for it could be told at a glance that every seat was full. Everyone wondered what was to be gained by the delay, and as soon as the call began three leaders of the majority were seen to approach each other and hold a hurried consultation. The clerk rushed through the call with marvelous rapidity.

"The members of the joint assembly are all present, Mr. President," he announced.

"The sergeant-at-arms will see that each member remains in his seat until

"I wish to explain my vote," announced the presiding officer, as the members began to stir around, and as the three majority leaders took their respective desks, their faces still clouded with intense anxiety. This was the condition on the entire majority side of the house. On the other side, each member seemed to be struggling with an almost uncontrollable excitement.

The roll-call began. The first name

on the list was Anderson, a stalwart minority man.

"Flaherty!" he shouted.

"Axtell," called the clerk, and all eyes were turned on the veteran majority senator. Axtell was not a leader in any sense of the term, but he was the senior member of the party, and his advice was always listened to with the greatest respect. He was a safe counselor.

"I wish to explain my vote," announced the gray-haired lawmaker as he rose from his chair, and every body listened as he began to speak. He first referred in touching terms to the strong attachments that had sprung up between the members during their service in the session, and then expressed his sorrow that the bitter struggle on

the election of a senator had brought about such hard feelings. He then took up the issue of the campaign and related how the majority had been elected pledged to send a man to the federal senate who was in sympathy with their political ideas. At this the recalcitrant members of the majority began to squirm in their seats, and before he had gone far they were locking downcast.

"You say that if we select a democrat who is suitable to you, you will help elect him," he cried, turning to them. "Who is this man, I demand? Do you mean this statement, or is it but a miserable subterfuge, by which you expect to wait until the last moment and then betray our party? This is your scheme, so it has been openly stated in these halls, and you have not had the courage to deny it. Do you think, men, that you are perry enough to go back to your democratic constituents, after having helped elect Flaherty to the federal senate?"

"You say that if we select a man who is suitable to you he will be elected. You know that the man you are supporting can never be elected, and I do not believe that the man for whom I have been casting my ballot can at this late hour be successful. Now is your opportunity to prove whether you are men or are cattle, to be bought by the highest bidder. Name some man, I say, and prove your assertions. Who is he?"

Everybody listened as if expecting an answer, but none came, the members to whom these burning remarks had been addressed continued to carry their half-ashamed, half-defiant look.

"Who is he?" repeated the speaker. The silence became painful, but still no reply was forthcoming. Just as the awful quiet seemed to reach the point where it was unbearable, a shrill, sharp voice was heard.

"Why don't you elect Hines?"

This seemed to strike the popular chord, and a great hurrah for the old-time ex-governor went up from the majority side. The members who were supposed to have been purchased looked upon that cry as their salvation, and they, too, took it up.

When the din had subsided, Axtell raised his voice to its highest pitch and yelled to the clerk:

"Record my vote for Hines."

The excitement quieted a bit and the vote proceeded. Every man who had been elected with the majority cast his vote for the big-hearted ex-governor. At its conclusion, amid a deafening roar, the clerk announced the result: Hines, 48; Flaherty, 35.

With a shout the president announced the election of Hines, and then gave two sharp raps with his mahogany gavel.

"The hour of midnight having arrived, I now declare this session adjourned sine die," he said.

An hour later, the house was practically deserted. All had gone except two or three members, who were still packing their belongings. A newsboy entered with the morning "Enterprise," telling all about the election of the senator. Each member remaining bought a copy, and the boy lingered a minute as he watched them tie up a number of large bundles of paper.

"Aint it funny that you fellows never thought about electing Hines until I hollered it out from the back corner of the lobby," he said.

The lawmakers looked at the ragged boy, but said nothing.

Ancient Egyptian Kings.

Recent explorations in Egypt have unearthed the consecutive order of 17 kings, thus establishing a firm foundation for the investigation of Egyptian history.

THIS BRUIN WENT ON A SPREE.

Invested a Dairy, Drank His Fill & Was Happy.

The proverbial bull in a china shop has found an imitator in a bear which has been paying an uninvited visit to an establishment where milk is dispensed, but in order to relieve immediately any anxiety which might be felt on the subject, I must say that bruin behaved extremely well, and that no bones or crockery were broken. The bear was being exhibited on one of the outlying boulevards when its owner, in an absent-minded fit, relaxed his hold on the chain, says a Paris letter to the London Telegraph.

The animal took advantage of this situation to start on a promenade, and when the people who had gathered around to witness the show bolted panic-stricken in every direction, it pursued the even tenor of its way until it had reached the shop, at the door of which a pail of milk was standing. It seized the can in its paws, walked into the establishment and squatting comfortably in a corner, drank off the contents at one gulp.

When the owner of the bear arrived on the spot he found the worthy woman who keeps the milk shop lying prone on the floor behind the counter in a state of abject terror, but otherwise not a bit the worse for the adventure. He patted bruin, who was in an even more amiable mood than usual after the little feast to which he had treated himself, duly paid the bill which he had run up, adding a trifling sum to compensate the tradesman for her fright with his grizzly companion, who, during the remainder of the day, went through his evolutions with even more zeal and energy than he was wont to display, so that when his owner finally wended his way homeward he discovered that he had far exceeded his usual average of profits, and had more than recuperated himself for the money spent on the milk.

AS TO AGE OF EARTH AND MAN.

Complex Social Conditions Existed Seven Thousand Years Ago.

The question of the antiquity of the earth and of man has caused no end of discussion among scientists. The geologists have figured themselves into a disreputable state. They have gone on adding ciphers to their estimates until they have caused all other scientists to revolt. They are themselves abashed when they contemplate the results of their own enthusiasm. The anthropologists, who have made a study of the characteristics of the human race on scientific lines, have been more moderate in their calculations, but they can come to no agreement. The most modest admit that man existed and had reached a complex social condition at least seventy centuries ago.

There are scientific reasons for assuming that it required thousands of years for the race to achieve the social conditions which are revealed by the lettered tablets of 5000 B. C. The ruins of an extensive system of waterworks afford presumptive evidence that there was a bustling business community at Babylon, for people who do not hustle cannot pay plumbers' bills. The tablets prove the use of a printing press and of a revolving cylinder with raised type.—Baltimore Sun.

Stammering Children.

Stammering is so much on the increase in Germany that in the German schools a special course of instruction has been started for children so afflicted. In Berlin six specialists, engaged by the Board of Education, devote twelve hours a week to this work. One and a half per cent of all the school children in Germany stutter. As in nearly all cases the difficulty in speaking arises from a peculiar nervous condition and is not due to any physical malformation, the specialists are confident of being able to cure nearly all the cases which they find. The system of cure consists largely in making the child speak slowly, in teaching him how to properly use his lips and tongue in forming words, and in correcting his nervousness. That stammering can be cured has been realized since the time that Demosthenes walked by the seashore declaiming with a pebble in his mouth. It is a little singular that the Germans, who have been supposed to be a race rather lacking in nervousness, should suddenly develop into a nation of stutters. Perhaps the strenuous life into which the Emperor has plunged the country has been a little too much for its nervous system.—New York Press.

Egyptian Women.

The Egyptian beasts of burden, the camel, the ox, the donkey, have the same patient look as the people. It may not be improper to add another beast of burden, woman. There is the look of sad patience in every Egyptian woman's eyes as in the melancholy river boiling at its great task, and in the face of the camel, the donkey and the ox. They all look at you with the same expression of patience. They seem content to live, no matter the conditions of their often wretched life—and not desirous of making change or resistance. The long swing of the camel, the measured stride of the ox or buffalo, the half-trot of the donkey are seen everywhere. The woman's face is covered, at least her mouth is always, for no Mohammedan woman may expose her mouth to the vulgar gaze of passers-by. All have the same expression in their eyes as the camel or other animals.

Count de Castellane cables to New York a long plea in favor of the sale of the Panama canal to the United States.



"A newsboy entered with the Morning Enterprise."



"I wish to explain my vote."

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