

soms broken plates and wrecked top hamper. Von Gruenau lost everything, as he was captured in the Marsh by a small French squadron sent out for the purpose of interfering with him and his three consorts.

CHAPTER III. A Council of War.

"What shall I tell the people, sir?" said the representative of the Figsaro when he met Vanstarrt on board the Seafarer as she swung to her berth in the inner harbor at Havre.

"Tell them," said Jerome, "that France and I conquered the Sahara—surely, then, we are equal to the lesser task set us by Germany."

"May I be informed as to your personal intentions?"

"Only this, that I go direct to Paris to consult with the king. But, monsieur, a word in your ear. Make much of the help given me by the British war ship. Queenie is an earnest of English good will to France. This war will not be an affair of moments, and when the stress comes it will be well to have England at our back. Do you understand?"

"Fully, monsieur. Your wishes are law to every patriotic Frenchman."

"And now," said Vanstarrt, "let us change roles. What news have you?"

The journalist glanced around nervously to make sure he was not overheard. "I'll, monsieur, France is unprepared. The newspapers claim victories won for our arms, but each such victory heralds a German advance. I fear the worst and have abandoned hope. Who can extricate us from this miserable position?"

The millionaire, who long ago measured the French character and knew how to mold it to his will, "I have come from America to make a strong effort, monsieur. Confidence begets success. Tell France to be confident."

The Figsaro used the phrase as a headline the next day.

No intelligence, not even the unexpected declaration of war, had created such a thrill of excitement throughout the country as the announcement of Jerome's landing. And when the laboring wires bore to every center of population the full details of his sensational escape in mid-Atlantic, coupled with his first cheerful words of encouragement, excitement passed from fever heat to delirium.

The magnanimity of the hour spread to the army. Next day the northern German column sustained a severe check in the vicinity of Verdun. When an apparently impregnable flank was turned by a French brigade, each member of which fought with a vigor and determination that upset the scientific calculations of their opponents, the rallying cry of the fighting line was, "Paris wert by joy."

When Vanstarrt reached the Gare St. Lazare he found soldiers and populace in imminent danger of conflict. The authorities had detailed thousands of men to line the street and three regiments of cavalry to assist the infantry.

But the people would not be repressed. They wanted to see, to cheer, to touch their hero, and for a time the British frenzy threatened to end in bloodshed.

Everybody saw him, everybody cheered him, and all were supremely delighted.

This was one side of the question, the other presented itself when, an hour after he reached the Tuileries, the authorities and his principal officers of state in the council chamber.

Here gloom took the place of jubilation. With downcast and saddened faces the chief men in France made him cognizant of the bitter truth.

They seemed to invite reproach by their words. A neglected army, a depleted navy, deficiency in guns and stores, skeleton divisions and inferior commissariat—these were the rusted weapons they opposed to the pléthoric treasury of Germany.

Money was being lavished now, but was it not too late?

Only once did Vanstarrt betray resentment. When he heard of the messenger's report in munitions supplies he said, doubtfully and surprised.

"Can this be possible with Pompiet at the head of the department?"

Silence followed his question. The members of the council looked at each other, until the king passionately explained.

"I protested against it, Vanstarrt, but court influences were too strong for me. Admiral Pompiet was placed on the retired list, the department was split up into naval and military branches and they are controlled by the marquis de Fery-Mittler and Baron de Champault, respectively."

"Are these gentlemen at present discharging the same responsible duties?" said Vanstarrt, with asperity in his tones.

"Yes."

"It is not their fault, probably. Liancourt will see to it that Pompiet is recalled, by telegram, and given complete control. If he thinks these retired nonentities can help him, let them be retained. If not, they can be provided for elsewhere."

Liancourt smiled. The man, inscrutable to others, was an open book to Vanstarrt. It was easy to see that he rejoiced at the end of palace intrigues.

One member of the council was not pleased at this first indication of the millionaire's methods.

The fat, pompous, fussy Duc de Tangier, who became secretary of the navy because he owned a successful yacht, rose and protested angrily.

"Your majesty, it is a matter of precedent that in such a serious matter as that involved in the proposed change of opinion of the responsible authorities should be sought. I, as head of the naval service, protest against Mr. Vanstarrt's method of dealing with this council, headed as it is by your majesty in person."

"Who are you?" said Jerome, coolly. He felt assured that he must speedily assert himself, else he would be thwarted constantly by every jack-in-office who had sprung into existence beneath this mushroom monarchy.

"The Duc de Tangier, sir."

"Was it upon your recommendation that Admiral Pompiet was removed from the office to which I appointed him?"

"Yes, it was. Let me add, sir, that your words—"

"Are generally obeyed. Monsieur le Duc, I give you the alternative of sitting down with a closed mouth or being dismissed from your post."

of tact since he ascended the throne, cried: "If you leave us, Vanstarrt, you must take the queen and me with you. We shall not be wanted in France. Come, Tangier, if you are not in a hurry, do not forget that Mr. Vanstarrt is the emperor."

The crestfallen duke apologized, handsomely enough. Thereafter he was the millionaire's keenest supporter.

"And now, Liancourt," said Jerome, "what is the position?"

Liancourt unfolded a map. "Ten days ago," he said, "the German emperor simultaneously threw three army corps across the frontier. Three severe battles have been fought, besides several minor engagements. Although not routed, the French troops have been beaten by superior numbers, by super-concentration, and particularly by overwhelming artillery fire. The northern German column, commanded by General Krenschauk, occupies the right bank of the Meuse, and has lodged a division across the river at Montfaun. The center attack, led by the emperor in person, is also in possession of the Meuse, Verdun being threatened and in momentary danger of investment. General Daubisson has, however, offered stout resistance on both lines of advance. He was admirably served by the railway companies, and has thus been able to check the enemy's progress—much more than they anticipated. Their southern column has, unfortunately, been more successful. It has repelled, almost disastrously, two attacks from Nancy and Epinal, and we fear that the diversion of a large force from Belfort will mean the immediate launching of a fourth army corps collected at Mulhausen."

"Is that all?"

"No. The worst has yet to be started. The only scientific mobilization in France is ready at the front. The German armies have halted to consolidate and bring up reserves. Here they are vastly superior to us. Supposing that their next forward move be effectual, I fail to see how we can hope to arrest their march on Paris."

"You summarize affairs rapidly," cried the king with some bitterness. He resented this terse version of his own convictions.

"Your majesty, we may deceive the enemy, but, as you have said, we cannot deceive ourselves."

"Where is the fleet?" inquired Jerome.

"Protecting the Gables canal, massed in squadrons at Marseilles, Toulon, Brest and Cherbourg, and patrolling the channel," broke in the Duc de Tangier.

"And the German fleet?"

"So far as we know, resting securely behind the guns of Bremerhaven, Hamburg and Kiel. They cannot hope to match our navy, neglected though it may be."

Vanstarrt ignored the momentary sarcasm of the concluding remark.

"Let every available ship be sent from all the ports, and have made by mail into the North sea and the Baltic, with orders to do as much damage as possible to German commerce, ports, navy and fortifications. Cable instructions to commanders of vessels in distant parts of the world to sail for the nearest German colony and find occupation there. This, I think, had better be put in operation at once."

The Duc rose, but he murmured: "Even a single German cruiser in the Mediterranean can do infinite damage to the Sahara works at Gables."

"We have not forgotten that possibility," said Jerome quietly, and the secretary for the navy, in his new-born zeal, rushed into petuosity from the room to his admiralty headquarters.

Vanstarrt took some writing materials and began to draft a memorandum, the others watching him curiously. Without ceasing to write he inquired:

"Is the secretary for war present?"

"I am here," replied General Villeneuve.

"Are you well supplied with horses?"

"On the contrary, I have had difficulty in collecting an additional 40,000 which have been requisitioned at the front."

"But you have them?"

"My lists are nearly complete. I intend to begin forwarding them in batches tomorrow."

"As for forage?"

"Fortunately, we are well found in that solitary respect."

"Good. I want you to collect 10,000 horses, strong and fast, and in good condition, together with a week's supplies for them and 5,000 men, at Sedan, as soon as possible."

"At Sedan?" broke in several voices in utter astonishment. Sedan lay to the north of the present theater of operations. In any case, it was a place of evil omen to the French mind.

Jerome paused a moment in his writing, pulled the map towards him, scrutinized it for a moment, and exclaimed: "Yes, it is easily accessible by rail, and is just the right locality."

No one questioned him. General Villeneuve, not wishing to oppose the millionaire, yet ventured on a suggestion.

"We can hardly afford such a large number, monsieur. I pledged my word to General Daubisson that he should have 40,000 within a week."

"He will!" said Jerome, still writing. "I bought 20,000 before leaving the states. They will all reach Havre, Brest or Cherbourg between tomorrow, Sunday and Tuesday."

General buzz of subdued comment broke out at the table. The king looked at Vanstarrt's thoughtful face with something like wonderment in his own. Liancourt's air was ten years younger as he murmured to his nearest neighbor: "The emperor has not changed then." General Villeneuve resolved to carry out instructions without comment in future.

Jerome scribbled on industriously. "Where is Colonel Le Breton?" was his next question.

"He commands the cavalry division with the main army," said Villeneuve.

"Capital. The right man in the right place. I am sorry that he should have to relinquish his post for a time."

At last he ended his task, and carefully revised the manuscript. The watchful council noted that he appeared to be very particular as to its phraseology. Several times he corrected it and once sought the assistance of the king as to the exact significance of a French idiom he had used.

When quite satisfied with the production, he folded the document and handed it to Villeneuve, saying: "General, I entrust the execution of the task detailed therein to you, Daubisson and Le Breton. Have accurate copies made for the instruction of both those officers. Your part of the work will make itself clear on perusal and do not change them." "General, I entrust the execution of the task detailed therein to you, Daubisson and Le Breton. Have accurate copies made for the instruction of both those officers. Your part of the work will make itself clear on perusal and do not change them."

"From England!" said Henri with undisturbed amazement.

"Yes, your majesty must be aware of old that I thoroughly appreciate the press. The correspondents of the enterprising English journals will, I have no doubt, inform us as to the success or failure of my first personal blow at the German host."

"I may say in conclusion," he added, "that I was not idle before I sailed from New York. My agents are buying arms, ammunition, horses and equipment, together with some special requirements of my own, at every possible center in England and America. They are all consigned to a mysterious individual named Hiram F. Sloker, of Boston, Mass., but I have no doubt that they will eventually, and very soon, I hope, find their way to various French ports. The authorities must be instructed to look out for them and the less said about these consignments the better. As I have already remarked, the press can render us great service, but it can do us even greater injury by making our secrets known to the enemy."

"You have brought us new life, my friend," said the king, seizing Vanstarrt's hand impulsively.

"You have plenty of life," was the cheerful answer, "but you need rousing a bit. Believe me, France will arise from its supreme trial more powerful, more dignified than before."

"She will be bankrupt in gratitude," cried Liancourt.

"Nay, that is impossible. Of all countries she pays most dearly for slight services. Now to protect the Sahara."

He wrote a telegram addressed to the British foreign secretary: "The exigencies of the campaign compel France to leave the Sahara canals at Gables unprotected. Your interests, however, demand that they shall not be injured by any hostile power. Full explanations will be given to the British ambassador in Paris."

"Germany will think many times before it acts once so as to impel Great Britain to actively side with us in this struggle," he explained to those present, and the message was dispatched.

When the council dispersed Jerome sought his private apartment. He joined Evelyn, and in response to his inquiries was told that the queen, worn out with nursing her ailing child during the harass of recent events, was taking a much-needed rest whilst his wife was looking after the infant prince; otherwise Honorine would not have left the toy with his attendants.

Jerome smiled when he reflected that even in this troublous time the two mothers would find more to say concerning the youngsters than about affairs of state. As he commenced a letter to Pompiet, Arizona Jim entered.

Vanstarrt laid down his pen for a moment and Bates took the cue.

"Yes, Jim, there has."

"D'you recollect, boss, when we started west last trip, as I said that the French

"There's bin a big talker, gov'not?"

"I remember quite well."

"An' they'd want you, I guess?"

"Jim, when you grow too old for a fight you can set up as a prophet."

About the same hour in the afternoon the German emperor learned of Vanstarrt's arrival in France, from the same source that the latter looked to for information, the English newspapers.

"Von Waldersee, we must defeat Daubisson at the earliest opportunity."

"No doubt," but it will not be judicious to cross the Meuse in force until we are reinforced."

"Nonsense. We must attack immediately. The French have received a much stronger reinforcement than we can hope for, and we risk a great deal by doing so."

"How can that be, your majesty?"

"The American, Vanstarrt, has somehow eluded my cruisers and is now in Paris. His mere presence is worth more than a couple of army corps to France. Attack, I tell you. Let us get to Paris, and then, if he has the resources of the devil, he cannot cope with us."

(To Be Continued.)

For your summer outing don't forget to order a case of Cook's Imperial Champagne. Nothing equals it.

SOME LATE INVENTIONS.

Explosive powder is used to operate a new motor, a small quantity of the powder being fed into the cylinder to drive the piston rod, the expanded gas escaping through a valve as the piston returns.

A new tea or coffee pot strainer, to be attached to the spout of the pot, has a tin shield extending partially around the strainer to prevent the liquid from dripping from the wire meshes after the pot has been used.

In a newly designed glove, patented by a Michigan woman, the palm of the hand and inside of the thumb and fingers are provided with interwoven rings of leather or other material which prevent the glove from wearing out.

Texas inventor has made a non-puncturable tire, which has two layers of fabric, with the threads crossing each other, between which is placed a layer of rawhide, the whole being covered by an outer jacket of fabric or rubber.

Envelopes can be easily opened by a new device which is formed of a base supporting two uprights, the sides of which serve to guide a knife blade driven down by a knob at the top to slice a thin strip from the edge of the letter.

A new camera lens is formed of a flared rod attached to the wagon body on which a sliding shaft supporting the step is held in place by a pin, the step portion being turned inward when driving to prevent the wheels from throwing mud on it.

HOW ALICE SECURED A WHEEL.

By FRED THORP GRENNELL.

"Mother dear, please come here."

Alice was speaking. Alice with dark brown hair and blue lustrous eyes. Alice, who was demure and graceful and who sat at the window busily engaged in writing to Jack, the brother, who had gone south with the Massachusetts troops.

The mother, a sweet-faced woman, bent over her chair.

"I've written most everything, mother. All about the school, and the tiny new kitchen, and the cakes you baked, and—and you—and—and—and most everything. Oh, yes, and the fact I want a bicycle. 'Cause I do want one you know."

"Yes, Alice; but now that Jack has left, mother can't afford it. Wait until you see what Jack says."

It was a quiet New England town situated near Boston. The electric cars passed swiftly down the next street making their way over the glistening rails to the great city of bustle and confusion. Here in the comfort and peace of the home everything was quiet and placid. Hardly a sound stirred the atmosphere.

The mother and daughter were alone. The loving husband and father died two years before and big-hearted Jack, working in a nearby factory, had since then been the mainstay of the family. Alice was only 12 years old, was attending school. Jack, the only son, was a boy in spirits, a man in age. He had just passed his 22d birthday. Graduating from the high school at 18 he entered the factory and had risen successfully to the position of bookkeeper, and then to superintendent of one of the departments. Six months before the war broke out Jack entered the local military company and his enthusiasm for the work so carried away his fellow soldiers that when the office of captain became vacant he was quickly elected to fill the position. And all it he did, in such a manner that it soon became one of the best drilled in the state.

His regiment was called out with many others when the president made his proclamation calling for troops. A bank account of some \$500 consoling him to the fact that his mother and dear little sister would not

in the rain, knowledge that must be learned from gypsies or Indians. Gypsies and Indians know how to do it, but there is nothing mysterious in the accomplishment. Any one can learn it. To begin with, you must learn to keep your matches dry—and before that, to be sure you have matches. Leather match cases are likely to let matches get damp; carry a metal one. Then always make a habit of hanging them in a newspaper in your best protected pocket. You can get on without it, but it is good woodcraft to do things the easiest way, and the paper makes firebuilding easy. Also be sure you always have a good knife: of course no self-respecting boy needs that advice; but girls who want to glory their sex by showing what girls can do in the woods need to look to the knife problem. Select a place for the fire where it won't set either timber or tents ablaze.

Clear the ground around it of inflammable trash; a few stones roughly piled up between it and the wind will often save more time than it takes to gather and place them.

If everything is soaking for a fallen tree or an old stump; shave off the surface at one spot and then you can get good dry splinters from the old wood beneath; often a little "grubbing" in the stump or underneath the log will bring forth a handful of good dry wood without any use of the knife. Gather dead twigs from the trees, not from the ground; build your pile with care; hurry makes worry here, and it is to be hoped you wear a broad hat so that you can protect the infant blaze from untimely breezes with it.

Last and largest order—make the rest stand around and take orders from the man who the fire is your job; otherwise some one will probably dump great wet wood down on your struggling little flame and then say, "Why, I thought you could build a fire so well; what do you suppose is the matter with you?"

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