

THE FLATTENED BULLET



T is a hot summer evening in July, 1795, and the setting sun is loon...

lost; and for the third time since the great struggle began the cause of Prussia seems wrecked beyond redemption.

Of 48,000 men who gathered around the standards of Frederick the Great this morning barely 3,000 remain together.

Marshal Soltikoff is scribbling on a drumhead his triumphant dispatch to the Empress Elizabeth.

The batteries stormed so irresistibly this morning are once more crowded with white-coated Austrian grenadiers.

The dark blue mass of the Prussian column is ebbing back in a thousand scattered streams like a broken wave.

Last in the field, as the swarming destroyers came raging on, stand two battalions of Prussian guards—a little islet of stout manhood in that roaring sea of ruin.

They are prepared to die, if die they must; but at least they will sell their lives dearly. And so they do.

Loudon's dragoons on the right, Battyann's hussars on the left, storm in upon them like a whirlwind, but all in vain.

Falling fast on every side, the indomitable handful still close sternly up to make up good their impregnable square.

Firm as ever looms out the line of grim faces behind their hedge of steel, from which bursts ever and anon the flash and crack of the fatal musketry.

For now the Russians coming up in their mighty fall upon the devoted square, and break it by sheer weight of overwhelming numbers; and now it is all one frantic hurly-burly of hand-to-hand fight, one welter of stab-

king bayonets and pounding musket-balls, such as modern warfare has seldom seen.

Amid the maddening din and confusion of the final struggle a few brave men gather around the king, and hold the swarming assailants at bay while he mounts the horse of a staff-officer, his own having been killed.

At that moment a shower of bullets comes pelting into the midst of the little group.

officer cheerily, holding up the flattened bullet. "What's your name?" "Captain Hasfeldt of the—th dragoons, if it please your majesty."

And turning his horse he rides hastily off the lost battlefield. Years have come and gone, and the Seven Years' war is over, and Prussia is safe, and Frederick, busied with the overwhelming labor of replacing the ruin which the great struggle has wrought—rebuilding burned villages, replanting ravaged fields, bringing order out of disorder, extending national trade, promoting national education—fails to notice the careworn look and increasing shabbiness of a certain Colonel Hasfeldt, who is on duty at the palace of Potsdam.

Money is short, his wife is ill, and he, in order to supply his wants has sold or pawned one by one what few valuables he possesses.

At last nothing is left but the old silver watch which has been his companion in so many battles, and over it he hesitates long, for he knows that the methodical king likes to see every officer with his watch about him, and he is fond of asking the hour.

But money must be had, and the watch has to go.

However, the chain is still left, and in order to keep it in its place, the veteran attaches to it the flattened bullet of Kunersdorf, which he still preserves as a relic.

Thus equipped, and with the same stately bearing as ever, but hiding a very sore heart beneath his torn uniform, the old man goes up to the palace.

Now, as ill-luck will have it, just as he comes up the steps the chain gets loose and drags out the bullet along with it.

He puts it hastily back, hoping that no one has noticed it; but unhappily there is at that moment looking out of an adjoining window the very last man whom he would have wished to see him—a French wit who is on a visit to the king.

Fond of mischief as a monkey, and rejoicing in every opportunity of making other people look foolish, the malicious jester looks upon this involuntary betrayal of poverty as a first-rate joke, and hurries off to tell the king.

"Your majesty," says he, "when Colonel Hasfeldt comes in just ask him what time it is, and you'll see something comical."

The king looked rather stern, perhaps feeling conscience-stricken at the sudden remembrance of his old servant's careworn face, and the little notice he had lately taken of him.

But just at that moment in came the colonel.

"Are you not a little late this morning, colonel?" asked Frederick. "Out with your watch, and let me see what time it is."

The old soldier saw in a moment by the Frenchman's spiteful grin the snare that had been laid for him, but he faced the trial like a man.

Without hesitating a moment he pulled out the flattened ball, and holding it up to the king said quietly: "This watch, sire, keeps but one time—it tells me that I must be ready at any hour to die for my majesty."

Frederick shot a glance at the malicious Frenchman, before which the latter recoiled as from a blow, and then taking off his watch, said with a look of emotion rarely seen on that iron face: "Take this, my old comrade, as the gift not of your king but of your friend, and to-morrow you shall see that I have not forgotten the field of Kunersdorf."

And sure enough the very next morning Colonel Hasfeldt received a pension which made him comfortable for life.

Chinese and Cockroaches. One of the strangest superstitions of Chinamen is the awe with which they regard the cockroach.

A Character. The following response was made to a company of a character witness in a suit in Wilkes county, N. C.

Another Three. Some one has said that the three vilest words to pronounce consecutively are, "I was mistaken." Let the person who believes this assertion try his articulating powers on the names of the lakes in the state of Maine—three, for instance—Hahnety-shob, Zitsoomassobah Mahoanaw-

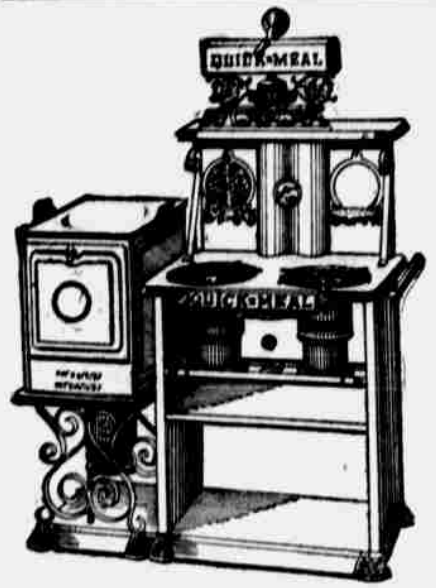
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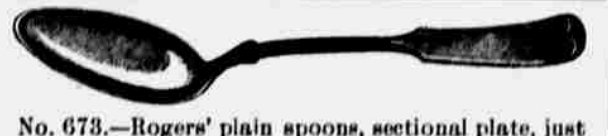
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THE WRONG MAN.

In Her Christian Zeal She Had Got Him Into Her Bible Class.

The Christian zeal of a young woman of Louisville placed her in a most uncomfortable position. She is one of a family of bright girls who are celebrated for their good looks.

One Sunday she noticed a chap about 30 years old in the rear of the church. She saw that he was a stranger, and thought there was a decidedly worldly look about his carefully arranged attire.

The stranger blushed slightly with surprise and probably with pleasure at the thought of being in the handsome teacher's class. Soon he had taken a seat, appearing perfectly at home.

The deputy clerk in the marriage bureau at Jacksonville was very busy. Without looking up from his work he knew there was a colored couple looking around furtively near the door.

"Well, well, want to get married, why don't you say so?" he demanded. They grinned at each other, then grinned at the clerk.

"Ya-as, sir."

"Got a license?" "Ya-as, sir."

shower can patter on a tin roof he rattled off the following:

"By virchow thoritof state of Florida me vestedinnow declare you manwife. Gitowder here!" and they went, still grinning.

Next day, while the bridegroom was laying track for the new electric car line, he was heard to say: "Mr. Charlie Verelst is de smartest white man in Jacksonville—marry you in a minute! Goily! I speeks to git him to marry me every time."

The parents of a youth who makes things interesting for a Buffalo family were trying to instill into the young man's mind the principles of self-sacrifice and generosity and all that sort of thing.

Reg couldn't see things in that light. His mother labored with him for a while longer and succeeded in making no impression whatever.

Reg pondered for a minute. Then he said: "Goutout and get the bananas and give me a chance."

That ended the lesson.

She Had a Fish. The mechanical figure of a woman that taps on the window of a honey store with her fan to attract the attention of the passer-by is one of the objects of curiosity seen in London.

In a civil action on money matters the plaintiff had stated that his financial position had always been satisfactory. In the cross-examination he was asked if he had ever been bankrupt.

"No," was the answer. Next question was: "Now be careful; did you ever stop payment?" "Yes," was the reply. "Ah," exclaimed the counsel, "I thought we should get at it at last. When did that happen?" "After I had paid all I owed," was the answer.

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