

At Swords' Points;

OR,
A SOLDIER OF THE RHINE.

By ST. GEORGE RATHBORNE

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CHAPTER I. A KNICKERBOCKER FROM OVER THE SEA.

When Paul Rhinelander, an American student at the famous old German university of Heidelberg, sauntered idly along the aisles of the great public garden he had entered, it was a wonderful spectacle that greeted his vision in every direction.

To young Rhinelander the kaleidoscopic spectacle was no new sight, though it had never lost its charm in his eyes. As Paul came strolling by, a student, who wore the dark blue cap, signifying that he belonged to the Rhine Korps, put out his hand and tackled him.

It was evident from the momentary flash of pleasure that appeared upon the face of the American that this yellow-haired young athlete was at least of more importance to him than the average run of students with whom fortune threw him in contact.

As they sat together at a table and chatted over the foamy beakers their conversation naturally covered the whole range of subjects that might be supposed to interest students. Paul's eyes at last settled upon a certain table at which sat a number of persons.

Karl saw him start and evince unusual eagerness—when Paul turned to him his face was possibly as impassive as ever, but in his eyes a fierce light had flashed up that announced a purpose on the eve of accomplishment.

"Pardon me, my friend, but you know, as a comparative newcomer here, I have not yet made the acquaintance of all students who have distinguished themselves in the battle of the books or the sword. I do not remember seeing you younger fellow before, and yet, unless my eyes deceive me, he wears the insignia that marks him a leader among the Saxo-Prussians."

"He is a terror with the rapier, a wizard, my fencing master has declared. I myself was accounted something fair, but Hoffman made sport of me. I was told I came out lucky in the encounter."

"Hoffman, you said?" between his teeth, as though something in the very name stirred up ugly memories.

"Conrad Hoffman, first leader of the fighting Saxo-Prussians."

"It is well. And now, my friend, you who know so many of the good people in this university town, perhaps you might even be able to tell me who that lady is who is with him."

Karl turned in swift anger. "What, you, too, are a victim of her fatal beauty. Perhaps she has lured you on as she did me, with false promises and sweet phrases, the jade! But I have sworn that no man shall step between and enjoy the undisputed possession of her heart. I am a son of the Rhine, and we fight for those we love, caring little though the whole world be against us."

But Paul only laughed.

"Reserve your fighting arm for your real rival, Conrad Hoffman, after I am done with him. Yes, I love that sweet girl, my dear fellow, and why not, when she is my own sister!"

CHAPTER II. CHALLENGED BY THE VICTOR OF FIFTY DUELS.

The expression upon Karl's face when he heard these astonishing words from the lips of his friend was a combination of incredulity and joy.

Why, not, when in their utterance he saw one possible rival swept from the field and felt that he had gained a brother.

"What?" he gasped. "Listen," said Paul, "to my life's story."

"I was born in New York city, and my father, being a well-to-do man, nothing was refused me that money could buy."

"Until I was about ten my life jogged on in the usual rut, with little that was uncommon to mark it."

"Then I began to notice that a difference had arisen between my parents, who seldom appeared together. Frequently I surprised my mother in tears, while my father almost lived at his club."

"The truth never dawned upon me until one day my father took me into the library—I shall never forget his awful face as he told me the story of his great wrongs."

"Pardon me if I do not dwell upon this matter, simply stating that the man who had once been his bosom friend had stolen the affections of his wife, and that they had fled, taking my little sister with them."

"He made no effort at pursuit, for he lay at death's door for almost two weeks."

"Recovering, he fled from the scene of his disgrace, where the papers mocked his shame, and grief with theories and false scandals."

"We went to Texas, where he bought a ranch, and there in that wild life I learned how to ride and shoot and do a good many things that cowboys pick up."

"A year or more ago I found myself an orphan—he was lost with others in that terrific blizzard that swept through Texas—the most heroic search failed to find one of the party, and all hope was finally abandoned."

"By degrees there came upon me a two-fold desire that grew stronger as

the months passed. This purpose was to visit Germany and to seek my sister if she were yet living.

"I would not confess then, but I know now, there was another motive that urged me on—and this, revenge!"

"Often in secret I had cursed the author of our shame, and registered a vow to some day pay him or his back for every hour of agony my poor father suffered through his duplicity."

"We knew they had gone to Germany, and it was the vague hope of meeting this treacherous friend that really lured me here. That in a nutshell is the skeleton story of my life."

"It is wonderful," said Karl; "but you did not make any effort to speak to her?"

"That time is not yet ripe. I must learn more about her, more about her mother, and what relations she bears to that man!"

"But—Hoffman—I do not understand."

"He is his son—the man was a widower when he stabbed my father in the back. I have his picture, a handsome devil he was, surely, and the boy promises to be the same unless some steady and cunning hand manages to mar his looks."

His manner as he said this was almost ferocious—the wrongs of years had burned in his heart until the seat of life had become like a young Vesuvius.

And Karl Von Stettin understood the eagerness that was in his soul. "What is it you would know of Beatrix?" he asked, presently.

"Tell me everything, as I am in complete ignorance."

"That is little enough. She lives with the lady you saw, her aunt, she calls her, and known to us as handsome Waldeck."

"And her name—Beatrix what?"

"Stannard."

"It was my mother's maiden name. Tell me, do you know aught of her—have you ever heard Beatrix mention her?"

"Once she said her mother was dead."

A spasm passed over Paul's face—that was all.

"God forgive her, as I do. But as to him—the traitorous hound, may he be rewarded through his son, whose actions shall sting his pride sharper than a serpent's tooth."

"You are determined to fight him, in spite of the fact that he is the bully of the university, a devil with the sword who has never yet been beaten?" asked Karl, eagerly.

"At the very first opportunity," calmly, as he looked around as though in search of the offender.

"Speak of the devil!" said Karl. "Yonder he comes now, and heading straight this way. By my soul, there is blood in his eye, too. I never saw Hoffman look so savage."

"That is good—it makes it easier," muttered Paul grimly, with the air of a man who sees all things within his grasp.

Straight up to the table at which the friends sat came the Saxo-Prussian, scowling like a dragon.

"One of you curs presumed to insult a lady in my company—which one was it—I demand satisfaction," he blustered.

Paul looked him calmly in the eye. "Did the lady complain?" he asked, quietly.

"Not at all; but I have eyes, and I could see she was deeply disturbed by some gesture I imagine your companion, who is insanely jealous of me, made."

"You are mistaken, Herr Hoffman. Neither of us made the slightest gesture. But I see you are spilling for trouble. In my country we are always ready to oblige, and I shall insist on your crossing swords with me."

"It is my right and privilege," growled Karl.

"I shall be most happy to oblige you both at the accustomed place at four in the morning; but it must be a toss up who comes first," he said, showing his white teeth.

"That privilege is mine," said Paul, and when his companion started to raise a protest he added: "And I shall clinch matters thus," saying which he slapped the gloves he carried directly in Hoffman's face.

"Prosit," growled that individual, reddening with the insult: "you shall have the first bout, young America, and heaven help you," with which he swung on his heel and strode away, followed by a disdainful laugh that must have stung him to the quick.

CHAPTER III. AT SWORDS' POINTS.

When Karl came with a carriage for his friend at an unearthly hour in the morning he found the American composed and smiling, as though bent upon a holiday. A light breakfast was eaten. Then they drove away just as the first rosy flush of dawn appeared in the east.

When they reached the court yard of the Hirschgasse Karl noticed that an unusual number had turned out this morning. Nor was he ignorant of the cause, since it must have gone abroad that the new student, the American protegee of the Rhine Korps, was about to take his chance before the invincible Saxo-Prussian leader.

Half a dozen affairs were on the carpet for this particular morning, so

that Paul might have something of an opportunity to watch the others for points ere his turn came, he being the last. As football is to American and English college boys, so dueling is the height of ambition on the Teuton's part.

Rhinelander eagerly watched the solemn details of the affairs that came off before his own, since it was his desire to profit by the experience.

He saw Hoffman eyeing him hungrily, as a wolf might a lamb, and knew the chief of the valiant Saxo-Prussian Korps was anxious to get at him, yet Paul had not the slightest fear as to the outcome, and ever decided in his mind just how he would slash the other on the left cheek so as to mar his exceedingly handsome countenance.

When the time came for him to enter the arena he felt as fierce and remorseless as the panther that crouches in a tree over a spring and waits for a thirsty deer.

At last he was to taste the sweets of revenge.

To strike, and in the name of his dishonored and heart-broken father—this was a consummation devoutly to be wished.

So he walked forward, supported by Karl, another student and the doctor, an Englishman, who had come to assist one of the regulars.

"Be wary! I never saw such an evil look on Conrad's face," whispered anxious Karl.

Rhinelander was to all appearances as cool as the most solid native in the den; as he received and tested his sword not a nerve seemed to tremble, and those among the Rhine Korps whose fears had been great because they had one and all gone down in turn before that wizard blade of the Prussian began again to take fresh courage under the belief that possibly a miracle had been wrought in their behalf and a champion discovered by their chief before whom the proud banner of their gloating rivals might be trailed in the dust.

Of course Paul, as a foreigner, could not become a Burschen, or full-fledged korps student, but he fought under their colors, and each man took as much interest in him as though he had been initiated into the most mysterious rituals of their secret order.

The hall was almost packed when Hoffman's turn came, an unusual thing, by the way, and which he took as a great compliment to himself, judging from the smirk upon his face as he waved his hand to enthusiastic admirers in the audience.

Herr Hoffman seemed very gay. Scores of eyes surveyed him with hatred and venom, and should defeat come his way all conventionalities would be brushed aside in doing the victor honor.

If ever those sturdy students prayed, it was that the god of war would favor the champion of their cause and humble the pride of the vainglorious Prussian.

When all preliminaries had been gone through with the rapiers came together with a clash that announced the opening of the duel.

Hoffman's style was already well known to every man, who had learned to his sorrow how baffling an attack he put up.

Hence their attention was directed toward his opponent, and every motion Paul made was eagerly scrutinized by experienced eyes.

When several brief rounds had been fought, during which he met Hoffman's attacks with an ease that astonished the champion, those who had been most skeptical began to pluck up heart and hold their breath with awe.

(To be continued.)

LORD SALISBURY'S PATRONAGE.

The Long List of Important Appointments He Has Made.

The marquis of Salisbury since he became premier for the first time has enjoyed a surprising amount of patronage. The two benches of bishops and judges are almost solely filled by his nominees, for, though the liberals have been in power nearly three years out of the last fifteen, they had scarcely any opportunities of making appointments during that period, and the ecclesiastical and legal survivors of the pre-1886 period are very rare.

To take the judges, only one, Lord of appeal in ordinary, Lord Davey, owes his appointment to the liberals. In the Supreme Court of Appeals Sir John Rigby was the last survivor of Gladstonian days. The chancery judges are all Lord Salisbury's nominees, Sir Arthur Kekewich, the senior, having been promoted for political services in 1886. Of the King's Bench Division, now that Sir James Mathew has gone up higher and Sir John Day has retired, Sir Alfred Wills and Sir W. Rann Kennedy alone owe their appointment to liberal influences.

Of the episcopal bench only the bishops of Lincoln, Llandaff, Ripon, Salisbury and Southwell date from the pre-Cecil dynasty, and in the course of nature at least three of these will before long seek retirement. It is a cause rather for congratulation than regret that in fifteen years men who are generally of full maturity when they begin these high duties should give place to younger men. But it is a little remarkable that during the three years of liberal ministry so few vacancies should occur except by death. If bishops and judges were not above such subtleties, one might suspect that they had postponed retirement in order to put further patronage in the hands of the present premier.

A Cincinnati physician took some of his own medicine. The verdict of the coroner's jury was "Death due to unprofessional conduct."

Old Friend of Lincoln

The men who personally knew Abraham Lincoln become fewer each year, but there is none who during the time in which the martyred president rose to prominence saw more of him than J. G. Stewart, a veteran photographer of Bloomington, Ill. In 1857 Mr. Stewart was in business in Springfield. He recalls many interesting events in the career of Lincoln and says when he first knew the "rail-splitter" that Mr. Lincoln exhibited negligence as to dress. The future president usually went about with one trousers leg caught on the top of one of his high boots. Mr. Stewart belonged to the Fremont party and following its defeat signed a call to organize the Republican party in Springfield. Among the names signed were those of A. Lincoln and Shelby M. Cullom. The first meeting was held in Mr. Stewart's gallery. The organization was called the Lincoln club. During the presidential campaign in which Lincoln was the nominee for president Mr. Stewart made over 450,000 pictures of Lincoln.



J. G. Stewart.

American Duchess' New Home.
The Duke of Marlborough's new house in Curzon street, London, is perceptibly "taking form," and the iron pillars and girders of the frame look like a huge skeleton. A feature of the interior is to be the marble hall and

staircase winding round it, with pretty galleries. The house will not be very lofty, considering its size, but standing alone and among smaller buildings, it will be very light and airy. The site was a present to the Duchess Consuelo from her father, Mr. Vanderbilt.

STEVENSON'S OLD HOME



The house in which Robert Louis Stevenson was born is for sale, and the price asked is somewhat less than \$3,000. Stevenson's birthplace is the quaint building at 8 Howard place, Edinburgh. He first saw the light there on Nov. 13, 1850, and when only a few days old he was baptized by his grand-

father, the minister of Colinton. Two and a half years after the birth of the future author the Stevensons removed from Howard place, and the earliest recollections which Robert associated with home reverted to the house in Inverleith terrace. It was in that place the novelist dreamed his boyhood dreams, and there were born many of the ideas which were afterward to develop into thrilling romances. Three doors from that house lived William E. Henley during the time he was the editor of the Scots Observer. This is recalled by Mr. Henley's late attack on the character of his dead friend and collaborator.

A Queer Christmas Present.

A good story is told of a professor of mathematics in an Illinois college, who is noted for his devotion to his profession and also for his eccentricity. Desiring to make a favorite pupil a Christmas present, he sent him a very difficult problem to solve. He liked nothing better than the disentanglement of a knotty mathematic puzzle, and took it for granted that his pupil would be delighted with his present.

PRETTIEST WOMAN IN PARIS

Mlle. D'Hally, who won the 10,000-franc beauty prize in Paris, is a popular music hall singer, and has been one of the stars of the vaudeville stage for several seasons. The best critics of female beauty in France have pronounced the brunette visage of the actress to be all but faultless in symmetry and regularity. Mlle. D'Hally receives \$2,000 in cash for being the "prettiest woman in Paris."



Odd Use of Mirrors.
In a village in the Cotswolds England, it is the custom to place a small mirror on the front door under the knocker, in which the visitor may examine his appearance before entering.

The Woodbridge (Suffolk) Urban District Council of England has resorted to novel means of preventing accidents at dangerous street corners. Three roads in the authority's district meet at awkward angles, and collisions between vehicles have been rather common. Widening by demolition of house property being impossible, the surveyor recommended the erection of mirrors. By this means drivers can see through brick walls, so to speak, and the experiment has proved successful.

Industrial Schools in Germany.

There are schools in Germany for farmers, gardeners, florists, fruit growers, foresters, blacksmiths, carpenters, machinists, cabinet-makers, bookkeep-

Telephones in Western Europe.
Western Europe will soon have as complete a long-distance telephone service as the United States now has.

CURIOUS OLD GRIST MILL



One of the most curious industrial plants in the West is the old Holland type of grist mill at Benson, near Bloomington, Ill. It was erected up about of thirty years ago, and is still

doing business. It is operated by wind power, re-enforced by a small engine, which can be called into use whenever nature's agent falls in its adequacy. The tall circular building is surmounted by four huge wings, each of which is forty feet in length, or eighty in the length of each pair. The mill is sixty feet high and is quite attractive for artists who desire a picturesque bit of rural scenery.

Female Divinity Students.

The Edinburgh University Court have resolved to make provision within the university for the instruction of women in the subjects taught in the faculty of divinity by adding them to the classes of that faculty. The resolution takes effect as from the beginning of the next academical year.

There are forty-eight different kinds of house fly known and classified.

Convents to Let.

One of the problems that confronts France, subsequent to the enforcement of the new law governing religious institutions, is what to do with the vast properties and buildings of the exiled monastic orders.

In Paris two of the largest religious estates are those of the Carmelites. They occupy ground of high value in the capital and suburbs. There is the old convent in the Avenue de Messine, snugly encoached in a beautiful orchard, surrounded by a high wall, on which is a balustrade surmounted by Gothic sculpture. In front of the convent proper is a high triangular veranda, above which is the inscription: "O Maria immaculata; Regina Carmelli, ora pro nobis." What a mockery is the "To let or for sale" sign near it! Close to the figure of the Virgin are the words "Propriete a vendre, Superficie 7,000 metres environ. S'adresser les Lundis, mercredis, vendredis a M. Borne, Notaire, Rue de Berlin, 38."

This epilogue of the act of the French chambers is seen on all sides. The fine chapel of the Carmelites on the Boulevard Gambetta at Fontainebleau can be bought for a song comparatively. The worst feature of the situation is the imposing structures which encumber most of the proper-



Monastery of the Carmelites.

ties. As it is there is a superabundance of churches in the land and religious sentiment in France is rapidly on the decrease. The buyer of monastic grounds wants a bargain since it will be costly to pull down the enormous sanctuaries upon them. Only a few of these edifices have passed into the hands of the Protestant denominations, which are working zealously to fan the dying embers of faith in France.

Boring for Turtles.

Young Bob Newell gave a public "turtling" exhibition Sunday afternoon on the north side of the road to the river. He caught twenty-five of the reptiles in a little over two hours, and a crowd watched his performance. He carried a pole like a pitchfork handle, with a hook at the end of it. He would sink this at random into the soft mud until he struck the hard shell of the turtle; then, with a simple twist of the wrist, he would drag it from its bed with a long, strong pull. The turtles he caught ranged in weight from four to twenty-five pounds, and each worth from sixteen cents to \$1 each.—Lacon (Ill.) Journal.

New York Countess.

Miss Anne Leary of 3 Fifth avenue, New York, has been made a Countess by Pope Leo in recognition not alone of her munificence along educational



and charitable lines and her personal piety but because of her unceasing efforts in behalf of the Church of Rome in America. Up to this time only two American women have been distinctively honored by the Pope—Mrs. John Sherman and Miss Gwendoline Caldwell—who were decorated with the Order of the Golden Rose. Miss Leary is well known for her many acts of charity. Bellevue Hospital has been a favored recipient. Another of her charities is the Stony Wald Sanitarium for consumptive working girls, and she has given liberally to many churches and educational institutions. Miss Leary's father was a wealthy hatter and the personal friend of John Jacob Astor.

He Knew Horses.

The propensity for gambling is proverbial. Another illustration with an amusing sequel occurred on Fifth avenue, in New York, when one of the horses of the ancient stage line actually became so devilish that the driver had to say "whoa" two or three times. "Wonder what's the matter with that horse?" asked a man of his friend. "I'll bet he smells something to eat." "I'll bet you a dollar," replied his friend. Then they walked around the corner and read over the doorway this sign: "Corn and Oats."