Literature.

A CELEBRATED CASE.

CHAPTER I.

THE EVE OF THE BATTLE

On the morning of the 19th of May, 1745, the cottagers in the vicinity of the village of Antoin, in the Province of Flanders, France, were startled by the booming of heavy cannon, the sounds, apparently, coming from the direction of Fontenoy. The men in the fields left their work, and collected in little groups to discuss the possible results of the impending conflict. The women, grasping their little ones, rushed to the doors and windows of their houses, and gazed into the distance, as if the omens of victory or defeat would appear in the clear blue sky above them. Growing braver as they became accustomed to these unwonted noises, several ventured down the road toward a pretty cottage, at the door of which stood a tall handsome woman, holding in her arms a delicate little girl.

"Well, Madeleine, they are very near us," said Marie Meyer. "You always feel sure of our side winning, but I—I always feel wretched until I hear who is on the retreat. Heaven send that our army may advance for, if they fall back after the fight, we shall all be murdered in our homes!"

"If only our brave Marshall de Saxe is with the troops, all will go well," said Madeleine Renaud, with another glance down the road. Then she sighed, and turned to the little group. "Come in and rest awhile. Adrienne was frightened at the noise. Poor little creature, she is too timid for a soldier's child. Jean will hardly know her when he comes back; she has grown so tall and thin. Will you play again with your toys?" she asked Adrienne, who only clung tighter to her neck, and sobbed aloud.

Madeleine pressed the little one in her strong arms, and led the way into the best room of the cottage.

It was, undeniably, the handsomest "best room" in the Province, for Jean Renaud had drawn a prize in the marriage lottery, Madeleine being the foster sister of the Countess d'Aubretot, and a pet with the whole family. Everything in the room bore traces of the liberality shown to Madeleine on the occasion of her marriage to Jean, six years before. Her furniture was handsome, as well as substantial; the curtains that shaded the windows and hung before the high bed were of a texture finer than is usually found in cottages; a Swiss clock hung above the mantle-shelf, and the image of the Virgin was also a wood carving brought to Madeleine by the countess after one of her visits to Paris. The perfume of violets pervaded the room, for Madeleine was sure to have the earliest blossoms to be found in the woods, and these were prettily arranged in a china plate, another of Madeleine's choice treasures. The plate stood on a tall, wide cupboard, with three doors, each of which boasted of a separate key and a very strong lock.

Scarcely had Madeleine and her neighbors sat down to forget anxiety in a little idle gossip, before Adrienne, sitting up and shaking the tears from her blue eyes, pointed to the cupboard and said:

"I want the necklace, mamma."

"That always comforts her, said Madeleine, rising, and putting Adrienne on the high bed. "If I give it to her, she sits and watches the stones sparkling, and I verily believe she knows each one, and just where it is set, but she never ill uses it."

While speaking, Madeleine took a bunch of keys from her pocket, unlocked the middle door of the cupboard, and taking out a box, placed it before Adrienne.

The neighbors crowded around, anxious to see the necklace so prized by a child. The box was of dark wood, quaintly carved on the lid and sides, and as Adrienne raised the cover, a general cry of wonder and delight met her ears.

Madeleine, bending over her child, enjoyed her neighbors' surprise.

On a red velvet cushion lay a magnificent necklace, formed of graduated lozenges, in each of which rubies, emeralds and sapphires blazed and sparkled with borrowed lustre. The centre-piece, a medallion, holding a miniature of the countess, was set with exquisite diamonds. Adrienne laughed as she watched the stones, and gently patted them with her little white hands.

"Heavens! how lovely! What a princely gift!" cried Marie Meyer, raising it and holding it to the light for all to see it better. Adrienne gazed at the group, too much astonished at this daring act to speak.

"A dangerous gift, I should think!" remarked Aglae Leroux, the belle of the little community.

"You are right, said Madeleine, with an unconscious sigh. "It was too rich a present for one like me, but nothing is too good for those whom she loves; she is generous to a fault. Countess Clare loves me as she would a sister, and when I married she said that I should have her likeness with me always. Come, Adrienne, show us the largest ruby."

Adrienne put a finger on the stone without a second's hesitation.

"And the brightest sapphire?"

"Here it is," cried Adrienne, delighted when her treasure was restored to her.

"You should be more careful of it," said Marie Meyer, preparing to go. "I would not leave it where strangers could see it if it were mine."

"I never take it out except to amuse Adrienne when I am too busy to entertain her. I often wish she would play out of my sight with the other children, but, no, she prefers my shadow—she never wants to leave me."

"Madeleine, farewell. Let us pray for our army and the king—no doubt before to-morrow night our fate will be settled."

"Farewell, said Madeleine, going to the door with her friends. "Farewell. If our marshal is with the troops we may sleep in peace."

"Mamma, where is papa?" asked Adrienne, looking up, as her mother closed the cottage door, and returned to her side.

"In Paris my child, with his regiment. If he were near us, mamma would not feel so light hearted." And now my baby let me put away the necklace; perhaps you can take a little sleep before dinner."

"No, I am not sleepy. I will sit by the window; somebody may come up the road with news."

Madeleine carefully put away the box and locked the cupboard. She began to every one in the village would know that she owned a costly necklace, and kept it in the house. She grew nervous, but soon forgot her fears, and began preparing dinner for her child and herself.

The soup was smoking on the table and the omelet was emitting a savory odor of herbs, when a cry from Adrienne drew her attention to the child.

Kneeling on the window seat, Adrienne's eyes were fixed on the figure of a man coming slowly up the road. For a minute Madeleine's heart ceased to beat; the next she knew that the figure was not tall enough for her husband, but he was dressed in the well known uniform of the French Guards, and she realized that her husband was in the vicinity, perhaps had been injured, and that this man was bringing her news. With the return of power to move came also self control. Madeleine left the cottage with Adrienne holding her skirt, and going to the gate awaited the man's approach.

He was wounded, that she perceived at once, and his whole appearance showed that he had been through a fierce struggle. Madeleine opened the gate and motioned to him to enter.

"You belong to the French Guards," she cried. "Tell me, do you know Jean Renaud?"

"I do well. He is your husband? Do not worry; I saw him safe and well not an hour ago. The worst is over for to-day. What to-morrow will bring, Heaven knows! I have lost my way, but I am too exhausted to retrace my steps without resting. You see I am slightly hurt."

"Come in and take dinner with us," said Madeleine, her kind voice attracting a peculiarly fixed gaze from a pair of very blue eyes, protected by long lashes and the heaviest eye-brows she thought that she had ever seen.

"Yes come and dine with us," said Adrienne, in her childish, light voice. "Papa wears a coat like that!"

"Yes, and wears it nobly, little one! You are both too kind, but I'll not forget your kindness. Jacques Latour never forgets either a kindness or an injury."

The force and the gestures with which these words were pronounced made Adrienne start back and run toward the house.

"She is easily frightened," said Madeleine, keeping pace with the soldier's slow steps. "Every member of my husband's regiment has a claim on my hospitality."

Jacques Latour ate as only hungry men can. Madeleine made coffee for him, and having satisfied his hunger, she brought water and linen and bathed and bandaged his wounded leg.

All the time she was conscious that the man watched her with an intense interest which bordered on admiration.

"You do not belong here," he said, at last. "You come from Paris."

"Why, yes; I was born here in Antoin, but I have spent part of nearly every year in Paris when the countess was there."

"Countess who?"

"Countess d'Aubretot. She is my foster sister. Is the count with the regiment?"

"Yes; and his wife was preparing to leave Paris when we started."

"Then she is coming here to the chateau!" cried Madeleine, clasping her hands in her delight. "To-morrow, Adrienne, we must go to the chateau and welcome her!"

"Better not leave the house to-morrow," said Jacques Latour. "The whole neighborhood will be full of soldiers and camp followers, and you and the little one are safest here; besides, the countess cannot have arrived here yet. We came in a hurry. The king and the dauphin are at Fontenoy, and so is our marshal, Heaven bless him."

"Just her, Adrienne! His majesty and our good dauphin! How I would like to see them!"

"Do not think of such a thing until after to-morrow; and how I must get back to camp. Little one, will you kiss me once before I go? Perhaps we shall never meet again; but if we do, I shall not forget this day's kindness."

He put out his arms. Adrienne at first drew back; then, on second thoughts let the great soldier kiss her hands and cheek.

"Should you see Jean, you will tell him that we are well, and send our love and blessing!" said Madeleine, trying to hide her tears. "I wonder he did not come if only for a moment."

"He dare not leave now; my being here is an accident. Farewell, and remember, should you or Adrienne ever need a friend, you have only to call on me, Jacques Latour."

So saying, Jacques Latour adjusted his sword, took his gun, and raising his hat, as a parting salutation, tried to walk gaily down the road.

Madeleine and Adrienne strained their eyes watching the blue coat as it gradually became indistinct in the distance.

"And now," said Adrienne, settling herself in the window seat, "I must watch for papa."

It was an echo of Madeleine's own thought. Surely, Jean would come. Only a few miles separated him from wife and child; the distance was no obstacle. Nervous and excited, as the hope of seeing him increased in her breast, Madeleine went uneasily from room to room in the cottage, trying, by dint of occupation to keep herself calm and tightly corsetted. Every now and then she would return to Adrienne's post, caress the child for a few minutes, and again busy herself with domestic cares.

She would prepare Jean's favorite supper, then, if he came, hungry no doubt and exhausted, after the long march and the morning's skirmish, she would enjoy the old satisfaction of seeing him eat and hearing him praise her nice food.

Madeleine's cottage was built like the majority of French cottages of the period in a manner called *pisé*, that is of clay, compressed and hardened, cut in blocks and laid in mortar, like stones. These houses are sometimes three stories high, and have window frames of stone. Madeleine's upper floors were seldom used; she and Adrienne slept in a pretty little room to the right of the large, middle apartment, or "*grande chambre*," as it is called. On the left was the kitchen; both rooms being shut off by strong wooden doors from the main one. The back windows of the "best room" were wide and low, opening on a small porch of ground used as a kitchen garden. Vines, carefully trained, almost concealed the gray walls, and the lawn in front was bright with early spring flowers. Madeleine had brought the gardens of the Chateau beyond the

them for a garland; but Adrienne was not to be attracted. For months her father's return had been the grand topic of conversation and now any minute his tall form might come up the road, and Adrienne wanted to run and meet him.

However, the long afternoon passed away, twilight was creeping like a haze over the landscape, and Adrienne began to lose hope. Madeleine, in her low seat, tried in vain to fix her thoughts on her every day employments. They would wander off to the days of her court-ship, and the stormy period that had constantly separated love and Jean since their marriage. Campaign after campaign had he left home to follow Count d'Aubretot's fortunes in the field, and Jean Renaud was considered one of the bravest men in the Guards. Tall and powerfully built, the stories of prowess in fighting seemed almost fabulous; but Madeleine never tired of hearing his praise, no matter by whom they were sung. This very natural feminine weakness has caused the only cloud in their short married life. Madeleine's beauty and intelligence had won her many admirers, both in Antoin and in Paris; but Jean also belonged in Antoin, and Madeleine had known him always, and cared only for him. But when his companions in arms sat down to dispute on his deeds, Madeleine listened with delight, and Jean, mistaking her pleasure for that of gratified vanity, often grew furiously jealous, and being quick tempered, was apt to express his anger in loud tones. Poor Madeleine had nothing to meet his torrent of passionate jealousy but her girlish innocence of wrong and her love, which in his heart of hearts he never doubted; only, he was a man of strong passions, and the constant society of men made fierce by the barbarism of war, did not tend to teach him self control or the gentleness needed in dealing with a sensitive woman.

"Bear with him, Madeleine," Countess Claire would say. "Men are queer creatures. When he is older he will learn to trust you, and feel ashamed of his old suspicions. I am quite sure that if men knew how we women value confidence and trust they would never weaken the feeling by doubting us."

On the other hand, Marie Meyer, not being as romantic as the countess, was more practical in her view of the subject. "Be careful, Madeleine, he will do you a mischief one of these days, and then repent his passion for the rest of his life. Let sleeping dogs lie. You know what he is now—a caged tiger when at home. The battle field is the best place for men, after all. There they can let loose their passions and win fame by forgetting that they are human beings; at home they have no use for their grand talents, and we women are good enough for them to vent their humors on!"

Which good advice fell on listless ears for Madeleine loved too truly to be cautious, and was constantly falling into fresh pitfalls. Recalling the events of that day, she knew that Jean would have preferred another woman than his young, pretty wife to wait upon Jacques Latour, and, no doubt, should Jacques mention the matter in camp, Madeleine would be taken to task for her action. Yet, were it to happen again—a soldier needing help—she knew that she would risk a scolding and obey the dictates of her kind heart.

"Were Jean in distress, I would bless the woman who would come to his relief; and why should not I do the same for the husband of some other poor creature sitting alone as I do now, wondering if she will ever see her loved one again?"

"Mamma, mamma! you must not cry," said Adrienne. "Papa will surely come; I know he will!" and, jumping from the window seat, Adrienne threw herself on her knees at her mother's side, and stretching her slight arms around Madeleine's neck, drew her face down for a kiss.

At that moment heavy steps were audible on the path, the door was flung wide open, and, rushing in, Jean Renaud threw his arms around wife and child, and pressed them to his heart.

CHAPTER II.

WHAT DETAINED JEAN RENAUD.

The skirmish of the morning had been fought between a detachment of French, who were hastily constructing redoubts near the village of Antoin, and a party of Dutch sent to dislodge them. The French had held their ground until strongly reinforced, when the enemy retired. It happened that the regiment to which Jean Renaud belonged was the one detailed to cover the men at work on the redoubts, and it suffered severely during the short but impetuous onslaught. Jean saw his comrades fall around him in numbers, and the living over, he fled the way to their succor. It was sad and weary labor, for the ground was very uneven, and several companies had been stationed in a deep ravine, where the search was necessarily slow and difficult. Anxious, and dissatisfied with the search, he started alone on a final survey of the ravine, in that portion where the reinforcement had met the enemy's fire. Jean was noted for just such rapidly conceived ideas, and, like other progressive people, was generally left to carry them out alone. Of course, he never shared any blame that might accrue, but, at the same time, he often won all the credit of a noble deed.

Now, as he sprang from stone to stone in the rocky descent, his quick gray eyes darting rapid glances beneath the clumps of under brush, he was thinking of the neatness of his own home, and the possibility of hazarding a visit to his wife and child. It would be a dangerous experiment to leave his regiment in the face of the enemy, even for the few hours that the quick walk would require. Men had been shot as deserters for a less offence; then, again, Madeleine did not dream of his presence at Antoin, and would not miss his society. Why take the risk? Still, everything pointed to a terrible conflict on the morrow. If he did not see Madeleine before dawn, it was possible that he would never see her again. Loth that and so often spared him, might claim him now. At night fall he could easily leave camp, and by cutting across the well known fields, where all his boyish days had been spent, he could reach his cottage in an hour. The more his thoughts dwelt on the subject the more he hungered for a sight of his wife and child. He pictured their astonishment at his appearance, their joy at his escape with them, their anxiety for his safety on the

(To be continued.)

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Cash on Hand
Government Stock
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Loans on Policies
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Loans on Debentures
Loans on Bonds and Mortgages
Outstanding Premiums
Agents' Balances
Interest Accrued
Interest in Hands of Agents
Interest Due and Unpaid
Interest Payable in Advance
Sundry Debts
Cash in Bank
Cash in Hand
Assets
LIABILITIES
SURPLUS
Capital Stock
Reserve Fund
Unclaimed Dividends
Dividends
Sundry Creditors
All Other Liabilities
Net Surplus
Surplus to Policyholders
Paid Policyholders during the year
Losses during the year
Reserve for Re-insurance
Reserve for Unearned Premiums
Reserve for Contingencies
Reserve for Depreciation in Securities
Reserve for Dividends
Reserve for Taxes
Reserve for Salaries
Reserve for Commissions
Reserve for Rent
Reserve for Sundries
Reserve for Losses in Course of Adjustment
Reserve for Losses Not Yet Due
Reserve for Losses Resisted
Reserve for Losses Payable in Installments
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Reserve for Losses Payable Half Yearly
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