

rade blazed with lightnings—it was a thunderbolt bursting underground. The thunder of the assailants replied to that of the ambuscade. The detonations answered one another; Gauvain's voice was heard shouting, "Break them in!" Then Lantenac's cry, "Hold firm against the enemy!" Then Imánus's yell, "Here, you men of the Main!" Then the clash of sabres clashing against sabres, and echo after echo of terrible discharges that killed right and left. The torch fastened against the wall dimly lighted the horrible scene. It was impossible clearly to distinguish anything; the combatants struggled amid a lurid light; whoever entered was suddenly struck deaf and blind; deafened by the noise, blinded by the smoke.

The combatants trod upon the corpses; they tore the wounds of the injured men lying helpless amid the rubbish; stamped recklessly upon the limbs already broken; the sufferers uttered awful groans; the dying fastened their teeth in the feet of their unconscious tormentors. Then for an instant would come a silence more dreadful than the tumult. The foes collared each other; the hissing sound of their breath could be heard, the gnashing of teeth, death-groans, curses; then the thunder would recommence. A stream of blood flowed from the tower through the breach and spread away across the darkness, and forming smoking pools upon the grass. One might have said that giant, the tower, had been wounded and was bleeding.

Strange thing, scarcely a sound of the struggle could be heard without. The night was very black, and a sort of funereal calm reigned in plain and forest around the beleaguered fortress. Hell was within, the grave without. This shock of men exterminating each other amid the darkness, these musket volleys, these clamours, these shouts of rage, all that din expired beneath that mass of walls and arches; air was lacking, and suffocation added itself to the carnage. Hardly a sound reached those outside the tower. The little children slept.

The desperate strife grew madder. The retirade held firm. Nothing more difficult than to force a barricade with a re-entering angle. If the besieged had numbers against them they had at least the position in their favour. The storming column lost many men. Stretched in a long line outside the tower, it forced its way slowly in through the opening of the breach like a snake twisting itself into its den.

Gauvain, with the natural impulse of a youthful leader, was in the hall in the thickest of the melee, with the bullets flying in every direction about his head. Besides the imprudence of his age he had the assurance of a man who had never been wounded.

As he turned about to give an order the glare of a volley of musketry lighted up a face close beside him.

"Cimourdain!" he cried, "what are you doing here?"

It was indeed Cimourdain. He replied, "I have come to be near you."

"But you will be killed!"

"Very well; you—what are you doing, then?"

"I am necessary here, you are not."

"Since you are here I must be here too."

"No, my master."

"Yes, my child."

And Cimourdain remained near Gauvain.

The dead lay in heaps on the pavement of the hall. Although the retirade was not yet carried, numbers would evidently conquer at last. The assailants were sheltered and the assailed under cover; ten besiegers fell to one among the besieged, but the besiegers were constantly renewed. The assailants increased and the assailed grew less.

The nineteen besieged were all behind the retirade, because the attack was made there. They had dead and wounded among them. Not more than fifteen could fight now. One of the most furious, Chante-en-hiver, had been horribly mutilated. He was a stubby, woolly-haired Breton, lithe and active. He had an eye gouged out and his jaw broken. He still could walk. He dragged himself up the spiral staircase, and reached the chamber of the first floor, hoping to be able to say a prayer there and die. He backed himself against the wall near the loophole in order to breathe a little fresh air.

Beneath, in front of the barricade, the butchery became more and more horrible. In a pause between the answering discharges Cimourdain raised his voice. "Besieged," cried he, "why let any more blood flow? You are beaten. Surrender! Think—we are four thousand five hundred men against nineteen—that is to say, more than two hundred against one. Surrender!"

"Let us put a stop to those hypocritical babblings," retorted the Marquis de Lantenac.

And twenty balls answered Cimourdain.

The retirade did not reach to the arched roof; this space permitted the besieged to fire from the barricade, but it also gave the besiegers an opportunity to scale it.

"Assault the retirade!" cried Gauvain. "Is there any man willing to scale the retirade?"

"I," said Sergeant Radoub.

X.—RADOUB.

Here a sort of stupor seized the assailants. Radoub had entered the breach at the head of the column, and of those men of the Parisian battalion of which he made the sixth, four had already fallen. After he had uttered that shout, "I," he was seen to recoil instead of advance. Doubled up, bent forward, almost creeping between the legs of the combatants, he regained the opening of the breach and rushed out. Was it a flight? A man like this to fly? What did it mean?

When he was outside, Radoub, still blinded by the smoke, rubbed his eyes as if to clear them from the horror of the cavernous night he had just left, and studied the wall of the tower by the starlight. He nodded his head, as if to say, "I was not mistaken."

Radoub had noticed that the deep crack made by the explosion of the mine extended above the breach to the loophole of the upper story, the iron grating of which had been shattered by a ball. The network of broken bars hung loosely down, so that a man could enter.

A man could enter, but could he climb up? By the crevice it might have been possible for a cat to mount. Such was Radoub. He belonged to the race which Pindar calls "the active athletes." One may be an old soldier and a young man. Radoub, who had belonged to the French guards, was not yet forty. He was a nimble Hercules.

Radoub threw his musket on the ground, took off his shoulder-belts, laid aside his coat and jacket, guarding his two

pistols, which he thrust in his trowsers' belt, and his naked sabre, which he held between his teeth. The butt-ends of the pistols protruded above his belt.

Thus lightened of everything useless, and followed in the obscurity by the eyes of all such of the attacking column as had not yet entered the breach, he began to climb the stones of the cracked wall as if they had been the steps of a staircase. Having no shoes was an advantage—nothing can cling like a naked foot—he twisted his toes into the holes of the stones. He hoisted himself with his fists, and bore his weight on his knees. The ascent was a hazardous one; it was somewhat like climbing along the teeth of a gigantic saw. "Luckily," thought he, "there is nobody in the chamber of the first story, else I should not be allowed to climb up like this."

He had not more than forty feet left to mount. He was somewhat encumbered by the projecting butt-ends of his pistols, and as he climbed the crevice narrowed, rendering the ascent more and more difficult, so that the danger of falling increased as he went on.

At last he reached the frame of the loophole and pushed aside the twisted and broken grating, so that he had space enough to pass through. He raised himself for a last powerful effort, rested his knee on the cornice of the ledge, seized with one hand a bar of the grating at the left, with the other a bar at the right, lifted half his body in front of the embrasure of the loophole, and, sabre between his teeth, hung thus suspended by his two fists over the abyss.

It only needed one spring more to land him in the chamber of the first floor.

But a face appeared in the opening. Radoub saw a frightful spectacle rise suddenly before him in the gloom—an eye torn out, a jaw fractured, a bleeding mask.

This mask, which had only one eye left, was watching him. This mask had two hands; these two hands thrust themselves out of the darkness of this loophole and clutched at Radoub; one of them seized the two pistols in his belt, the other snatched the sword from between his teeth.

Radoub was disarmed. His knee slipped upon the inclined plane of the cornice; his two fists, cramped about the bars of the grating, barely sufficed to support him, and beneath was a sheer descent of forty feet.

This mask and these hands belonged to Chante-en-hiver.

Suffocated by the smoke which rose from the room below, Chante-en-hiver had succeeded in entering the embrasure of the loophole: the air from without had revived him; the freshness of the night had congealed the blood, and his strength had in a measure come back. Suddenly he perceived the torso of Radoub rise in front of the embrasure. Radoub, having his hands twisted about the bars, had no choice but to let himself fall or allow himself to be disarmed, so Chante-en-hiver, with a horrible quietness, had taken the two pistols out of his belt and the sabre from between his teeth.

Then commenced an unheard-of duel—a duel between the disarmed and the wounded. Evidently the dying man had the victory in his own hands. A single shot would suffice to hurl Radoub into the yawning gulf beneath his feet.

Luckily for Radoub, Chante-en-hiver held both pistols in the same hand, so that he could not fire either, and was forced to make use of the sabre. He struck Radoub a blow on the shoulder with the point. The sabre-stroke wounded Radoub, but saved his life.

The soldier was unarmed, but in full possession of his strength. Regardless of his wound, which indeed was only a flesh-cut, he swung his body vigorously forward, loosed his hold of the bars, and bounded through the loophole.

There he found himself face to face with Chante-en-hiver, who had thrown the sabre behind him, and was clutching a pistol in either hand.

Chante-en-hiver had Radoub close to the muzzle as he took aim upon his knees, but his enfeebled arm trembled, and he did not fire at once.

Radoub took advantage of this respite to burst out laughing. "I say, ugly face!" cried he, "do you suppose you frighten me with your raw bullock's head? Thunder and Mars, how they have shattered your features!"

Chante-en-hiver took aim.

Radoub continued: "It is not polite to mention it, but the grape-shot has dotted your mug very neatly. Bellona has peppered your physiognomy, my lad. Come, come; spit out your little pistol-shot, my good fellow!"

Chante-en-hiver fired; the ball passed so close to Radoub's head that it carried away part of his ear. His foe raised the second pistol in his other hand, but Radoub did not give him time to take aim.

"It is enough to lose one ear," cried he. "You have wounded me twice. It is my turn now."

(To be continued.)

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

THURSDAY, Sept. 24.—Passenger rates from New York to Liverpool have been reduced to \$12 and \$15.

Elections for the French National Assembly have been ordered for October 18th.

The Republican State Convention in session at Utica, yesterday, nominated the present State Officers for re-election.

The report that the Bourbon branches have recognized Don Carlos as heir presumptive to the throne of France is denied.

Trouble is reported as imminent in Alabama, where negroes are being shot down on the slightest provocation. Troops are to be sent there for the protection of the coloured population.

The excitement consequent on the election of a Consul-General for Corsica, has obliged the authorities to interfere to prevent collision between the adherents of the opposing candidates, Prince Napoleon and M. Pietri.

Among the resolutions passed by the Republican State Convention was the following: "The Administration of President Grant has been true to its pledges, and distinguished by achievement in domestic and foreign policy unsurpassed in the history of the country."

FRIDAY, Sept. 25.—Another expedition for topographical surveys in Palestine is fitting out in New York.

The glowing accounts recently received from the Black Hills country turn out to be utterly unreliable.

Prussian agents are actively engaged on the Algerian frontier in establishing relations with Arabian tribes.

The report of Bismarck's proposal to incorporate Denmark into the German Empire is stated to be absolutely false.

The boundary dispute between Italy and Switzerland, referred to arbitration, has been settled in favour of the former.

The Carlists have suffered another disastrous defeat at the hands of the National troops in the Province of Biscay.

A meeting of delegates from all the Women's Associations of Germany has been called at Berlin by the Empress Augusta for October.

It is reported that Disraeli, on the occasion of the approaching Royal visit to Ireland, will recommend a general amnesty for all political prisoners.

The Austrian Polar expedition declare their explorations are hopeless of any satisfactory result. The reported extension of the open polar sea is said to be untrue.

General Kellogg telegraphed to the Attorney-General that if the troops were withdrawn there would be rioting, which would not cease till he and all his party were killed or driven out of the State. The White League is said to be spreading to other Southern States.

SATURDAY, Sept. 26.—The Prince of Wales has accepted the Grand Mastership of the Order of Free Masons.

Mr. Disraeli's visit to Ireland has been postponed on account of a severe attack of bronchitis.

A Vienna despatch says the Sultan of Turkey intends appointing his eldest son to the command of the army, preliminary to declaring him heir to the Throne.

A New Orleans special says no open attack will be made on Kellogg or his party as long as they have the sheltering ægis of the United States troops, but that Kellogg himself is daily threatened with assassination.

The result of the municipal authorities of Chicago having ignored the requirement of the Board of Underwriters, as to improvements in the Fire Department, is that fifty Insurance Companies are pledged to withdraw their business from the city.

MONDAY, Sept. 28.—The Hon. W. B. Vail succeeds Hon. W. Ross as Minister of Militia.

South Carolina is now in a ferment. Governor M'oss has demanded Federal troops from President Grant to assist him in preserving order.

The question of the transfer of Porto Rico to Germany is causing considerable excitement. It is stated that Russia is ready to ally herself with the United States to prevent the accomplishment of that design.

TUESDAY, Sept. 29.—Preliminary steps have been taken in the case for the trial of Rev. Mr. Beecher.

The news of the destruction of Antigua, Guatemala, by earthquake is confirmed.

The result of the revision of voters' lists for the city of London has been a gain of 54 for the Conservatives.

A mass meeting of the Fenian Brotherhood was held at the Cooper Institute in New York, last night. O'Donovan Rossa was among the speakers.

De Maille, the Republican candidate for the Department of Maine et Loire, has been elected to fill the vacant seat in the French Assembly by 3,787 majority.

A devastating typhoon passed over Hong Kong on Sunday, causing great havoc amongst the shipping. A thousand persons are said to have been killed.

The Austrian Government are about to dispatch another expedition to the Arctic regions, one-half of which will go by way of Siberia and the remainder via Greenland.

Mayor Ows, of San Francisco, has caused much excitement in that city by taking possession of the assessors' office, books, records, &c., and issuing warrants for several persons attached to the office.

The entire business portion of Lennoxville was destroyed by fire yesterday, together with over thirty private residences. The College and school buildings were in no way affected. The loss is estimated at \$100,000.

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