

STORIES OF ADVENTURE.

Massena was a thin, sour little fellow, and after his hunting accident he had only one eye, but when it looked out from his cocked hat there was not much upon a field of battle which escaped it. He could stand in front of a battalion, and with a single sweep tell you if a buckle or a gaiter button were out of place. Neither the officers nor the men were very fond of him, for he was, as you know, a miser, and soldiers love that their leaders should be free-handed. At the same time, when it came to work they had a very high respect for him, and they would rather fight under him than under anyone except the Emperor himself, and Lannes, when he was alive. After all, if he had a tight grasp upon his money-bags, there was a day also, you must remember, when that same grip was upon Zurich and Genoa. He clutched on to his positions as he did to his strong box, and it took a very clever man to loosen him from either.

When I received his summons I went gladly to his headquarters, for I was always a great favourite of his, and there was no officer of whom he thought more highly. That was the best of serving with those good old generals, that they knew enough to be able to pick out a fine soldier when they saw one. He was seated alone in his tent, with his chin upon his hand, and his brow as wrinkled as if he had been asked for a subscription. He smiled, however, when he saw me before him.

"Good day, Colonel Gerard,"
 "Good day, Marshal."
 "How is the Third of Hussars?"
 "Seven hundred incomparable men upon seven hundred excellent horses."
 "And your wounds—are they healed?"
 "My wounds never heal, Marshal," I answered.

"And why?"
 "Because I have always new ones."
 "General Rapp must look to his laurels," said he, his face all breaking into wrinkles as he laughed. "He has had twenty-one of the enemy's bullets, and as many from Larrey's knives and probes. Knowing that you were hurt, Colonel, I have spared you of late."

"Which hurt me most of all?"
 "Tut, tut! Since the English got behind these accursed lines of Torres Vedras, there has been little for us to do. You did not miss much during your imprisonment at Dersmoor. But now we are on the eve of action."
 "We advance?"
 "No, retire."

My face must have shown my dismay. What, retire before this sacred dog of a Wellington—he who had listened unmoved to my words, and had sent me to his land of fogs! I could have sobbed as I thought of it.

"What would you have?" cried Massena, impatiently. "When one is in check, it is necessary to move the king."
 "Forwards," I suggested.
 He shook his grizzled head.

"The lines are not to be forced," said he. "I have already lost General St. Croix and more men than I can replace. On the other hand, we have been here at Santarem for nearly six months. There is not a pound of flour nor a jug of wine on the country side. We must retire."
 "There is flour and wine in Lisbon," I persisted.

"Tut, you speak as if an army could charge in and charge out again like your regiment of hussars. If Soult were here with thirty thousand men—but he will not come. I sent for you, however, Colonel Gerard, to say that I have a very singular and important expedition which I intend to place under your direction."

I pricked up my ears, as you can imagine. The Marshal unrolled a great map of the country and spread it upon the table. He flattened it out with his little, hairy hands.
 "This is Santarem," he said, pointing. I nodded.

"And here, twenty-five miles to the east is Almeida, celebrated for its vintages and for its enormous Abbey."
 Again I nodded; I could not think what was coming.

"Have you heard of the Marshal Millefleurs?" asked Massena.
 "I have served with all the Marshals," said I, "but there is none of that name."
 "It is but the nickname which the soldiers have given him," said Massena. "If you had not been away from us for some months, it would not be necessary for me to tell you about him. He is an Englishman, and a man of good breeding. It is on account of his manner that they have given him his title. I wish you to go to this polite Englishman at Almeida."

"Yes, Marshal."
 "And to hang him to the nearest tree."
 "Certainly, Marshal."
 I turned briskly upon my heels, but Massena recalled me before I could reach the opening of his tent.

"One moment, Colonel," said he; "you had best learn how matters stand before you start. You must know, then, that this Marshal Millefleurs, whose real name is Alexis Morgan, is a man of very great ingenuity and bravery. He was an officer in the English Guards, but having been broken for cheating at cards, he left the army. In some manner he gathered a number of English deserters round him and took to the mountains. French stragglers and Portuguese brigands joined him, and he found himself at the head of five hundred men. With these he took possession of the Abbey of Almeida, sent the monks about their business, fortified the place, and gathered in the plunder of all the country round."

"For which it is high time he was hanged," said I, making once more for the door.
 "One instant!" cried the Marshal, smiling at my impatience. "The worst remains behind. Only last week the Dowager Countess of La Ronda, the richest woman in Spain, was taken by these ruffians in the passes as she was journeying from King Joseph's Court to visit her grandson. She is now a

prisoner in the Abbey, and is only protected by her—"
 "Grandmother," I suggested.
 "Her power of paying a ransom," said Massena. "You have three missions, then: To rescue this unfortunate lady; to punish this villain; and, if possible, to break up this nest of brigands. It will be a proof of the confidence which I have in you when I say that I can only spare you half a squadron with which to accomplish all this."

My word, I could hardly believe my ears! I thought that I should have had my regiment at the least.
 "I would give you more," said he, "but I commence my retreat to-day, and Wellington is so strong in horse that every trooper becomes of importance. I cannot spare you another man. You will see what you can do, and you will report yourself to me at Abrantes not later than to-morrow night."

It was very complimentary that he should rate my powers so high, but it was also a little embarrassing. I was to rescue an old lady, to hang an Englishman, and to break up a band of five hundred assassins—all with fifty men. But after all, the fifty men were Hussars of Confians, and they had an Etienne Gerard to lead them. As I came out into the warm Portuguese sunshine my confidence had returned to me, and I had already begun to wonder whether the medal which I had so often deserved might not be waiting for me at Almeida.

You may be sure that I did not take my fifty men at haphazard. They were all old soldiers of the German wars, some of them with three stripes, and most of them with two Oudet and Papiette, two of the best sub-officers in the regiment, were at their head. When I had them formed up in fours, all in silver grey and upon chestnut horses, with their leopard skin shabraeks and their little red panaches, my heart beat high at the sight. I could not look at their weather-stained faces with the great moustaches which bristled over their chin-straps, without feeling a glow of confidence, and, between ourselves, I have no doubt that was exactly how they felt when they saw their young Colonel on his great black warhorse riding at their head.

Well, when we got free of the camp and over the Tagus, I threw out my advance and my flankers, keeping my own place at the head of the main body. Looking back from the hills above Santarem, we could see the dark lines of Massena's army, with the flash and twinkle of the sabres and bayonets as he moved his regiments into position for their retreat. To the south lay the scattered red patches of the English outposts, and behind the grey smoke-cloud which rose from Wellington's camp—thick, oily smoke, which seemed to us poor starving fellows to bear with it the rich smell of seething camp-kettles. Away to the west lay a curve of blue flecked with the white sails of the English ships.

You will understand that as we were riding to the east, our road lay away from both armies. Our own marauders, however, and the scouting parties of the English, covered the country, and it was necessary with my small troop that I should take every precaution. During the whole day we rode over desolate hillsides, the lower portions covered by the budding vines, but the upper turning from green to grey, and jagged along the skyline like the back of a starved horse. Mountain streams crossed our path, running west to the Tagus, and once we came to a deep strong river, which might have checked us had I not found the ford by observing where houses had been built opposite each other upon either bank. Between them, as every scout should know, you will find your ford. There was none to give us information, for neither man nor beast, nor any living thing except great clouds of crows, was to be seen during our journey.

The sun was beginning to sink when we came to a valley clear in the centre, but shrouded by huge oak trees upon either side. We could not be more than a few miles from Almeida, so it seemed to me to be best to keep among the groves, for the spring had been an early one and the leaves were already thick enough to conceal us. We were riding then in open order among the great trunks, when one of my flankers came galloping up.

"There are English across the valley, Colonel," he cried, as he saluted.
 "Cavalry or infantry?"
 "Dragoons, Colonel," said he; "I saw the gleam of their helmets, and heard the neigh of a horse."

Halting my men, I hastened to the edge of the wood. There could be no doubt about it. A party of English cavalry was travelling in a line with us, and in the same direction I caught a glimpse of their red coats and of their flashing arms glowing and twinkling among the tree-trunks. Once, as they passed through a small clearing, I could see their whole force, and I judged that they were of about the same strength as my own—a half squadron at the most.

You who have heard some of my little adventures will give me credit for being quick in my decisions, and prompt in carrying them out. But here I must confess that I was in two minds. On the one hand there was the chance of a fine cavalry skirmish with the English. On the other hand, the mission at the Abbey of Almeida, which seemed already to be so much above my power. If I were to lose any of my men, it was certain that I should be unable to carry out my orders. I was sitting my horse, with my chin in my gauntlet, looking across at the rippling gleams of light from the further wood, when suddenly one of these red-coated Englishmen rode out from the cover, pointing at me and breaking into a shrill whoop and halloo as if I had been a fox. Three others joined him, and one who was a bugler sounded a call which brought the whole of them into the open. They were, as I had thought, a half squadron, and they formed a double line with a front of twenty-five, their officers—the one who had whooped at me—at their head.

For my own part, I had instantly brought my own troopers into the same formation, so that there were, hussars and dragoons, with only two hundred yards of grassy sward between us. They carried themselves well, those red-coated troopers, with their silver helmets, their high white plumes, and their long, gleaming swords; while, on the other hand, I am sure that at they would acknowledge that they had never looked upon finer light horsemen than the fifty

hussars of Confians who were facing them. They were heavier, it is true, and they may have seemed the smarter, for Wellington used to make them burnish their metal work, which was not usual among us. On the other hand, it is well known that the English tactics were too tight for the sword-arm, which gave our men an advantage. As to bravery, foolish, inexperienced people of every nation always think that their own soldiers are braver than any others. There is no nation in the world which does not entertain this idea. But when one has seen as much as I have done, one understands that there is no very marked difference, and that although nations differ very much in discipline, they are all equally brave—except that the French have rather more courage than the rest.

Well, the cork was drawn and the glasses ready, when suddenly the English officer raised his sword to me as if in a challenge, and cantered his horse across the grass-land. My word, there is no finer sight upon earth than that of a gallant man upon a gallant steed! I could have halted there just to watch him as he came with such careless grace, his sabre down by his horse's shoulders, his head thrown back, his white plume tossing—youth and strength and courage, with the violet evening sky above and the oak trees behind. But it was not for me to stand and stare. Etienne Gerard may have his faults, but, my faith, he was never accused of being backward in taking his own part. The old horse, Ratsplan, knew me so well that he had started off before ever I gave the first shake to the bridle.

There are two things in this world that I am very slow to forget the face of a pretty woman, and the legs of a fine horse. Well, as we drew together, I kept on saying, "Where have I seen those great roan shoulders? Where have I seen that dainty fetlock?" Then suddenly I remembered, and as I looked up at the reckless eyes and the challenging smile, whom should I recognise but the man who had saved me from the brigands and played me for my freedom—his whose correct title was Milor the Hon. Sir Russell Bart.!

"Bart!" I shouted.
 He had his arm raised for a cut, and three parts of his body open to my point, for he did not know very much about the use of the sword. As I brought my hit to the salute he dropped his hand and stared at me.
 "Halloo!" said he. "It's Gerard!" You would have thought by his manner that I had met him by appointment. For my own part I would have embraced him had he but come an inch of the way to meet me.

"I thought we were in for some sport," said he. "I never dreamed that it was you."
 I found this tone of disappointment somewhat irritating. Instead of being glad at having met a friend, he was sorry at having missed an enemy.
 "I should have been happy to join in your sport, my dear Bart," said I. "But I really cannot turn my sword upon a man who saved my life."

"Tut, never mind about that."
 "No, it is impossible. I should never forgive myself."
 "You make too much of a trifle."
 "My mother's own desire is to embrace you. If ever you should be in Gascony—"
 "Lord Wellington is coming there with 60,000 men."
 "Then one of them will have a chance of surviving," said I, laughing. "In the meantime, put your sword in your sheath!"
 Our horses were standing head to tail, and the Bart put out his hand and patted me on the thigh.

"You're a good chap, Gerard," said he. "I only wish you had been born on the right side of the Channel."
 "I was," said I.
 "Poor fellow!" he cried, with such an earnestness of pity that he set me laughing again. "But look here, Gerard," he continued, "this is all very well, but it is not business, you know. I don't know what Massena would say to it, but our Chief would jump out of his riding boots if he saw us. We weren't sent out here for a picnic—either of us."

"What would you have?"
 "Well, we had a little argument about our hussars and dragoons, if you remember. I've got fifty of the Sixteenth all chewing their carbine bullets behind me. You've got as many fine-looking boys over your shoulder, who seem to be edging in their saddles. If you and I took the right flanks we should not spoil each other's beauty—though a little blood letting is a friendly thing in this climate."

There seemed to me to be a good deal of sense in what he said. For the moment Mr. Alexis Morgan and the Countess of La Ronda and the Abbey of Almeida went right out of my head, and I could only think of the fine level turf and of the beautiful skirmish which we might have.
 "Very good, Bart," said I. "We have seen the front of your dragoons. We shall not have a look at their backs."
 "Any betting?" he asked.

"The stake," said I, "is nothing less than the honor of the Hussars of Confians."
 "Well, come on!" he answered. "If we break you well and good—if you break us, it will be all the better for Marshal Millefleurs."
 When he said this I could only stare at him in astonishment.

"Why for Marshal Millefleurs?" I asked.
 "It is the name of a rascal who lives out this way. My dragoons have been sent by Lord Wellington to see him safely hanged."
 "Name of a name?" I cried. "Why, my hussars have been sent by Massena for that very object."

We burst out laughing at that, and sheathed our swords. There was a whirl of steel from behind us as our troopers followed our example.
 "We are allies," he cried.
 "For a day."
 "We must join forces."
 "There is no doubt of it."

And so, instead of fighting we wheeled our half squadrons round and moved in two little columns down the valley, the shakos and the helmets turned inwards, and the men looking their neighbours up and down, like old fighting dogs with tattered ears who have learned to respect each other's teeth. The most were on the broad grin, but there were some on either side who looked black and chafing, especially the English sergeant and my own sub-officer Papiette. They were men of habit, you see, who could not change all their ways of thinking in a moment. Besides, Papiette had lost his only brother at Busaco. As for the Bart,

and me, we rode together at the head and chatted about all that had occurred to us since that famous game of cards of which I have told you. For my own part, I spoke to him of my adventures in England. They are a very singular people, these English. Although he knew that I had been engaged in twelve campaigns, yet I am sure that the Bart thought more highly of me because I had an affair with the Bristol Bustler. He told me, too, that the Colonel who presided over his court-martial for playing cards with a prisoner, acquitted him of neglect of duty, but nearly broke him because he thought that he had not cleared his trumps before leading his suit. Yes, indeed, they are a singular people.

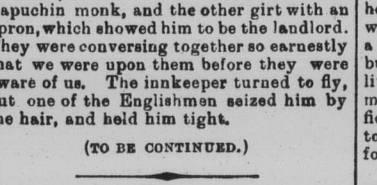
At the end of the valley the road curved over some rising ground before winding down into another wider valley beyond. We called a halt when we came to the top; for there, right in front of us, at the distance of about three miles, was a scattered grey town, with a single enormous building upon the flank of the mountain which overlooked it. We could not doubt that we were at last in sight of the Abbey that held the gang of rascals whom we had come to disperse. It was only now, I think, that we fully understood what a task lay in front of us, for the place was a veritable fortress, and it was evident that cavalry should never have been sent out upon such an errand.

"That's got nothing to do with us," said the Bart; "if Wellington and Massena can settle that between them."
 "Courage!" I answered. "Pire took Leipzig with fifty hussars."
 "Had they been dragoons," said the Bart, laughing, "he would have had Berlin. But you are senior officer; give us a lead and we will see who will be the first to finish."

"Well," said I, "whatever you do must be done at once, for my orders are to be on my way to Abrantes by to-morrow night. But we must have some information first, and here is some one who should be able to give it to us."
 There was a square whitewashed house standing by the roadside, which appeared, from the bush hanging over the door, to be one of those wayside tabernas which are provided for muleteers. A lantern was hung in the porch, and by its light we saw two men, the one in the brown habit of a Capuchin monk, and the other girl with an apron, which showed him to be the landlord. They were conversing together so earnestly that we were upon them before they were aware of us. The innkeeper turned to fly, but one of the Englishmen seized him by the hair, and held him tight.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Red Crepon Dress.
 Bright red crepon bouillonne is the material of this dress. The skirt is made with pleated front and godet back. The



full round waist has a notched yoke and standing collar of perforated black velvet mounted over red silk, and is completed by a bias black velvet belt.
 The accompanying hat is a wide-brimmed capeline of black fancy straw edged with pleatings of black mousseline de soie, and trimmed with black satin ribbon bows and fan pleatings of mousseline de soie, with a mass of red poppies lifting the brim at the back.

A Brute of a Husband.
 Mrs. Jinks—My husband is a regular brute, and that's all there is about it.
 Her Mother—Dearie me! What's he been doing now?
 I had to sit in the station for six mortal hours, waiting for a train, and it was all his fault.
 Didn't he have a time-table?
 Yes. You see, we wanted to take the limited express, but we missed it, and had to wait six hours for another limited. Of course, we couldn't travel a thousand miles on a way-train, you know.
 Of course not.
 Well, it was just my husband's obstinacy that made us miss the first limited. We were late in starting because I couldn't find my button-hook, and finally he said we'd miss the train if we didn't run. Of course I couldn't run with corsets and a new dress on, you know.
 Of course not.
 Well, so I told him to just run ahead and tell the conductor that I'd be along in ten or fifteen minutes or so; and would you believe it, the man who had sworn at the altar to love, honor, and protect me wouldn't do it.

Lucky Fellow.
 Haskins says that the Widow Van Vliet has promised to be a mother to him.
 Indeed!
 No—in law.
 To ascend Mont Blanc costs about \$50, as there must by law be two guides and a porter to each person.

MR. AND MRS. BOWSER.

Mr. B.'s Mad Revels With a Little Balloon.

"Now what are you going to do?" queried Mrs. Bowser as dinner was finished the other evening, and Mr. Bowser removed coat, vest, collar and necktie.
 "Mrs. Bowser," he solemnly replied as he returned from the front hall with a pasteboard box in his hand, "it's no wonder that medicine doesn't do us any good! The wonder is that we are not in our graves!"

"But we are not ailing—we don't need medicine!"
 "We don't eh? I haven't said anything to you about it, because I didn't want to hasten the climax by scaring you half to death, but as a matter of fact the pair of us have been heading for the tomb at a gallop for the last six months! I wouldn't say anything about it now, only I think I have found the remedy."

"Remedy! Why I thought both of us were in perfect health!"
 "What you thought and what was and is are three different things, Mrs. Bowser. Here is what the doctor recommended for both of us."
 "A toy balloon! Are we to eat it, smell of it, or what?"
 "No, ma'am, we are not to eat it, smell of it or what! If you had done less gadding and more reading you might have heard of the Delsarte movement. You might have heard that this little balloon has been the means of drawing thousands of people back from the yawning grave."

"Oh! yes! You let it float around the room and follow it up and strike it? I was reading in the paper the other day about how many people had broken their arms and legs and necks. You think you need the Delsarte movement, do you?"
 "I don't think anything about it, but know it!" he exclaimed Mr. Bowser as he rolled up his shirt sleeves. "If you want to sit around and die for the want of a little common-sense exercise, all right, but I propose to regain by lost health and live on as long as I can. The Delsarte movement is the simplest and most beneficial of all athletics. I permit the balloon to float away—like that. Then I step forward and strike it—like this."

"Mercy on me, but you'll knock the whole house down!" exclaimed Mrs. Bowser, as the chandelier rattled and a vase toppled off a bracket. "Let me get out with the baby! If some one should tell you to come and play ball with dynamite bombs I suppose you'd do it! The idea of any such nonsense benefiting your health?"
 "Nonsense, eh?" shouted Mr. Bowser, as he jumped forward and led with his left and kicked a chair over. "That shows how much you know about anatomy! In delivering an upper-cut like this you bring into play the muscles of the neck, shoulder, arm and leg. The blood also—"
 But Mrs. Bowser and the baby retreated to the library.

"Egad, but if she wants to die, let her die!" growled Mr. Bowser as he dropped his suspenders off his shoulders to give his arms more play. "Anybody with the sense of a canary knows that you must have exercise to keep your health. Here I am in the prime of life, and yet I'm lopsided, humpedback and as weak as a—"

He had been following the balloon about and punching at it. A right-hand swing missed the floating object and brought down a gas globe from the chandelier.
 "What on earth has happened now?" exclaimed Mrs. Bowser as she stuck her head out of the door.
 "Nothing! When I want you I'll knock on the door."

Mrs. Bowser retreated and he gathered up the fragments of the broken globe and deposited them on a chair, and squared off to his work again, saying:
 "I dunno who old Delsarte was, but he was a corker on exercise. Couldn't have started a movement better calculated to bring out all the—"
 He simply knocked over a rocking-chair and brought down a stand as he made a vigorous spring, but Mrs. Bowser's head appeared to view again, and she demanded:
 "Are you going to wreck the whole house, Mr. Bowser?"

"Who's wrecking anything? I think I've a right to move about in my own house in search of health. Go back and sit down and wait for consumption and the grave!"
 Young Bowser began howling, and his mother withdrew to quiet him. Mr. Bowser lifted up the stand and chair and wiped the perspiration from his forehead and got ready for more health. He felt that he ought to have a little more leg exercise with it, and he blew the balloon away from him and then rushed for it. His legs were doing nobly when his toe struck a hassock and he took a header. What occurred during the next fifteen minutes will never be clear to him. He knew that his head struck the library door and busted a panel, but after that all was blank. When he opened his eyes there was a wet towel on his forehead, a camphor bottle at his nose, and three or four of the neighbors were in the house. In a far-away voice he heard Mr. Henderson say:

"It is curious what a fool a man will make of himself over these fads! He'll have a sore head for the next three months!"
 And in another far-away voice he thought he heard Mrs. Bowser reply:
 "I tried to argue with him but it was no use. Of course, his lawyer will see my lawyer in the morning and arrange about the divorce and alimony!"

A Conditional Reward.
 Woman—My husband has disappeared and may be dead. I want to offer a reward for his body.
 Chief of Police—Yes, madame. A description will be needed, and this, with the reward, will no doubt prove effective. He may be alive, you know, in which case we may soon be able to return him to you.
 Woman—I shan't pay a cent of reward unless he is returned dead, just remember that.