

dons, for the gay city is now one vast hospital. Said Sturgis, "These French beat the devil when they do fight, and they generally want to fight." I felt in no mood for his bandinage, and walked slowly to the American Legation.

In two hours I hear the cry of the street gamin with the scanty sheet of newspaper which served during the siege and was sold for one franc.

I step to the door and purchase a copy and read as I walk back to my chair. The account of the sortie is here. Not in the verbiage of the usual Parisian reporter. No; the people are all in earnest now, but I see the usual headlines and read along with pity in my heart for the useless but brave sacrifice I had seen from a distance. Here is a list of killed and wounded officers. Of course I do not know them, but I read down the list.

"Lieutenant Hippolyte Boh, of the Guards, left dead on the glacis when the sortie fell back." Heavens! And I had forgotten Aimee. I threw the paper down and rapidly dressed again for the street.

When I came into the Quartier St. Germain I seemed to discover sombre shadows along the street I had not noticed before. More silent than ever seemed the quiet of the *quartier*. At the door no *concierge*. No pounding or hallooing seemed to attract an inmate of the house.

I tried the heavy latch and the door swung open. Without waiting for further ceremony I pressed on into the wide old parlor. Still all silent. Is the house deserted? I raised my voice and called aloud, "Aimee! Aimee!"

I hear a sob, and pushing back the heavy curtains pass into a smaller living room of the house. Arising from a divan, Aimee extends her arms and says: "It is Monsieur the American. Thank God!"

"Where are the servants, Aimee?" I ask.
"Ah, Heaven! Monsieur, they are gone; they would not remain and starve," and she wept like a child.

"What, is it come to this, my child?" I asked in astonishment.

"Yes, my father has been on duty at the front for a week, and everything is eaten. Monsieur, I too am hungry," and the childish little face looked haggard.

"Aimee, you are a woman in years, and will soon be one in hard experience, I am afraid. We must leave this place before dark. I am afraid the Reds of Paris will soon make a hell of this city. Aimee, what did your father say about me at our last meeting?" and I took her hand.

"Ah, *mon Dieu!* he said if he did not come back you would be to me a father; and he does not come. Now I know what you mean," and with a scream she fell back on the divan in a swoon. I ran for water, and wetting her face and chafing her little hands, I soon restored her to consciousness.

"Aimee," said I, as if talking to a child, "is there any valuable paper or basket of papers, or anything you wish to take with you? You must come with me to a place of safety. Gather your clothing in as small a compass as possible, and do it instantly, for Heaven only knows how long the streets of Paris will be safe! Secure everything you value in a valise, and be ready soon."

This practical language seemed to inspire her with energy, for she soon gathered her valuables and necessary clothing in a small valise, and turned her back upon her home forever.

No carriage could be procured. The streets were deserted, and we moved away rapidly. The tender feet of the little ward who had fallen under my care seemed all unused to the long walk, but at last we stood in the Ministerial office. A word to my noble chief, Washburne, explained matters, and he simply said:

"Put her in the care of the good woman who cares for our home here. She is the ward of the United States as well as my Secretary."

Thus Aimee was in a place of safety during the carnival of crime which was soon inaugurated in Paris.

CHAPTER VI.

That ridiculous song of the American war, "Johnny Comes Marching Home," wafted on the frosty air of Paris, told me that Napoleon Smith was approaching my office. But it was not the Napoleon Smith we knew, not in appearance, at least, for the butterfly was out of the chrysalis and was soaring in the crisp winter air in a new French uniform of the Infantry Garde Mobile. His cap, with red-tipped pompon, was worn very much on one side—it fact, its position on his head looked precarious in regard to its tenure of office—a vagabond, as it had no visible means of support, and looked as though it were held in position by magnetism in his head.

"Smith, couldn't you drop that tune, and, if you must whistle or sing, vary the programme occasionally by substituting 'Dixie's Land' or 'Yankee Doodle'?" I said with some asperity.

"I suppose I could, Cap; but what's the use? Music is music, and I got attached to that tune in Virginia, and somehow it sticks like a burr. Skewball, says I, is not personal and has no political or moral force; durned if I don't think it was just put in to fill the measure, like a repeat in a choir anthem at a country church." And he smiled broadly and stroked his waxed mustache.

"But say, do you get onto this uniform? Chivaree de bongsay and au revoir. Well, but won't those French devils fight or anything? Well, I reckon. I was in that sortie a few weeks ago. I tell you I kept looking for the mounseers to break and gig back; but not any for them. It begun to get too warm for your's truly, and I begun to think it was all foolishness when we clambered right up on the Dutchmen's sixty four pounder siege-guns, and a little lieutenant spiled two of them, and then, when he had lead enough in him to anchor a flat-boat, he just yelled out, 'Vive la France!' and passed in his checks like a little man, and we fell back and left him right there amongst the dead Germans and broken gun-carriages, and I know now that a Frenchman will fight."

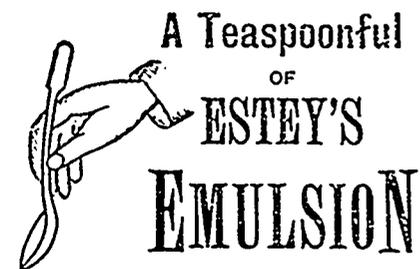
(To be continued.)



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