VOL. XXVII.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1876.

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THE LION OF FLANDERS:

THE BATTLE OF THE GOLDEN SPURS.

BY RENDRIK CONSCIENCE.

CHAPTER IX (Continued).

On reaching the French lines Deconinck and the herald of the gullds were immediately introduced into the tent of De Chatillon, when the Denn of the Clothworkers advanced towards the general and with a firm countenance thus addressed him :

"Messire de Chatillon, the citizens of Bruges give you to know, by me their delegate and spokesman, that, in order to avoid useless bloodshed, they have resolved to surrender to you the city. Nevertheless, since it is a noble and honorable feeling that leads them to proffer their submission, they can make it only on the following conditions :-first, that the cost of his majesty's late entry be not levied by a new impost upon the commons; secondly, that the present magistrates be displaced from their offices; and lastly, that no one be prosecuted or disturbed on account of any part he may have taken in these present troubles, by what name soever the same may be called. Be pleased to inform me whether you assent to these terms."

"What !" exclaimed the governor, his counteratce overcast with displeasure: " what manner of talk is this? How date you speak to me of conditions, when I have only to bring my engines to your walls and batter them down, without hindrance or delay?"

"That is very possible," replied Deconinck firmly : " but I tell you, nevertheless, -and do you give heed to my words,-that our city ditch shall be filled with the dead of your people, before a single Frenchmen shall plant his foot upon our walls. We, too, are not unprovided with implements of war ; and they that have read our chronicles, have not now to learn that the men of Bruges know how to die for their country.

"Yes, yes, I know well that stiff-necked obstinacy which is the characteristic of your race; but what care I for that ? The courage of my men knows no obstacles; your city must surrender at

To say the truth, the sight of that warlike multitude in army array upon the walls had alled Ded Chatillon with serious apprehenhim the desirableness of gaining possession of the city, if possible, without a struggle. He was not a little rejoiced, therefore, when the arrival of Deconinck gave him hopes of the peaceful accomplishment of his wishes us On the other hand, the conditions proposed were by no means to his taste. He might, to be sure, at ionce accept them under a there, with his eyes bent upon the ground, he sudmental reservation; and afterwards invent some dealy became aware that he was no longer alone;pretext for evading them; but he had a supreme a stranger stood before him. mistrust of the Dean of the Clothworkers, Deconinck, and greatly doubted whether he could safely rely upon , what he had said Herresolved, therefore, to put his words to the test and see whether it really was true, as he asserted that the men of His complexion was deeply bronzed; his features Bruges were determined to resist to the death, hard and strongly marked; his forehead scarred, rather than surrender at discretion; accordingly, in and deeply furrowed with wrinkles. Like some

watched the countenance of his adversary!! It had though he recognised one whom he was glad to not escaped his penetration that the resolute air of meet. This however, was but for a moment the

ternal level bosons and bestores stored to store

of this, he adhered firmly to the conditions he had proposed; while he regarded with apparent indifference the hostile peeparations which were being made around him.

The cool self-pessession of the Fleming was too much for De Chatillon. He was now convinced that the men of Bruges stood in no fear of him, and that they would defend their city to the last extremity. Unwilling, therefore, to stake all upon this isolated point of the game, he at last condescended to a negotiation; and, after some discussion, it was finally agreed that the magistrates should remain in office, while the other two points were conceded to the Flemings. The governor, on his part, expressly stipulated for the right of occupying the city with his troops, in whatever numbers he might think fit.

And now the terms of capitulation having been regularly engrossed, and the instrument mutually executed with all formality, the envoys returned to the town. The conditions agreed upon were made known to the citizens by proclamation from street to street, and half-an-hour afterwards the French force made their triumphant entry with banners and trumpets; while the guildsmen, with their hearts full of sorrow and of wrath, departed each to his home, and the magistrates and Lilyards issued forth from the castle. A few hours more, and to a superficial observer peace reigned through the whole city.

CHAPTER X.

Bruges being now entirely at the mercy of the French party, De Chatillon began to think seriously of executing the several commissions with which he had been charged; and the first that occurred to any way I can. Things go ill enough, truly, in our him was the securing, according to the queen's degood city of Bruges; the French are now our mashim was the securing, according to the queen's de-sire, the person of the young Matilda de Bethune. It might seem, indeed, as though nothing need this design, seeing that the city was occupied by his troops in overpowering force; nevertheless a motive of policy restrained him for a time. He was anxious, in the first instance, to establish his dominion on a firm and permanent basis; and this he conceived could be effected only by breaking once for all the power of the guilds, and erecting a strong citadel in order to overawe the town; this accomplished, he was prepared, without farther delay, to seize Matilda and send her off to France.

The arrival and entry of the French troops had filled Adolf of Nieuwland with the most serious upprehensions for his young charge, now in the midst of her enemies, and totally without defence; for though Deconinck, indeed, visited her daily, and watched over her without intermission, yet this was not enough to set at case the mind of the young knight. After the lapse of some weeks, however, finding that in fact no molestation was offered to the fair girl, he began to think that the French had either forgotten her existence altogether, or else that they had ceased to have any hostile design against her. Meanwhile his vigorous constitution, and the skillful care of his physician, had done the colour returned to his cheek their work: activity to his limbs; but not so peace and joy to his breast, in which was now opened, in truth, a fresh source of anxiety and sadness. Day by day it was his grief to behold the daughter of his prince and benefactor grow paler and paler; wasted and sickly, like a blighted flower, Matilda hined away in sorrow and anguish of heart. And he who owed his life to her tender and generous care could do nothing to help her, nothing to comfort her! Neither kind attention nor pleasant words would bring a smile upon the countenance of the sorrowing maiden; sighs and tears were the only utterance of her heart; sighs and tears for her father's unhappy lot of whom no word of tidings reached her, and for the fate of the other dear prisoners, whom now she thought to see again no more. Adolf's endeavours to mitigate her grief were incessant and fruitless; in vain he sought out for her the oldest legends and the newest toys; in vain he sang to his harp of the Lion's deeds of valour: nothing could rouse her from her depression, or dispel her dark forebodings. Gentle, indeed, she was, affectionate and grateful; but without life, without interest in aught around her. Even her favourite bird sat apart neglected, with dull spiritless eye and

drooping wing. Some weeks had now passed since Adolf's complete recovery, when one day with sauntering steps he passed the city-gates, and struck into a narrow pathway across the fields, which led him on in dreamy mood towards the little hamlet of Sevecote. The sun was fast sinking towards the horizon, and the western sky was already glowing with the tints of evening. With head bowed down, and full of bitter thought; Adolf walked on, following the path mechanically, and taking little heed whither he was going. A tear glistened from beneath his eyelide, and many a heavy sigh broke from his bosom A thousand times had he strained his imagination to find some means of alleviating the young Matilda's lot, and as often had he fallen back into despair, so sad and hopeless did it appear. And, for sloss as to the issue of the coming fight. himself, what wretchedness what shame leach day, knowing as he did the indomitable spirit of and all day long, to watch her pining away with the men of Bruges, and the probability of a des-sorrow, and sinking into an early grave, and thus perate resistance, prudence strongly dictated to to stand by the while with folded arms, powerless

alike to help, to counsel, or to console! He was now at some distance from the city Wearied more with the burden of his sadness than with the length of the way, he seated himself upon a bank, and still allowed his thoughts to drift along upon the drowsy current of his reverie. As he say

The unknown was dressed in a friar's frock of brown woollen, with a wide and deep bood; a long grey beard hung down upon his breast, and his bright black eyes were overhung by shaggy brows. a loud voice he gave the signal for advancing the way-worn traveller, he dragged his weary steps to engines to the assault.

Sufficiently the spot where Adolf sat, and for an instant a glean But Deconingk like a skillful player, had closely of satisfaction seemed to light up his features, as the spot where Adolf sat, and for an instant a gleam the French generals was merely assumed and that grave and cold expression whether real or worn as a very pit of despair this soul is filled with the for some moments with a countenance on which the French generals was merely assumed and that grave and cold expression whether real or worn as a very pit of despair this soul is filled with the for some moments with a countenance on which is first regarded the youth, bitterest angularly and cold first regarded the youth, bitterest angularly and cold for mass with the first of the world gladly ravoidable instance with the body was depicted wonder, mission the doubt border; but in the world gladly ravoidable instance of the world gladly ravoidable of the world gladly ravoidable world gladly ravoidable of the wo

Merson and collected all the softe in the land with the mention with the property out own south and faithful fullers and account of the collection of the collecti 程制的基件

Adolf, aware of the friar's presence only when the latter stood close before him, immediately rose from his seat, and greeted the stranger in words of courtesy. But the melancholy tenour of his thoughts bad communicated a tone of sadness to his voice; and, to say the truth, he had to put some violence on himself to speak at all.

"Noble sir," responded the friar, "a long day's journey has wearied me, and the pleasantness of the spot which you have chesen tempts me to loiter awhile to snatch a few moments' rest; but I pray you let me not disturb you."

So saying, he threw himself upon the grass; and, motioning with his hand, invited Adolf to do the like; who therenpon, moved either by respect for the friar's sacred character, or by some secret wish to enter into conversation with him, resumed at ouce his former seat, and thus found himself side by side with the stranger.

Something there was in the strange priest's voice which had a familiar sound to Adolf's ear, and he endeavoured to recollect when and where and under what circumstances he had heard it; but as all his efforts failed, he was at last obliged to dismiss the notion as a groundless fancy.

A short pause ensued, during which the friar re-

garded the young knight with many an anxious and inquiring glance, at length, however, he proceeded to open a conversation.

"Noble sir," he commenced, "it is now long since I left Flanders; and I should be greatly obliged by any information you could give me concerning the present state of things in our good city of Bruges. pay you be not offended at my boldness."

"How could I be offended, father?" answered Adolf. "It will be pleasure to me to serve you in ters there !"

"That seems to please you but indifferently, noble stand in the way of his immediately carrying out sir. Nevertheless, I had understood that most part of the nobles had renounced allegiance to their lawful Count, and done homage to the stranger."

" Alas! that is but too true, father. Our unfortunate Count Guy has been deserted by very many of his subjects; and still more of them there are who have tarnished the glory of their ancient name by base submission. Yet there are left some in whose veins the Flemish blood runs pure; still there are brave and loyal hearts, that have not given themselves up to the stranger.

At these words an expression of the liveliest satisfaction passed over the features of the friar. With more experience of life, Adolf might haply have perceived something both forced and feigned in the speech and countenance of his companion, betraying to a keen observer that he was playing a part which was not his own.

"Your sentiments, noble sir," he replied, "do you much honour. It is ever a true joy to me to meet with one of those generous souls who have not this his sad estate. God reward you for your loy-

"O father," cried Adolf, "would that you could so you might know the love I bear to our old lord -now, alas! so helpless-and to all his ancient house. I swear to you, father, that the happlest moment of my life would be that I should pour out

for them the last drop of my blood." The friar had good experience of men's hearts, and of their words and faces too; he could well see that there was no feigning in the young knight, and that Adolf was in very truth deeply attached to Count Guy, and devoted to his cause. After some

reflection, he resumed :-"Then, if I should one day give you the oppor tunity of making good what you have just averred you would not hold back; but would be ready, like

a man and a true knight, to defy all danger?"

"I pray you, father," cried Adolf, in a tone of supplication, "I pray you, doubt not either of my faith or of my courage. Speak now quickly; for

your silence tortures me." " Listen then,-but calmly. To Guy of Flanders and his illustrious house I am bound by the tie of countless benefits; and I have resolved, to the utmost of my power, to pay them in this their hour of need the debt of gratitude which I owe them — With this resolve I have been travelling through France; and there, sometimes by money, sometimes under colour of my priestly character, have found means to visit all the noble prisoners. I have carried to the father the greeting of the son, and brought back to the son the blessing of the father; yes, and I have even sighed and wept with poor Philippa in the dungeons of the Louvre. Thus have I mitigated their sufferings, and bridged over for a moment the gulf that separates them from each other. Many a time have I spent the night in long and toilsome journeys; many a time have I been repulsed with scorn: but little recked I of all this, if thereby I could serve my lawful princes in the time of their distress. A tear of joy which my arrival might evoke, a word of thanks which might greet me on my departure, was to me a reward against which all the gold in Flanders would have weighed as nothing."

"Blessings upon you, generous priest!" cried Adolf, "and a blessed reward shall one day be yours! But tell me, I pray you, how is it with Lord Robert?"

"Let me proceed, and you shall soon hear more of him. He lies in a darksome tower, at Bourges, in the land of Berri. Worse, however, his lot might be; for he is free from chains and fetters.-The old castellan, under whose charge he is, long ago fought in the Sicilian wars under the banner of the Black Lion; and he is now a friend rather than a gaoler to our prince.".

Adolf listened with intense eagerness ; and many a time were exclamations of heartfelt joy upon his lips. Hor restrained himself, chowever

and the friar meanwhile proceeded:

"His imprisonment (would thus be otolerable enough, had he only himself to think of ; but he is of the chamber.

- father and has a father's heart, and lit is that the property your tears. Lady Matilda," he cried. "No which suffers most. His daughter is left behind in more sadness and sorrow! Light is breaking in Flanders; and he fears lest the spiteful and cruel upon our darkness! Queen Joanna should persecute his child perhaps even to death. This dreadful thought will not disconsolately in the window, and from time to

and Matilda's name was already upon his lips, when

Adolf was about to give vent to his compassion;

a sign from the friar prevented him from speaking.
"Weigh well now," resumed the stranger in a solemn tone, "whether you in very truth are ready to risk your life for the Lion, your liege lord. The castellan of Bourges is ready to set him free for a season, upon his knightly word to render himself upon the appointed day; but he must find some faithful and loving subject to take his place the hile."
The young knight seized the priest's hands, and

kissed them with tears in his eyes.

"O happy hour!" he cried; and shall it be mine to procure this consolation for Matilda? shall she once more behold her father, and that by my assistance? How does my heart beat with gladness!— Father, you see before you the happiest man upon earth. You cannot tell what delight, what unmixed happiness, your words have given me. I will fly to my prison on the wings of joy! More precious to me than gold shall be the iron bars of my dun-geon. O Matilda! would that the winds could speed to you this rapturous news!

Without interrupting the knight's transport, the friar now rose from his seat; Adolf followed his example, and they walked on together slowly to-

wards the city.

"Noble sir," said the priest again, "I cannot but admire the generosity of your spirit; but though I doubt not of your courage, think you, have you well weighed the risk you are about to run? The deception once discovered, the reward of your devotedness is death,"

"Is death, then, a word to frighten a Flemish knight?" answered Adolf; " no, nothing shall keep me back. Did you but know how, day and night, for these six months past, I have had no other thought but to devise means how I might serve the bouse of Flanders at the peril of my life, you would hardly speak to me of danger or of fear. Even now, when first you saw me sitting sorrowfully beside the path, was I earnestly praying God to show me how I might best accomplish the object nearest to my heart; and He has answered me by you His

"We must depart this very night, lest our secret be discovered," rejoined the friar.
"The sooner the better; in thought I am already

at Bourges with the Lion of Flanders, my lord and

prince."
"But remember, sir knight, you are somewhat young for the part you have to play. It may be that in feature you are not unlike to Robert de Bethune; but the difference of age is much too great. That, however, shall be no hindrance to us; in a few moments my art shall make up the deficiency in years."

"What mean you, father? how can you make

me older than I am?" "That indeed I cannot do; but I can change your ceased lovingly to remember our old Count Guy in | face, so that the very mother who bore you should not recognize you. This I can do by means of heibs, of which I have learned to know the virtues; think not that any unlawful art hath aught to do the city, can you tell me whereabout resides one Adolf of Nieuwland?"

"Adolf of Nieuwland!" exclaimed the knight; "it is with him you are now conversing. I am Adolf of Nienwland."

Great seemed the frair's surprise; he stopped turned full upon Adolf, and regarded him with well-feigned astonishment.

"What! you Adolf of Nieuwland! Then it is in your house that the lady Matilda de Bethune now "That honor has fallen to its lot," answered

Adolf. "Your news, father, will bring it consolation; and not before it was wanted; for Matilda's life is fast wasting away with sorrow." "Here, then, is a letter from her father, which I

commit to your charge to place in her hands; for I can well perceive that it will be to you no trifling satisfaction to be the bearer of such happy tidings." With these words he drew from underneath his

frock a parchment secured with a seal and silken cord, and handed it to the knight, who received it in silence and with deep emotion. Already he seemed to be in Matilda's presence, and to have a foretaste of the joy which her delight would give him. The friar's pace was now too slow for him; so urgent was his impatience, that he always found himself a step or two in advance of his companion.

Once within the city, they soon stood before Adolf's house; and here the priest took a general but attentive survey both of it and of all the neighboring buildings, as though fixing them in his memory for future recognition. At last he said :

"Sir Adolf, I must now bid you farewell; ere the day close I will be here again; probably it may be somewhat late; meanwhile, make all the necessary preparations for your journey."

Will you not, then, allow me to present you to the lady? moreover, you are weary; I pray you do me the honor of taking refreshment and repose beneath my rooi."

"I thank you, sir; my duty as a priest calls me elsewhere; at ten o'clock I will see you again .-God have you in His holy keeping!" And with this greeting he parted from the as-

tonished knight, and turned into the Wool Street, whence he speedily vanished into Deconinck's

Transported with joy at his unexpected good fortune, which had come upon him like a golden dream, Adolf knocked with the greatest impatience at his door. His dear master's letter seemed to glow between his fingers; and as soon as the door was opened he rushed past the servant and along the corridor like one mad.

"Where is the Lady Matilda?" he inquired, in a tone which demanded speedy answer. "In the front room," replied the servant. He hurried upstairs, and hastily opened the door

As Adolf entered, the young Countess was sitting suffer him to rest, and his prison is become to him time sighing heavily! She looked at the knight

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"What mean you?" she cried at last; " what light can visit such darkness as mine?"

" Nay, but so it is, noble lady; a better lot awaits you. See, here is a letter; does not the throbbing of your heart already tell you from whose hand it comes?"

More he would have said : but, even as he spoke, Matilda sprang from her scat, and snatched the letter from his hand. Her bosom heaving, her cheeks glowing with a colour that had long been a stranger to them, and tears of joy streaming down her cheeks, she broke the seal and tore off the silken cord; and thrice her eyes wandered over the writing on the parchment ere she seemed to catch its purport. Then, at last, she understood it too well; unhappy maiden! her tears ceased not to flow, but the cause of them was changed; they were no longer tears of joy, but of new and bitter sorrow.

"Sir Adolf," at last she said, in a tone of deepest suffering. "your joy adds torture to my grief.— What was it you said? light! read, and weep with me for my unhappy father."

The knight took the letter from Matilda's hands, and, as he read it, his countenance fell. For a moment he feared that the priest had dealt treacherously by him, and had made him the bearer of evil tidings; no sooner, however, had he fully possessed himself of the contents of the letter than his suspicions vanished; but recollecting his incautious exclamations, he was seized with self-reproach, and remained silent and lost in thought. And now compassion filled Matilda's breast; seeing him musing so sadly, with his eyes fixed mournfully upon the letter, she repented of her hasty words, and approaching where he stood, while a smile gleamed through her tears, "Forgive me, Sir Adolf," she said: "be not thus

troubled. Think not that I am angry with you for having raised my hopes too high; full well I know the fervor of your zeal for all that touches me and mine. Believe me, Sir Adolf, I am not un-grateful for your generous self-devotion."

"Princely lady," he exclaimed, "I have not raised your hopes too high. I repeat, there is light for you, and my joy is not in vain. All that the letter tells you was known to me already; but it was not for that I so rejoiced. Dry your tears, lady, again I say, and cease your mourning; for

soon your father shall press you to his heart,"
"What!" cried Matilda, "can it indeed be true?
shall I, then, see my father, and speak to him? But why torture me thus? why talk to me in riddles? O Adolf! speak, I pray you, and free my heart from doubt."

A slight shade of vexation passed across the young knight's countenance. Gladly would be bave given her the explanation that she sought; but his generous spirit could not bear to publish his own deserts. He answered, therefore, in an earnest tone : "I pray you, illustrious lady, take not my silence

amiss. Be assured that you shall in truth see my lord, your father; that you shall hear his beloved voice, receive his warm embrace; and that, too, on the soil of our own dear Flanders. More to tell ou is not in my power."

But the young maiden was not to be thus put off. A double feeling,-her woman's curiosity and a lingering doubt,-alike impelled her not to rest till she had discovered the solution of the enigma. Evidently not well pleased, she began again:

"But do, Sir Adolf, -do tell me what this is which you would fain conceal from me. You surely do not rate my discretion so low as to suppose that I shall betray your secret,-I that have so much at

"I pray you, spare me, lady," he replied; "it is impossible. I must not, I cannot tell you more." With each refusal or evasion of the knight, Matilda's curiosity grew more and more. Again and again she pressed him to disclose his secret: but all in vain. To curiosity succeeded impatience, to impatience irritation; till at last she lost all selfcommand, and burst into a flood of tears, like a child that cannot have its way. Adolf could now resist no longer; he resolved

to tell herall, however much it might cost him to be the herald of his own self-sacrifice. Matilda soon read her victory in his countenance, and drawing more closely to him regarded him with a smile of pleasure, while he thus addressed her:
"Listen, then, lady, since it must be so, and hear

in how wonderful a manner this letter and these joyful tidings reached me. I had wandered out towards Sevecote, and was sitting upon the bank deep in thought, fervently beseeching Heaven to have mercy upon my lawful but unhappy lord. Suddenly, happening to raise my head, to my sur-prise I saw before me a stranger priest. In the intant it seemed to me that my prayer had been heard, and that some consolation was at hand, of which this stranger was to be the minister. And so it was, lady; for it was from his hand that I received the letter, and from his mouth the happy news. Your noble father has obtained from a generous keeper the boon of a few days' liberty: but on condition that another knight takes his place in

"O, joy !" exclaimed Matilda; "I shall see him! I shall speak with him! Ah, my father! how has my heart longed for one kiss from your lips! Oh Adolf, I am beside myself with joy! How sweet are your words, my brother ! But who will be willing to take my father's place?"

The man is already found," was the brief re-

"The blessings of our Lord be upon him! How noble a spirit must his be who can thus devote himself for my father's safety! But tell me, now, who is this generous knight? Let me know his name, that I may ever think of it with love and gratitude; that is the least return I can make to one who thus restores me to life at the instant peril of his own.

For a moment Adolf hesitated; the words would not pass his lips. At last, bending one knee to the ground, with a hasty effort he exclaimed was a Who else lady could it be than your servant Adola Lucin en allinose en de rent menones a figura en la f torment. I call out the manufacture of institution in the second second in the second second in the second second second in the second second second in the second secon