

(Copyright secured and all rights reserved.)

## OUR CENTENNIAL STORY.

## THE BASTONNAIS:

A TALE OF THE AMERICAN INVASION OF CANADA IN 1775-76.

By JOHN LESPERANCE.

## BOOK I.

## THE GATHERING OF THE STORM.

## XVII.

## A NOBLE REPARATION.

After leaving the Chateau, Roderick Hardinge repaired to his quarters, where he refreshed himself with a copious supper and then arrayed himself in civilian evening dress for his visit to M. Belmont. His mind was intensely occupied with the details of Pauline's conversation at the waterside, but his love for her was so ardent, and he felt so strong in the consciousness of duty accomplished, that he experienced no serious misgivings as to the result of the interview which he was about to hold. His feeling, however, was the reverse of enthusiastic. The more he reflected on the incident, the more he appreciated both the extent of M. Belmont's mistake and the profundity of the wound that must rankle in his proud spirit. He, therefore, resolved to hold himself purely on the defensive and to enter upon explanations to the simple extent of direct replies to direct charges. The stake was Pauline herself. On her account, he was prepared to push prudence to the limit of his own humiliation, and to make every concession that would not directly clash with his loyalty as a soldier.

Having fully made up his mind on these points, he threw his long military cloak over his shoulders and issued from the barracks. In less than ten minutes he found himself at the door of M. Belmont's residence. In spite of all his resolution, he paused before the lower step and looked about him with that vague feeling of relief which a moment's delay always affords on the threshold of disagreeable circumstance. The lower portion of the house was silent and dark, but above, a faint light appeared in the window of Pauline's room. In other days, that light had been his beacon and guiding star beckoning him from every part of the city and attracting him away from the society of all other friends. In other days, when he approached, that light would suddenly rise to the ceiling, flash along the stairway and hall and meet him glistening at the open door, held high over Pauline's raven hair. But to-night, he knew that he could expect no such welcome. He summoned all his courage, however, and struck the hammer. The door was opened by the maid, but as the vestibule remained in darkness, she did not recognize him.

"Is M. Belmont at home?" he asked in a low voice.

"Yes, sir, he is."

"Is he visible?"

The maid hesitated a moment, then said falteringly, "I will see, sir," and left him standing in the obscurity passage.

Without loss of time, M. Belmont himself stepped forward. Bowing stiffly and looking up in the vain attempt to distinguish the features of his visitor, he said:

"To whom I am indebted for this call?"

There was a tone of sarcasm in the query which almost threw Roderick off his guard. He saw that M. Belmont was racked by suspicions and must be approached with caution. He, therefore, extended his right hand and said:

"M. Belmont, do you not know me?"

That gentleman did not accept the proffered hand, but stepping backward and drawing himself up to his full height, exclaimed:

"Lieutenant Hardinge!"

Roderick made a slight inclination, but said nothing. M. Belmont continued:

"Do you come here, sir, in your military capacity?"

For all answer, Hardinge threw open his long cloak.

"Ah! you are in citizen's dress. Then I cannot understand the object of your visit. If you came as an officer of the King, the house would be yours and you could do as you liked. But if you come as a private citizen, I would remind you that this house is mine and that I will do as I like. To-night, I would particularly like not to be disturbed."

This was said with a polite sneer which cut the young officer to the quick, but he contained himself, and began quietly:

"M. Belmont..."

"Sir," was the sharp interruption, "I have given no explanations and require none. You will oblige me by..." and he finished the sentence with a wave of his hand toward the door. Roderick did not stir, but made another attempt to be heard.

"Really, M. Belmont..."

"Sir, do you mean to force yourself upon me? I know that there is a sort of martial law in the city. You are an officer. You may search my house from cellar to garret. You may quarter yourself in it. You may detain me as a prisoner. In fact you may do whatever you please. If such is your intention, say so, and I will not resist."

But if such is not your intention, I stand by my right of inviolability. Your boast is that every British subject's house is his own castle. My desire is to maintain this privilege in the present instance."

At this third summons of ejection, Hardinge's equanimity was completely shaken, and he was about to turn on his heel when, on looking up, his eye caught the hem of a white dress fluttering at the head of the stair. The sight suddenly altered his determination. Pauline was there listening to the interview upon which the future of both depended, and her presence was omnipotent to nerve his courage, as well as to inspire him with the means of successfully extricating himself from his difficult position. Roderick at once resolved to change his tactics. Drawing his cloak tightly across his chest and flinging the border of the cape over his right shoulder, in the manner of a man who has come to a decision, he said calmly:

"M. Belmont, I cannot be treated thus. I must be heard."

These words were slightly emphasized, but without bluster or defiance, and they had a visible effect on the listener, for he immediately folded his arms as if to listen. Hardinge continued:

"It is true, sir, that I came to your house as a private citizen and as a presumed old friend of your family."

M. Belmont uttered a moan and made a gesture of deprecation.

"But since it is plain that my presence in that capacity is distasteful, I will add now that I am also here in my quality as a soldier. The object of my visit is really a military one, and as such I beg you to hear me."

"Why did you not say so at first?" exclaimed M. Belmont with a bitter laugh. "Mr. Hardinge I do not know. Lieutenant Hardinge I cannot choose but hear. Lieutenant, please step into my parlor."

Lights were immediately brought into that apartment and the two took their stand before the fire-place, Hardinge having declined a seat. Glancing at M. Belmont, Roderick was shocked at the change that had come upon him within three days. He seemed like another man, his features being pinched, his eyes sunken, and his manner quick and nervous. The normal calm of his demeanor was gone, and his stately courtesy was replaced by a restless petulance of hands. He stood uneasily near the mantel waiting for the young officer to speak. Hardinge at length said:

"M. Belmont, this interview shall be brief, because it is painful to both of us. Indeed, so far as I am concerned, there is only word to say, and it is this—that, although I have had some important military duties to perform in the last few days, not one of these was or could be directed against you."

M. Belmont looked dubiously at Hardinge and shook his head, but answered nothing. Roderick bit his lip and resumed:

"The statement that I make, sir, though brief, covers the whole ground of your suspicions and accusations. I know what these are and hence my statement is very deliberate. I ask you to accept it as my complete defence."

M. Belmont looked into the fire and still kept silent.

"Must I construe your silence as incredulity, sir? If so, I will instantly leave your house, nevermore to enter it. But before taking what to me will be a fatal step, I must observe that I had never believed that a perfect French gentleman like you, M. Belmont, would doubt the faith of a British officer like me, and my distress will be intensified by the reflection that your daughter, who formerly favored me with her esteem, will hereafter see in me only the brand of dishonor stamped upon my character by her own father. For her sake I will say no more, but take my departure at once."

At these words there were heard the rustling of a dress and suppressed sobs outside the parlor door. Both the men noticed the sounds and instinctively looked at each other. The eyes of Hardinge were suffused with tears, while those of M. Belmont mellowed with an expression of solemn pity.

"Stay, Lieutenant," he said in a low voice. "It strikes me all at once that my silence may possibly be unjust. If I thought your statement embraced all the circumstances of the case, I should not hesitate to accept it, but I fear that you do not know how far my grievances extend."

"I am certain that I know all," said Hardinge in a significant tone which was not lost upon his interlocutor, who immediately subjoined:

"This can be easily ascertained if you will answer me a few questions. You called upon Lieutenant-Governor Cranmahé early on the morning of the seventh?"

"I did so."

"You delivered to him a parcel of letters purporting to come from Colonel Arnold, the commander of the Bastonnais?"

"Yes, sir."

"Some of those letters were addressed to citizens of Quebec?"

"They were."

"You know the names of those citizens?"

"I do not."

"Did not the Lieutenant Governor open the letters before you?"

"He did."

"And read them?"

"Yes, and read them."

M. Belmont's lip curled in scorn and his eyes darted fire at Hardinge, who responded with a smile:

"The Lieutenant Governor opened and read the letters in my presence and, after reading, made his comments aloud, but in no instance did he reveal the name of the persons to whom the letters were addressed, so that I am, to this moment, in profound ignorance of them. Except by inference from what has occurred between us, I should not know that one of those letters was addressed to you, and, indeed, as yet I have no positive proof that such was the case."

"Such is the case," cried M. Belmont in a voice of thunder. "I received such a letter and it has brought me into trouble. I was summoned to the Chateau in the face of the whole city. I have been suspected and threatened and the consequence is that I have been driven to..."

"Stop, M. Belmont," said Hardinge quietly, and interposing his hand. "Tell me nothing of your plans. I do not want to know them. I will do my duty to my King and Country. I believe you will do yours, but should your principles lead you to another course, I prefer to ignore the fact and thus avoid becoming your enemy."

"You are not and will not be my enemy," exclaimed M. Belmont, clasping the extended hand of Hardinge in both of his, and then embracing him on the cheek. "I owe you a full apology. My suspicions were cruelly unjust, but you have dispelled them. My treatment of you this evening was outrageous, and I beg you to pardon me. Your explanations are thoroughly satisfactory. You did your duty as a soldier in delivering those letters to the Lieutenant Governor, and even if you had known to whom they were addressed, your obligation would have been no less."

"I did not need to be told my duty," said Hardinge with just a shade of haughtiness, which he immediately qualified by adding, "but I am flattered to know that I have the approval of one who has always appeared to me a model of honor."

"You have my unqualified approval, Lieutenant. Although you were the indirect instrument of the crisis through which I am passing, I am satisfied that you are clear of the imputation of traitor and spy to me which I had charged upon you in my indignation and despair. We are on the eve of important events. Within a few days war with all its anxieties and horrors will be upon us. You have high duties to perform both as a citizen and a soldier. Perform them with all the energy of your nature. It is your sacred duty. I will watch your course with the deepest interest. Your successes will be a source of personal pleasure to me, and I sincerely trust that no harm will befall you."

Roderick was quite overcome by this cordial speech, which was to him more than a reparation for all he had endured during the interview. He rejoiced too at his own perspicacity in having so accurately divined the real cause of M. Belmont's misunderstanding. It was lamentable, indeed, that Arnold's letters which he had delivered to the Lieutenant Governor should have implicated M. Belmont—if they did implicate him, a fact of which he had yet no proof and which he still refused to credit—but they had been the means of awakening the authorities to a sense of the peril with which Quebec was threatened, and that was some compensation for what he had suffered. But there was, however, another compensation for which he longed, notwithstanding that the hour was considerably advanced and he had to return to his military duties. Approaching closer to M. Belmont, with a pleasantly malicious smile upon his lips, he said:

"I have to thank you, sir, for the kind words which you have spoken. I regard them in the light of the reparation which I knew you would not withhold so soon as you became acquainted with the facts, but you will excuse me for saying that there is just one little thing wanting to make the reparation complete."

M. Belmont looked up in some surprise, but when he saw the expression on Roderick's face, he comprehended the allusion at once and replied with genuine French good-humour and vivacity.

"O, of course, there is a woman in the case. You want to be rehabilitated in the eyes of Pauline as well. It is only just, and it shall be done. I told her all my suspicions against you, and repeated all my charges to her. And, by the way, that reminds me that I never told any body else about the matter. How, then, pray, did it come to your ears? You must have known of it before you came here to-night."

"I did, sir, and came expressly on that account."

"Who in the world could have told you?"

Hardinge broke out into a hearty laugh. The laugh was re-echoed by a silvery voice in the passage.

"Treason is indeed rampant," roared out M. Belmont, cheerily. "A man's worst enemies are those of his own household." Saying which, he advanced rapidly to the door and opened it wide. Pauline stood before him, her eyes swimming in tears, but with a smile of ineffable joy playing on her white lips.

"Don't embrace me, don't speak to me," said

M. Belmont with mock gravity. "I will hear no explanations. Settle the matter with this gentleman here. If he forgives you, as he has forgiven your father, then I will see what I can do for you."

He went out of the room, leaving Pauline and Roderick together for a full quarter of an hour. There is no need to say that the twain laughed and wept in turns over their victory.

When M. Belmont returned from his cellar with a choice bottle of old Burgundy, the reconciliation was complete, and that night the happiest hearts in Quebec were those of Roderick Hardinge and Pauline Belmont. M. Belmont was content at having done a good deed, but he was not really happy. Why, the sequel will tell.

(To be continued.)

## NATIONAL SALUTATIONS.

Some years ago a learned and ingenious writer in the *Quarterly Review* attempted to establish the relation of cause and effect between national character and verbal forms of salutation. In the "shalum"—peace—of the Jews he traced the appreciation of a nomadic people of what was to them the highest because rarest good, and he matched it with equivalent words of greeting among the Bedouins and the American Indians. In the *chaire*—be glad—of the Greeks, he saw plain indications of a disposition whose leading tendency and chief aim were to rejoice and be merry. In the "salve"—be healthy—and "vale"—be strong—of the Romans he perceived manifestations of the spirit befitting the conquerors of the world, who only in later and degenerate times condescended to the "Quid agis, dulcissime rerum," the "Quid agis," as he conjectures, being far older than the "dulcissime rerum" with which Horace connects it. What could be more appropriate than the "sanitae gualagno"—health and gain—of the commercial Genoese, the "eresete in sanita"—grow in piety—of the priest-ridden Neapolitans, and the "rah vash"—your slave—or "kholop vash"—your self—of the Russians? Similar lessons are to be derived, it was contended, from the "comment vous portez-vous" and "comment va vatt-il" of the French, the "buenas tardes" and correlative replies of the Spaniards, the "wie gehts" and "leben Sie wohl" of the Germans, the "come sta" and "come state" of the Italians, the "Hoe vaart's ge" of the Hollanders, the "Hur mar ut" of the Swedes, the "lev-vel" of the Danes, and so forth. "How is your stomach?" says the "Heathen Chinee!" "Do you perspire copiously?" inquires the polite Egyptian; both of which particular queries, and many more besides, are included in our comprehensive formula, "How are you?" But "How do you do?" can only be described as "an epic self-contained," if, as it is affirmed, it is sufficient to account for Trafalgar, Waterloo, steam-engine, railway, Exeter Hall, *Times* newspaper, *Punch* itself, and if, as it is affirmed, it ought to have been made the chorus of "Rule Britannia." "To do!" Surely this contains the whole essence of productive existence, national or individual. To do! It is the law and the prophets, the theoretic and practice, the whole texture of life. And this doing is so universal among us, it is such a completely recognized and accepted fact that we do not ask a man, What do you do? but, How do you do? Do you must; there is no question about that—a very useful thing to be remembered, in one sense, in all business transactions. The correct theory of "How do you do?" has, however, yet to be constructed, like that, perhaps of "ave."

Nunc et in aeternum, Frater, ave atque vale.

## DOMESTIC.

**BARLEY SOUP.**—Two pounds of shin of beef, quarter of a pound of pearl barley, a large bunch of parsley, four onions, six potatoes salt and pepper, four quarts of water. Put in all the ingredients and simmer gently for three hours.

**TO CURE A COLD.**—Eat absolutely nothing after breakfast, during the day, and at night, just before retiring, heat the feet thoroughly hot in the fire and drink copiously of hot herb tea the last thing. Catnip is best, though any domestic herb is good.

**FLANNEL.**—A flannel vest should be worn next the skin all the year round, and in winter a pair of flannel drawers coming up high round the waist should be added. Attacks of diarrhoea, dysentery, or even cholera, may be prevented by this protection.

**WARM FOOD.**—The warmest food is probably pea-soup. The warmest meat is fresh pork. The warmest drink is tea with ginger in it, which is excellent on long journeys in the cold. Coffee is good too; but wine is bad, and spirits are dangerous as well as bad, being apt to bring on jaundice.

**CUTTING GLASS.**—To cut a bottle in two, turn it as evenly as possible over a gaslight flame for about ten minutes. Then dip steadily in water, and the sudden cooling will cause a regular crack to encircle the side at the heated place, allowing the portions to be easily separated.

**A HINT FOR THE LAUNDRY.**—A tablespoonful of black pepper put in the first water in which gray and buff linens are washed will keep the colors of black or colored cambrics or muslins from running, and does not harden the water. A little gum arabic imparts a gloss to ordinary starch.

**CARROT SOUP.**—Four quarts of liquor in which a leg of mutton or beef has been boiled, a few beef-bones, six large carrots, two large onions, one turnip; seasoning of salt and pepper to taste. Put the liquor, bones, onions, turnip, pepper, and salt into a stewpan, and simmer for three hours. Scrape and cut the carrots thin, strain the soup on them, and stew them till soft enough to pulp through a hair-sieve or coarse cloth; then boil the pulp with the soup, which should be of the consistency of pea-soup. Add cayenne. Keep only the red part of the carrot, and make this soup the day before it wanted.