

fied Sherman of their intention to return to the Union, and that Sherman has subsequently halted in his march. It is further reported, that Vice-President Stephens expressed a desire to meet Federal commissioners in Canada. Very little credit attaches to the reports.

Richmond papers of Wednesday contain nothing definite about Sherman. Telegraph communication appears to be interrupted beyond Milledgeville, probably by Federal Cavalry.

Sheridan had a severe cavalry engagement with Early in the Shenandoah on Tuesday, lasting six hours. It appears to have been brought on by a Federal reconnoissance, and was without definite results.

RETALIATION.

(Concluded.)

Providence came to my aid. One afternoon, I was leaving the Kasbah for a stroll in the town, when one of the hospital assistants brought me a paper, which, he said, had been found in Raymond's name. "It is the letter," he said, "of a particulaire," Fatima by name. I thought, sir it might interest you."

The perusal of this letter filled me with surprise. It was brief, merely making an appointment, but what revelations in the name!

"What, then, those exclamations of Castagnac's in his fits," I said to myself, "had reference to a woman, and Duterte had also relations with her. It was to keep his appointment that he had asked my leave to go out! Yes the note is dated the 3rd of July. The very day. Poor fellow, not being able to get out in the day he ventured forth by night by that frightful road, and Castagnac was awaiting him!

As I was thus reflecting, I had arrived in front of a vaulted building or arched way as usual to the wind, and where an old patient of mine Sidi Humayun by name, distributed coffee to a few scanty customers. I determined at once to consult this kawaji, so I took my place on the matting by the side of half a dozen natives in their red fezoes with blue silk tassels, and their long chibaks in their laps. The kawaji, without pretending to know me, brought me my pipe and cup of coffee in silence. Presently the muezzin was heard calling to prayer; the faithful rose up, stroked their beards, and departed slowly for the mosque. I was alone.

Sidi Humayun, looking around him to see that we were really so, then approached me, and, kissing my hand, "Lord Taleb," he said, "what brings you to my humble abode? What can I do in your service?"

"I want you to tell me who Fatima is."

"Lord Taleb, in the name of your mother, do not see that woman."

"Why so?"

"She is perdition to the faithful and to the infidel. She possesses a charm that kills. Do not see her!"

"Sidi Humayun, my resolve is made. She possesses a charm! well! I possess a greater. Hers entails death, mine gives life, grace, and beauty! Tell her that Sidi; tell her that the wrinkles of age disappear before my charms. I must see her."

"Well, then, since such is your will, Lord Taleb, come back tomorrow at the same hour. But remember what I said to you; Fatima makes an evil use of her beauty."

You may imagine if I awaited the appointed time with impatience. I thought the maezzin would never summon the faithful to prayer again. At last his low, plaintive monotonous voice made itself heard from the top of the minaret, and was taken up from one to another, till it seemed as if soaring over the indolent city. I slowly paced my way to the coffeehouse, so as to give time to the guests to retire. Sidi was already shutting up his shop.

"Well!" I said to him, breathless with anxiety.

"Fatima awaits you, Taleb."

He affixed the bar, and, without further explanation, led the way. Leaving the main street, he entered the Suma, a passage so narrow that two could not walk abreast—a mere chaos, yet crowded with industrious persons of many nations—Moors, Bebers, Jews, Copts, and Arabs. Suddenly Sidi Humayun stopped at a low doorway, and knocked.

"Follow me," I said; "you will act as interpreter."

"Fatima can speak French," he replied, without turning his head.

The door was opened by a Nubian slave, who, letting me in, as quickly shut it against the kawaji. She then led the way to an interior court paved with mosaic-work and upon which several doors opened. The slave pointed to one, by which I entered a room with open windows shaded by silken curtains with Moorish designs. An amber-coloured mat covered the floor, while cushions of violet-coloured Persian shawls lined the divan, at the extremity of which sat Fatima herself, her eyes veiled by long dark lashes, straight and small nose, pouting lips, and beautiful little feet.

"Come in Lord Taleb," she said; "Sidi Humayun has told me of your visit. You are good enough to interest yourself in the fate of poor Fatima, who is getting aged—yes, she will soon be seventeen—seventeen! the age of regrets and wrinkles. Ah! Lord Taleb, sit down, you are welcome!"

I scarcely knew how to reply, but, recovering myself, I said:

"You scoff with infinite grace, Fatima. I have heard your wit spoken of no less than your beauty, and I see that I have heard the truth."

"Ah!" she exclaimed. "By whom then?"

"By Duterte?"

"Duterte?"

"Yes, Raymond Duterte, the young officer who fell over the precipice of the Kasbah. He whom you loved, Fatima."

She opened her great eyes in surprise.

"Who told you that I loved him?" she inquired, looking at me with a strange expression. "It is false! Did he tell you so?"

"No. But I know it. This letter proves it to me—this letter, which you wrote, and which was the cause of his death, for it was to get to you that he risked himself at night upon the rock of the Kasbah." Scarcely had I uttered the words than the young Oriental rose up abruptly, her eyes lit up with a gloomy passion.

"I was sure of it!" she exclaimed. "Yes, when my Nubian brought me word of the accident, I said to her, 'Aissa. It is he who has done it. The wretch!'"

"Whom do you mean, Fatima?" I said astonished at her anger.

"I do not understand you."

"Of whom? Of Castagnac? You are the Taleb at the hospital. Well, give him poison. He is a wretch. He made me write to the officer to tell him to come here. I refused to do it. Yet this young man had sought for my acquaintance for a long time, but I knew that Castagnac owed him a grudge. When I refused, he declared he would come out of the hospital to beat me if I did not, so I wrote. Here is his letter."

I went forth from Fatima's with a heavy heart, but my resolution was soon made. Without losing a minute on the way, I ascended to the Kasbah, entered the hospital, and knocked at Castagnac's door. "Come in! What, is it you?" he said, forcing a smile. I did not expect you!"

For all answer I showed him the letter that he had written to Fatima. He turned pale, and, having looked at it for a second, made a movement as if to throw himself upon me.

"If you make a step towards me," I said, placing my hand upon the hilt of my sword, "I will kill you like a dog! You are a wretch. You have assassinated Duterte. I was at the amphitheatre: heard all. Do not deny it! Your conduct towards that woman is infamous: a French officer to lower himself to such a degree of infamy! Listen! I ought to deliver you over to justice, but your dishonour would defile us all. If an atom of honour remains within you, kill yourself! I grant you till tomorrow. Tomorrow by seven, if I find you still living, I will myself take you before the commandant de place."

Having said this, I withdrew without waiting for his reply, and went at once to give the strictest orders that Lieutenant Castagnac should not be permitted to leave the hospital under any pretext whatsoever. Since Castagnac's guilt had been rendered evident to me I had become pitiless. I felt that I must avenge Raymond. Having procured a torch, such as our spahis use in their night carousals, I shut myself up in the amphitheatre, closing its strong doors with double bars. I took up my position at the window, intending the fresh breeze of the evening and thinking over the horrible drama in which I was called to play so prominent a part till night came on. Some hours had passed thus, and all was buried in the deepest silence, when I heard stealthily steps descending the staircase. They were followed by a knock at the door. No answer. A feeble hand then sought for the keyhole.

"It is Castagnac," I said to myself.

"Open!" exclaimed a voice from without. I was not deceived, it was him. A stout shoulder made an effort to shake the door from its hinges. I moved not, scarcely breathing. Another and a more vigorous effort was then made, but with the same want of success. Something then fell on the ground, and the footsteps receded. I had escaped assassination.

But what would become of him? Once more, as if by instinct, I took up my position at the window. I had not waited long before I saw the shadow of Castagnac advancing along the foot of the wall. The hard-hearted criminal stopped some time to look up at my window, and seeing nothing, moved on slowly with his back to the rampart. He had got over half the distance when I cast the shout of death at him:

"Raymond, where are you going?"

But whether he was prepared for whatever happened, or that he had more hardihood than his victim, he did not move, but answered me with ironic laughter:

"Ah, ah! you are there doctor; I thought so. Stop a moment, I will come back, we have a little matter to arrange together."

Then lighting my torch, and raising it over the precipice:

"It is too late," I said, "look, wretch, there is your grave!"

And the vast steps of the abyss, with their black shining rocks, were illuminated down to the depths of the valley. It was so terrible a vision that I involuntarily drew back myself with horror at the scene. What must it have been to him who was only separated from it by the width of a brick! His knees began to tremble, his hands sought to cling to something on the face of the wall.

"Mercy!" exclaimed the assassin, in a hoarse voice, "have mercy on me!"

I had no heart to prolong his punishment. I cast the torch forth into space. It went down slowly, balancing its flames to and fro in the darkness, lighting up rocks and shrubs on its way, and casting sparks on the void around. It had already become but as a luminous point in the abyss, when a shadow passed by it with the rapidity of lightning.

I then knew that justice had been done.

As I ascended to my own room, my foot struck against something. I picked it up; it was my sword: Castagnac, with characteristic perfidy, had resolved to kill me with my own sword, so as to leave an opening for belief in suicide. I found, as I had anticipated, my room in utter disorder, the door had been broken open, my books and papers ransacked, he had left nothing untouched. Such an act completely dissipates whatever involuntary pity I might have felt for the fate of such a wretch.

Medical Copartnership.

THE Public are hereby informed that Dr. TUTT has entered into a Professional copartnership with W. N. WICKWIRE, M. D., a Graduate of the University of Edinburgh, N. Y., who may be at all times consulted at their Office 101 Hollis Street, (next door South of the Halifax Hotel.)
Halifax, Nov. 18, 1864. 1m

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