VOL. XXVII.

MONTREAL, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1876.

NO. 13.

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THE LION OF FLANDERS;

OR.

THE BATTLE OF THE GOLDEN SPURS.

BY HENDRIK CONSCIENCE.

-:-0-:--

A heavy blow resounded upon either breast, as of hammer upon anvil, and both reeled backwards from the shock, which, however, did but inflame their rage the more. A short deep growl mingled with their heavy breathing, and with their arms they seized each other round the body as in a vice of steel. Every limb was strained to the uttermost, every nerve quivered, every muscle was in play; their veins swelled, their eyes became blood-

shot, their brows from red grew purple, and from purple livid; but neither could win upon the other by an inch of ground; one would have said their feet were rooted where they stood. After some time spent in this desperate struggle.

the Frenchman suddenly made a step backwards, twined his arms round Breydel's neck, and taking a firm purchase forced the Fleming's head forwards and downwards so as in some degree to disturb his balance; then, following up his advantage without the loss of a moment, Leroux made yet another effort with increased energy, and Breydel sank on one knee beneath the overpowering attack.

The Lion is on his knees already!' cried the French champion, triumpliantly, dealing at the same time a blow on the head of the butcher that might have felled an ox, and well nigh laid him prostrate on the ground. But to do this with effect, he had been obliged to release Breydel with one hand, and, at the very moment that he was raising his fist to repeat the blow, the latter extricated himself from the single grasp which held him, rose from the ground, and retreated some few paces; then rushing upon his adversary with the speed of lightning, he seized him round the body with a hug like that of a forest bear, so that every rib cracked again. The Frenchman, in his turn, wound his limbs about his foe with a terrible vigour, strengthened by practice and directed by skill, so that the Fleming felt his knees bend beneath him, and again

they nearly touched the ground. An unwonted sensation atole into Breydel's heart, as though for the first time in his life it had begun to fail him. The thought was madness; but, even like madness, it gave him strength; suddenly loosing his hold, and again retreating, at the same time lowering his head, like a furious bull he rushed upon Leroux, and butted him in the chest, before the Frenchman could foresee, much less provide against this new attack. Reeling under the shock, blood burst from his nose, mouth, and ears; while at the same moment, like a stone from a catapult, the Fleming's fist descended upon his skull; with a long cry he fell heavily to the earth, and all was

Now you feel the Lion's claws!' cried Breydel. The soldiers who had been witnesses of the conflict had indeed encouraged the French champion by their shouts; but had rigorously abstained from any further interference. Chey now crowded about their dving comrade, and raised bim in their arms; while Breydel, with slow and deliberate steps, 16called for another stoup of beer, from which he exclaimed; has your ears; for I have need thinking and repeatedly drank to quench his burning; "Brothers, lend; me, your ears; for I have need thirst

has this part with past pool africe. The He had now been sitting thereasome time, and was beginning to recover himself from the fatigue have never before had to endure."

In the combat, when the door opened behind him:

Masters and journeymen alike pressed eagerly

four pair of powerful hands, and roughly thrown him so violently excited; all eyes were according-upon the ground, while in a moment after the room ly fixed upon him as he continued: was filled by armed soldiers. For some time he maintained a fruitless struggle against numbers; but at last, exhausted with this new conflict, he ceased to resist, and lay still, regarding the Frenchmen with one of those terrible looks that precede a death-blow given or received. Not a few of the soldiers looked on the Fleming, as he lay, with hearts ill at ease, so fiercely and threateningly did his flam-

ing eyes glare upon them.

A knight, whose dress sufficiently betokened his rank, now approached; and after ordering his men to keep a secure hold upon the prisoner,

"So, scoundrel!" said he, "we know one another

of old: you are the ruffian that, in the forest near Wynandael, killed one of Messire de Chatillon's men-at-arms, and even went so far in your insolence as to threaten us knights with your knife; and now I find you murdering one of my best soldiers on my own ground. But you shall have your re-ward; this very day shall you be gibbeted upon the castle wall, that your friends in Bruges may see you dangling, and know what comes of rebellion."

"You belie me foully," exclaimed Breydel; "I have killed my opponent in fair fight and in self-defence; and only give me fair play, and I will

show you the same over again." "You dared to insult the royal banner of France

"I spoke up for our own Black Lion, and so I will do while breath is left me. But come, either lift me up, or finish me at once; don't let me lie here like a slaughtered ox."

At a word from St. Pol, the soldiers raised their prisoner from the ground, but without for a moment loosing their hold, and cautiously led him to the dicket behind St. Cross."

door. Breydel walked slowly and quietly along,

After a few special inst two of the strongest of his captors holding him by the arms, and as many closely preceding and following him, so as to render assistance useless and escape impossible; and many a taunt had he to listen to the while from the soldiers who guarded

"Be easy, my fine fellow!" cried one; "show us a brisk dance upon nothing to morrow, and we will keep the ravens from you afterwards."

Breydel answered only by a look of withering

"If you dare to look at me so, you accursed Claward," cried the soldier, "I will give it you across

"Coward Frenchman !" retorted Breydel; "that is ever your way,—to insult your enemy when he is in your power, base hirelings of a despicable master!"

A blow on the cheek from the soldier next him was the reply. Breydel ceased to speak, and bowed his head upon his chest, as though utterly cast expedition were seven hundred in number; never-down; but in truth his spirit burned within him all theless, so intent were they on effecting their purthe while, like the fire which smoulders deep in the pose, that the most perfect silence prevailed among bosom of a slumbering voicano. The soldiers, however, misinterpreted his silence, and jeered him all the more bitterly now that he answered them not a

Just at the moment, however, that they were about to step upon the drawbridge, their laughter suddenly ceased, and their faces became pale with terror. Breydel had suddenly collected all his strength, and extricated his arms from their grasp. Like a panther, he sprang upon the two soldiers who had been the most forward in jeering him, and like the wild beast's jaws his iron fingers clutched their throats.

"For you, Liou of Flanders, will I die!" he cried; "but not on a gallows, and not unrevenged."

And as he spoke, so fiercely did he grasp the throats of his two foes, that in a moment they hung senseless in his hands; then dashing their heads together with such violence that the blow re-echoed from the castle-walls, with one tremendous throw he cast them from him helpless upon the earth.

This feat of strength and energy was the work of less time than it has taken to describe it; and for a moment the surprise so paralysed the whole party. that Breydel gained time for flight, and was already at some distance from his enemies before they fully recovered their senses. The soldiers were soon in pursuit of him, however, with shouts and curses; and the chase was vigorously kept up, till at last he succeeded, by a tremendous leap, in putting a wide ditch between himself and his pursuers, of whom only two were bold enough to follow him. On reaching the ditch, and attempting to cross, both fell into the water, and the pursuit was thereupon at an end. Without further molestation, the courageous butcher returned to the city, and arriv-

ed safely at his own home.
On entering the house, Breydel found, to his astonishment, that no one was within except a young journeyman, who was himself just in the act of go-

ing forth.
"What is this? Where are my men?" he cried

impatiently. "Well, master," answered the youth, "they are all gone to our hall; a hasty message came to tell us

that we were all to meet there." "What is going on, then?" "I don't rightly know, master; but this morning the city-crier read a proclamation of the magistrates, enjoining all citizens who live by work or trade to pay every Saturday so much of their week's

earnings to the tax-gatherers; and we suppose that this is the reason why the Dean of the Clothworkers has ordered all the trades to assemble at their halls." "Stay you and shut up the shop," said Breydel, and tell my mother not to be alarmed if I should not come home to-night; most probably I shall

not. He took his axe from where it hung, hid it under his gown, and was soon at the hall of his guild, where his entrance was immediately greeted by a murmur of satisfaction.

"Here is Breydel! here is Breydel!" was echoed by all present, while the provisional president im-mediately made place for him in the chair of honour. Breydel, however, instead of occupying it as tired from the ground and made his way back to usual, seated himself upon a stool, and looking the room where the quarrel had begun. Here he round with a grim smile upon his comrades, he

of you. To day a dishonour has been put upon me, and, in me, upon our whole guild, such as we

"You, like myself, are true born citizens of Bruges; you, like myself, have too long been suffering under the disgrace and burden of bondage; but all that is nothing to what I had to endure to-day. By Heaven! I hardly know how to tell you of it for very shame."

The bronzed checks of the butchers already glowed with wrath, though as yet they knew not the cause of the offence; every fist was clenched and muttered curses rose to the lips of all.

"Listen, my brothers," pursued Breydel, "and bear the shame as you best can; listen attentively, for you will scarcely believe your ears: a French dog has smitten your Dean upon the face,—yes, on this very check !"

If the butchers had been wroth before, they were furious beyond all measure on hearing these words. Cries of rage re-echoed from the vaulted roof, and fearful oaths of vengeance durst on every side.
"How," continued Breydel, " can such a blot be

washed away ?" "With blood !" was the upamons response.

"I see you understand me, brothers," said the Dean: "yes, that is the only way. Now, you must know that it is by the soldiers of the garrison, at Male that I have thus been handled. Will you not say, with me, that when to-morrow's sun rises upon Male, he shall find no castle there?"

A unanimous cry of assent followed this appeal. "Come, then," pursued Breydel, " let us go! Every one to his home. Let each take his keenest axe, and any other arms he can provide; we shall want, too, what may serve for scaling-ladders. At eleven o'clock to-night we assemble in the alder-

After a few special instructions to the Ancients, the assembly broke up.

That night, a little before the appointed hour, might been seen in the moonlight, upon the divers paths in the neighborhood of St. Cross, a multitude of figures, all wending their way in one direction, and finally disappearing in the alder-thicket. Some of them carried crossbows, others clubs; the most of them, however, without any visible weapons. Already in the thickest of the wood stood Jan Breydel, taking counsel with his fellow-leaders as

to the side on which they should attack the castle. At last it was unanimously determined to make the attempt from the side of the drawbridge, first filling in a portion of the ditch, and then endeavoring to scole the walls. A number of the young journeymen had been busily at work cutting brushwood and small trees, and binding fascines; and everything needful for the esclade being in rendy-

ness, the Dean gave the word to set forward. The chronicles tell us that the men forming this expedition were seven hundred in number : neverthem; not a sound was heard but the wary trend of their footsteps, the dragging of the branches along the earth, and the baying of the dogs, disturbed by the unwonted noise. At a bowshot from the castle they made halt, and Breydel, with a small party, advanced to reconoitre. The sentinel, meanwhile, from his station above the gate, had caught the sound of their approach, though yet uncertain of its import, now came forward upon the wall to make his observations.

"Wait a moment," cried one of the butchers : "I will quickly rid you of this listening dog."

And as he spoke a bolt from his crossbow rapidly winged its way towards the sentinel. The aim, indeed, was good, but the missile shivered its If upon the tempered steel of the sentinel's breast plate, and at the same instant the alarm was given

"France! France! an attack! to arms! to arms!"

" Forward, comrades !" shouted Brevdel. " For-

ward! Here with the fascines!" No sooner was it said than done. The ditch was bridged, the ladders planted, and a scaling-party stood upon the walls before any effectual resistance could be opposed to them. Within, meanwhile, the garrison was hurrying to arms, and in a few moments more than fifty of them were in radiness to oppose the assailants. For an instant Jan Breydel and his followers had the worst of the fray; there were hardly more than thirty of them yet within the castle; and, without helm or mail as they were, the French arrows rained fearfully upon them. But this did not last long; in a short time all the Flemings had made good their entrance.

"Now, comrades, to work !" cried Braydel. "Fol-

And, like a ploughshare through the earth, he opened a way through the enemy's ranks. Every stroke of his axe cost a foeman's life, and his garments were speedily drenched with the blood of the slain. His comrades advanced with no less fury, and drowned the death-cries of their victims

with their shouts of triumple While the conflict was thus raging upon the ramparts and in the court yard, the castellan, Messire de St. Pol, seeing that there was no longer any hope of defending the fortress, ordered some of his man-at-arms to get to horse with all possible speed. A few moments after a female figure was led, weeping and trembling, from an inner chamber, and placed before one of the mounted soldiers. The fally-port was then opened, the little body of horsemen issued from the walls, and, swimming the ditch disapp are d amid the surrounding wood.

Surprised and outnumbered as they were, the garrison defended themselves with courage and obstinacy. All resistance, however, was vain, and an hour later not a Frenchman remained alive within the castle. All that had not fullen under the terrible axes of the butchers had made their escape by the postern.

Breydel's wounded honor was now avenged; but

his end was only half attained, for the Lady Matil. da had not yet been found. After a long and fruitless search in every corner and crevice of the castle for aught but tears." from its loftiest turrets to its deepest dungeons under the guidance of one who knew it well, he hastily closing his visor, turned towards the road, as was obliged to conclude that, she was carried off. It anxiously giving his car to some distant sound. And now, to make his vengeance complete, he set! A noise as of the tramp of horses was now audible

CHRONICLE.

Round about the fire-bell resounded from village to village, and the peasants, as in duty bound, hurried up to help at the call; but they arrived only to be spectators of the scene of destruction, which, to say the truth, did not greatly displease them.
"There!" shouted Breydel, with a voice at once deep and clear, as the last turnet fell in; "now let

to-morrow's sun look down upon the place where the castle of Male once was !

And the butchers marched off in a body to Bruges singing in chorus as they went the song of the Lion.

CHAPTER XIII.

At the time of the conquest of West Flanders by the French, in the year 1296, the castle of Nieuwenhove had offered them an especially obstinate resistance. A great number of Flemish knights had shut themselves up within it under Robert de Bethune, fully resolved to listen to no proposals of surrender so long as a single man remained in a condition to defend himself. But their valour was in vain against the overpowering force of their assailants; most of them perished, fighting desperately on the ramparts. The French, on entering through the breach effected by their engines, found not a living soul within the walls; and for want of living beings upon whom to wreak their vengeance. they fired the castle, and afterward deliberately battered down what the flames had spared, and filled up the most with the rubbish.

The ruins of the castle of Nieuwenhove lay some few miles from Bruges, in the direction of Courtrai, surrounded by thick wood. At a considerable dis-tance from any human babitation, it was but seldom that the place resounded with the foot of man; the more so, as the incessant screeching of the night-birds, which harboured there in great numbers, had possessed the country-people with the idea that the spot was haunted by the unquiet spirits of the Flemings who had fallen in the com-bat, and who now wandered upon earth crying for vengeance, or wailing after repose. But, though ruined for all purposes of defence or habitation, the castle was yet not so utterly destroyed but that its ground-plan could be distinctly traced. Even considerable remnants of the walls were still standwork which had formerly supported them; and windows might here and there be seen, of which the stone mullions were yet undestroyed. Every thing betokened a devastation effected in haste; for while some portions of the building had been deliberately and effectually demolished, others again had been left comparatively uninjured. The had done their work to increase the wildness of the prisoner rode to make his escape with his cold grey of the shattered walls, and was itself relieved in turn by the varied tints of the flowers which grew profusely amongst it.

forerunner of the rising sun, was just appearing upon the eastern verge of the horizon, the ruins of Nieuwenhove lay reposing in their dim shadow, and the face of the still slumbering earth showed itself only under uncertain tints,-they could not vet be called colors. - while the heavens had already begun to don their mantle of blue. Here and there their hold, and then both sank together to the a night-bird was still on the wing, screeching as it sought its hiding-place before the coming light.

The figure of a man was scated amidst the ruins, upon one of the heaps of rubbish. A plumeless helmet covered his head, and the rest of his person was clothed in complete armour. His steel gauntlet rested upon a shield, of which the cognisance would have been sought in vain, so completely was it obliterated by a broad transverse stripe of some non-heraldic color. All his armour was black; even the shaft of the long spear which lay on the ground beside him was stained with the same that the unconscious maiden was not crushed and hue, as if to betcken the deep and hopeless success of the wester's heart. At a little distance stood a hoofs. The combatants, though panting with horse as black as his rider, so completely harded fatigue, weak with loss of blood or severe conwith steel plates that it was with difficulty the tusions, seemed to have no cidea of anything but animal could bow its head so as to crop the tops of fighting to the death. And now the black knight the tall herbage. The sword that hung at the saddle-bow was of extraordinary size, and seemed | the Frenchmen's hearts leaped with exultation as as if suited only for the hand of a glant.

The sileuce which reigned in the ruins was broken by the knight's deep-drawn sighs; and for an instant after be rode at them at full speed ever and anon he motioned with his hands, as and so well had he calculated his blow, that, even though engaged in an animated discourse. At last, as he reached the nearest of them, helmet and head after many anxious and suspicious glances around him in every direction, he ventured to raise the visor of his helmet, so far as to make his features visible. They were those of a man far advanced maining companion instantly turned rein and fled, in years, deeply wrinkled, and with grey hair. All in the full conviction that it was no mortal adthough his countenance bore all the signs of long and severe suffering, yet the extraordinary vivacity of his eyes testified of the fire which still glowed within his breast. For some moments he remained lost in thought, gazing fixedly upon the ruins; then a bitter smile passed over his lips, his head sank upon his breast, and he seemed intent upon something at his feet; at last a tear fell from either eye, as he thus spoke:

O my brave brothers in arms! these stores have been wetted with your noble blood, and here beneath my feet you sleep the long sleep of death! But harpy you who have left this troublous life in your country's cause, and without having seen our beloved Fanders in bondage. The blood of him to whom you gave the name of the Lion bedewed this ground along with yours; but, less fortunate than you, he still survives—an outcast, left to sigh over your silent graves, like a helpless woman, impotent

Suddenly the knight rose from his seat, and the to the four corners at the building. Soon the in the distance. As soon as he had convinced flames mounted high into the heavers, the walls himself that his first impression had not deceived cracked and fell, the infuriated assalants he wall him; the kinight selzed his spear, and hastly mountdown the gates, the bridge, the posts, and hurled ing his charger, took up his station behind a porand before he could turn Lis head, he was seized by around their Dean. Never before had they seen them into the burning pile. Long before morning | tion of the wall, so as effectually to conceal himself calling out the home reserves.

nothing wes left of the magnificent castle of Male that the fury of the butchers and the devouring fire could lay waste.

from view. He had not long occupied his post, however, when other sounds fell upon his ear along with those which it had already caught; tbrough the clank of almour and the rapid tramp of the horses, he could now distinctly hear the lamentations of a female voice. At this his cheeks grew pale under his helmet, not with fear,-forthat was a thing his heart knew not,-but his honor as a knight, his feeling as a man, urged him to suc-cour the helpless, and above all to protect a woman, while at the same time a high mission and a solemn vow forbade him to expose himself to recognition. The mental struggle which he had thus to undergo showed itself plainly in his countenance.

But the party drew nearer, and he could distinctly hear the maiden's words, as with an agonizing voice, she cried: "Father! oh, my father!" a voice, too, which, though he recognized it not, had yet something in its sound that spoke irresistibly to his heart. In an instant all hesitation was at an end; giving the spur to his horse, he hastily made his way over the heaps of rubbish, and came forth upon the open road a little in advance of a body of six horsemen, who were proceeding along it at a rapid pace, and who, by their accourtements appeared to be French. They were without lances, though otherwise armed at all points, and one carried before him upon the saddle a female, whose wild and terrified air, irrespective of the exclamations of distress which occasionally burst from her lips, sufficiently indicated that she was an unwilling captive in their hands. With levelled spear the black knight awaited them. The Frenchmen no sooner beheld this unlooked-for opponent, than they reined in their horses, and regarded the stranger with looks of wonder not unmixed with fear; while he that seemed to have the command of the escort advanced to the front, and called out in a loud

"Out of our way, sir knight, or we ride over you!"
"Stand, false and dishonorable knight!" was the answer, "stand and let go this lady, or you will have me to deal with!'

"Forward! down with him!" cried the leader to his men. But the black knight gave them no time to make their onset; stooping upon his charger's neck, he dashed in full career upon the astonished Frenchmen, and in an instant one of them fell mortally wounded from his saddle. The rest meanwhile had upon him from all sides with their drawn swords, and St. Pol, the leader of the band, had already with a tremendous blow cut away one of the sable champion's shoulder-plates. Seeing himself thus beset, the knight dropped his spear and drew his giant sword, and, wielding it with both hands, speedily cleared a space around him; for after a special country of his property of his respective of his property of his respective of hi short experience of his prowess, no one of his opponents dared to venture within its sweep. St. castle-yard still formed an enclosure, though but a Pol, whose horse, irritated by a wound, was no broken one, and encumbered in every direction longer fully at his command, perceiving now that with heaps of rubbish and scattered stones. Durthe issue of the conflict was less certain, at all ing six years, moreover, which had now clapsed events less immediate, than he had anticipated, since the assault and conflagration, time and nature | made a sign to the soldier on whose horse the scene; a vegetation, rank and luxuriant, in part But the black knight was as vigilant as he was concealed, in part set off with its rich green and valiant. By a sudden movement he barred the way, and, dexterously parrying the blows which rained upon him, "For your life, set her down!" he cried in a voice of thunder; and, as the soldier It was four in the morning; a faint glimmering, turned off on the road, and sought to slip by him on one side, the mighty sword descended quickly upon his head, and cleft him to the teeth. In two red streams the blood gushed from the unhappy man, encrimsoning the white drapery of the young girl, and bedabbling her fair locks. For a moment the arms of the dying man convulsively retained

> the soldier motionless and senseless. Meanwhile the black knight had already laid prostrate another of his foes, of whom now only three remained. But these seemed rather exasperated than intimidated by the fall of their companions, and the fight continued with increased fury. The horses tore up the ground, and seemed themselves to take part in the conflict; wonder it was trampled upon as she lay beneath their iron-shod suddenly reined his horse back a few paces, while they thought that he was at last about to retreat,-But they did not long enjoy this pleasing illusion, went flying across the road. This dexterous feat completed the discomfiture of the foreigners; for, astonished and terrified, St. Pol and his one reversary they had encountered.

> ground. The consciousness of the young maiden

had failed her under the alternate agitations of

hope and terror, and she lay beside the corpse of

These events, which have taken so many words to describe, were crowded into a few rapid mo-ments. The sun had not yet risen above the horizon, the fields still lay in dim twilight; but the veil of mist was already lifting itself from off the woods, and the tops of the trees were beginning to show a brighter green.

(TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.)

The Czar Alexander, together with Prince Gortschakoff, Baron Jomini, and other notabilities, including the Czarina and the Duchess of Edinburgh, were, at last accounts, in the Crimea. At the Warsaw military review, the Czar, addressing the troops, said that although there might be no immediate necessity for putting their efficiency to the test, yet it was well to have a trustworthy force ready for any emergency. The St. Petersburg newspaper Golos asserts that Russia has at present nearly one million men under arms and twenty-six hundred and seventy field-pieces, and that the army can be increased to two and a half million men without