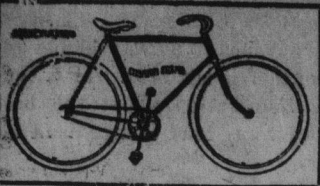


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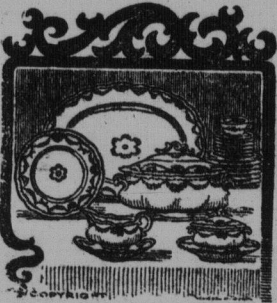
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### SCOTCH CURLERS.

Their Reply to the Scotch Whiskey Allegations.

There Were Some "Unco Guid" in Canada Who Raised a Storm in a Teapot.

The Liverpool Post of March 2nd reported the return of the Scotch curlers from Canada and the United States, and says: "The gentlemen from Scotland who had come to meet the team brought with them what is known as the 'curlers' cove,' viz., a species of broom made of heather, which is used for sweeping the ice at curling matches. They had with them quite a number of these brooms, and as the curlers came down the gangway on to the stage, the brooms were elevated into a sort of arch, under which the returning curlers passed into the customers' room. The first passenger to land was a Scotch curler. He had on a heavy fur-lined overcoat, and he was enthusiastically greeted by his friends on shore, who rushed forward to shake hands with him. A similar cordial welcome was extended to the other members of the team. All present displayed the utmost good humor, and many a joke was passed in the broad Scotch dialect. From a conversation which our representative had with members of the team and their friends, it appeared that the visit made to Canada and the United States had been a most enjoyable one. They were received with great enthusiasm in Canada, and were very well treated. They found many enthusiastic curlers among the Canadians, and, in fact, they were more enthusiastic than the curlers of Scotland themselves. They played about ninety matches and won more than half. The Canadians played a good scientific game. With regard to the Canadians generally, they noticed that their loyalty was very pronounced."

One of the players who remained in Liverpool, as well as other friends, stated that the talk about the "drumming" habits of the Scotch, as cabled from the dominion, had been greatly exaggerated. Scotchmen, he admitted, liked a "wee drapple" when it was

"guid," but they were no "aye dramming," as some people tried to make out. In Scotland there was a league not to drink "afore twelve" of the day, whatever they might do "about midnight." The Canadians made no attack on them with regard to their partiality for a "stoup." In fact, it was quite the contrary, for they got plenty of it and to spare during their pleasant trip in Canada. Among their fellow Scots in Canada there were some "unco guid" creatures, namely, a Scotchman who raised a storm in a teapot, or a "mutchkin," but it speedily fizzled out. There was nothing but fraternal "Tam O'Shanter and Souter Johnny" relations between them all through, and if they had anything to complain "about," it was the kind of the folks in Ontario, which was "a' Scotch-Scotch as Scotland and mair sae, especially Hamilton," where the thistle was supreme and flourishing. The fact that the Scotch curlers lost many matches was due to the special training and long practice of the Canadian curlers. They played of ten for five months in the year—a practice which made the Scotch "water," for Scotland, however grand, could "nae boast ava" or such particular opportunities. If they were often beaten, they were never disgraced, and all, if the laurel were a bit taken, it was by Scotchmen, and "a' the rest was mere havers."

#### WARNING TO ELOQUENCE.

(Brooklyn Eagle.)  
The Rev. C. H. Parkhurst is widely noted for the plain way he has of stating facts in a discourse last Sunday he referred to those who are in the habit of dropping a nickel in the plate after having listened to a discourse and of giving five cents' worth of evangelical responsiveness.

#### THANKFULNESS.

(Argonaut.)  
While Lord Charles Berensford was in New York he told of one of his tenants who conducted a small undertaker's establishment in Waterford. One day he met her and asked how the business was getting along. "Grand, me lord," she exclaimed, "I now have the luckiest little hearse you ever saw. It is a 'new model'—it was never a day idle since I got it."

Traveller (to hotel clerk)—I want a room and a bath please.  
Hotel Clerk—Well, I can give you a room, but I haven't time to give you the bath just now.—Columbia Jester.

You can't judge by appearances, paw, said Farmer Sorghum's eldest daughter. Beneath the roughest exterior may nestle the heart of gold.

## THE LORD OF CHATEAU NOIR.

(By A. CONAN DOYLE.)

It was in the days when the German armies had broken their way across France, and when the shattered forces of the young republic had been swept to the south of the Loire. Three broad streams of armed men had rolled slowly but irresistibly from the Rhine, now meandering to the north, now to the south, dividing, coalescing, but all uniting to form one great lake round Paris. And from this lake there welled out smaller streams, one to the north, one southward to Orleans, and a third westward to Normandy. Many a German trooper saw the sea for the first time when he rode his horse girth-deep into the waves at Dieppe.

Black and bitter were the thoughts of Frenchmen when they saw this sea of dishonor stretched across the face of their country. They had fought and they had been overborne. That swarming cavalry, those countless footmen, the masterful guns they had tried and tried to make head against them. In battle their invaders were not to be beaten; but man to man, or ten to ten, they were their equals. A brave Frenchman might still make a single German run the day that he had left his own bank of the Rhine. Thus, unchronicled amid the battles and the sieges, broke out another war, a war of individualism, for murder upon the one side and brutal reprisal upon the other.

Colonel von Gramm, of the 24th Posen Infantry, had suffered severely during this new development. He commanded in the little Norman town of Les Andelys, and his outposts stretched amid the hamlets and farm-houses of the district round. No French force was within 50 miles of him, and yet morning after morning he had to listen to a black report of sentries found dead at their posts, or of foraging parties which had never returned. Then the colonel would go forth in his wrath, and farmsteadings would blaze and villages tremble; but still morning there was still that same dismal tale to be told. Do what he might, he could not shake off his invisible enemies. And yet, it should not have been so hard, for from certain signs in common, in the plan and in the deed, it was certain that all these outrages came from a single source.

Colonel von Gramm had tried violence and it had failed. Grief might be more successful. He published it abroad over the countryside that 500 francs would be paid for information. There was no response. Then 800. The peasants were incorruptible. Then, galled on by a murdered corporal, he rose to 1,000, and so bought the soul of Francois Robane, farm laborer, whose Norman aversion was a stronger passion than his French hatred.

"You say that you know who did these crimes?" asked the Prussian colonel, eyeing with loathing the blue-blooded, rat-faced creature before him. "Yes, colonel."

"And it was —?"  
"Those thousand francs, colonel!"  
"Not a sou until your story has been tested. Come! Who is it who has murdered my men?"

"It is Count Eustace de Chateau Noir."

"You lie!" cried the colonel, angrily. "A gentleman and a nobleman could not have done such crimes."

The peasant shrugged his shoulders. "It is evident to me that you do not know the count. It is his wife, colonel. What I tell you is the truth, and I am not afraid that you should test it. The Count of Chateau Noir is a hard man; even at the best time he was a hard man. But of late he has been terrible. It was his son's death, you know. His son was under Douay, and he was taken, and then in escaping from Germany he met his death. It was the count's only child, and indeed we all think that it has driven him mad. With his peasants he follows the German armies. I do not know how many he has killed, but it is he who cuts the cross upon the foreheads, for it is the badge of his house."

It was true. The murdered sentries had each had a saltire cross slashed across their brows as by a hunting-knife. The colonel bent his stiff back and his forehead over the map which lay upon the table.

"The Chateau Noir is not more than four leagues," he said.

"Three and a kilometre, colonel."

"You know the place?"

"I used to work there."

"Give me this map and detain him," said he to the sergeant.

"Why detain me, colonel? I can tell you no more."

"We shall need you as guide."

"As guide? But the count? If I were to fall into his hands? Ah, colonel!"

The Prussian commander waved him away.

"Send Captain Baumgarten to me at once," said he.

The officer who answered the summons was a man of middle age, heavily-jawed, blue-eyed, with a curving yellow moustache, and a brick-red face which turned to an ivory white where his helmet had sheltered it. He was bald, with a shining, tightly-stretched scalp, at the back of which, as in a mirror, it was a favorite mess-joke of the subalterns to trim their moustaches. As a soldier he was slow, but reliable and brave. The colonel could trust him where a more dashing officer might be in danger.

"You will proceed to Chateau Noir tonight, captain," said he. "A guide has been provided. You will arrest the count and bring him back. If there is an attempt at rescue, shoot him at once."

"How many men shall I take, colonel?"

"Well, we are surrounded by spies, and our only chance is to pounce upon him before he knows that we are on the way. A large force will attract attention. On the other hand, you must not risk being cut off."

"I might march north, colonel, as if to join General Goeben. Then I could turn down this road which I see upon your map, and get to Chateau Noir before they could hear of us. In that case, with 20 men—"

"Very good, captain. I hope to see you with your prisoner tomorrow morning."

It was a cold December night when Captain Baumgarten marched out of Les Andelys with his 20 Posners, and took the main road to the north-west. Two miles out he turned suddenly down a narrow, deeply rutted track, and made swiftly for his man. A thick cold rain was falling, swishing among the tall poplar trees and rustling in the fields on either side. The captain walked first with Moser, a veteran ser-

gent, beside him. The sergeant's wrist was fastened to that of the French peasant, and it had been whispered in his ear that in case of an ambush the first bullet fired would be through his head. Behind them the 20 Posners followed along through the darkness with their faces sunk to the rain, and their boots squeaking in the soft, wet clay. They knew where they were going and why, and the thought upheld them, for they were bitter at the loss of their comrades. It was a cavalry job, they knew, but the Posners were all on with the advance, and besides, it was more fitting that the regiment should avenge its own dead men.

It was nearly eight when they left Les Andelys. At half-past eleven their guide stopped at a place where two high pillars, crowned with some heraldic stonework, flanked a huge iron gate. The wall in which it had been the great gate still towered above the brambles and weeds which had overgrown its base. The Prussian broke their way round it, and advanced stealthily, under the shadow of a tunnel of oak branches, up the long avenue, which was still cluttered by the leaves of last autumn. At the top they halted and reconnoitred.

The black chateau lay in front of them. The moon had shone out between two rain-clouds, and threw the old house into silver and shadow. It was shaped like an L, with a low arched door in front, and lines of small windows, like the open ports of a man-of-war. Above was a dark roof breaking at the northern corners into little round overhanging turrets, the whole lying silent in the moonshine, with a drift of ragged clouds blackening the heavens behind it. A single light gleamed in one of the lower windows.

The captain whispered his orders to his men. Some were to creep to the front door, some to the back. Some were to watch the east, and some the west. He and the sergeant stole on tiptoe to the lighted window.

It was a small room into which they looked, very meagrely furnished. An elderly man in the dress of a mental patient was reading a tattered paper by the light of a guttering candle. He leaned back in his wooden chair with his feet upon a box, while a bottle of white wine stood with a half-filled tumbler upon a stool beside him. The sergeant thrust his needle-gun through the glass, and the man sprang to his feet with a shriek.

"Silence, for your life! The house is surrounded and you cannot escape. Come round and open the door, or we will show you no mercy when we come in."

"For God's sake, don't shoot! I will open it! I will open it!" He rushed from the room with his paper still crumpled in his hand. An instant later, with a groaning of old locks and a rasping of bars, the low door swung open, and the Prussians poured into the stone-flagged passage.

"Where is Count Eustace de Chateau Noir?"

"My master! He is out, sir."

"Out at this time of night? Your life for a lie!"

"It is true, sir. He is out."

"Where?"

"Doing what?"

"I cannot tell. No, it is no use your cocking your pistol, sir. You may kill me, but you cannot make me tell you that which I do not know."

"Is he often out at this hour?"

"And when does he come home?"

"Before daybreak."

Captain Baumgarten rasped out a German oath. He had had his journey for nothing, then. The man's answers were only too likely to be true. It was what he might have expected. But at least he would search the house and make sure. Leaving a picket at the front door and another at the back, the sergeant and he drove the trembling butler in front of them—their shaking hands sending strange flickering shadows over the old tapestries and the low, oak-raftered ceilings. They searched the whole house, from the huge, stone-flagged kitchen below to the dining hall on the second floor with its gallery for musicians, and its panelling black with age, but nowhere was there a living creature. Up above in an attic they found Marie, the elderly wife of the butler; but the owner kept no other servants, and of his own presence there was no trace.

It was long, however, before Captain Baumgarten had satisfied himself upon the point. It was a difficult house to search. Thin stairs which only one man could ascend at a time, connected lines of tortuous corridors. The walls were so thick that each room was cut off from its neighbor. Huge fire-places yawned in each, while the windows were six feet deep in the wall. Captain Baumgarten stamped with his feet, and tore down curtains and struck with the pommel of his sword. If there were secret hiding-places, he was not fortunate enough to find them.

"I have an idea," he said, at last, speaking in German to the sergeant. "You will place a guard over this fellow, and make sure that he communicates with no one."

"Yes, captain."

"And you will place four men in ambush at the front and at the back. It is likely enough that about daybreak our bird may return to the nest."

"And the others, captain?"

"Let them have their suppers in the kitchen. This fellow will serve you with meat and wine. It is a wild night, and we shall be better here than on the country road."

"I will take my supper here in the dining-hall. The logs are laid and we can light the fire. You will call me if there is any alarm. What can you give me for supper—?"

"Alas, monsieur, there was a time when I might have answered, 'What you wish!' but now it is all that we can do to find a bottle of new claret and a cold pullet."

"That will do very well. Let a guard go about with him, sergeant, and let him feel the end of a bayonet if he plays us any tricks."

Captain Baumgarten was an old campaigner. In the Eastern provinces, and before that in Bohemia, he had learned the art of quartering himself upon the enemy. While the butler brought his supper he occupied himself in making his preparations for a comfortable night. He lit the candelabrum of ten candles upon the centre table. The fire was already burning up, crackling merrily, and sending spurts of

blue, pungent smoke into the room. The captain walked to the window to look out. The moon had gone in again, and it was raining heavily. He could hear the deep sough of the wind and see the dark looms of the trees, all swaying in the one direction. It was a sight which gave a zest to his comfortable quarters, and to the cold fowl and the bottle of wine which the butler had brought up for him. He was tired and hungry after his long tramp, so he threw his sword, his helmet, and his revolver belt down upon a chair, and fell to eagerly upon his supper. Then, with his glass of wine before him and his cigar between his lips, he tilted his chair back and looked about him.

He sat within a small circle of brilliant light which gleamed upon his silver shoulder-straps, and threw out his terra-cotta face, his heavy eyebrows, and his yellow moustache. But outside that circle things were vague and shadowy in the old dining-hall. Two caped Normans, heavy with his repeat, lay back in his chair looking up at them through the clouds of his tobacco smoke and pondering over the strange chance which had sent him, a man from the Baltic coast, to eat his supper in the ancestral hall of these proud Normans, chieftains. But the fire was hot, and the captain's eyes were heavy. His chin sank slowly upon his chest, and the ten candles gleamed upon the broad white scalp.

Suddenly a slight noise brought him to his feet. For an instant it seemed to him that one of the pictures opposite had walked from its frame. There, beside the table, and almost within arm's length of him, was standing a huge man, silent, motionless, with no sign of life save his fierce, glinting eyes. He was black-haired, olive-skinned, with a pointed tuft of black beard, and a great, fierce nose, towards which all his features seemed to run. His cheeks were wrinkled like a last year's apple, but his sweep of shoulder, and bony, corded hands, told of a strength which was unassayed by age. His arms were folded across his chest, and his mouth was set in a fixed smile.

"Pray do not trouble yourself to look for your weapons," he said, as the Prussian cast a swift glance at the empty chair in which they had been laid. "You have been, if you will allow me to say so, a little indiscreet to make yourself so much at home in a house every wall of which is honey-combed with secret passages. You will be amused to hear that 40 men were watching you at your supper. Ah! well!"

Captain Baumgarten had taken a step forward with clinched fists. The Frenchman held up the revolver which he grasped in his right hand, while with the left he hurled the German back into his chair.

"Keep your seat," said he. "You have no cause to trouble about your men. They have already been provided for. It is astonishing with these stone floors how little one can hear what goes on beneath. You have been relieved of your command, and have now only to think of yourself. May I ask what your name is?"

"I am Captain Baumgarten, of the 24th Posen Regiment."

"Your French is excellent, though you incline, like most of your countrymen, to turn the 'p' into a 'b.' I must amuse to hear them cry 'aves little sur moi!' You know doubtless, who it is who addresses you."

"The Count of Chateau Noir."

"Precisely. It would have been a misfortune if you had visited my chateau and I had been unable to have a word with you. I have had to do with many German soldiers, but never with an officer before. I have much to talk to you about."

Captain Baumgarten sat still in his chair. Brave as he was, there was something in this man's manner which made his skin creep with apprehension. His eyes glanced to right and to left, but his weapons were gone, and in a struggle he saw that he was but a child to this gigantic adversary. The count had picked up the claret bottle and held it to the light.

"And was this the best that Pierre could do for you? I am ashamed to look you in the face, Captain Baumgarten. We must improve upon this."

He blew a call upon a whistle, which hung from the shooting-jacket. The old manservant was in the room in an instant.

"Chamberlain from bin 15!" he cried, and a minute later a grey bottle streaked with cobwebs was carried in as a nurse bears an infant. The count filled two glasses to the brim.

"Drink!" said he. "It is the very best in my cellars, and not to be matched between Rouen and Paris. Drink, sir, and be happy! There are cold joints below. There are two lobsters fresh from Honfleur. Will you not venture upon a second and more savory supper?"

The German officer shook his head. He drained the glass, however, and his host filled it once more, pressing him to give an order for this or that dainty.

"There is nothing in my house which is not at your disposal. You have but to say the word. Well, then, you will allow me to tell you a story while you drink your wine. I have so longed to tell it to some German officer. It is about my son, my only child, Eustace, who was taken and died in escaping. It is a curious story, and I think that I can promise you that you will never forget it."

"You must know, then, that my boy was in the artillery, a fine young fellow, Captain Baumgarten, and the pride of his mother. She had died within a week of the news of his death reaching us. It was brought by a brother officer who was at his side throughout, and who escaped while my lad died. I want to tell you all that he told me."

"Eustace was taken to Weissenburg on the 4th of August. The prisoners were broken into parties, and sent back into Germany by different routes. Eustace was taken upon the fifth to a village called Lauterburg, where he met with kindness from the German officer in command. This good colonel had the hungry lad to supper, offered him the best he had, opened a bottle of good wine, as I have tried to do for you, and gave him a cigar from his own case. Might I entreat you to take one from mine?"

The German again shook his head. His horror of his companion had increased as he sat watching the lips that smiled and the eyes that glared.

"The colonel, as I say, was good to

my boy. But, unluckily, the prisoners were moved next day across the Rhine to Ettlingen. They were not equally fortunate there. The officer who guarded them was a ruffian and a villain, Captain Baumgarten. He took a pleasure in humiliating and ill-treating the brave men who had fallen into his power. That night, upon my son answering fiercely back to some taunt of his, he struck him in the eye, like this!"

The crash of the blow rang through the hall. The German's face fell forward, his hand up, and blood oozing through his fingers. The count settled down in his chair once more.

"My boy was disfigured by the blow, and this villain made his appearance the object of his jeers. By the way, you look a little comical yourself at the present moment, captain, and your colonel would certainly say that you had been getting into mischief. To continue, however, my boy's youth and his destitution—for his pockets were empty—moved the pity of a kind-hearted major, and he advanced him ten Napoleons from his own pocket without security of any kind. Into your hands Captain Baumgarten, I return the gold pieces, since I cannot learn the name of the lender. I am grateful from my heart for this kindness shown my boy."

"The 'lie tyrant' who commanded the escort accompanied the prisoners to Durlach, and from there to Carlsruhe. He heaped every outrage upon my lad, because the spirit of the Chateau Noir would not stoop to turn away his wrath by feigned submission. Ay, this cowardly villain, whose heart's blood shall yet clot upon this hand, dared to strike my son with his open hand, to kick him, to tear hair from his moustache—to use him thus—and thus—and thus!"

The German writhed and struggled. He was helpless in the hands of this huge giant whose blows were raining upon him. When at last, blinded and half-senseless he staggered to his feet, it was only to be hurled back again into the great oaken chair. He sobbed in his impotent anger and shame.

"My boy was frequently made to tears by the humiliation of his position," continued the count. "You will understand me when I say that it is a bitter thing to be helpless in the hands of an insolent and remorseless enemy. On arriving at Carlsruhe, however, his face, which had been wounded by the brutality of his guard, was bandaged by a young Bavarian subaltern who was touched by his appearance. I regret to see that your eye is bleeding so. Will you permit me to bind it with my silk handkerchief?"

He leaned forward, but the German dashed his hand aside.

"I am in your power, you monster!" he cried; "I can endure your brutalities, but not your hypocrisy."

The count shrugged his shoulders. "I am taking things in their order, just as they occurred," said he. "I was under vow to tell it to the first German officer with whom I could talk tete-a-tete. Lo me see, I had got as far as the young Bavarian at Carlsruhe. I regret extremely that you will not permit me to use such slight skill in surgery as I possess. At Carlsruhe, my lad was shut up in the 'Kaserne,' where he remained for a fortnight, the worst pang of captivity was that some unmanly curs in the garrison would taunt him with his position as he sat by his window in the evening. That reminds me, captain, that you are not quite situated upon a bed of roses yourself, are you, now? You come to trap a wolf, my man, and now the beast has you down with his fangs in your throat. A family man, too, I should judge, but that well-filled tunic. Well, a widow the more will make little matter, and they do not usually remain widows long. Get back into the chair, you dog!"

"Well, to continue my story—at the end of a fortnight my son and his friend escaped. I need not trouble you with the dangers which they ran, or with the privations which they endured. Suffice it that to disguise themselves they had to take the clothes of two peasants, whom they waylaid in a wood. Hiding by day and travelling by night, they had got as far into France as Remilly, and were within a mile—a single mile, captain—of crossing the German lines when a patrol of Uhlans came right upon them. Ah! it was hard, was it not, when they had come so far and were on ear to safety?"

The count blew a double call upon his whistle, and three hard-faced peasants entered the room.

"These must represent my Uhlans," said he. "Well, then, the captain in command, finding that these men were French soldiers in civilian dress without trial or ceremony, I think, Jean, that the centre beam is the strongest."

The unfortunate soldier was dragged from his chair to where a noosed rope had been flung over one of the huge oaken rafters, which spanned the room. The cords slipped over his head, and he felt his hands gripped round his throat. The three peasants came to the other end, and looked to the count for his orders. The officer, pale, but firm, folded his arms and stared defiantly at the man who tortured him.

"You are now face to face with death, and I perceive from your lips that you are praying."

"So face to face with death, and he prayed, also. It happened that a general officer came up, and he heard the lad praying for his mother, and it moved him so—he being himself a father—that he ordered his Uhlans away, and he remained with his side-decamp and only, beside the condemned men. And when he heard all the lad had to tell, that he was the only child of an old family, and that his mother was in failing health, he threw off the rope as I throw off this, and he kissed him on either cheek, and I kiss you, and he bade him go, as I bid you go, and every kind wish of that noble general, though it could not save off the fever which slew my son, descend now upon your head."

And so it was that Captain Baumgarten, disfigured, blinded, and bleeding, staggered out into the wind and rain of that wild December dawn.

Coughs, colds, hoarseness and other throat ailments are quickly relieved by Cresceno Tablets, ten cents per box. All druggists.

There had been a slight shock of earthquake, and Mr. Herlihy and Mr. Dolan had both felt it.

Tim said Mr. Dolan, solemnly, what did you think when first the ground began to tremble?

Think! echoed his friend, scornfully. What man that had the use of his legs to run and his lungs to roar would waste his time thinking? Tell me that!—Youth's Companion.

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