



# The Volunteer Review

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### ROLL CALL.

"Corporal Green!"—the orderly cried,  
"Here!" was the answer, loud and clear,  
From the lip of a soldier standing near,  
And "Here," was the word the next replied.

"Cyrus Drew,"—then a silence fell—  
This time no answer followed the call,  
Only his rear man saw him fall,  
Killed or wounded—he could not tell.

There they stood in the falling light,  
Those men of battle, with grave, dark look—  
As plain to be read as open books,  
While slowly gathered the shades of night.

The fern on the hill was splashed with blood,  
And down in the corn where the poppies grew,  
Were redder stains than the poppies knew  
And a crimson-dyed was the river's flood.

For the foe had crossed from the other side,  
That day in the face of murderous fire  
That swept them down in its terrible tide,  
And their life-blood went to color the tide.

"Herbert Cline,"—at the call their came  
Two stalwart soldiers into the line,  
Hearing between them this Herbert Cline,  
Wounded and bleeding to answer his name.

"Ezra Kerr," and a voice answered "here!"  
"Hiram Kerr," but no man replied;  
They were brothers those two; the set wind  
sighed,  
And a shudder crept through the corn field near.

"Eobrtalm Deane"—then a soldier spoke,  
"Deane carried our regiment's colors," he said,  
"When our Ensign was shot; I left him down!  
Just after the enemy wavered and broke."

"Close to the road-side his body lies;  
I paused a moment and gave him to drink;  
He murmured his mother's name, I think,  
And death came with it and closed his eyes."

"Twas a Victory—yes; but it cost us dear;  
For that company's roll when it led at night,  
Of a hundred men that went into the fight,  
Numbered but twenty that answered "Here!"

### AN ACT OF TERRIBLE JUSTICE.

#### CHAPTER I.

In 1845, said the Doctor, I was attached, as assistant-surgeon, to the military hospital of Constantine. This hospital rose in the interior of the *Kasba*, upon a pointed rock from three to four hundred feet high, overlooking the entire city, the governor's palace, and the immense plain which stretches away farther than the eye can reach. It is a wild and imposing point of view. From my window, opened to let in the evening breezes, I could nearly pitch my cigar into the Rummel, which winds by the foot of the gigantic wall of rock.

Garrison life has never had any charms for me; I could never find pleasure in drinking glasses of absinthe, rum, or brandy. At the time of which I am speaking, this was called

want of spirit; it was a kind of spirit which my gastric faculties did not permit me to exhibit. I was obliged to limit myself, therefore, to visiting my patients: to writing my prescriptions: to doing my duty: this done, I retired to my own room to make notes, to look over my books, or to revise my observations, and put them in order. In the evening, when the sun was slowly withdrawing his rays from the plain, with my elbow resting on the sill of my window, I stood dreamily watching this grand spectacle of nature, always the same in its marvellous regularity, and yet eternally new: a distant caravan winding its way over the hill-sides; an Arab galloping on the limits of the horizon, and lost to my sight as if he had faded into space; some cork-oak trees cutting with their leafy outline the purple bars of the setting sun, or, far off, and high above me, the wheeling of the birds of prey, their clearing wings, spread darkly against the sombre azure of the sky, all this attracted, captivated me; I could have remained there for hours, had not duty forcibly carried me away to the dissection-table.

Nobody troubled themselves to criticise these tastes of mine—except a certain lieutenant of Voltigeurs, named Castagnac, whose portrait it is necessary that I should here draw for you.

On stepping from the public vehicle, at the moment of my first arrival at Constantine, I heard a voice behind me say: "I'd bet that this is our new assistant surgeon."

I turned and found myself in the presence of an infantry officer, tall, dry, bony, red-nosed, his kepi cocked over his ear, with the peak pointed up to the sky, and his sabre between his legs; it was Lieutenant Castagnac. Before I had fully made out his strange physiognomy, the Lieutenant had shaken me by the hand. "Welcome, Doctor!" he cried. "Enchanted to make your acquaintance. You're fatigued? Let us go in at once; I'll undertake to present you to the club."

The "club" at Constantine is simply the officers' place of refreshment,—their eating-house.

We entered; for how could I resist the sympathetic enthusiasm of such a man, even though I had read "Gil Blas?"

"Here!—waiter!"—cried my conductor; "two glasses! What do you drink. Doctor? Cognac?—rum?"

"No; curaçoa."

"Curaçoa! Oh!—why not *parfait-amour*? You've a funny taste, Doctor! Waiter! a glass of absinthe for me,—a full one—up to the brim. Good! Your health, Doctor!" "Yours, Lieutenant."

It was thus that I was at once instated in the good graces of this strange individual.

I need hardly say that this kind of intimacy could not long be pleasant to me; I very quickly discovered that my friend Castagnac had a confirmed habit of being deeply plunged into the reading of the newspaper whenever the moment for payment arrived. This characteristic will give you a good idea of the man. On the other hand, I made the acquaintance of several other officers of the same regiment, who laughed heartily with me at this new kind of Amphitryon. One among them, named Raymond Dutertre, a brave young fellow, told me that, on his joining the regiment, something had happened to him.

"I detest backbiting," he said, "so I told Castagnac what I had to say before some of our comrades. He took the thing ill; and we went to a quiet place under the walls, where I gave him a pretty little cut with the point, which played the devil with the reputation of a skull cracker which he had gained in some lucky duels he had fought."

Things were in this state when, towards the middle of June, fevers make their appearance in Constantine; the hospital received not only military patients, but a great number of the inhabitants, entailing upon me a considerable amount of extra work; and interfering with my regular habits.

Among my patients were Castagnac and Dutertre. Castagnac was not suffering under an attack of fever, however, but under a strange affection called *delirium tremens*,—a state of delirium, of nervous trembling peculiar to drunkards, and especially to individuals who abandon themselves to the drinking of absinthe. It is preceded by great restlessness, sudden shudderings; it is characterised by redness of face and alcoholic odour in the breath. While the attack was upon him, he uttered frequent and terrible cries, in the midst of which he repeated a woman's name, "Fantima! Fantima!" a circumstance which made me presume that at some previous time he might have been the victim of an unfortunate love-affair, for which he had consoled himself by the abuse of strong liquors.

This idea inspired me with profound pity for him; for it was truly pitiable to see his tall, meagre body bent to the right or to the left, then suddenly stiffened like a log of wood, the face pale, the nose blue, the teeth clenched; it was impossible to witness these cries without shuddering.

Upon recovering his senses, at the end of half an hour or so, after every one of his fits, he invariably demanded:—"What have I been saying, Doctor?—Have I said anything?"