

The Middleburgh Post.

H. HARTER.

He that will not reason is a bigot; he that cannot is a fool; he that dare not is a slave.

EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

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SEVENTEEN DAYS ON THE DESERTED BATTLE-FIELD

RELATED BY A RUSSIAN VOLUNTEER.

BY M. GARDNER.

(CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK.)

My God! Ab, perhaps there is water in the Turk's drinking flask. I must get to him, whatever effort costs. And oh, it cost me. No matter, I shall do it.

I creep with my legs dragging in my hand, my feeble hands unable to move forward my body with execrable pain. There are hardly two yards between me and the corpse. Yet, to me they are miles. But I must creep. My chested throat burns like fire. I hold die more quickly without water. Well perhaps— And I creep, poor legs creaking in the slightest vibration on the ground causing intolerable pain at each movement. I cry, I lament, and continue all the time.

At last! I hold the drinking flask in my hands. It is not more than half filled with water.

I shall have enough to last a while. I shall have enough to drink. I shall have enough to live. I shall have enough to see the end of this war. I shall have enough to see the end of this war. I shall have enough to see the end of this war.

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stand now the evil I did those beloved ones. Why bring back these memories to-day? The past can never come to us again. Several of my acquaintances thought it very odd. "Well, you foolish fellow, to go and get yourself killed!" they would say. "He doesn't know what he is doing." How could they speak so? How do such words agree with their manner of comprehending heroism and love of country? I represented in their eyes all that, and yet they called me a fool.

Here I was on my way to Kishinoff, a knapsack on my back, and all the other military equipments, and off I go with thousands of my brothers, among whom many had come like myself of their own free will, while others would gladly have remained at home. Nevertheless, they marched like us with their hearts in the business, crossing whole countries. They will fight like us, perhaps better, doing the duty conscientiously, but they would abandon all to return, if discipline permitted it.

A fresh breeze springs up, the grove is stirred, a bird flies away, the stars grow pale, little white clouds float in the sky, it is dawn—morning. The third day is beginning, bringing—how shall I say it?—life or death for me!

The third. How many have I still got to live? Not many, what ever happens, for I am very weak, and it seems to me that I am able no longer to get away from the corpse. We shall soon be alike. The one will be no more repulsive than the other. I must drink. I shall drink three times a day, morning, noon, and night.

The sun is up. His huge disc appears through the bushes; it is all red—red like blood. It will be very warm to-day. Neighbor, what of you? You are bidden already. Yes, he is a fearful sight. His hair is beginning to fall out, his skin growing pale and yellow; it is drawn so tightly on his face that it has split behind his ears, where the worms are wriggling and crawling. His body is swollen enormously. What will the sun make of him to-day?

To remain lying near him becomes intolerable. Cost what it will, I must get away, but how do it? I am still able to lift my arm, open the flask and drink, but to move my inert and heavy body—I will try to withdraw myself little by little, if it be not more than a step an hour.

All the morning passes in these efforts, the pain is intense, but what can it do to me? I have forgotten all I cannot even represent to myself any longer the sensations that a healthy man feels. I am, as one might say, naturalized to pain.

By dint of unheeded exertions, here I am, about five paces distant from the corpse, in my old place. Alas! I have not enjoyed the fresh air long, if one can call the air fresh that is breathed two yards from a cadaver. The wind changes, and brings with it a stifling odor that fills me with nausea, my empty stomach contracts so painfully that I have internal spasms, and I am thickly enveloped in pestiferous air, I lose courage, and weep.

Broken down, annihilated, I lay there almost without consciousness, when all at once—was it an illusion of my disordered thoughts? No, I am not mistaken, there are voices and the stamping of horses. Yes, I hear them speaking. I was going to shout, but I restrained myself; for, if they were Turks, what would happen? They would add to my frightful sufferings, other agonies still more terrible. It makes one's hair stand to read the newspapers. They would flay my wounded legs, and then burn them over a slow fire. Still, if they would stop their hands! But they are ingenious in their devilish inventions! It is better to die in the bushes than to fall in their hands. If they were our people? Accursed bushes that surround me like a wall! It is impossible to see through them. In a single place there is an opening, through which there is a distant view of the valley. The stream must be there at which we drank before the battle.

guage they speak. My ears scarcely hear any more. My God, if they were our people! I would shout, they will hear me from down yonder. That will be better than falling into the hands of the Baschi Bouzouks. But why don't they come? I am devoured with impatience, so that I do not perceive the odor of the corpse any longer.

At last a Cossack appears at the ford of the stream, followed by several others. I see the blue uniforms trimmed with red, the lances—it is a demi-sotnia, commanded by an officer with a black beard, mounted on a magnificent horse. As soon as the men have passed, he turns round on his saddle and commands: "March, trot!"

"Stop! for God's sake, stop, brothers! Help!" I shout, and the trot of the horses, the rattle of the sabers and the noisy conversation drown my voice.

Malediction! I fall with my face upon the ground, sobbing. All is lost, everything escapes me, my life, my rescue, even to the brief delay of the term of my death, the water in the drinking flask that I overturned in my despair. I perceive it only when but a few drops remain. All has been drunk up by the arid soil.

I cannot tell how long the stupor lasted that took possession of me after that terrible moment. I remained stretched out with closed eyes. The wind changed often, now fresh and pure, now enveloping me with a horrible stench. On that day my neighbor had become more frightful than any mind could imagine.

On opening my eyes I saw him and was terrified at his aspect. He had no longer a face, the flesh had slid from off his bones, and his fearful skeleton smile, motionless and hideous, caught my eye. I have held a skull in my hands more than once, and have even prepared anatomical specimens, but that huge body, already denuded of its flesh, dressed in a uniform, with glittering buttons made me shiver. It is war, said I to myself; there is its portrait.

The sun scorches my face and hands more and more. I have drunk all the water that was left. I was suffering so terribly from thirst that I swallowed all of it at one pull, although I had determined to drink only one mouthful. Ah! why did I not call the Cossacks when they were so close to me? And even if they had been Turks it would have been better than this. They would have tortured me an hour or two, while now, how much longer shall I have to suffer?

Mother, mother, thou wilt tear thy gray hair; thou wilt curse the world that has invented war! Yet I hope that neither thou nor Masha will ever know of my tortures. Good-bye, mother! good-bye, my betrothed! My God! how bitter and hard!

Something surges to my heart; it is still the remembrance of the little white dog. The policeman did not save him; he dashed him against the wall, and threw him in a ditch, where the poor little creature lived and suffered an entire day. I am still more unfortunate, for my agony has lasted three days now; tomorrow will be the fourth—then the fifth, the sixth! Death, where dost thou hide? Come, come, take me!

Death does not hear. Here I am under this flaming sun, with not a single drop of water to moisten my burning throat. The corpse bane is in my breath. The corpse is all decomposed, Myriads of worms fall from it. How they crawl! When devoured, nothing will remain but the bones and the uniform. Then it will be my turn, and I shall become like it.

an living!" This is what I tried to cry out, but only a feeble groan issued from my tightly drawn lips.

"Great heavens! he is alive still! Friends, come here, quick! 'Tis Ivanoff! He is living. Call the surgeon. Quick! Quick!"

Some seconds later they poured a little water in my mouth, then some brandy, then something else, and everything disappeared. The litter advances slowly, swinging rhythmically. This regular movement puts me to sleep. I awake again; then I drowse again. My wounds being dressed do not hurt me any longer. A feeling of unspeakable comfort invades my whole being.

"Stop, let him down. To sanitary attendants of the fourth relief, take the litter, lift it, march!"

It is Piotr Ivanovitch that gives the order, our kind ambulance officer, very tall, very thin, and very good. He is so tall that, on raising my eyes to the side where he stalks along, I see his head and even his shoulders, although the litter is borne on the shoulders of four big soldiers.

Piotr Ivanovitch, says I, feebly "What, my friend?" He bends towards me. "Piotr Ivanovitch, what did the doctor tell you? Am I going to die soon?"

"Don't worry yourself, Ivanoff; there is no fear of your dying; not one of your bones has been touched. You are a lucky fellow! I not even an artery has been injured! But how have you managed to live three times twenty four hours? What have you eaten?"

"Nothing." "And what have you drunk?" "I took the Turk's flask; but I can't speak any more." "Go to sleep, my friend. May God have you in his keeping!"

Again drowsiness and sleep. I came to myself at the ambulance quarters of the division. The doctor and sisters of charity surround me. I recognize, stooping over me, the face of a Saint Petersburg professor. His hands are covered with blood as he turns towards me.

"You are singularly fortunate, young man. You will live! We have amputated one of your legs, but that's nothing. Can you speak?"

THE RAILROAD TRAVELER'S RIGHT.

A man named Myron T. Ely has done the public some service in compiling from court reports a manual of the railway passenger's legal rights. Why, when and where may a passenger be ejected from a train, is frequently a perplexing question for conductors, and the exercise of the rights is certainly humiliating to passengers.

For instance, it is one thing to prevent a drunken or disorderly person or a "bad character" from boarding a train, and quite another to expel such a one after being lawfully on board.

But having lawfully allowed a drunken man to get on board he cannot be expelled during the journey unless he misbehaves.

The, too, a company may refuse to allow a passenger to board a train without a ticket, but if he succeeds in getting aboard he cannot be expelled for want of a ticket if he tenders the legal fare.

But if you refuse to pay your fare and the train has been stopped for the purpose of putting you off, a subsequent offer to pay does not give you a right to remain nor take from the conductor the right to exclude you from the car.

Not having been put off do you gain the right to re-enter immediately on tendering either the fare or a ticket. You forfeit your right to continue on that train.

Except that if the train stops at a regular station and before being ejected there the fare is offered, the conductor should receive it.

It is a familiar rule that in case it is lawful to expel a passenger it must be done with as little violence and force as possible, and in a manner so as not to injure him.

In some states a statute provides that the expulsion must be at a regular station or near some dwelling house. A violation of such a provision makes the company liable.

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