

LAST CARTRIDGES.

STORY OF THE INCIDENT DEPICTED IN A CELEBRATED PAINTING.

The Magnificent Bravery of a Handful of French Marines—Soldiers Whose Bravery Was Recognized by Their Conquerors.

Who has not seen a print of the famous picture, "The Last Cartridges," by Alphonse de Neuville? The original is in the gallery of one of New York's citizens. Well, in that picture the wounded major leaning against the old chest and watching through the window the effect of the Turco's last shot is Lambert, the hero of Bazailles.

The story of that picture is brief enough, and yet it has never been printed in full in any American paper. It is as follows:

On Sept. 1, 1870, the German artillery was thundering around Sedan. The French army was shattered. Its cavalry had made that last and desperate charge which brought from the lips of old King William the exclamation so often quoted in French papers, "Oh, les braves gens!" At Bazailles, where the French infantry in scattered groups continued to fight furiously and hopelessly, disputing every inch of ground with the enemy, the German losses were severe. On the northern outskirts of the town a small number of French marines, barricaded in a house known as La Maison Bourgeoise, kept up a prolonged resistance, actually holding in check almost an army corps. This handful of heroes was composed of Lambert and his men.

The Fifteenth Bavarian regiment invested the house, firing at the windows, without attempting to take the place by storm. Major Lambert and Captains Ortus and Aubert directed the fire. They transformed all the openings of the house into loopholes, from which they poured a deadly fire into the ranks of the Bavarians, who were obliged to fall back repeatedly. Re-enforcements after re-enforcements arrived, but repulse followed repulse. The marines kept up a perfect hail of bullets, against which it seemed impossible to advance.

The Bavarians were mowed down mercilessly. But the besieged, too, had a hard time of it. The bullets tore into shreds the mattresses with which they had barricaded the windows, and the woodwork was shattered into splinters. But from the two rooms of the first story of the building the Frenchmen handled their chassepots with deadly effect. Lambert, with pale cheeks and flashing eyes, constantly shouted in a hoarse voice: "Stick to it, boys! Stick to it!" Captains Ortus and Aubert, each with a chassepot in his hand, blazed away with the rest. The odor of powder was almost stifling, but the Frenchmen coolly continued to use up their last cartridges. The little troop was gradually becoming smaller and smaller. The wounded and the dead lay in heaps upon the floors. The Bavarian general, out of patience with the extraordinary resistance of that handful of Frenchmen, ordered an attack by the artillery. A shell fell upon the roof, tearing a big hole in it, and also in the ceiling just above the heads of Lambert and his men. But, fortunately for them, it burst above, and, strange enough, did comparatively little damage. A few men were wounded by the flying pieces of timber. But the smoke with which it filled the place was suffocating and almost blinding. "Stick to it, boys!" shouted Lambert. And they stuck to it. At last the ammunition was becoming exhausted. The cartridge boxes of the dead and wounded were picked up and their supply eagerly grabbed. But it did not last long. Each one was fired, the last by Captain Aubert.

Then Lambert opened the door and with a white handkerchief in his hand limped out in front of the enemy. The Bavarian soldiers were furious at their losses. A crowd of them at the sight of the Frenchman made a dash at him with their bayonets, but just then brave Captain Lessignol of the Fifteenth Bavarian infantry dashed forward, covered the Frenchman with his body and sword in hand drove back the men who were about to butcher him.

So Lambert and all that remained of his men became prisoners of war. They numbered about 40, all more or less wounded. That evening Major Lambert and Captains Ortus and Aubert were brought before the crown prince of Prussia, afterward Emperor Frederick III. They offered him their swords.

"Keep your swords, gentlemen," said the crown prince. "We don't disarm brave soldiers like you."

On the 1st of September, 1895, General Lambert made a pilgrimage to the crypt where lie the remains of his companions of that memorable day. Then he went to see the Maison Bourgeoise. That establishment is transformed into a national museum—that is to say, it is covered and sheltered by another building, and the original house stands inside, just as it was when Lambert left it.

But there is one unfortunate mistake in De Neuville's picture. There was no Turco in Lambert's band, and the man who fired the last cartridge was Captain Aubert. The captain must have smiled when he saw the strange portrait which the famous artist made of him.

General Lambert is now in the reserve forces, having passed the legal limit for a general in the regular army.

Some years ago the badauds of Paris used to ask each other the solemnly stupid question, "Have you seen Lambert?" And at that time nobody had seen him, and nobody had any expectation of ever seeing him.

But now all Paris has seen him. The French army honors him, and every one who has visited a picture gallery or stopped in front of a picture store in any city of the civilized world has seen his portrait. Le Journal Officiel reports that he has been promoted to the dignity of grand officer in the Legion of Honor.—New York Sun.

ELECTRICITY AND WAR.

The Telegraph as an Agency in Preserving Peace.

In the course of his farewell speech at the dinner of the British chamber of commerce in Paris Lord Dufferin, the retiring British ambassador, said:

"But whatever may be the ups and downs of the diplomatic career, every member of the service, no matter how unpromising the post he occupies, may console himself with the reflection that, if he is industrious, prudent, and, above all, single minded, the bread he casts upon the waters will not be lost, and that, perhaps, when he least expects it, his day will dawn, for, though, like everything else, the outward aspects of diplomacy have changed since the beginning of the century, never have the nations stood in greater need of the thing itself than at the present moment. What do we see around us? The whole of Europe is little better than a standing camp numbering millions of armed men, while a double row of frowning and opposing fortresses bristles along every frontier. Our harbors are stuffed, and the seas swarm with ironclad navies, to whose numbers, I am forced to admit, England has been obliged, in self defense, to add her modest quota. Even in the remotest east the passion for military expansion has displayed an unexpected development.

"In fact, thanks to the telegraph, the globe itself has become a mere bundle of nerves, and the slightest disturbance at any one point of the system sends a portentous tremor through its morbidly sensitive surface. We are told by the poets of old that when Zeus nodded the golden halls of his Olympus shook to their foundations. Today it would suffice for any one of half a dozen august personages to speak above his breath or unwittingly to raise his little finger, and, like in a heaven overcharged with electricity, the existing conditions of unstable equilibrium which sustains the European political system would be upset, and war, waged in circumstances of greater horror than has been hitherto known to the experience of mankind, might eventually envelop not Europe alone, but two—nay, all the four—continents at once, since in every one of them representatives and offshoots of the contending nations would of necessity be brought into collision.

"It is to prevent catastrophes of this kind that we meek, civil spoken and mild mannered persons have been invented. Looking at us, you will perhaps say that we are a poor and feeble folk, and that our calling is a sorry preservative against such dangers; but, such as it is, it is the best device that human ingenuity has been able to discover. After all, a very thin wire proves a perfectly effective lightning conductor, and for over 80 years, thanks to this unpretending agency, an unbroken peace has been maintained between your native land and the country with whose prosperity and welfare your own interests are so closely associated."

Unhappy Austria.

The cruel humiliation Austria suffered in Italy was followed by the crushing blow at Sadowa and the not less painful collapse of a brother's ambitions in Mexico. If the dignity of a Caesar was to be saved for the Hapsburgs out of the wreck, it seemed most likely to be achieved on the lines suggested by Count Beust. The choice once made, it was impossible to turn back. What is given as a boon to distressed nationalities in the name of progress cannot afterward be withdrawn on the plea of prudence. The result is pathetic, but there is no help for it.

We see Croats, Ruthenians, Poles, Servians, Wallachs and the rest of the half barbarous hordes cutting one another's throats when they are not combining to insult the civilized Hungarians and Germans, whose fate it is to be their neighbors. We see Vienna itself in the hands of a fanatical anti-Semitic rabble, and we see the power of the only capable parliamentary party in Austria broken by hopeless dissensions. Truly the domestic state of the empire is nothing less than pitiable. Its influence in Europe is also a thing of the past. The Balkan states, which were its props in the south, have publicly gone over to Russia, and its solitary remaining protection against dismemberment is the alliance with Italy, which covets Dalmatia, and with Germany, which is moving heaven and earth to establish secret relations with Russia.—Saturday Review.

Matrimony and Patience.

Matrimony and patience! It is not always a perfect combination, is it? In South Africa the savage tribes have a peculiar ceremony which they put the matrimonial candidate through previous to his entering the holy state. His hands are tied up in a bag containing five ants for two hours. If he bears unmoved the tortures of their stings he is considered qualified to cope with the nagging and daily jar and fret of married life. Such a man would make an admirable husband. He would not be upset by the thoughts of a spring bonnet or grow irritable every time the steak was overdone. The idea of having a patience trial for those about to marry is one that civilized people might adopt.

Two Archbishops.

The archbishop of Canterbury is primate of all England, and therefore takes precedence of the archbishop of York, who is only "primate of England." This very nice distinction was made several centuries ago on account of a very bitter dispute arising between the two functionaries as to which should precede the other. The matter was settled by conferring precedence upon the archbishop of Canterbury, the two titles being also bestowed at the same time.

Side Talk at the Wedding.

"What sort of a girl is she?"
"She is a miss with a mission."
"Ah!"
"And her mission is seeking a man with a mansion."
"Oh!"—Harlem Life.

An Occult Study of Rubies.

The ruby, as indeed every other gem, had its magical properties in those old times when occultism was an article of faith. The oriental ruby defied both poison and the plague. Worn on the person or ground to powder and drunk as a drug it preserved the wearer and the swallower from that ever present danger of poison, that ever present fear of the plague. When misfortunes and evil days threatened the wearer, it lost its brilliancy and became sad and dark.

A learned German with an unpronounceable name testifies to this. "On the 5th day of October, 1690 after the birth of Christ Jesus, as I was going with my beloved wife Catharine Adelmannie (of pious memory), from Stuttgart to Cahena, I observed by the way that a very fine ruby which I wore mounted in a gold ring (the one which she had given me) lost repeatedly and each time almost completely its splendid color, and that it assumed a somber, blackish hue, which blackness lasted not one day, but several, so much so that, being greatly astonished, I drew the ring from my finger and put it into a casket. I also warned my wife that some evil followed her or me, the which I augured from the change of the ruby. And truly I was not deceived, for within a few days she was taken mortally sick. After her death the ruby resumed its pristine color and brilliancy."—New York Dispatch.

His "Sheer."

The distinction of being the richest and meanest man in the town in which he lived belonged to old Andy Scraggs. No one questioned his right to this honor when old Andy's wife died and he went to four different undertakers, trying to get them to make him a coffin for \$5 out of some worm eaten old black walnut boards he had kept in his barn for 20 years "for that very purpose," as he admitted.

When he was worth over \$150,000, a committee went to him to solicit something for a widow with six little children who had been burned out of house and home and who had not a penny in the world nor a change of clothing for her children or herself.

"I'm dreadful sorry for her," said old Andy, "dreadful sorry, and I agree with you that it's right for her friends and neighbors to help her out. I'll do my sheer, gentlemen; I'll do my sheer."

He was making his usual five or six tons of sugar at the time, and, after a few moments' reflection, he said: "I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll send her over two quarts of maple sirup if she'll be sure to send back the jar I'll have to put it in. I think that'll be about my sheer, gentlemen."—Detroit Free Press.

Scorching and Reading.

The man who gets so interested in his newspaper on the street cars that he is oblivious to women who stand and men who climb over him has not endeared himself to his kind; but Kansas City has produced even a greater nuisance in a bicyclist who reads as he rides. It would seem to the casual observer that the bicycle offered sufficient advantages to inflict or receive accidents even when the rider kept his eyes open and his wits alert. This rider is described as going scorching along with his attention apparently absorbed by what he is reading, while terrified pedestrians climb the telephone poles and seek such other places of safety as they can find. A few days ago another rider followed him, hoping to be in at the death; but the literary bicyclist rode on, reading congenial tales of battle, murder and sudden death, until he turned down a quiet street, where he folded his paper, put it in his pocket and coasted safely into his own yard.—New Orleans Picayune.

George Francis Train's Peculiarities.

George Francis Train's hair is a little whiter and his eccentricities a little more pronounced, and he has even increased the size of the bouquet that he wears pinned to the lapel of his white coat. He is the most picturesque character to be found in Madison square, New York, on a warm day. It was a good many years ago when George Francis Train announced his determination to shake hands no more and expressed the opinion that the friendship of children was worth more than that of their elders. He has cultivated the acquaintance of the children who play in Madison square, and every one of them knows him to be a good fellow. People who see him regularly have come to look upon his eccentricities with little interest, but he is one of the sights of Broadway to visitors who know anything about his career. He is not averse to notoriety and willingly talks with any one who addresses him.—New York Letter.

The Largest Described Snake.

Speke, in his narrative of the journey to the source of the Nile, describes the largest snake that has ever been seen by man. "I shuddered," he says, "as I looked upon the effect of his tremendous dying strength. For yards around where he lay grass, bushes and saplings—in fact, everything except full grown trees—were cut clean off, as if they had been trimmed with an immense scythe. The monster, when measured, was 51 feet 2½ inches in extreme length, while around the thickest portions of its body the girth was nearly 3 feet."

A World Out of Joint.

A poor devil tells his latest misadventure: "I had had nothing to eat for two days. In despair I threw myself into the Seine. A sailor fishes me out. Well, they gave \$5 to my rescuer and nothing to me."—Figaro.

Men are often capable of greater things than they perform. They are sent into the world with bills of credit and seldom draw to their full extent.—Walpole.

The brain of woman is absolutely smaller than that of man, but is stated to be somewhat larger in proportion to the weight of the body.

A Famous German Doctor's Work.

Consumption is now known to be curable if taken in time—the German remedy known as Otto's Cure, having been found to be an almost certain cure for the disease. Asthma, Bronchitis, Croup, Coughs, Colds, Pneumonia, and all throat and lung diseases are quickly cured by Dr. Otto's Great German Remedy. Sample bottles of Otto's cure are being given away at Reynolds Drug Store. Large sizes 25c. and 50 cents.

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