

An Old-Time Duel.

It was in 1803 that Captain Fournier of the Chasseurs, and Captain Dupont of the Hussars, commenced a duel which lasted nearly five years. Fournier was the most famous duellist in the French army at the time. He was a skillful swordsman, and even more skillful with the pistol. When quarrels were scarce, he would frequently smash with his pistol-ball the pipes in the mouths of soldiers, who sat unsuspectingly thirty paces away. And quarrels, of course, became lamentably scarce with such an expert as Fournier, and the soldiers, becoming wary, would not sit out-doors as usual, nor in fact at their windows, with their pipes in their mouths. While matters were in this strait, young Blumm, a wealthy burgher, who had been roistering around Fournier's quarters in Rouen, one evening, was found a corpse the next morning, with a rapier thrust in his throat. Blumm being inexperienced, some indignation was excited among the citizens against Fournier, who was believed to have dispatched him. Fournier, however, never replied to the indignant murmurs that reached his ears, except by a shrug of his shoulders. "A fight," he would say, "is too precious to lose."

On the night succeeding Blumm's funeral, a ball was given at the Grand Opera, the finest ball that it was probable Rouen would see for many a day. It was reported the Fournier had expressed an intention of coming. This following so close on the disastrous duel, public decency was shocked at the suggestion. The general said that it must be prevented. He sent for the captain of the guard, who happened to be young Captain Dupont.

"Captain," said the general, "Fournier proposes to come to the ball to-night. You see it is plainly impossible that he should be admitted."

"Yes, general."

"You will, therefore, prevent his entrance, captain."

"Yes, general."

Captain Dupont knew Fournier by sight and fame alone. The two could not be intimate friends, for Dupont detested duelling and duellists. He was a good swordsman, a man of honor, and had a brave heart. He loved Marie Hutton, a lovely lady of Rouen, and the day just before the ball she had consented to become his wife. Now he felt that he must be a better swordsman than Fournier, if he won her. Not that Fournier loved her, or even knew her, but Dupont saw that a duel was inevitable, and he must kill or be killed.

The ball opened, and Dupont was at his post. Late in the evening, Fournier arrived.

"Captain," said Dupont, "it would seem somewhat indecorous for you to attend a ball on the night of young Blumm's funeral."

"I presume," answered Fournier, "that I alone have the right to judge of that."

"Apparently not," replied Dupont, "the general has decided that you should not attend."

"Has the general directed you to prevent my entrance?"

"Yes."

"I suppose you are willing to answer at the sword's point, for impertinences that you retail second-hand?"

"I am willing to answer at the sword's point."

"Early in the morning then, captain, at the usual spot," said Fournier, eagerly; "so, *bon soir*; I assure you I do not regret the ball."

The parties met at the appointed time and place, and, after a few well-contested thrusts, Dupont was wounded in the shoulder. As he fell, he exclaimed; "I claim another fight."

Then he sank into insensibility.

"Perhaps you will claim it when you recover, and perhaps you will not," said Fournier and, leaving Dupont in the care of surgeons, he withdrew. Within two weeks Dupont was well again, and he sent word to Fournier that he claimed his privilege.

The code of honor in those days guaranteed a fight until death or surrender, but a cessation when either party received a wound sufficient to incapacitate him.

Fournier was gratified at Dupont's demand for another fight.

"One man for two or three fights," said he, "is economy."

They met again, and Fournier this time received a thrust in the shoulder. "Ah," said he, in anguish, as he fell, "I claim the privilege."

They met a third time, and Fournier was again wounded, and again claimed the privilege. When he had nearly recovered from his second wound, he sent a note to Dupont asking him to come and see him. Dupont went.

"My dear captain," said Fournier, "we have had three bouts, and I hope we shall have many more. I therefore propose that we draw up a convention by which to govern our future combats."

"I had hoped, captain," responded Dupont, "that we would not have more than another fight at the farthest, but I heartily subscribe to your idea of a convention."

And between them they drew up an agreement, similar to this:

1.—A fight shall be arranged whenever the party are within thirty leagues of one another.

2.—There shall be no excuse for not fighting except illness, or military duty.

3.—Pistols shall not be used except by mutual consent.

4.—Death, surrender, or mutual agreement, shall alone terminate the fight.

Fournier objected to the third clause, as he expressed himself anxious to try a pistol-fight once more, but Dupont insisted upon it, as he knew that the fight would be unequal with that weapon.

That night Captain Dupont, with his company of hussars, was ordered to Beauvais. He went to see his sweetheart, Marie, before his departure. He asked her to marry him then and there, but she refused.

"No," she said, "you have a duel on hand with Captain Fournier, and I will not marry until the duel is ended."

"Alas, my dear Marie," answered the captain, "we have just drawn up an agreement to fight at every opportunity, until we die or surrender."

"Heavens!" cried Marie, "the duel may never be ended."

"Hope better than that, Marie," he answered. "It may be ended the next bout."

But she was disconsolate, and he went away to his quarters with a heavy heart.

He wrote the following note to Captain Fournier:

"Sir: I am ordered to Beauvais. Address me in case you should be in that neighborhood."

Yours, etc.,
ALEXIS DUPONT."

The next day the company departed, to the inexpressible regret of Marie Hutton and Captain Fournier.

"Ah," said Marie, in tears at her window, "what a hateful thing is this duelling!"

"Ah," said Captain Fournier, in his sick-chamber on a balcony, "what an exquisite duellist!"

Six months passed, and the combatants were still separated. One day Fournier was ordered to carry important dispatches to Paris. He was accompanied by two chasseurs, and, while laboring through a tangled forest-path, he met Dupont.

"My dear Dupont," he cried, "I have been almost dead to see you."

"My dear Fournier," responded Dupont, "I am quite glad to meet you. Shall we fight?"

"Heavens!" cried Fournier, "I have no time. I am carrying important dispatches to Paris. But you—"

"I have a short leave of absence for Rouen, but, if you wish, I will ride with you to Paris."

"My dear, good Dupont," cried Fournier, in ecstasy, "you give me new life. Come, then."

And Dupont, turning his horse, sped onward with the party. They stopped late at night at a quiet little hostelry, where, after a hearty meal, Fournier and Dupont retired to the same room to sleep. Fournier awoke before daylight, and discovered Dupont sitting at the fire, with his head in his hands.

"My dear Dupont," said Fournier, yawning, "why are you so abstracted?"

"To tell the truth," said Dupont, "I am vexed. My leave of absence was for the purpose of seeing my fiancée at Rouen, and she will not cherish me more highly for preferring a duel with you, to a chat with her."

"Then you wish to return. We can arrange it. I shall show that I can be as generous as yourself. We'll fight now, and you can return to-morrow."

"But," interposed Dupont, "suppose something should happen by which your dispatches are delayed?"

"There is where my generosity comes in," answered Fournier, rising and preparing to dress himself.

"My dear fellow," said Dupont, "you are not philosophic. If your dispatches were to miscarry, it might be a matter of considerable detriment to France."

"And I might be court-martialed," said Fournier, "and then I could not fight you any more. I will give them to one of my chasseurs."

"No," said Dupont, "I will carry them if you fall."

They stirred up the fire, to give them better light, and then they closed again in deadly combat. The fight was long, for Fournier had learned to be cautious, and Dupont had long been so. While their rapiers were still twining and twisting, without a scratch having been received by either, the day broke into the room, and the sun struck fairly into Captain Dupont's eyes, blinding him for an instant. In that instant he felt, for he could not see, the pressure of Fournier's sword against his own relax, and, on stepping from the sun light, he found Fournier had withdrawn so that Dupont's back would be partly toward

the sun. The two, standing thus on the opposite sides of the narrow strip of sunlight, stopped a moment, and dropped the points of their swords.

"Captain," said Dupont, tenderly, "I have to thank you for a very grateful courtesy."

"Captain," returned Fournier, with feeling, "you taught me the lesson."

With that they again took position, and were about to renew the fight, when a knock came at the door, and a chasseur entered. He saluted in military style, and said: "Breakfast and the horses are ready, captain."

The two captains hesitated a moment, when Dupont said: "I think this comes under the head of military duty, captain."

"True," returned Fournier, and the two sheathed their swords. The chasseur withdrew.

"I presume you will now return to Rouen," said Fournier, as they proceeded to fully enrobe themselves.

"Yes," returned Dupont, "we have had our bout, and although neither has been wounded, I for one do not feel the less satisfied."

They mounted their horses, and parted at the door, Fournier going toward Paris, and Dupont toward Rouen.

"Wait for me if you can," said Fournier, as they shook hands on their departure.

On reaching Rouen, Dupont reported to the general, and called upon Marie. He again urged marriage upon her.

"No," she said. "You cannot doubt my love, Alexis, but I will surely doubt yours if you urge marriage upon me while this terrible duel is pending."

The very next day, Dupont received orders from the general to return immediately to his company and prepare for the campaign. The great Napoleon was again about to take the field.

Dupont left his regrets with Fournier. "It seems," he wrote, "that fate is against us as is the general."

Fournier returned answer: "It is hard but we must have patience."

Over two years had elapsed, and, at Austerlitz, Dupont found Fournier almost overborne by an attack of Austrian cavalry. With his good company at his heels, he dashed to the rescue, and brought Fournier, badly wounded, from the hands of the foe.

"Is it you, Dupont?" he asked, faintly, as he opened his eyes. "How shall I thank you?"

"By getting well again, my poor friend," said Dupont.

These two enemies now termed each other "friend."—Dupont, too, who had detested duellists.

When Fournier was almost well, a month later, he rode ten leagues to meet Dupont. The latter was overjoyed to see him looking so well.

"We have not had a fight for over two years," said Fournier. "Is it not sad?"

"We will have one now."

With that their rapiers again sprang to the work. Dupont seemed abstracted. He laid his guard open freely, but Fournier did not notice that he was playing his best. At one of these unlucky moments, Fournier pricked him unmercifully in the right breast. Dupont fell almost without a groan. Fournier sprang to him, and raised his head.

"My friend, my friend!" he cried, "look up."

He tore open his breast, and discovered there a parchment commission as colonel of hussars for gallantry at the battle of Austerlitz, where he had rescued Fournier.

"A colonel!" he cried, "and yet he consented to fight me, a captain. Good, generous friend!"

He gave Colonel Dupont into the hands of his servants and his surgeon, and withdrew with a bowed head and an aching heart, thinking of the modest, generous demeanor of his friend and enemy.

Two battles took place soon after that, and Fournier displayed such consummate daring that Napoleon himself conferred the cross upon him, and made him a colonel. His first step, after receiving his colonelcy, was to ride over to Dupont. Alas! Dupont had been made a general of brigade.

"The fates are against me," said Fournier.

"It is hard," said Dupont, "but have patience."

Four years and a half had elapsed since Dupont had barred Fournier's entrance to the ball-room at Rouen. Fournier had recently won his promotion to general, and several bouts had taken place, with varying results. At least ten duels had been fought by the two in this time, and at least five wounds were recorded on each one's body by the other's rapier. Fournier, being of the opinion that dueling was the normal condition of man, was delighted. Dupont was despondent, for Marie remained firm to her purpose.

He asked her again to marry him. "This duel," he repeated, "will probably never end."

"Then I will never marry," she said, firmly.

"It can only end by my surrendering to Fournier," said he, as he turned bitterly from her presence.

This woman, who loved him so dearly, gazed after him with flashing eyes.—"Did he say surrender?" she murmured. That night, as General Dupont rode at a slashing gallop past her house, in the direction of Beauvais, where Fournier was now stationed, she muttered a short prayer, and rested her head on her hands. In her heart of hearts she said: "He surely will not surrender."

Dupont reached Fournier early the next morning. They embraced like old friends, as, indeed, they were, for Fournier, about a month previous, had proved his friendship by pricking a young fellow who had said something derogatory of Dupont's sweetheart.

"At least," he said, in telling Dupont of the circumstance, "I thought it might have been your sweetheart, for she lived in Rouen, and he called her Marguerite."

"My dear fellow," Dupont had responded, "there may be many Marguerites in Rouen; but my sweetheart is not one of them. She is Marie."

A shade of gloom overshadowed Fournier's countenance. "I was wrong, then," he said. "I pricked the poor fellow for no cause at all."

When Dupont and Fournier had embraced, Dupont entered immediately upon the business that had brought him.

"I have come Fournier," he said, "to compromise the whole matter between us."

"Compromise it? Impossible."

"Listen first. We have been fighting for nearly five years, and for what?"

"Ciel! I do not know."

"You surely remember the cause of our quarrel?"

"Not a bit of it."

"My dear Fournier," said Dupont, "when we were both captains at Rouen, I, by the general's order, debarred your entrance to the grand ball, on the night of the funeral of young Blumm, whom you slew."

"My dear Dupont," said Fournier, coolly, "I never slew young Blumm. He was a burgher, and I would not have condescended to fight with him. I remember now that you debarred my entrance to the grand ball; but you had your premises all wrong."

"Why, then, did you not say so?" asked Dupont.

Fournier shrugged his shoulders.—"That was not for me to do. Duels were scarce in those days, and my cause of quarrel had nothing to do with Blumm. He was probably killed by some roistering blade of his own rank, while I received the credit of it, as I did of every wild act occurring in Rouen at that time."

"Then the whole thing has been a mistake," said Dupont. "Is there any reason why we should continue our quarrel?"

"Ah! yes, general," said Fournier, with a smile. "You see it was not the killing of Blumm that constitutes our cause of quarrel; it was your barring my entrance to the ball."

"True," said Dupont, with a sigh.

"Then, I have come to propose a compromise."

"Why, my dear general, do you wish to wind up our pleasant interchanges so summarily?"

"Because," replied Dupont, in a low tone, "my betrothed will not marry me until this duel is ended."

"Ah!" said Fournier, rising, "have I been doing you such a wrong as that? Come, then, let's hear your proposition."

"It is this: We will fight with pistols. As you have greatly the advantage, we will each take our two pistols, and enter the private park of M. La Tour, in the suburbs, at opposite gates. Then we will fire when we like."

"The idea is a good one," said Fournier; but he was apparently not enthusiastic over this duel with pistols, which he had been so long craving. He was, in fact, abstracted.

The two separated and repaired to the park. As Fournier entered the northern gate, he saw Dupont waving his hand to him in the southern entrance. They advanced a short distance, and Fournier took refuge behind a tree. Dupont, seeing this, did the same. They were still at long range; but Fournier, stepping from behind his tree, fired one shot, which struck against Dupont's tree, a foot above the roots. Dupont then moved forward to another tree, and the two were thus brought in closer range.

"One of his shots is gone," said Dupont. "It is bad shooting for Fournier. Let me see if I can draw his other one."

He thrust his hat cautiously from behind the shelter of the tree. Fournier plainly saw the ruse. Nevertheless he fired at the hat, which, he knew, was not on Dupont's head. The ball went through it. Dupont, having drawn his adversary's fire, stepped out, and advanced upon him with his two pistols, still loaded, in his hand. Fournier, with

a pale face, stepped gayly out from behind his tree, took off his hat with a bow, opened the breast of his coat, and said, "Shoot!"

Dupont dashed his pistols to the ground. "I will not," he cried.

"Then," said Fournier, "my life is in your hands. Make your own terms."

"Fournier," said Dupont, taking both his hands, and looking into his eyes, "our duel is no longer a duel. We do not fight to kill, but to show generosity. Your two pistol-shots were intended, not to kill me, but to miss me. I can fight you no longer, and I give you your life without terms."

"I take it," responded Fournier, "only on condition that I may be your friend, and not your antagonist, and that, if we ever fight again, you shall hold the right you now have,—to two shots first."

The terms were accepted, and the two friends were no longer antagonists. On returning to Rouen, Dupont claimed Marie's hand, and told her how the duel had ended.

"Then," she said, "you did not surrender?"

"No."

Then that woman, who loved him so, fell into his arms, and whispered in his ear:

"Ah! dear, if you had surrendered, I would have never spoken to you again."

GIVING HIM A LESSON.

THE Vienna correspondent of the

London *Globe* writes: Your correspondent was suddenly called to Pesth for a few hours last week. The carriage which he entered contained two ferocious-looking Magyars—booted, braided and pomatumed. The other occupants compartments were a well-dressed, good looking youth, a German, who appeared dreadfully sleepy, and an innocent-looking old gentleman of, say sixty, the pattern of benign and paternal mildness—a sort of Maygar Mr. Pickwick. A moment later we started. The old gentleman addressed several remarks to the young one, who, however, vouchsafed but scant reply between mighty yawns and sighs of fatigue. In a very few minutes the youthful German was snoring hard. The old gentleman then turned to us and proved very communicative, telling us how the youth opposite was his son, deploring at the same time his carelessness in money matters.

"There he goes to sleep among strangers with a whole pocketful of money; is that not careless?" inquired he with more candor than flattery. "Just to give him a fright and to teach him a lesson for the future, I shall take it away from him."

Mr. "Pickwick" hereupon quietly lifted the flap of the youth's coat and took out a bulky pocketbook, which he placed in his own breast-pocket, with a knowing smile. Soon after this the train stopped at Pressburg. The old gentleman begged us to look after his son, his son's hand luggage and his own overcoat while he was absent. He got out and returned no more; in fact, he vanished completely. The train once more started, and we awoke the tired Teuton and informed him how his father had been left behind, and how he had taken the pocketbook with him, a piece of intelligence which produced the most startling results. The sleepy one began to use the most unflinching language, felt frantically for his pocket-book, and uttered a howl of rage. He remained unintelligible for some time, but at last he managed to gasp out that he had no father and had never in his life seen the innocent old gentleman before that night. "There were three thousand florins in the pocketbook," shouted he wildly, "the wretch must have seen me take it out at the station." This is one of the most impudent cases of robbery which has happened here for some time, for it required an amount of deliberation, coolness and daring which would have sufficed a general to win a great battle. Needless to say that the mild old gentleman has not since been heard of.

A Nice Point.

Samuel Wallace was before Magistrate R. R. Smith, in Philadelphia, to answer the charge of having married his niece. Counsel for the accused read the law upon the subject, which forbids a niece to marry her uncle, but says nothing about the latter marrying the niece. Therefore he claimed that his client was entitled to a discharge, as the prosecution should have been brought against the woman. The magistrate held Wallace in his own recognizance to appear again if wanted.

Living Witnesses.

The hundreds of strong, hearty, rugged and healthy looking men, women and children, that have been rescued from beds of pain, sickness and well nigh death by Parker's Ginger Tonic, are the best evidences in the world of its sterling merit and worth. You will find such in almost every community.—Read of it in another column. 41 4t