

# "IN THE MIDST OF ALARMS."

ROBT. BARR, IN "LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE."

## CHAPTER VII.

Before night three more telegraph boys found Yates and three more telegrams in sections helped to carpet the floor of the forest. The usually high spirits of the newspaper-man went down and down under the repeated vibrations. At last he did not even swear, in the case of Yates, always indicated extreme depression. As night drew on, he feebly remarked to the professor that he was more tired than he had ever been in going through an election campaign. He went to his tent-bunk early, in a state of such utter dejection that Renmark felt sorry for him and tried ineffectually to cheer him up.

"If they would all come together," said Yates, bitterly, "so that one comprehensive effort of malediction would include the lot and have it over, it wouldn't be so bad; but this constant dribbling in of messengers would wear out the patience of a saint."

As he sat in his shirt-sleeves on the edge of his bunk, Renmark said that things would look brighter in the morning,—which was a safe remark to make, for the night was dark.

Yates sat silently with his head in his hands for some moments. At last he said, slowly, "There is no one so obtuse as the thoroughly good man. It is not the messenger I am afraid of, after all. He is but the outward symptom of the inward trouble. What you are seeing is an example of the workings of conscience, where you thought conscience was absent. The trouble with me is that I know the newspaper depends on me, and that it will be the first time I have failed. It is the newspaper-man's instinct to be in the centre of the fray. He yearns to scoop the opposition press. I will get a night's sleep if I can, and tomorrow I know I shall capitulate. I will hunt out General O'Neill and interview him on the field of slaughter. I will telegraph columns. I will refurbish my military vocabulary, and speak of deploying and massing and throwing out advance guards, and that sort of thing. I will move columns and advance brigades and invent strategy. We will have desperate fighting in the columns of the Argus, whatever there is on the fields of Canada. But to a man who has seen real war this operabouf masquerade of fighting—I don't want to say anything harsh, but to me it is offensive."

He looked up with a wan smile at his partner sitting on the bottom of an upturned pail as he said this. Then he reached for his hip-pocket and drew out a revolver, which he handed butt-end forward to the professor, who, not knowing his friend carried such an instrument, instinctively shrank from it.

"Here, Ronny, take this weapon of devastation and soak it with the potatoes. If another messenger comes in on me to-night I know I shall riddle him if I have this handy. My better judgment tells me he is innocent, and I don't want to shed the only blood that will be spilled during that awful campaign."

How long they had been asleep they did not know, as the ghost stories have it, but both were suddenly awakened by a commotion outside. It was intensely dark inside the tent, but as the two sat up they noticed a faint moving blur of light which made itself just visible through the canvas.

"It's another of those fiendish messengers," whispered Yates. "Gimme that revolver."

"Hush!" said the other below his breath. "There's about a dozen men out there, judging by the footfalls. I heard them coming."

"Let's fire into the tent and be done with it," said a voice outside.

"No, no," cried another; "no man shoot. It makes too much noise, and there must be others about. Have ye all got yer bayonets fixed?"

There was a murmur apparently in the affirmative.

"Very well then, Murphy and O'Rourke, come round to this side. You three stay where you are. Tim, you go to that end; and, Doolin, come with me."

The Fenian army, by all the gods! whispered Yates, groping for his clothes. "Renny, give me that revolver, and I'll show you more fun than a funeral."

"No, no. They're at least three to our one. We're in a trap here, and helpless."

"Oh, just let me jump out among 'em and begin the fireworks. Those I didn't shoot would die of fright. Imagine scouts scouring the woods with a lantern!—with a lantern, Renny! Think of that! Oh, this is pie! Let me at 'em."

Hush! Keep quiet! They'll hear you.

"Tim, bring the lantern round to this side." The blur of light moved along the canvas. "There's a man with his back against the wall of the tent. Just touch him up with yer bayonet, Murphy, and let him know we're here."

"There may be twenty in the tent," said Murphy, cautiously.

"Do what I tell you," answered the man in command.

Murphy propped his bayonet through the canvas, and sunk the deadly point of the instrument into the bag of potatoes.

"Faith, he sleeps sound," said Murphy, with a tremor of fear in his voice, as there was no demonstration on the part of the bag.

The voice of Yates rang out from the interior of the tent:

"What the old Harry do you fellows think you're doing, anyhow? What's the matter with you? What do you want?"

There was a moment's silence, broken only by a nervous scuffling of feet and the clicking of gunlocks.

"How many are there of you in there?" said the stern voice of the chief.

"Two, if you want to know, both unarmed, and one ready to fight the lot of you if you are anxious for a scrimmage."

"Come out one by one," was the next command.

he was greatly impressed with the importance and danger of his position. Yates glanced about him with a smile, all his recent dejection gone, now that he was in the midst of a row.

"Which is Murphy," he said, "and which is Doolin? Hello, alderman," he cried, as his eyes rested on one tall, strapping, red-haired man who held his bayonet ready to charge, with a fierce determination in his face that might have made an opponent quail. "When did you leave New York? and who's running the city, now that you're gone?"

The men had evidently a sense of humor, in spite of their blood-thirsty business, for a smile flickered on their faces in the lantern-light, and several bayonets were unconsciously lowered. But the hard face of the commander did not relax.

"You are doing yourself no good by your talk," he said, solemnly. "What you say will be used against you."

"Yes, and what you do will be used against you; and don't forget that fact. It's you who are in danger,—not me. You are at this moment making about the biggest ass of yourself there is in Canada."

"Pinion these men," cried the captain, gruffly.

"Pinion nothing!" shouted Yates, shaking off the grasp of a man who had sprung to his side. But both Yates and Renmark were speedily overpowered; and then an unseen difficulty presented itself. Murphy pathetically remarked that they had no rope. The captain was a man of resource.

"Cut enough rope from the tent to tie them."

"And when you're at it, Murphy," said Yates, "cut off enough more to hang yourself with. You'll need it before long. And remember that any damage you do to that tent you'll have to pay for. It's hired."

Yates gave them all the trouble he could while they tied his elbows and wrists together, offering sardonic suggestions and cursing their clumsiness. Renmark submitted quietly. When the operation was finished, the professor said, with the calm confidence of one who has an empire behind him and knows it,—

"I warn you, sir, that this outrage is committed on British soil, and that I, on whom it is committed, am a British subject."

"Heavens and earth, Renmark, if you find it impossible to keep your mouth shut, do not use the word 'subject,' but 'citizen.'"

"I am satisfied with the word, and with the protection given to those who use it."

"Look here, Renmark, you had better let me do the talking. You will only put your feet in it. I know the kind of men I have to deal with; you evidently don't."

In trying the professor they came upon the pistol in his coat-pocket. Murphy held it up to the light.

"I thought you said you were unarmed," remarked the captain, severely, taking the revolver in his hand.

"I was unarmed. The revolver is mine, but the professor would not let me use it. If he had, all of you would be running for dear life through the woods."

"You admit that you are a British subject?" said the captain to Renmark, ignoring Yates.

"He doesn't admit it, he brags of it," said the latter, before Renmark could speak. "You can't scare him; so quit this fooling, and let us know how long we are to stand here trussed up like this."

"I propose, captain," said the red-headed man, "that we shoot these men where they stand, and report to the general. They are spies. They are armed, and they denied it. It's according to the rules of war, captain."

"Rules of war! What do you know of the rules of war, you red-headed Senegambian? Rules of Hoyle? Your line is digging sewers, I imagine. Come, captain, undo these ropes and make up your mind quickly. Trot us along to General O'Neill just as fast as you can. The sooner you get us there the more time you will have for being sorry over what you have done."

But the captain still hesitated, and looked from one to the other of his men, as if to make up his mind whether they would obey him if he went to extremities. Yates's quick eye noted that the two prisoners had nothing to hope for, even from the men who smiled. The shooting of two unarmed and bound men seemed to them about the correct way of beginning a great struggle for freedom.

"Well," said the captain at length, "we must do it in proper form, so I suppose we should have a court-martial. Are you agreed?"

They were unanimously agreed.

"Look here," cried Yates, and there was a certain impressiveness in his voice in spite of his former levity, "this farce has gone just as far as it is going. Go inside the tent there, and in my coat-pocket you will find a telegram, the first of a dozen or two received by me within the last twenty-four hours. Then you will see whom you propose to shoot."

The telegram was found, and the captain read it while Tim held the lantern. He looked from under his knitted brows at the newspaper-man.

"Then you are one of the Argus staff," said the chief of the Argus staff. "As you see, five of my men will be with General O'Neill to-morrow. The first question they will ask him will be 'Where is Yates?'"

The next thing that will happen will be that you will be hanged for your stupidity, not by Canada nor by the State of New York, but by your own general, who will curse your memory ever after. You are fooling, not with a subject this time, but with a citizen, and your general is not such an idiot as to monkey with the United States government and, what is a blamed sight worse, with the American press. Come, captain, we've had enough of this. Cut these cords just as quickly as you can, and take us to the general. We were going to see him in the morning anyhow."

"But this man says he is a Canadian."

"That's all right. My friend is me. If you touch him you touch me. Now hurry up. Climb down from your perch. I shall have enough of trouble now, getting the general to forgive all the blunders you have made to-night, without your adding insult to injury. Tell your men to untie us and throw the ropes back into the tent. It will

soon be daylight. Hustle, and let us be off."

"Untie them," said the captain with a sigh.

Yates shook himself when his arms regained their freedom.

"Now, Tim," he said, "run into that tent and bring out my coat. It's chilly here."

Tim did instantly as requested, and helped Yates on with the coat.

"Good boy," said Yates. "You've evidently been porter in a hotel." Tim grinned.

"I think," said Yates, meditatively, "that if you look under the right-hand bunk, Tim, you will find a jug. It belongs to the professor, although he has hidden it under my bed to divert suspicion from himself. Just flush it out and bring it here. It is not as full as it was, but there's enough to go round, if the professor does not take more than his share."

The gallant troop smacked their lips in anticipation, and Renmark looked astonished to see the jug brought forth. "You first, professor," said Yates; and Tim innocently offered him the jug. The learned man shook his head. Yates laughed, and took it himself.

"Well, here's to you boys," he said, and may you all get back as safely to New York as I will. The jug passed down along the line until Tim finished it.

"Now, then, for the camp of the Fenian army," cried Yates, taking Renmark's arm; and they began their march through the woods.

"Great Caesar Stilly," he continued to his friend, "this is rest and quiet with a vengeance, isn't it?"

## CHAPTER VIII.

The company, feeling that they had to put their best foot foremost in the presence of their prisoners, tried at first to maintain something like military order in marching through the woods. They soon found, however, that this was a difficult thing to do. Canadian forests are not as trimly kept as English parks. Tim walked on ahead with the lantern, but three times he tumbled over some obstruction and disappeared suddenly from view, uttering maledictions. His final effort in this line was a triumph. He fell over the lantern and smashed it. When all attempts at reconnoitering failed, the party tramped on in go-as-you-please fashion, and found they did better without the light than with it. In fact, although it was not yet four o'clock, day break was already filtering through the trees, and the woods were perceptibly lighter.

"We must be getting near the camp," said the captain.

"Will I shout, sir?" asked Murphy.

"No, no. We can't miss it. Keep on as you are doing."

They were nearer the camp than they suspected. As they blundered on among the cracking underbrush and dry twigs, the sharp report of a rifle echoed through the forest, and a bullet whistled above their heads.

"Pat the devil are you foiring at, Mike Lynch?" cried the alderman, who recognized the shooter now rapidly falling back.

"Oh, it's you, is it?" said the sentry, stopping in his flight. The captain strode angrily towards him.

"What do you mean by firing like that? Don't you know enough to ask for the countersign before shooting?"

"Sure I forgot about it, captain, entirely. But then, ye see, I never can hit anything; so it's little difference it makes."

The shot had roused the camp, and there was now wild commotion, everybody thinking the Canadians were upon them.

A strange sight met the eyes of Yates and Renmark. Both were astonished to see the number of men that O'Neill had under his command. They were a motley crowd. Some tattered United States uniforms were among them, but the greater number were dressed as ordinary individuals, although a few had trimmings of green braid on their clothes. Sleeping out of a couple of nights had given the crowd the unkempt appearance of a great company of tramps. The officers were undistinguishable from the men at first, but afterwards Yates noticed that they, mostly in plain clothes and slouch hats, had sword-belts buckled around them and one or two had swords that had evidently seen service in the United States cavalry.

"It's all right, boys," cried the captain to the excited mob. "It was only that fool Lynch who fired at us. There's nobody hurt. Where's the general?"

"Here he comes," said half a dozen voices at once, and the crowd made way for him. General O'Neill was dressed in ordinary citizen's costume, and did not have even a sword-belt. On his head of light hair was a black soft felt hat. His face was pale and covered with freckles. He looked more like a clerk from a store than like the commander of an army. He was evidently somewhere between thirty-five and forty years of age.

"Oh, it's you, is it?" he said. "Why are you back? Any news?"

The captain saluted, military fashion, and replied.

"We took two prisoners, sir. They were encamped in a tent in the woods. One of them says he is an American citizen and says he knows you, so I brought them in."

"I wish you had brought in the tent too," said the general, with a wan smile. "It would be an improvement on sleeping in the open air. Are these the prisoners? I don't know either of these men."

"The captain makes a mistake in saying that I claimed a personal acquaintance with you, general. What I said was that you would recognize somewhat quicker than he did who I was, and the desirability of treating me with reasonable decency.—Just show the general that telegram you took from my coat-pocket, captain."

The paper was produced, and O'Neill read it over once or twice.

"You are on the New York Argus, then?"

"Very much so, general."

"I hope you have not been roughly used?"

"Oh, no; merely tied up in a hard knot and threatened with shooting,—that's all."

"Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. Still, you must make some allowance at a time like this. If you will come with me I will write you a pass which will prevent any similar mistake happening in the future." The general led the way to a smouldering

camp-fire, where, out of a valise he took writing-materials, and using the valise as a desk, began to write. After he had written "Headquarters of the Grand Army of the Irish Republic," he looked up and asked Yates his first name. Being answered, he inquired the name of his friend.

"I want nothing from you," interposed Renmark. "Don't put my name on the paper."

"Oh, that's all right," said Yates. "Never mind him, general. He's a learned man who doesn't know when to talk and when not to. As you march up to our tent general, you will see an empty jug, which will explain everything. Renmark's drunk, not to put too fine a point upon it, and he imagines himself a British subject."

The Fenian general looked up at the professor.

"Are you a Canadian?" he asked.

"Certainly I am."

"Well, in that case, if I let you leave camp, you must give me your word that should you fall in with the enemy you will give no information to them of our position, numbers, or of anything else you may have seen while with us."

"I shall not give my word. On the contrary, if I should fall in with the Canadian troops I will tell them where you are, that you are from eight hundred to one thousand strong, and the worst-looking set of vagabonds I have ever seen out of jail."

General O'Neill frowned and looked from one to the other.

"Do you realize that you confess to being a spy, and that it becomes my duty to have you taken out and shot?"

"In real war, yes. But this is mere idiotic fooling. All of you that don't escape will be either in jail or shot before twenty-four hours."

"Well, by the gods, it won't help you any. I'll have you shot inside of ten minutes, instead of twenty-four hours."

"Hold on, general, hold on," cried Yates, as the angry man rose and confronted the two. "I admit that he richly deserves shooting if you were the fool-killer, which you are not. But it won't do. I will be responsible for him. Just finish that pass for me, and I will take care of the professor. Shoot me if you like, but don't touch him. He hasn't any sense, as you can see, but I am not to blame for that, nor are you. If you take to shooting everybody who is an ass, general, you won't have any ammunition left to conquer Canada with."

The general smiled in spite of himself, and resumed the writing of the pass.

"There," he said, handing the paper to Yates. "You see we always like to oblige the press. I will risk your belligerent friend, and I hope you will exercise more control over him, if you meet the Canadians, than you were able to exert here. Don't you think, on the whole, you had better stay with us? We are going to march in a couple of hours, when the men have had a little rest." Headed in a lower voice, so that the professor could not hear, "You didn't see anything of the Canadians, I suppose?"

"Not a sign. No, I don't think I'll stay. There will be five of our fellows here some time to-day, I expect, and that will be more than enough. I'm really here on a vacation. Been ordered rest and quiet. I'm beginning to think I have made a mistake in location."

Yates bade good-by to the commander, and walked with his friend out of the camp. They threaded their way among sleeping men and groups of stacked guns. On the top of one of the bayonets was hung a tall silk hat, which looked most incongruous in such a place.

"I think," said Yates, "that we will make for the Ridge Road, which must lie somewhere in this direction. It will be easier walking than through the woods; and besides, I want to stop at one of the farm-houses and get some breakfast. I'm as hungry as a bear after tramping so long."

"Very well," answered the professor shortly.

They stumbled along until they reached the edge of the wood, then, crossing some open fields, presently came upon the road near the spot where the first fight had taken place between Yates and Bartlett. The two, now with greater comfort, walked silently along the road towards the west, with the reddening east behind them. The whole scene was strangely quiet and peaceful, and the recollection of the weird camp they had left in the woods seemed merely a bad dream. The morning air was sweet, and the birds were beginning to sing. Yates had intended to give the professor a piece of his mind regarding the lack of tact and common sense displayed by Renmark in the camp, but somehow the scarcely-awakened day did not lend itself to controversy, and the serene stillness soothed his spirit. He began to whistle softly that popular war-song, "Tramp, tramp, tramp, the boys are marching," and then broke in with the question,—

"Say Renny, did you notice that plug-hat on the bayonet?"

"Yes, answered the professor; "and I saw five others scattered around the camp."

"Jingo! you were observant. I can imagine nothing quite so ridiculous as a man going to war in a tall silk hat."

The professor made no reply, and Yates changed his whistling to "Kally round the flag."

## (TO BE CONTINUED.)

## Meaning of Colours.

White is the colour of light, purity, innocence, faith, joy, and life. Black means mourning, wickedness, and death. Red signifies fire, divine love, and wisdom. Blue stands for heaven, truth from a celestial origin, constancy, and fidelity. Yellow or gold is the symbol of the sun, of marriage, and faithfulness; in a bad sense yellow signifies inconstancy, jealousy, and deceit. Green, the emerald, is the colour of spring, hope, particularly of the hope of immortality and of victory, as the colour of the laurel and palm. Violet signifies love and truth, or passion and suffering. Purple and scarlet signify things good and true from a celestial origin.

## No Rear Cars Wanted.

Pat—"Now, Bridget, dear, an' for yer loite don't be goin' an' sittin' of yerself in th' rear car of th' thrain on yer way to Toronto. Ach! it's thim as allers gets smashed t' smotherens."

Bridget—"An' Oi won't, indeed. But whoy is it, Pat, the railrhodes niver hez th' since 't' be afther leavin' th' rear cars off th' thrains for th' safety of their travellers?"

## EPITOME OF THE WEEK.

A British Match Consumers' League has been formed.

Walking-sticks for ladies are becoming fashionable.

The salary of the Viceroy of India is £10,833 rupees a month.

There are over 80,000 stuttering children in the schools of Germany.

Pulmonary consumption claimed 144 victims in London (Eng.) last week.

The British War Office authorities say that our soldiers are becoming shorter.

The largest holly tree in Great Britain is said to be at Clochfaen, Llanidloes.

Mr. W. P. Frith, R.A., received 6d. for his first drawing, a sketch of a dog.

Patti gets £800 for singing in London, and £500 for singing in the provinces.

Mr. Michael Santley, the son of the great baritone, is now studying for the Bar.

Mr. Max O'Rell thinks the Australian women are the most frivolous he has ever met.

Mr. Tom Mann thinks that the textile wages in Yorkshire are a disgrace to England.

In the United States it is a law that all phonographs in public use shall be disinfected.

A superabundance of iron in the blood is the theory put forward to account for red hair.

Mr. Cecil Rhodes, Premier of Cape Colony, thinks the Matabele trouble will soon be over.

In the neighbourhood of Isterburg, in Germany, wolves have appeared in large numbers.

It is said that a performance of Utopia is to be given before the Queen in the course of the season.

A Boston statistician finds that nearly twice as many women as men live to be over 80 years of age.

A movement is on foot in Russia to establish by law a compulsory insurance against the failure of the crops.

The survivors of the famous Balaclava charge are dwindling away, but there are still two in Newcastle.

A station official says that 50 men come to ask for articles left in railway carriages for every woman who does so.

The Bank of England note is not of the same thickness all through. Counterfeit notes are invariably of one thickness.

Messrs. Spiers & Pond intend to start a restaurant in Paris, for the supply of grilled steaks, chops, and English dishes.

Mdme. Patti's favorite pet is a small Mexican dog named Richi. He is provided with a complete wardrobe, including night-gown.

The Empress of Austria spends nearly half the day in having her hair cared for. During this time she is read to, and smokes incessantly.

Canton, says one who visited it recently, is chiefly notable for its foul smells, cooked dogs, and rat's flesh everywhere exposed for sale.

All persons in the service of the late Lord Derby had distributed between them on Wednesday a sum of £16,000, bequeathed in his will.

Prince Arthur, the little ten-year-old son of the Duke of Connaught, has been taking swimming lessons in the open sea at Southsea.

A lady correspondent says the colours in which the Duchess of York looks best are a rather warm, bright pink and forget-me-not blue.

An acute American observer writes that it is difficult in England to come across a Gladstonian among the upper and upper middle classes.

The Board Schools of London appeal for any used lawn tennis balls that players may have to spare. The balls are very useful in the playgrounds.

Rosa Bonheur, the well-known artist, has several pretty pet dogs, but her chief favourite is her monkey, which is allowed to run about at will.

The Duke of Devonshire has given a site valued at £6,000 for a new church at Eastbourne, and has also subscribed £5,000 towards the same object.

The Princess of Wales numbers among her many virtues the crowning one of being what is known in unaristocratic circles as "a good hand" with babies.

A movement has been inaugurated at Scranton, Pa., to send a choir of 160 Welsh-Americans to Wales next year, to represent the United States at the National Eisteddfod there.

It is rumoured that in America have been found the corrected proof-sheets of Boswell's Johnson, containing the passages which Boswell suppressed on the representations of his friend.

## With an Eye to Business.

Henry Irving tells a story of the "boots" at a country hotel where he was staying asking to be paid for going to the theatre. Irving, struck with the fellow's civility, gave him an order for the play.

"Come and see the piece, Tom," said Irving.

"At the theatre?"

"Yes," said Irving, "here is an order for you."

The next day Irving said: "Well, Tom, did you like the play?"

"Oh, yes," said the "boots" in a dubious kind of way, "but who is to pay me for my time?"