

# At Swords' Points;

## OR, A SOLDIER OF THE RHINE.

By ST. GEORGE RATHBORNE

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### CHAPTER IX—(Continued.)

She was no ordinary woman, this Parisian countess. He remembered that he had heard it said she was a born diplomat and that Louis Napoleon would sooner trust any desperate foreign mission to her than to most of his representatives.

Why, then, was she in Germany? Her appearance on the scene was like a blight to Paul. The conditions had really been bad enough before, but now they were rendered doubly serious.

When Hildegarde and her companion arose to leave the garden, he saw the countess also make a move.

He held his breath when he saw her brush up against the German beauty, throw back her veil a moment and speak rapidly to her, at the same time pressing a note into the hand of the fairly surprised Hildegarde.

Paul noticed that the countess dropped her veil again the moment she left Hildegarde's side.

What was the reason of this scrupulous care?

Did she wish to avoid recognition by Paul? He had never cared for her, though dazzled for a time by her beauty and the scintillating brilliancy of her intellect. Now he positively hated the dashing charmer, and could even see evil befall her with grim complacency.

Hence, it was with renewed interest and not a little satisfaction that he discovered a certain fact.

The countess had a shadow. In her turn, she was being watched, and something about the appearance of the man who kept her under constant surveillance gave him the impression that he belonged to the secret police of Berlin.

Then her mission to Baden was no such dead secret as she might suppose, and if she gave her enemies good and sufficient cause for an arrest, the beautiful Frenchwoman who dared to take such risks in order to gain the royal favor of Napoleon might see the inside of a German bastille sooner than she dreamed, even in her most sanguine moments.

Paul had much to consider while walking to his lodgings. Being possessed of means, Paul had a very luxurious establishment, which Karl shared with him of late.

The old woman who took care of the several flats usually waited up, though Paul could always enter with his key, and this he did on the present occasion.

To his surprise, the lights were turned up. Karl must have reached home ahead of him.

With a smile on his lips he abruptly entered the sitting-room to see the figure of a woman rise from a chair by the table where she had been reading and to feel a cold hand laid upon his heart as he recognized in his late visitor the charming enchantress and shrewd female diplomat, Countess Almea!

### CHAPTER X.

#### A Stormy Interview.

Paul knew he was in for a siege as soon as his eyes fell upon his visitor, and it required all the fortitude of which he was possessed to brace himself for the encounter.

He took her hand in a perfunctory way, and would have immediately released it only she refused to let him go so easily.

"Ah! you men forget so easily. It is the poor, weak, loving women who have to suffer," she said, with such exquisite pain in her voice that Paul might well have been inclined to pity, only that he knew her so well.

"Countess," he said, steadily, with a stern face, that betrayed his design, "your remembrance of me is very kind, but surely the present time and conditions are hardly suitable for a lady's visit. Had you informed me of your presence here, I should have been pleased to have paid my respects to you at your hotel."

"Ah! that was what I did not wish. I am not stopping at a hotel, and they do not know me here as the Countess Almea. Besides—it was my desire to surprise you."

"You certainly accomplished that."

"I thought, I believed, you would be overjoyed to see me, and I had looked forward with such eagerness to this meeting. Since you left Paris I have had the blues and have grown actually thin."

She said this so boldly that it had no effect for he knew it was false. If anything, she was more plump than ever, and as to her moping, he had no doubt she had been through a constant round of gaiety, breaking new hearts every week, and accepting generous presents from her ardent admirers.

"That is too bad, countess, but you should not allow cares of state to worry you so," he said.

"Ah! you are blind; you will not see. You want me to tell you openly it is the torment of that little god Love that has harassed me. You have no pity upon a poor woman who, reigning a queen for years, suddenly finds herself the weakest slave."

"I am sorry to hear you say that, countess," Paul remarked, coldly.

"Sorry!"  
The hands fell from the bewitching face, now pale with sudden anger, and her black eyes flashed incipient lightning as the realization dawned upon her that her scheming had, after all, been in vain.

"Ah! you do not know what wondrous love has wrought ere now," she said, slowly, and just at that moment Paul had a faint glimpse of the natural woman beneath the coquette.

Such remarkable women have lived at all times since the days of Cleopatra and Anthony, and their passage through the world is always strewn with the shipwrecks of mortal hopes.

The countess smiled mockingly. "Ah! I know where your love has strayed. I have watched you and the white-faced doll you fancy. Listen! I have implicated the sweet and unsophisticated Hildegarde with the political plots that keep the pot boiling and seething. Long ere you left the garden a paper I sent to her was in the hands of the secret officials of Bismarck."

Paul started as if shot. He began to understand the villainy of which a jealous and unscrupulous woman might be guilty.

"What did that paper contain? I demand that you answer me!" he cried, showing signs of excitement at last.

"Apparently a cipher which could be easily read, and which Hildegarde was instructed to pass on to the next agent, who would carry it swiftly over the border to Paris."

"And the cipher—what was it about?" savagely.

"Oh! a simple recapitulation of the number of men available whom Germany could place on the border, and some hints as to the best line of march a French army could take on the road to Berlin."

Paul hated her at that moment worse than he had hated any one in all his life.

She read his thoughts. "You mean to betray me to the authorities?" "It would only be fair. In that way I might save your intended victim."

"Ah! you do not dream what a hornet's nest you would bring down about your ears if you attempted that. And do you think they would believe you, whose name was signed to the note I gave Hildegarde? At this very moment agents are watching this house, believing I have come here to have a secret conference with you about political matters."

"I am lost!" he groaned.

"Wait. There is a chance of escape." "You mean you have terms to propose."

"Fly with me. I can outwit even Bismarck's bloodhounds. We can reach Russia, where we will be safe. Only promise that you will be faithful to me while life lasts. It is all I ask—all I care for. With that I can well say good-by to the world."

Eagerly she waited for his answer. It came speedily enough.

Paul folded his arms, he drew himself up to his full height, and looked her sternly in the eyes.

"Before I would reward such base treachery I would thrust my hand into the fire and let it burn to the stump." His words completed her demoralization, and she threw aside the mask.

"You cast the offer of my love away like a tattered glove. Well, I shall live for revenge, Monsieur Paul. You will curse the stupidity of this hour. I shall find means to wring your proud, cold heart. No man ever treated me as you have done, and it has aroused all the devil in my nature. I shall have a terrible revenge, do you hear me, a revenge best suited to such an insult. And now I will relieve you of my hateful presence, but you can depend upon it, you are already a marked man among the King's soldiers, and a guard will remain to watch your future actions. Mine you were, and no other shall possess what fortune has denied to me," and, with flashing eyes, in which he saw murder rampant, the adventures glided from the room and was escorted by him to the lower door of the house.

### CHAPTER XI.

#### Led by Destiny.

It may be safely assumed that Rhineland, after that stormy interview with the countess, did not feel much like sleep.

Long he tramped up and down the rooms, for Karl had not yet arrived. At length he retired, and when Karl came in he seemed to be sleeping; yet, through the remaining watches of the night, the American lay there and arranged plans, just as when a child he had built houses out of cards, to knock them down the next capricious moment.

Another day dawned. Paul remembered his promise to his sister.

It must be kept, painful though the interview might be. Beatrix should know that at least she had a father with an unsullied name, and that there was a brother ready to love and protect her, in whose arms she could weep.

Accordingly he hastened to the address he had received on the previous night.

He had already noticed as a queer coincidence that it was in the same strasse as the house where Hildegarde resided. This did not appear to be the only remembrance, since the building itself had a familiar look.

Passing upstairs and asking to see the young lady, he handed his card to the attendant.

Through the doorway came a vision in white, and Paula's nervous arms fell fast to his sides.

For strange to say, it was not Beatrix who floated in through the doorway, but Hildegarde herself.

"And, like a flash, it came upon Paul that, in some clumsy manner, he had succeeded in mixing the numbers, and thus made a mess of it.

However, since the damage had already been done, he must abide by the consequences.

Hildegarde was evidently struggling under a variety of emotions; but she had been taught how to keep her feelings under fair control, and, besides, the German maidens are so very modest they never wear their hearts upon their sleeves for daws to peck at.

As Paul had ere now fully determined that this sweet girl was lost to him, that circumstances had lifted her far beyond his reach, allowing him only the chance of worshipping at a great distance, as the Atecs might the glowing sun, what did it matter, anyway?

"Of course, you are surprised to see me here, and I assure you I am inclined that way myself, but, since I have stumbled into your presence, I must say something that is on my mind. Will you condescend to listen, Fraulien Hildegarde?"

She inclined her head, as though unwilling to trust her voice as yet.

Now he was ready to make the plunge.

"It is my duty to warn you against some one you saw last night at the garden; a woman, who has taken an intense dislike toward you, founded on a senseless fabric, but who wishes you ill."

"A woman, you say—and last night?"

Hildegarde put this question hastily, while her manner betrayed more or less excitement.

She did not forget, she could not forget, that she had seen Paul bending over a sweet girl, holding her two hands in his own, and beaming upon her with what appeared to be the most devoted attention.

No wonder her curiosity was aroused and she hung upon his words with eagerness.

"This woman has conceived a sudden dislike toward you. She has no scruples about working you injury, and has arranged a miserable plan whereby you may seem to be implicated with her in treachery toward the Kaiser."

The girl's face grew white. To a patriotic daughter of the Rhine, there could be no greater evil befall one than to be accused of such a crime.

"Impossible! Who would believe such a thing?" she murmured.

"In these troublous times men are ready to believe the strangest stories. Spies there are in the heart of Germany. One was discovered only a few days ago within court circles, a woman who had been trusted almost implicitly. She is now shut up in a fortress. Let me try to explain."

"Proceed, my dear."

(To be Continued.)

### CLOCKS OF PAST AGES.

#### How the Present Magnificent Timepieces Originated.

The word clock, derived from the French *cloche*, German *glocke*, signifies bell, and up to the fourteenth century it was only used to designate a bell which was struck at certain periods of time indicated by the hour-glass.

Sandals or "gnomons" were the first instruments used in measuring time, and there is but little doubt that the long granite pillars which we call obelisks were used by the Egyptians if not as actual sundial hands, at least for some astronomical observations of the movement of the sun.

Clepsydras or water clocks and sand clocks came next in order. The flow of sand through a small orifice is an accurate method of measuring time, for the exit of the sand is always regular; but water is influenced by the laws of hydrostatics; when the vase is full the water runs out faster than when it is nearly empty.

Candle clocks, or tapers on which were colored bands indicating how much was consumed in a certain time, were also used, and their invention is attributed to Alfred the Great; but this method is even more susceptible of error than the previous ones.

In most large cities a public record of the flight of time seems to have been kept by some method or other. In 1286 St. Paul's in London paid a salary to an orologist, who kept a record of time; and in 1371 we find one employed at Westminster palace to attend to the clock. The first portable clocks are attributed to a German named De Souable, and are supposed to have been made in 1300; but it is not till 1430 that we find mention of a clock made so that it might carry it with him to every place which he might go."—*Jewelers' Review*.

#### Lost the Lord's Nickel.

A little boy who goes to Sunday school every Sunday always receives a nickel from his father to place in the collection plate. Last Sunday his father gave him two nickels, saying, "One is for the Lord and the other is for yourself." As it was too early to start for Sunday school the little boy sat on the porch steps in the warm sunshine playing with the two nickels. After a while he dropped one of them and it disappeared down a crack. Without a moment's hesitation and still clutching the remaining coin in his clenched fist, he looked up at his father, exclaiming, "Oh, pop! There goes the Lord's nickel!"

#### Nice Even to the Stupid.

He—I certainly had reason to think you cared for me—you were so nice to me. She—But I make it a point to be nice to every man, no matter how stupid he is.—*Detroit Free Press*.

## ILLINOIS ITEMS

There is a movement on foot to establish a baseball league of semi-professional clubs, to include Murphysboro, Centralia, East St. Louis, Belleville, Cairo and Paducah.

The Illinois Central is unloading material at Centralia for the enlargement of the shops. A new building, 140x80, is to be erected as an addition to the carpenter shop department. The shops now have 340 men on the payroll, the largest in ten years.

Hopedale will vote on a proposition to issue bonds for a jail, fire station and village hall.

The Lincoln Chautauqua has leased beautifully shaded and watered grounds.

About \$5,000 of the desired \$12,000 for the new Catholic church at Minier has been raised.

German Lutherans at Decatur propose building a new school.

The Dwight postoffice business warrants free delivery of mail after July 1.

Swedish citizens have organized an Episcopal church at Molina.

The Quawka button factory will remove to Burlington, Ia.

A Monmouth factory recently shipped a train load, twenty-five cars, of sewer pipe to Toledo, O.

A Kansas City man bought the Maccomb sewer pipe factory, valued at \$70,000, for \$35,000, and will spend \$25,000 in improvements.

Monmouth will build another schoolhouse, costing over \$25,000.

A woman named Norman lived at Abington for years in a hovel with a box for a bed and a stick of wood for a pillow. She died recently and \$1,700 in cash has since been found secreted about the shanty.

Recently a special train of twelve cars bearing nine families and their personal effects left Aledo—seven of the families bound for Nebraska, one for Missouri and one for Iowa.

George Frankland, a manufacturer of plows and farm wagons, died at Albion. He was 57 years old.

The proposition to change the village of Assumption to a city was hotly contested. The city advocates won by thirty-three majority.

William W. Austin of Effingham has announced himself a candidate for Republican nomination for House of Representatives in the Twenty-third congressional district.

The Republican central committee of Calhoun county called a convention to meet in Hardin April 28 to nominate a county ticket and name delegates to the state, congressional and senatorial conventions. The precinct primaries will be held on Saturday, the 28th of April.

William S. Hall, editor of the Daily Republican Era, one of the best known Republican newspapers of southern Illinois, died of smallpox at his home in Murphysboro. He was 54 years of age.

At Cairo the 375 employees of the Slager sewing machine factory went on a strike out of sympathy for the striking employes at South Bend, Ind. The factory closed down.

Just when shippers were congratulating themselves on the prospect of lake navigation opening April 1, or nearly a month earlier than usual, vessel owners at Chicago have started a movement to delay the season until May 1. The object of the combine is to raise carrying charges.

An electric bolt struck the home of [Mrs.] Beldin, west of Mattoon, and a little daughter, standing in the doorway, was thrown violently to the floor. The clothing was stripped from the child's body. Another child was also injured.

Stockholders of the Charleston Gas company have awarded the contract for the erection of a new plant at a cost of \$48,000, and under the terms of the agreement gas is to be in the mains July 1.

John Cox, the 12-year-old son of Charles Cox of Hutton township, was instantly killed by a bolt of lightning while standing in the barn door.

Mrs. Elizabeth Rose, aged 81, died at her home at Ridgeway.

James Howard, aged 70 years, died at Murphysboro after a long illness. Deceased had been engaged in the hotel business in Jackson county for a number of years.

At the meeting of the Macon county board of supervisors the tract system of indexing the books in the recorder's office for real estate transfers was adopted. It will cost \$5,000 to \$7,000 to have the books put in shape.

Hugh Cox was arrested on a charge preferred by Mrs. E. Demuth of the Alton Humane society, that he was guilty of incest with his daughter.

Dennis Bell, a large farmer and land owner, died at his home near Greenuop, of cancer, aged 70 years.

W. M. Dorsey, a retired business man, died at his home at Bunker Hill, aged 79 years.

A mass meeting of prominent business men was held at Peoria and steps were taken to secure the next Republican state convention.

The Underwriters' association of Illinois held a meeting at Peoria, there being about 150 members present. The meeting was held behind closed doors and no information given out.

The Munich Reinsurance company, of Munich, Germany, commenced a suit in the circuit court at Springfield, to prevent State Superintendent of Insurance Yates from revoking its license to do business in the state.

Dow & King's grain elevator at Pittsfield, together with 40,000 bushels of wheat and 5,000 bushels of corn, was totally consumed by fire. There was \$39,000 insurance.

Charles Cox, a youth living near Diona, ten miles north of Greenuop, was struck by lightning and instantly killed.

Nancy A. Cole of Alton has entered suit for divorce from William Cole, whose arrest she caused one week ago on a charge of nonsupport and ill treatment of his family. Cole is in jail, and the divorce will be procured while he is serving a sentence of 108 days for being a "lazy man."

Alfred Bush, son of Alderman Bush, of Carbondale, who was injured by falling from a train, died from his injuries.

A trophy shoot will be held by the Illinois gun club at Springfield Thursday of next week. The contest will be a twenty-five-bird race. This will be the last shoot before the grand American handicap, which will take place in Kansas City the first week in April.

Alderman S. F. Connor, of the 4th ward of Alton has fathered a resolution in the city council providing for the appointment of a city council committee to devise means of purchasing a site for a public park to consist of from 50 to 150 acres. The committee is also authorized to select a location.

It is practically settled that the question of issuing county bonds to fund the large floating indebtedness now being carried will not be submitted to the people again until the November election at Springfield.

The stone cutters have resumed work on the court house building at Taylorville, after a strike lasting three days.

M. H. Boals, a prominent Alton lumber man, has laid claim to a large tract of land along the river which has been claimed by the city for many years, and he has requested that the city refrain from attempting to exercise control over the land.

Thieves stole two horses, a spring wagon, two sets of harness and other property from Cicero Moore, a farmer residing on the Pickensville and Tamaroa road, six miles east of Pickensville.

Fred Robs, aged about 37 years, was adjudged non compos mentis by a medical commission at Carrollton, and was taken by Sheriff Conise to the hospital for the insane at Jacksonville.

It is said by the managers of the Alton baseball association, which owned and controlled the Alton Blues baseball team last year, that there is a poor prospect of Alton having the Blues back again next season. The reason given is that the baseball park can not be had for the same rental as last year and that the baseball association can not pay increased rent.

City Marshall L. A. Talbert at Sparta arrested Thomas Williams, of Percy, Ill., who was wanted in Perry county on the charge of robbing the postoffice at Willisville. Williams was turned over to the sheriff of Perry county.

H. H. Adams, a prominent farmer of Assumption township, is dead. He was 74 years of age.

The First National bank building in Herrin was destroyed by fire, together with a second-hand store adjoining. The loss is estimated at \$14,000, most of which is covered by insurance.

Acting Governor Northcott honored the requisition of the governor of Indiana for the extradition of Frank McKinney, under arrest at Kankakee, and wanted in Indiana for violating his parole from the reformatory of the state.

The Alton board of education is considering a name for the new high school building, which will be erected on Seminary square within the next six months at a cost of \$50,000. It is proposed to name the building the McKinley high school building of Alton.

The Equitable Powder company has started work on a new hotel building on their property near East Alton for the accommodation of the workmen to be employed in the new plant being constructed there for the manufacture of high explosives and cartridge shells.

It is denied that any gas wells have been found on the Philip Kennedy farm at Fosterburg.

W. H. Dillman has been appointed master in chancery of Clay county.

The citizens of Highland have raised \$146.56, which will be forwarded to the suffering Boers in South Africa.

D. H. Conwell, one of the most prominent citizens of Carlyle, bears the distinction of being one of the oldest in point of continuous membership in the Odd Fellows' order in southern Illinois. He was initiated into Golden Rule lodge in Milton, Del., March 2, 1849.

The Ayer & Lord Tie company has taken an option on the 350 acres of land adjoining that recently purchased for their tie-preserving works at Carbondale. The price agreed upon is \$48 per acre. This tract included, will make over 400 acres connected with their extensive plant.

The farmers east of Sparta have organized the farmers' social and economical union.

E. R. Cobbart has purchased the O. F. Roland farm, near Murphysboro, containing 100 acres, the price paid being \$5,000.

The practice games on the baseball club in the Third ward were discontinued April 15, when Manager Palmer was taken the Chicago White Sox to that city.

The head office of the American Home Circle has been removed from Champaign to Springfield.

Thomas Child, son of William Child, the contractor of Decatur, fell from a Wabash train south of Decatur and was killed. The body was taken to Decatur.

The Mount Vernon band, formerly 4th regiment band, E. N. G., and one of the oldest and best musical organizations in southern Illinois, has disbanded.

Rev. I. E. Arnold, the evangelist, has purchased the little steamer *Edith Adams* of Quincy, and will soon leave and inaugurate a series of mission meetings in the towns on the Mississippi river south of Quincy.

The Anna Fruitgrowers' association has elected these officers for the ensuing year: Matt Allison, president; Robert Lambert, vice president; A. J. Shreffler, secretary; Tillman Nichols, treasurer.

Reports from the wheat-growing country north of Alton are to the effect that the growing crop was never in better condition than it is now. Wheat passed through the winter well.

The Alton commercial club has decided to advertise Alton as a desirable manufacturing site, and to that end will assist the business men in promoting the publicity of the city. The natural advantages of the city and its future as a manufacturing center will be pushed.

J. L. Dollar, a representative of the government of Great Britain, has closed a contract with E. K. Sweet of Quincy for the purchase of 500 head of horses.

Carbondale officials believe that one of the gang who have been operating throughout southern Illinois in burglarizing banks has been caught in the person of Thomas Williamson, charged with robbing the Willisville postoffice last Tuesday night.

The pupils of the public schools of Cairo were asked by State Superintendent Alfred Bayless to contribute to the McKinley memorial fund. The 2,300 school children contributed \$22.

At a meeting of the senior class of the Cairo high school a vote was taken to elect a member of the class to represent the high school at the interscholastic oratorical contest to be held at Champaign in May. The voting resulted in the election of Monte Keller.

A most excellent outlook for apples is reported throughout the state, although it is a little early to estimate this crop. So far as can be inferred now 92 per cent of an average crop may be expected.

The Big Four railway has begun work putting in more double-tracking at East Alton and a steam shovel with a big force of men are at work.

The state board of health has been notified of a serious outbreak of scarlet fever at Ridott, in Stephenson county.

There is renewed uneasiness over the smallpox situation at Springfield, which a few days ago was said to be improving. On Wednesday seven new cases developed and were taken in charge by the health authorities. It is said that the continuance of the epidemic is due to the failure of afflicted persons to take ordinary precautions.

A badly decomposed body of an infant white child is in charge of Officer Beer at Springfield and efforts are being made to locate the mother.

It is probable that the Wabash railroad hospital will be removed from Springfield to Decatur as a more central and accessible point.

Proceedings have been commenced by Henry Goewert against Henry Law for \$2,000. Both are residents of Brown. The plaintiff alleges defendant made derogatory remarks about his character.

The city of Litchfield has brought for \$1,500 damages on account of bills suit against the county of Montgomery incurred in caring for smallpox patients. The board contends that the county is not liable for such claims unless the persons affected were paupers.

R. H. Ferguson, treasurer of the McKinley monument fund, will shortly receive from Mayor Phillips \$100, Springfield's contribution to the fund. The collections here, although small, represent a large number of contributors.

William R. Westover, alias William R. Westover, who forced several Springfield merchants by means of bogus checks, will be taken to that city from Detroit, Mich., as soon as the authorities there are through with him.

Arthur R. Looney, son of Edwin R. Looney, a prominent merchant of Murphysboro, died at the home of his parents, of consumption. He was 29 years of age.

Arthur Roland, the colored man arrested at Murphysboro on suspicion of being a murderer, who was wanted in Jackson, Tenn., was identified by Sheriff Mayo, of that city, and was taken to Jackson for trial.

Alfred Bush, aged 15, son of Alderman Bush, of Carbondale, was probably fatally injured by falling from a train.