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**The Colonel's  
 Pride**

How the Army Regulations  
 Were Adhered to and  
 a Genius Secured  
 For the Band

By ARTHUR TOWNSEND

"Do you play on any musical instrument?"  
 "No."  
 "Have no musical taste?"  
 "I don't know. I was born and have lived all my life in the heart of a forest, where no musical sound except the singing of the birds has ever reached my ears. But that I have always dearly loved. Why do you ask these questions?"  
 "Because if you could play upon the cornet or the flageolet or the trombone you might be permitted to live. As it is, your sentence will be carried out. What a pity that you have not some foundation for a musical training; I could in a few days coach you so that you might save yourself from being shot."  
 When the Spanish war broke out the news of it reached the wilderness in which I lived. Here was a chance to get out of the woods and into the world. I would enlist for a soldier. I would need no money. The government would clothe, feed and transport me, and all that would be required of me would be to be shot. And if those who shot at me missed me and continued to miss me till the war was over, I would be taken care of till the next war, and if I lived through all the wars till I became an old man I would be laid on the shelf, but would be still taken care of.  
 This was the explanation given me by the recruiting officer, whom I found after a walk of sixty miles. Not caring to walk back again and remain out of the world I accepted the conditions to remain in the world till some enemy fired a shot that would give the government the best of the bargain. I was put into an infantry regiment and an effort was made to knock some of the "green" out of me and turn me into a soldier. But the effort failed. I could not be disciplined and within a week after having been landed in Cuba I struck my captain, was tried for mutiny and sentenced to be shot.  
 There are two extremes in war. When an army is not in action there is enough red tape used to strangle the world, but when the real work begins there isn't any red tape at all. In the mix-up that occurred after our landing, while many a good soldier lay dying on the battlefield, I, a mutineer, ill with malarial fever, was turned into the house of a Cuban farmer and was attended by his daughter, one of those dark haired, olive complexioned, long eyed daughters of equatorial regions who can't look at a man without falling in love with him.  
 It has required three times the talk to tell all these commonplace facts as the beginning of my story. It was Inez Gonzalez, the farmer's daughter and my nurse, who regretted my want of musical training with which I might have saved my life by blowing a horn.  
 "A regiment encamped yesterday," she went on, "in a field across the road, and two of the men supped here this evening. One of them said that his cornet and his flageolet had been killed and his trombone was grunting under a bad wound. The colonel was very proud of the regimental band, and just as soon as the routine of army life recommenced he would notice that the music was not up to the mark and there would be the mischief to pay. The other suggested that musicians be obtained from the prisoners who had been captured by the enemy. The first man answered that he hadn't thought of it; he would try. If you were a musician he might put you into the band."  
 Here was a chance for life—a ghost of a chance, but still a chance. The only indication that I had enough music in me to avail myself of the opportunity was that I had loved the songs of birds. I asked Inez to go to the camp, find the bandmaster and tell him there was a man in her home who could play on any instrument; that he was ill, but convalescent, and with a couple of weeks' practice would be able to take his place in a band.  
 Inez told the story, and the bandmaster came over to see me. When I told him I was under sentence to be shot he was a bit discouraged, but said that if I was a first class cornet player he thought the colonel would have enough influence to get a commutation or something that would save my breath for the band. He went away and came back to say that he had seen the colonel and secured an order delaying my execution till it could be discovered whether I was a valuable musician. If so some way of defeating justice would be found by which I could be utilized. The colonel's pride in the band was such that he would shoot a dummy in my stead if necessary, only the army regulations must be faithfully adhered to. But my abilities must be tested before any change in the army situation should take place.  
 So there I was, not knowing a note of music, sick in bed and required to make a musician of myself immediately, for army situations are not lasting, and the present one was liable to be changed at any moment. I got busy at once, with my life the spur to drive

me on. Inez, having taken a few lessons on the piano, had the wherewithal for a beginning. But there was no time to get on an instrument so unlike the one I was required to play, and Inez borrowed a flute. On this I made a beginning. It was better for the purpose than a cornet since it made less noise, and the bandmaster across the road couldn't hear me practicing.  
 Written music bothered me, but I made wonderful progress playing whatever came into my head. I could not read music at least could not learn to do so quickly enough for the purpose—but I could improvise, and what astonished Inez was that I could not only "make up" airs, but could play them with remarkable fervor.  
 All this developed within a few days, at the end of which time the bandmaster sent to learn if I was well enough to play for him. I replied that I would be very soon, but since I had not touched a musical instrument since the war began I would like to have him send me one on which I might get a little practice before submitting to a test. He sent me a cornet.  
 Fearing that he would hear my first efforts and learn of my ignorance of the art to which I pretended, I asked Inez to stuff the cracks in the windows of the room in which I lay, and I began my efforts under the bed. I made what headway I could in this disadvantageous way and in two days began to play on the bed instead of under it. Whether I was heard by the bandmaster or not I don't know, but if I was no word about it came to me. But so fearful was I of betraying my want of knowledge of the cornet that I dare not blow a full blast.  
 Every day I feared some change that would cut short my preparation, and it was carried on under the fear that at any moment the army law might be permitted to take its course. I was haunted by the expectation of being marched out at any moment, stood up before a file of soldiers and shot. So lugubrious were my feelings that my playing would have been much better fitted for a funeral march than the popular airs of the day.  
 One morning the bandmaster came to see me and told me that a candidate for cornet player in the band had appeared in the personage of a soldier in the ranks and, since he must have a man to fill the post as soon as possible, unless I was ready to stand a test he would have the other man transferred to the band. I begged him to wait a few days that I might get more strength, but he said the colonel was liable at any time to notice the deteriorated condition of the band and if he did it would be impossible to tell what he would do. This frightened me, and I consented to stand trial.  
 The next afternoon he brought a man to the house where I was lying. Inez saw them coming with a cornet and, pale as death, ran in to tell me. I was desperate. If I submitted to a trial of skill between myself and one who was familiar with the instrument I would doubtless show my inability as a cornet player; if I refused to submit the man would be appointed in my place and I would be shot.  
 "Let them come," I exclaimed. "I will blow a blast that will awaken the dead."  
 I knew that my room was no place for a test on a cornet and asked Inez to hand me my clothes. When the bandmaster arrived I was dressing and sent word to him that I would be out in a few minutes. Having finished my toilet, I muttered a prayer and staggered out on to a porch, where I draped into a chair. The bandmaster told me and my rival that he would take two into the band the better player of the two, and since I was weak and the other fellow was strong he would give me the advantage of playing after him.  
 My rival took the cornet carelessly. It did not appear that he was anxious to get into the band, and he did not make a special effort. He did not need to do so to beat me, though he did not know it. He played a selection from the overture to "Zampa," a favorite piece for cornet players to show their skill. He rendered it very well, and I could not have played it at all.  
 One of the few simple airs I had learned was "Home, Sweet Home." Taking the cornet from the bandmaster, I told him that I was not strong enough to give him anything displaying technique; I could only produce melody. I fixed my mind on the cabin where I knew my dear mother was daily thinking of me and on the scene of my expected execution. There were but few notes, but each note was expressive of my depth of feeling. Persons who were passing stopped to listen. I played the air through once, and all were absorbed. I played it a second time, and their eyes were wet. The third time every one within hearing was weeping.  
 "That's enough," said the bandmaster; "you're my man."  
 "Hold," I said; "the secret must come out in time; I can't play a note. I have simply learned this in the vain hope of saving my life."  
 "I don't care if you can't play the scale; there's more music in you than in my whole band. I'll make a musician of you, and when I do you'll be a wonder."  
 Inez's tears gushed afresh, and she clasped me in her arms.  
 My execution was got round in this way. A requisition was made on the quartermaster for a coffin. It was indorsed, "No coffin in my possession." The requisition having been referred to the colonel, he issued a special order that I was to be released from arrest till a coffin could be procured in which to bury me. The coffin was never procured, and I have never been buried. The army regulations were adhered to, and I have become a great musician. Inez is my wife.

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**MOLECULES ARE INVISIBLE.**  
 Yet Their Tracks Through Space Can Be Discerned.  
 It came to be evident about the middle of the last century that, in order to explain certain facts connected with the relative weights of gases, matter must not merely consist of atoms, but that these atoms must have the power of uniting in small groups. In forming a compound, indeed, this must be so. For instance, carbonic acid gas must consist of one atom of carbon, which, along with two atoms of oxygen, forms a small group of three atoms.  
 The novelty of the conception was in the notion that oxygen itself in the state of gas, as it exists, for example, in the air, consists of small groups of atoms; in this case, two. To such small groups of atoms was given the name molecules. A molecule is that portion of a substance which can exist in the free state, as oxygen does in air. An atom generally exists in combination, but atoms may and sometimes do exist separately, in which case they also are termed molecules.  
 Now, can molecules be seen? Is their existence a mere assumption? The answer to that question is, No, they cannot be seen, but artificial molecules can be made which correspond so closely in their behavior to real molecules that the existence of real molecules is practically certain. Moreover, although no one has ever seen a molecule, still the track of a molecule moving through space has been seen, and, just as Robinson Crusoe was right in inferring the existence of man Friday from his footprint imprinted in the sand, so the real existence of a molecule may just as certainly be inferred from the track it leaves.—Sir William Ramsay in Harper's.  
**COLD COMFORT.**  
 It Came After the Little Faker Had Got His Punishment.  
 The end and small boy had sadly misbehaved and was locked in his room. Pretty soon his mother heard him calling.  
 "Muvver," said the shrill voice, "I'm goin' to bust the window and fall out."  
 The mother made no reply. Again the shrill voice arose:  
 "Muvver, I've found some matches, an' I'm goin' to set fire to the curtains."  
 The mother remained indifferent. Once more the voice bawled her:  
 "Muvver, don't you smell sumfin' burnin'?" Even this drew no response.  
 "If you don't smell nothin'," the voice went on, "it's 'cause I pulled off all the match heads an' swallowed 'em, an' I'm goin' to die. Do you hear that, muvver; I'm goin' to die."  
 By this time the mother was thoroughly incensed, and, hastily preparing a cup of mustard and hot water, she hurried upstairs.  
 "If you've swallowed match heads," she announced, "you'll have to swallow this to keep them company." And then she poured the nauseating stuff down his throat.  
 A little later the aggravating youngster, sadder, wiser and much humbled, concluded to take the balance of his punishment in silence.  
 "I didn't really swallow the matches, muvver," he contritely explained.  
 "I knew you didn't, sonny," replied the mother.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.  
**Love's Paradox.**  
 "Love results in many paradoxical situations," remarked the professor.  
 "What is one?"  
 "To keep the love of another one must return it."—Buffalo Express.

**As Far as He Could Go.**  
 "I," she said proudly, "can trace my ancestry back to armor and shirts of mail."  
 "I started to trace my ancestry back once," he replied, "but my wife made me stop when I got to shirt sleeves and overalls."—Judge.  
**Good Names and Riches.**  
 "A good name is better than great riches," quoted the sage.  
 "But that's not the reason why most of us are poor," replied the fool.—Cleveland Enquirer.  
 Begun your web, and God will supply you with thread.—Italian Proverb.  
**A Fleet Street Story.**  
 Henry Arthur Broome, in "The Log of a Floating Stone," says that in 1871 he was engaged in wood engraving for Punch when one day, at the end of the week, short of money, he stood gazing longingly at the cherries on a counter-mongee's barrow which stood straight in the way of the London Telegraph. His gaze attracted the attention of a gentleman whom he had often seen there before, though not at midday.  
 The gentleman, averting his eyes from me a moment, purchased two paper bags of this fruit. Then, placing one of them in the pocket of his capacious dust coat, he turned to me with the sweetest smile imaginable and without a word offered the other one to me, which I gratefully accepted. He then passed on and went upstairs to the offices of the newspaper. That was my first introduction to the prince of journalists, George Augustus Sala.  
**A Limit to His Power.**  
 A curious historical anecdote is handed down from the time of James I. James, being in want of £20,000, applied to the corporation for a loan. The corporation refused. The king insisted. "But, sire, you cannot compel us," said the lord mayor. "No," exclaimed James, "but I'll ruin you and the city forever. I'll remove my courts of law, my court itself and my parliament to Winchester or to Oxford and make a desert of Westminster, and then think what will become of you!" "May it please your majesty," replied the lord mayor, "you are at liberty to remove yourself and your courts to wherever you please; but, sire, there will always be one consolation to the merchants of London—your majesty cannot take the Thames along with you."  
**Franks of Nature.**  
 Monument park, near Colorado Springs, Colo., contains some queer freaks of nature. Among the most singular is a group of light grayish-yellow sandstone pillars twenty or more feet high capped with a thin layer of dark colored rock which resembles the tops of giant anthrobrons which have shriveled and partially dried up. The dark colored capping being of a much harder (fronstone) rock than the pillars has to some extent protected the latter from disintegration. Especially at nightfall is the traveler impressed with the weird effect of these gigantic and grotesque forms, which in the uncertain light assume the attitudes of huge human or animal shapes.—Argonaut.

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