

# THE CAPTAIN'S STRATAGEM.

A TALE OF LA VENDEE.

BY MAURICE SULLIVAN.

Ping! ping! the bullets sounded, as they hailed in a storm of lead against the walls of the old house. They cracked the crumbling bricks, broke the tiles on the roof, and flew in through the windows, destroying window frames, shutters, furniture, and ceilings, making clouds of mortar, splinters of wood, and fragments of glass and earthenware fly about, whistling and rebounding, hissing and screaming as if thirsty for human blood.

The attack was fierce, but the defence was stubborn. The garrison of the old house consisted of about sixty veteran French soldiers. They were a detachment from the army commanded by General Hoche, who had been despatched to the famous western province of La Vendee to put down the Royalist rebellion which raged there in the year 1794. They had been sent out to a considerable distance from the main body of the Republican leader's forces, with orders to occupy a lone house which stood on a height overlooking a wide extent of country.

They had barely reached the building, when they found themselves attacked by an overwhelming number of Royalists, who burst suddenly upon them from a belt of woodland below, and opened a furious fire. The Republican troops hastily sought shelter within the house, which was an old and solid brick structure. They barricaded the doors, rushed to the windows, and vigorously returned the shower of bullets rained upon them by the assailants.

From time to time a soldier shooting from the window would fall back on the floor. He would be dragged aside, and a comrade would press forward to take his place. Wounded men were staggering from room to room. Several already lay dead or dying. The enemy's line was drawing nearer and nearer.

The captain of the besieged was in the topmost room of the house, where he directed the defence, launching out his commands like pistol-shots. He was tall, thin, and austere-looking, with grizzled hair and beard. His appearance was a singular contrast to that of a bright-faced young drummer beside him. The boy was only fourteen years old, and this was the first fighting he had ever seen. It was only a few days since he had said good-bye to his widowed mother in their little home in the Quartier Latin of Paris, and proudly marched along the street with his regiment. And now he had posted himself beside the captain, with pale cheeks, but with eyes glittering with excitement, and not a trace of fear in his set face. He stood on tip-toe and peered out of the small upper window, heedless of the bullets that struck around him.

He could see the rebels closing in on the house with triumphant yells that showed their belief that their prey was well within their grasp. They were advancing upon the front and on both sides; the back of the house looked down a steep incline, where the ground was so broken and rough that they did not attack it from that quarter.

The captain's face, hitherto stern and unmoved, began to show signs of uneasiness as he saw the apparent hopelessness of the position. Was there no way to save the lives of the brave fellows intrusted to his command?

Suddenly, as if a thought had struck him, he drew back from the window, and laid his hand somewhat roughly on the young drummer's shoulder.

The boy looked up, and his glance met the stern grey eyes of the captain fixed upon him with a gaze that penetrated his very soul.

"Josef Barra!"

The drummer put his hand to his cap in military salute.

"Josef Barra, have you courage?"

Josef's eyes flashed.

"Yes, my captain!" he said.

The captain led him from the room, and went to a window at the back of the house.

"See Josef," he said quickly but calmly, as he pointed out of the window, "take your drum, and slip out of the back entrance of the house; make your way down the hill, and into the woods beyond; then sound the 'advance' on your drum as loud as you can. The enemies will think that reinforcements are coming up, and you may save the detachment."

The boy's eyes flashed more brightly than ever now. He did speak, but, buckling his drum to his side, he hurried down to the ground floor. A moment later, with a final "God help you," the captain had sent him out by the door at the back of the house, which was closed and barricaded behind him.

The captain returned to the upper window, and eagerly watched the boy flying down the descent. Would he reach the woods unobserved by the enemy, or would they catch sight of him? If they did the stratagem would hardly succeed, even if they did not finish the drummer's career with a ball from one of their muskets.

On and on the boy hurried, concealing himself as best he could, by taking advantage of the irregularities of the ground. Breathlessly the captain watched him, all heedless of the whistling and hissing of the bullets in the front of the house, the angry and excited voices of the sergeants and corporal, the sharp cries of the wounded, the falling of mortar, the crashing of furniture.

The drummer boy is far down the slope now; he has nearly reached the shelter of the woods. The captain measures with his eye the distance still to be traversed. Two minutes more, and—

One of the sergeants dashed into the room and told him that the enemy, though they had not ceased firing, were waving a white cloth, to show that they demanded a surrender.

"Do not answer," cried the captain, and he ran hastily downstairs to join his men. The lower story was full of the wounded, lying helpless on the floor, or supporting themselves against the walls, which were spattered and splashed with blood. Here and there was a corpse; smoke and dust covered everything.

"Courage, men!" called the captain,

"Keep your posts! Help is even now at hand!"

A feeble cheer broke out among the brave defenders, desperate as the case seemed. The rebels had drawn nearer still. Their fierce faces could be seen through the smoke; among the noise of firing could be heard their cries, calling on the besieged to surrender and threatening massacre.

The fire of the garrison soon slackened again, and despair began to show itself upon their faces. Already more than one window was without defenders, and it was clear that the house could not be held much longer.

Suddenly one of the wounded men raised himself from the floor with a shout of triumph.

"They are coming, comrade! I hear General Hoche's drums! You are saved!"

And the poor fellow fell back in a swoon. The captain's straining ears had caught the same sound. A drum beat, loud and clear, rose from the woods on the enemy's flank. It was sounding the advance.

"Help is near!" was the cry among the defenders, and again their spirits rose. Every man who could stand made for the windows, and again a hot fire was poured forth on the rebels.

Signs of disorder were soon visible among the Royalists. The drum beat had puzzled and terrified them. It must mean that Hoche's troops were close at hand, though they had believed him to be miles away.

The captain saw the enemy's doubt and hesitation, and feared that they might discover the trick he had played, though none of his own men had done so. He took a bold step.

"Open the doors!" was his sharp order. The barricaded entrances were thrown wide.

"Charge! The enemy is in confusion, and help is near!" was the next command. And the little band of soldiers dashed forth from the old house with a wild hurrah, and fell upon the astonished foe with flashing bayonets and glancing swords.

That ended the Royalists' hesitation. Bewildered and panic-stricken, and believing that resistance was useless, they fled right and left, turning in all directions, since they knew not from which side to expect the next attack. The handful of Republican troops swept before them a force four times as numerous as themselves.

The chase was not kept up very far. The enemy was soon so scattered that further pursuit was useless, and the victorious soldiers returned to the house which they had so bravely defended, to hold it according to their original orders, till the main division of the army came up.

The captain now told his men the stratagem which Josef Barra, the drummer boy, had carried out so successfully.

But where was Josef? He had not returned to the house. His drum beat was no longer to be heard. What had become of him?

The captain's orders were to hold the position he occupied, and he was bound to obey them; still he could not allow the boy, whose courage and skill had saved the detachment, to be lost or taken prisoner without an effort to help him. So strong, indeed, were his feelings on this point that he determined to go himself in quest of the brave young drummer.

With half a dozen picked men he descended the hill, following the path taken by Josef. He reached the wood, but nothing was to be seen of the boy.

Presently, however, the sound of harsh voices reached the captain's ears. It came from a little distance to the left, and the officer, motioning his men to remain where they were, stole forward in that direction to reconnoitre.

He had not gone very far when he saw before him, in an open glade of the wood, a sight that thrilled his heart. There was Josef, and around him was a group of rough-looking peasants, stragglers from the body of rebels who had been driven away from the house. In their random flight they had stumbled upon the boy as he was making his way back to his comrades, and they seemed as if they meant to vent upon him their rage at the defeat they had suffered.

"Shout 'Long live the King,' boy!" the captain heard one of them say, pointing his long bayonet at Josef's body.

"Never!" was the clear reply. "Long live the Republic!"

The Royalist thrust savagely at the boy. At the same instant, the captain reached the spot at a bound, and felled the murderer with a terrible sweep of his sabre. He called loudly to his men, and the tramp of their feet was heard as they rushed through the wood. The rebels were again panic-stricken at the sudden attack, and fled at their utmost speed.

The captain turned to Josef, who had fallen under the thrust of the Royalist's bayonet.

It was too late! The life-blood was flowing fast from a fearful gash in his side.

The captain knelt beside him, powerless to help the wounded boy, and the tears fell from his eyes, that had seen a score of battles unmov'd.

"Captain," said Josef, faintly, "do not weep!"

The veteran officer took off his cap. "Josef Barra," said the rough old soldier, "I am only a captain; you are a hero."

## UNUSUAL DENTISTRY.

A Paris Elephant had the Toothache. But Submitted Peaceably to a Course of Treatment Which Cured Him.

The killing of Tip, the New York elephant who had grown too cross to live, was not so interesting an operation as one lately performed on the famous trick elephant Liga, at the Nouveau-Cirque in Paris. Liga, who is only nine years old, broke a tooth, decay set in and there appeared a huge cavity, with much inflammation, which was no improvement to Liga's temper. Among Liga's accomplishments is violin-playing, and as it would never do to let a great artist's nerves get entirely unstrung, a dentist was sent for. Dr. Valladon of the Paris School of Dentistry undertook the job. When he began to probe the decayed tooth, Liga's keeper put some lumps of sugar in his trunk. Liga then understood that the whole business was well-meant, and submitted with very little protest. The big tooth was cleaned and scraped at plugged with cotton and iodoform, which was renewed once a week for two months, by which time the inflammation was gone. Then the dentist filled the cavity with amalgam, and Liga's tooth was practically as sound as ever. It was at first proposed to fill the tooth with gold, but when it was found that it would require 1,500 francs' worth, they thought amalgam would do just as well.

## PERSONAL POINTERS.

New Treatment for Leprosy—The English Labor Leader—Stories of Dean Stanley.

Mlle. Gorwitz, a young Russian lady, was received as doctor in medicine by the faculty of Paris in April.

The Maharajah of Cuch Behar and his son, the Rajkumar, have just arrived in England, where the latter will attend school at Eton.

The Rev. Father Muller, of Mangalore, India, is meeting with great success in the treating of leprosy by means of the electro-homoeopathic system cure.

Mme. Severine, the only woman journalist of any prominence in France, lives in Paris, and is able to earn by her writings \$12,000 to \$15,000 a year.

The Earl of Dufferin has in his possession the smallest book in the world. It is half the size of a postage stamp, and is an edition of the sacred book of the Sikhs.

After twenty-five years' missionary work in India, the Rev. Mr. Roberts has returned to England. He is now lecturing in that country on the vastness of the Indian Empire and the customs of the inhabitants.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Louis Stevenson gave a very swell dinner and dance at their home in Samoa recently. All the dignitaries of the island were present to the number of 100 or more.

Alexander Condie Stephen, who has recently been knighted by Queen Victoria, has had a long and honorable career in the English foreign service. He has been stationed at St. Petersburg, Constantinople, and in various sections of Central Asia. At present he is Charge d'Affaires at Coburg.

John Burns, the English labor leader and member of Parliament, has declined an invitation to come to America at the expense of the American Federation of Labor. He wrote to President Gompers that he would like to come, but was too busy. He said he could not possibly visit this country until after the next election in England.

The Emperor of China pays great reverence to the sacred person of the Dalai Lama and pays a large bounty to the Lhasa Lamas for the daily repetition of prayers and the holding of ceremonies to invoke the blessing of Buddha. The amount paid annually is about 100,000 ounces of silver and some 10,000 yakloads of tea.

The Monteur Acadien says that a letter from Edinburgh states that Dr. J. Clarence Webster, of Shediak, has won the first prize—fifty guineas—in the Royal College of Medicine for original work in scientific medicine during the year. In the ten years he has passed at Edinburgh, says the Monteur, Dr. Webster has won \$4,000 in prizes.

Kaiser William has appeared in a new role. His Majesty has set to music a number of songs written by Count Philip Eulenburg, and has had one of them arranged for an orchestra by the maestro Kluss and performed at Schlitz. Soldier, statesman, painter, and musician—his Majesty has himself wielded the conductor's baton—William II. is a sovereign of many talents.

The biographer of Dean Stanley says that when he preached his first sermon in a little village church near Norwich, an old woman was heard to say after the service: "Well, I do feel rather empty like." "Yes," replied another venerable dame, "that young man did not give us much to feed on." A visitor to the abbey said to the Dean, after he had preached a geographical sermon that he made the way to Jerusalem very plain, but not the way to Heaven; to whom he replied that he preached on but one subject at a time.

## TRIAL BY ORDEAL.

The Clever Ruse of an Old Brahmin to Find a Thief.

Several years ago a large sum of money was taken from the East Indian mail on the road. Suspicion fell upon Rama, one of the runners, but proof of his guilt was wanting, and resort was had to an aged Brahmin, famed to be possessed of occult powers and to hold communion with the gods. A gentleman residing in India, himself an eye-witness of the affair, contributed to the India Times an account of the trial.

All the mail-carriers were bidden to meet the Brahmin at the temple of Mahadeo. The temple had long been abandoned as a place of worship and bore an evil reputation. The house selected was twilight, and the dense shadows gave the place a weird, uncanny look.

The old Brahmin was busy muttering incantations as we approached, and all the men seemed to be more or less under the spirit of the hour. The Brahmin addressed them.

"You are about to face the gods," he said. "To the innocent the trial will be nothing, but to the guilty much. In the temple a magic wand has been placed on the altar. Each of you must go in turn, take up the wand and turn round three times, repeating the name of Mahadeo. The wand will stick to the hand of the guilty one."

I glanced in through the door of the temple. A solitary oil buttee threw a fitful light on the altar, on which an ordinary bamboo stick about two feet long reposed among grains of uncooked rice and cut times, the whole sprinkled with red powder. A curtain was drawn across the door, and the men entered one at a time.

As each one came back from the ordeal the Brahmin seized his hands and raised them to his forehead, and then allowed him to pass on and join his fellows. Coming to Rama, he went through the same pantomime, but instead of allowing him to pass on, bade him stand aside. When the last man had gone through the ordeal, the Brahmin turned to Rama and said:

"Tell the sahib how you stole the money."

To my amazement Rama fell on his knees confessed that he was the thief, and offered to show where he had hidden the money.

How was he found out? The temple the lonely glen, the hour, the incantations, all were mere accessories to appeal to the superstitions of the ignorant peasants. The "magic wand" was thickly smeared with strongly scented sandalwood oil. Rama's guilty conscience prevented him from touching it as he firmly believed it would stick to his fingers; and his, of course, was the only hand that did not smell of the oil.

## THE SALVATION ARMY.

HOW THE JUBILEE WILL BE CELEBRATED IN THIS COUNTRY.

A Lumber Colony for the Reforming of Criminals in Muskoka, and Two Farms at Little York.

The Salvation army, of which Gen. Booth was the founder, was started in England twenty-nine years ago, and its anniversary will be celebrated by a congress to be held at the Crystal palace, in London, on July 3.

ITS PROGRESS IN CANADA.

Coming to Canada in 1883, the organization has prospered so amazingly that it now has 300 corps with 800 officers and 11,000 workers, scattered throughout the various provinces. The army is now clear of the difficulties and dissensions which beset it a year ago, and Commandant Booth predicts that as the way is now clear, its future advance will be even more rapid than in the past. The Canadian salvationists will celebrate the General's Jubilee by carrying out a programme in which fifty schemes, costing \$130,000 are included. Of this amount the army will be obliged to raise \$45,000 in cash during the year.

LITTLE YORK FARM COLONIES.

In the proposed schemes, the work in Toronto is accorded considerable attention. Among these projects is the establishment of a social farm colony. Two farms at Little York near Toronto have already been leased for this purpose, and are now being stocked. A milk business will be started shortly. Hogs, poultry, vegetables and fruit will be raised and disposed of in the city, thereby making the ventures self-paying. Commandant Booth says the purposes of the new enterprises are: 1. To find honest employment for any willing to labor. 2. To find a healthy and lovely spot for weary officers to rest. 3. To supply our wants in the city. 4. To make a profit that will help us support our social institutions, and thus render them nearer self-sustaining; all of which we hope to do.

Three months ago the Army opened a woman's shelter on Albert street, Toronto. It is a small building, but it has already furnished lodgings for a thousand unfortunate women, who would otherwise have been driven to the police station. The present building will shortly be enlarged, at an expenditure of \$5,000.

FOR THE UNEMPLOYED.

A wood yard upon a large scale, where those applying for relief will be made to pay their way by sawing and splitting cordwood for the market will also be established. Said Commandant Booth, "I do not believe in making men feel that they are paupers. When a man applies to me for lodgings I send him to our haven, telling him that the officer there will give him work to do; and after the work is done he will be furnished with bed and food. The Army does not dispense charity, although it is true that owing to the distress which existed last winter we distributed 10,000 meal tickets. The Salvation Army is doing a greater work for good than anyone has any idea of. It has made good citizens of hundreds of persons, as the police will know, who were formerly outcasts of society and jail birds. With a view of widening the scope of this work, we have decided upon.

ANOTHER SCHEME.

"We intend to purchase a timber limit in Muskoka, upon which we will erect a comfortable shanty. We propose to send men from this city who are out of employment to work there, and our wood yard in Toronto will furnish a market for their product. One noteworthy feature in the project is that it is our intention to visit the jails and persuade the young men, who through evil associations have gone to the bad, to go up when their sentences have expired to our lumber colony. We will then be in a fair way to reclaim them."

GENERAL BOOTH'S VISIT.

General Booth will visit Canada next December. Entering by Victoria, he will make a tour of the North-west, Ontario and the maritime provinces.

## A Gold-Mine Instead of a Grave.

"Some of the richest gold mines in Colorado were stumbled upon in the most accidental way," said a miner. "When the gold fever was at its height several years ago, a party of prospectors traveling through the mountains came upon the dead body of a man lying beside the trail. 'Poor fellow,' said one of them, 'he has passed in his checks; let's give him a decent burial.' They accordingly began to dig a grave. Three feet below the surface they discovered signs of gold. The stranger was buried in another place, and where they had located a grave a gold mine was opened up which turned out to be one of the richest claims in that section of the country. The mine was named 'Dead Man's Claim.' Another instance is where an adventurer who drifted into Leadville awoke one morning without food or money. He went up into the mountains and shot a deer, which in its dying struggles kicked up the dirt and disclosed signs of gold. The poor man staked out a 'claim' and opened one of the most profitable mines ever worked in Colorado."

## That Big Cheese.

The mammoth cheese which attracted so much attention at Chicago was taken to England and there cut up. A block of it was sent back to Professor Robertson of the Ottawa Experimental Farm, its designer and creator. Prof. Robertson has distributed portions of the monster for the purpose of showing the soundness and quality of the cheese after being subjected to the most trying conditions. It was put into place before the exhibition opened in May and remained there, often in a temperature of 95 degrees, until November. It will be remembered that it was reported as perfectly rotten. That this was a mistake was proved when it was cut up in London, England, last month. With the exception of a few inches on the surface the cheese was sound throughout. The mighty cheese although not mitey; has been altogether a good advertisement for one of Canada's main industries.

## THE HOME.

To Make Good Tea.

First you take and warm your teapot. For some minutes, two or three; 'Tis a most important secret. But see you do not spare the tea. Pour some water in to draw it. Let the water boiling be: Then fill up and shake and pour it. And bless the man who found out tea.

Celebrate in song, Pakoe and Soehong; Morning Congou, too, syrupy Foochoo. Give to me, oh, give to me, a full and fragrant cup of tea!

If once you learn these lines you will never forget them and never forget how to make good tea.

## Moving Stoves.

No housewife takes pleasure in looking upon an unused stove during the summer, but, too often, it is left in the bright, cheery sitting-room during the pleasant summer days, because the husband or sons do not seem inclined to remove it. Why is it that the masculine portion of the home is so averse to handling a stove?

If the wife is persevering, and has secretly determined to oust the black monster, she coaxes and cajoles her better half until he grants her request. I will draw a veil over the scene which usually follows. Suppose you adopt a new plan of operation this year. Let me help you with suggestions which I have seen carried out over and over again, with great success. Saw a broom handle into three equal lengths, to be used as rollers. It is better to have the rollers of the same diameter, but if you have only one broom handle at your disposal you can get along very well if the rollers do vary in thickness. The next thing needed is a heavy board and a piece of stove wood, which is about one half as thick as the height of the stove legs. Now you are ready for operations, after having taken down the pipe with all care and due precaution. Put the board under the stove, letting it run front and back; then rest the back end on the piece of wood. Next, put the rollers under the board. Now lift the stove, by raising the front end of the board and while it is raised slip out the stove legs. Let down the front end of the board, and then the back end, by slipping out the blocks of wood. The stove can now be rolled out of the room with very little labor. As the stove is rolled along the rollers will slip out at the back. As soon as a roller appears, place it under the front end of the board, thus keeping two rollers under the board.

Do not imagine that you are not strong enough to do this. It does not require strength—it simply requires the know-how. Archimedes said he could lift the world if he had a fulcrum and a level long enough. Now Archimedes was only a man, and shall we women let a man boast of lifting a world, while we say we cannot lift even a stove when we have what Archimedes lacked—the fulcrum and the lever? The piece of stove wood is our fulcrum, the long board the lever, and with these any child can move the largest stove. Try it and surprise your lazy men.

## The Care of Lamps.

An indignant housekeeper declares that the ordinary servant either cannot or will not keep lamps in order. Occasional entreaties may prevail upon her to trim the wicks, but she always does that with the scissors which is the worst possible method.

The lamps should be wiped with cheesecloth; the wicks should be trimmed with the sharp edge of a card or with a poker heated red hot and passed over the wick. This removes the charred parts evenly. Wicks used for a long time grow thick and give forth an unpleasant odor. They should be renewed once a month. In Duplex burners one wick should be trimmed in the opposite direction from the other. Round wicks should be trimmed towards the centre. Burners should be wiped free from bits of charred wick and drops of oil every day. They should be boiled in strong soapuds occasionally. When they have been used a long time they should be discarded.

## Curtains and Portiers.

It is surprising how little attention is given to curtains and portiers. In many households the various draperies are taken down, shaken and aired only once in a while year. This is not the proper way to treat them. Curtains of every description absorb the odor from cigar smoke and from any food which may be cooking and the greatest care should therefore be taken that they be kept well aired. All drapery, particularly doorway curtains, should be removed every other sweeping day, brushed and shaken and hung upon a line in the yard until the rooms are cleared and dusted. It is so easy to do this that there is no excuse for any unpleasant odor being attached to them.

## The Sulky Husband.

All sensible women, and most all the others, would prefer a husband who now and then upset two or three chairs, then threw the bootjack through the middle pane of the window, that is if he had no trouble to keep his own balance—to that most detested of all creatures, the man who is as silent as the gods of India, who sits hour after hour to ape a long-faced and sorely persecuted orang-outang. His picture first provokes merriment, then anger and disgust. His wife is the most pitiable creature in the world. Fire, flood, and earthquake, or even a hurricane, might be welcome guests—but a man in a fit of sulks, never. Wake him up! As well might you try to revive a mummy, while his fit lasts. He is as rigid and dead to sensibility as the tenants of an Egyptian catacomb, and his stubbornness, as his wife knows, beggars all description.

The Queen of Holland is the recipient of an interesting present, coming from one of the Dutch colonies—Batavia. It consists of a collection of figures clothed in the curious costumes of the natives, exhibited at the Batavia Agricultural and Industrial Exhibition.