

**CORNERED**

By C. WELLINGTON BLISS

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Antoine Chabeller, private in the One Hundred and Forty-seventh regiment of the line, to the manner born, twenty years of age, defender of France from the Germans, who were marching over the borders, at the battle of Gravelotte, received two wounds, one in the leg and one in the arm. The wounds were made with bullets, which were cut out by the surgeon. They were shown to the wounded men, who asked for them, and they were given to him.

Then a brilliant idea struck the young soldier. Being a good deal of a butterfly in the matter of his loves, before marching from Paris he had tearfully bid adieu to two young ladies, each one of whom had wept on his shoulder. "I will send Lucile one of these bullets," he said, "and Clochette the other, a very pretty compliment, the bullets having wounded me on the field of battle. I can see nothing dishonorable in the matter since if either takes it as a proposal of marriage it will be her own fault."

So he wrote a letter to Lucile, telling her that he was sending her the bullet with which he had been wounded in the late battle, and wrote a duplicate to Clochette. When he next saw these young ladies the second empire had fallen and the republic was restored. Antoine lived in one of the swell quarters of Paris, on a street midway between his two charmers. They had fled from the commune, but when tranquillity was restored had returned and again settled in their homes. The war had cost France much of its best blood, and Lucile, one of the young ladies who possessed "the bullet with which Antoine had been wounded," having lost an uncle, had fallen heir to a large fortune.

Antoine, like most young men of social rank, having heard of this accession of wealth, not averse to marrying a fortune, congratulated himself on having favored the heiress with the bullet that had wounded him, but felt ill at ease for fear the other "bullet with which he had been wounded" would ruin him. His first meeting with Lucile was very tender. She did not weep tears of joy on his shoulder at his return, but there were various reasons for this. In the first place, France was a great sufferer; in the second, mademoiselle was now a prize in the matrimonial market and could not be expected to give herself away as readily as before. These were the reasons Antoine gave himself for a want of demonstrativeness on the girl's part such as she had shown at his departure for the war.

It was some time after his return that he called upon Clochette, who possessed the other bullet with which he had been wounded. She received him with the same demonstrations of affection as before, permitting him to embrace her, though Antoine thought that there was not the same genuine feeling she had shown before. She was much interested to know where he had been struck, and Antoine turned up his trousers and showed her a scar in the calf of his leg. The wound in his arm he was keeping for Lucile.

There was one weak spot in this little farce for its hero. The two young ladies were acquainted. Antoine felt hopeful that the gene would not learn of the other's souvenir since high bred ladies were not likely to tell one another of their love affairs. However, he was in a hurry to wed Lucile, for once married there might be half a dozen bullet souvenirs in the hands of as many young ladies and no great harm done. Lucile put him off on the plea that she was not assured of his love for her, but declared that once convinced she would yield.

One day when Antoine called on Lucile he was concerned to find Clochette there drinking English afternoon tea. Clochette was surprised to see him, but the three drank tea together very sociably. Antoine was called upon to give some account of his war service, and both girls naturally manifested an interest in his wound. Finally Lucile said:

"M. Chabeller, show mademoiselle the place in your arm where you were wounded."

The bomb was about to burst. Nevertheless Antoine was a man of courage. He did not flinch.

"In the leg, you mean," said Clochette.

"He told me it was in the arm; indeed, he showed me the scar."

"I think I should know," said the other, "since I possess the bullet that wounded him."

"Indeed," rejoined Lucile, with hauteur, "I supposed I possessed that bullet. Is it not so, monsieur?"

"It is."

"And do not I possess the bullet that wounded you?" asked Clochette, with spirit.

Antoine saw that it was all up with him. He surrendered, but to neither.

"Young ladies," he said, "I sent one of you a bullet that wounded me in the arm, the other one that wounded me in the leg. I sent a third bullet to another girl."

"Where did that one strike you?" asked Clochette.

"In the heart."

Both girls burst into a laugh. Lucile finally forgave him, and he is now making ducks and drakes of her fortune. Nevertheless his wife is not fond of having him tell the story, which he does whenever he entertains a select party of intimate friends.

**Strangers.**  
Knicker—Can you make ends meet?  
Bocker—Well, they meet, but they don't speak.—Harper's Bazar.

**Pays For Them.**  
Black—I buy all my wife's dresses.  
Brown—So do I, but I never pick them out.—St. Louis Star.

**He Played the Ticker.**  
"I offered to let him have a hundred." "That would only be a drop in the bucketshop."—Life.

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