



## HIS WORD OF HONOR.

He was only a boy, not yet sixteen, but they were going to shoot him, nevertheless.

The band of insurgents to which he belonged had been routed by the Army of Versailles, and, taken red-handed with some ten of his comrades, he had been conducted to the Mairie of the Eleventh Arrondissement.

Struck by his youthful appearance, and also astonished at the boy's coolness in this hour of extreme peril, the commandant had ordered that the fatal verdict should, so far as he was concerned, be suspended for the moment, and that he should be kept a prisoner until his companions had met their fate at the neighboring barricade.

Apparently quite calm and resigned, his great eyes and his face—the pale face of a Parisian child—showed neither emotion nor anxiety. He seemed to watch all that was passing around him as though they held no concern for him. He heard the sinister report of the fusillade which hurried his companions into eternity without moving a muscle; his calm, fixed gaze seemed to be looking into the great "Afterwards" which was soon to become the "Present" to him also. Perhaps he was thinking of his happy carefree childhood—he had hardly outgrown it; perhaps of his relations and their sorrow when they heard of the chain of fatality which had made him fatherless and had tossed him into the seething turmoil of civil war, and now demanded his life at the hands of fellow-countrymen; and, perhaps, he wondered why such things were.

At the time war was declared he was living happily with his father and mother, honest working folk who had apprenticed him to a printer; politics never troubled that little household.

It was not long, however, before the Prussians had slain the head of the

family. The privations of the siege, the long and weary waiting at the butchers' and bakers' shops when the scanty dole of food was distributed in the rigors of that terrible winter, had stretched his mother on the bed of suffering, where she lay slowly dying.

One day when he had gone with others to dig for potatoes in the frost-bound plain of St. Denis a Prussian bullet broke his shoulder, and afterwards, driven partly by hunger, partly by fear of his companions' threats, he had enrolled himself in the Army of the Commune. Like many another, fear and fear only had led him into and kept him in the ranks; he had no heart for a war of brothers, and now that his life was about to pay the penalty he was glad that he could lay no man's death to his charge. He was innocent of that, at any rate.

The things he had seen and suffered during the few last months had given him a dread of life. He hated to think of leaving his mother in this terrible world—his mother whom he loved so dearly, who had always been so inexpressibly good to him; but he comforted himself with the thought that before long she would come, too—she could not have much more suffering to undergo, she was so weak when he last saw her, four days ago.

"Kiss me again, dear—again," she had said, "for I feel that I may never see you more."

"Ah," he thought, sadly, "if they would only trust him—would give him only one hour of liberty—how he would run to her and then come back and give himself up to the hands that hungered for his life. He would give his word, and he would keep it. Why not? Save his mother—and she, too, was dying—he had no one to regret. To see her again, to kiss her dear lips once more, console, encourage her, and leave her hopeful—then he could face death bravely."

He was in the midst of these sad reflections when the commandant, followed by several officers, approached him.

"Now, my fine fellow, you and I have a score to settle; you know what awaits you?"

"Yes, mon commandant, and I am ready."

"Really? So ready as all that? You are not afraid of death?"

"Less than of life. I have seen so much the last six months—such awful things—death seems better than such a life."

"I wonder you would not hesitate if I gave you your choice. If I said: 'Put your best foot foremost and show me how soon you can be out of sight,' you would soon be off, I'll warrant."

"Try me, mon commandant, try me! Put me to the proof; it's worth a trial. One more or less for your men to shoot, what does it matter? One hour of freedom only, not more; you shall see whether I will keep my word, and whether I am afraid to die."

"Oh! da! you're no fool, but you must take me for one. Once free and far away, and then come back to be shot just as you would keep an ordinary appointment? You will hardly get me to swallow that, my boy!"

"Listen, sir, I beg of you. Perhaps you have a good mother; you love her, your mother, more than ought else in

less violent, and soon nothing could be heard in the little room but the regular breathing of the mother and child. Ashamed of his weakness, the boy forced himself into self-control, and when he raised his head from the pillow, once more believing himself stronger than love of life, his mother, yielding to the reaction which her sudden joy had caused, was sleeping peacefully.

The slight restored his energies. A kind Providence, he thought, had wished to spare him a scene, which his strength and courage could not have borne, and he resolved to go at once. Lightly he kissed his mother's forehead, and gazed at her earnestly for a few moments. She seemed to smile, he thought; then he went out hurriedly and returned to his post as quickly as he had come, not seeing a soul he met nor daring to look behind him.

"What's so soon?" the commandant cried, astonished. He had hoped, like the good-hearted man he was, that the boy would not return.

"But I had promised!"

"Doubtless, but why be in such a hurry? You might have stayed with your mother some time longer, and still have kept your word."

"Poor mother! After a scene of tears which seemed to take all my courage—tears of joy for her, of despair for me—she fell asleep so calmly, so happily, that I dare not wait for her to wake. She fell asleep with her arms around me, thinking I should never leave her again; how could I have told her the truth? Who knows whether I should have had the courage to leave her after doing so? And what would you have thought of me if I had not come back?"

"So I kissed her, and slipped away like a thief while she was sleeping, and here I am. Pray God may be good to her as she has been to me. Mon commandant, I have one more thing to ask—to finish quickly."

The officer looked at the boy with mingled pity and admiration. His own eyes were full of tears.

"You are quite resigned, then; death does not frighten you?" he asked.

Victor answered him with a gesture.

"And if I pardoned you?"

"You would save my mother's life, too, and I would reverently as a second father."

"Alions! you are a plucky lad, and



"HE BECAME A CHILD ONCE MORE."

you have not deserved to suffer as you have done. You shall go. Embrace me first—bleat! Now go, and go quickly. Join your mother, and love her all ways."

As he spoke the last few words, the officer took the boy by the shoulders and pushed him away gently.

"It really would have been a pity," he said, half apologetically, to his staff, as he turned toward them.

Victor did not run—he flew home. His mother was still sleeping. He would dearly have liked to cover her with kisses, but he did not dare to wake her, although her sleep seemed troubled. He lay down again beside her.

Suddenly she sat up, crying: "Mercy! Victor! My child! Oh! Mercy! Ah! you are here; it is really you?" she added, waking.

Her thin, weak hands wandered all over him; she pressed him close to her and rained kisses on his face. Then she was shaken by convulsive sobs, which Victor could not calm.

"Oh! my boy! my boy!" she moaned, "I dreamt they were going to shoot you!"—Strand Magazine.

**The Town of "Is."**

One of the most popular legends in Brittany is that relating to an imaginary town called Is, which is supposed to have been swallowed up by the sea at some unknown time. According to them the tips of spires of the churches may be seen in the hollow of the waves when the sea is rough, while during a calm the music of their bells ringing out the hymn appropriate to the day rises above the waters. I often fancy that I have at the bottom of my heart a city of Is, with its bells calling to prayer a recalcitrant congregation. At times I halt to listen to these gentle vibrations, which seem as if they come from immeasurable depths like voices from another world. Since old age began to steal upon me I have loved, more especially during the repose which summer brings with it, to gather up these distant echoes of a vanished Atlantis.—Ernest Renan.

**Value of Change.**

One of the best prescriptions that can issue from a physician is a change, a specialist friend of mine tells me. The effects of mingling with new people who have new methods of thought is very salutary, he says. Always to see the same people do the same thing, feel the same way, produces a stagnant condition of the mind and heart that is very distressing to behold. There are thousands of invalids who might be greatly benefited by getting away from home, if only for a short time, to mingle with strangers and be touched with the magnetism of the great world as it courses in its accustomed rounds. And there are mental and moral invalids who need the same change to get their heart and mind enlarged and let in a little more of the great light of life.

**The Lord's Itinerary.**

A good story is told by the Jewish Messenger of a number of boys who were playing on a Saturday in front of an Episcopal church. The rector suddenly came out of his parsonage and told the boys to be quiet in front of the Lord's house.

"That is all right, mister," said the boys. "The Lord is not here to-day. He is down the street at the Jewish synagogue."

When a boy picks a green peach, he squeezes it until it is so soft and ripe that his mother will not object if he eats it.

## ANECDOTE AND INCIDENT

Admiral Farragut used to relate that a pretty girl on a Mississippi steamer was anxiously sought in marriage by five of the passengers. Viewing them all with favor, the girl applied to the captain of the boat for advice in making her selection. He suggested that she leap overboard, after he had made arrangements that would make injury to her impossible. She did as he said. Four of her suitors promptly went in after and united in bringing her safely back to the deck. "What shall I do now?" she perplexed inquired of the captain. "I don't rightly know, miss," he answered, "but it seems to me I'd take the dry one."

When the attack was on Sidon, during the war with Syria, it became necessary for the British troops to advance across a long, unprotected bridge, in the face of a battery of six guns, which completely commanded the approach. The men were unwilling to expose themselves to certain death, when Arthur Cumming, carefully dressed in full uniform, stepped forward to the middle of the bridge. It was immediately swept by the fire of the battery. When the smoke had rolled away, there stood Cumming intact, carefully brushing the dust from his boots, after which he stood erect, fixed a single glass in his eye, and looked back at the men. This was too much, and they captured that bridge and battery with a whoop.

An Irishman who was out of work went on board a vessel that was in the harbor and asked the Captain if he could find him work on the ship. "Well," said the Captain, at the same time handing the Irishman a piece of rope, "if you can find three ends to that rope, you shall have some work." The Irishman got hold of the end of the rope, and, showing it to the Captain, said, "That's one end, your honor." Then he took hold of the other end, and, showing it to the Captain as before, said, "And that's two ends, your honor." Then, taking hold of both ends of the rope, he threw it overboard, saying, "And, faith, there's another end to it, your honor." He was immediately engaged.

An Irishman, the son of one who had been hanged, having been asked how his father died, thus eluded the admission of the fact: "Sure, thin, my father, who was a very reckless man, was just standin' on a platform haranguing a mob, when a part of the platform suddenly gave way, and he fell through, and thin it was found that his neck was broken."

A young girl from the far South, who was making her first visit to Washington, was on the street alone, says the New York Sun, trying to find the house of a friend. Just then she met a middle-aged, very respectable-looking colored woman, well dressed, but carrying a basket of clothes. The slight cheered her; colored people were always so kind to her down home, and she hurried to the woman and said, most sweetly: "Oh, auntie, I have lost my way. Won't you please tell me how to get to K street?" Instead of the expected "Yas, indeed, child," the colored woman glared at her and said, in rasping tones, as she stalked haughtily away: "I ain't no auntie—Ise yo' eka!"

On one occasion two gentlemen, invited as guests at a table where Mr. Gladstone was expected, made a wager that they would start a conversation on a subject about which even Mr. Gladstone would know nothing. To accomplish this end, they read up an ancient magazine article on some unfamiliar subject connected with Chinese manufactures. When the favorable opportunity came the topic was started, and the two conspirators watched with amusement the growing interest in the subject which Mr. Gladstone's face betrayed. Finally he joined in the conversation, and their amusement was turned into gnashing of teeth to speak figuratively—when Mr. Gladstone said: "Ah, gentlemen, I perceive you have been reading an article I wrote in the magazine some thirty or forty years ago."

A certain narrow-minded man of note was very bitter against the Jews. He lost no opportunity to deride and abuse them. One day a friend said to him: "You shouldn't bear down on the Jews the way you do. You ought to remember that they are God's chosen people." "Yes," said the other man, "I know that. But tastes differ."

Mrs. Proudie, the wife of the Bishop of Copemaster, in England, does admirable work by going among poor people and talking to them out of her own experiences and giving them wholesome advice. She did so the other day at Mudbury, near Copemaster. Next day the rector's daughter at Mudbury said to one of the audience of the previous evening: "Well, Mrs. Toddie, what did you think of Mrs. Proudie's address?" "Oh, it was very good—very good; but, you see, she only went half way." "Whatever do you mean, Mrs. Toddie?" said the young lady. "Well, miss, she didn't tell us what she does when Mr. Proudie comes home drunk. We should like a little advice on that 'ere point."

**BANQUETS OF OLD.**

Ancient Social Dinners Were Most Magnificent Affairs.

Banquets of the present day, even the most sumptuous, are but mean affairs compared with those of antiquity. The dinner used to be the opulence of the latter Egyptian Empire, the bon vivant accustomed to the splendor of Greece or the luxury of Rome, expected much of their entertainers, and usually were not disappointed.

Vast was the magnificence of a feast given by some great nobleman during the reign of the Pharaohs. The guests, both men and women, came at midday, some in chariots, some in palanquins, and a few—doubtless those who lived near by—on foot. They were met at the doorway by slaves, and conducted to an ante-room, where their hands and feet were washed with perfumed water held in golden vessels; and their heads anointed with scented pomatum in sign of welcome.

Abutions ended, the guests were

crowned with lotus flowers, while chaplets of the same fragrant blossoms were hung about their necks, and a single bud given them to hold in the hand. They were then ready to pay their respects to their host and hostess, whom they found seated side by side on a large fauteuil in the reception room, exchanging copious greetings with their visitors.

Sometimes men and women sat together in festive gatherings; sometimes the sexes were separated, but each received equal attention. A slave stationed behind each guest was ready to obey the least command, and time passed quickly in feasting and merry-making. As the wine circulated women as well as men were drawn into the whirl of dissipation, and furnished subjects for the meretricious pencil of the caricaturist. The proof still exists pictorially that the fair sex of that time and country drank more than was good for them, while the lords and masters had frequently to be carried home from a festive gathering limp as the faded lotus blossoms resting on their fevered brows.

A strange custom was in vogue; in the midst of the feasting; when the senses seemed almost satiated, a slave appeared bearing a small figure of a mummy, which he exhibited portentously to the revelers, saying: "Gaze here; drink and be merry, for when you die such you will be."—Lippincott's.

**EARLY PORTO RICANS.**

How the Indians Proved that the Spaniards Were Mortal.

Frederick A. Ober, late Commissioner in Porto Rico of the Columbian Exposition, contributes to the Century an article on "The Island of Porto Rico." Mr. Ober says:

The "great navigator" who discovered the New World was very felicitous in his names for the lands he found, and it was with good reason that he called Borinquen, the Indian island, Puerto Rico, after the noble harbor in which he watered his ships in November, 1493. As Aguadilla it is known to-day, and the same palm-shaded spring gushes forth now as then, in volume sufficient to supply a fleet.

Fifteen years later another of fame's favorites, Ponce de Leon, landed in the bay, where he was well received by the Indian cacique Agueynaba, who gave him specimens of gold. In the year 1510 he founded the town of Caparra, now known as Pueblo Viejo, abandoned the year following for the more advantageous situation of San Juan. The Indians becoming, as the Spaniards say, disgusted, because they were reduced to slavery and compelled to labor in the mines, rebelled, and murdered all the white men they could catch outside the settlement. The Spaniards had told the guileless red men that they were immortal, and for a while they believed them; but Cacique Agueynaba finally conceived a theory of his own, and proceeded to put it to the test. In accordance with his orders, two of his followers caught an unprotected white man while fording a stream (which is known and shown to-day), threw him down, and held his head under water three long hours. Then they took him out, but still with fear and trembling, and, dragging the body to the bank, sat by it during two whole days, until unmistakable signs of decomposition convinced them of the man's mortality. In the end—and it came quickly—the Indians, to the number of half a million or so, were exterminated; but that was a mere incident in Spanish colonization, and the places they left vacant were filled with blacks from Africa.

**Lion Sermon.**

Nowhere in the world have so many quaint and queer old ceremonies and customs dating back to mediaeval times been retained as in the city of London. Many of the features of its municipal life have been in existence since the crusades, and among the strangest is the so-called annual Lion sermon, preached in St. Katherine's Church, Leadenhall street, by Dean Clarke, chaplain to the Queen, who at its conclusion receives the sum of \$100, in accordance with time-honored usage. It seems that in the thirteenth century a former Lord Mayor of London named Sir John Gayer was wrecked on a desert part of the coast of Arabia. There he was confronted by a huge lion. He thereupon sank upon his knees and prayed to heaven to help him. When he arose he found to his joy that the lion had turned tail and fled. Upon arriving home he determined to commemorate his miraculous escape, and accordingly left a large sum of money, the income of which was to be devoted to paying for a yearly sermon on the anniversary of his encounter with the king of beasts.—Chicago Record.

**Why Porto Rico Has Few Rebellions.**

A compact little island, an irregular parallelogram in shape, it can be easily governed, and readily made defensible; while its sister Isle of Cuba, with its seven hundred miles of coast-line, and its two thousand miles of coast-line, cannot. While the mountains, swamps, dense forests and bayous of Cuba afford secure hiding-places for the insurgents, with consequent prolongation of a rebellion, in Porto Rico, on the contrary, the physical features all lend themselves to the continuation of whatever system happens to be in power. In a word, there are no points of vantage whence a rebel against authority may emerge to annoy his enemy, no retreats that are not also accessible to the Sanish soldier. This is the simple reason why uprisings have never made head in Porto Rico, why they never will. Many a time the banner has been raised with "Patria, Justicia, Libertad! Viva Puerto Rico Libre!" inscribed thereon, but only to be trailed in the dust at the point of Spanish bayonets, and those who bore it sent, some to Africa, some to be shot.—Century.

**The Tallest Trees.**

The tallest of trees are to be found in the state forest of Victoria, Australia. They belong to the eucalyptus family, and range from 300 to 500 feet in height.

**Indelible Impressions.**

"Why don't you wear a button reading, 'Remember the Maine?'"

"I don't need to; my wife gave me a blowing up that same day."

The woman who is frightened half to death by the discharge of a gun is never frightened by her own bangs.

## SUPPOSE WE SMILE.

**HUMOROUS PARAGRAPHS FROM THE COMIC PAPERS.**

**Unpleasant Incidents Occurring the World Over—Sayings that Are Cheerful to Old or Young—Funny Selections that Everybody Will Enjoy.**

**Yankee Insolence.**

European—Why is it that so many of you Americans come over to see this country before you have seen your own?

American—Well, the truth is we want to look over this continent thoroughly and find out whether we like it or not. If it suits us we may decide to take it.

**One of the Nation's Bulwarks.**

"You act as if our victories had re-founded to your personal glory—as if they were due in some way to your own acts and efforts."

"I want you to understand that they are. I am not like some people that might be mentioned. I have taken a personal part in this affair. I paid 2 cents in war taxes the other day."

**Spoiled.**

He—I have a good mind to kiss you. She—Oh, dear, what made you foolish your approach in that way?

**What Might Have Been.**

"I know how the Spaniards might have given us a hard fight."

"How's that?"

"Just think if they had got to pointing guns at us that they didn't know were loaded! Why every Jack of them would have killed his man."

**Matter of Discipline.**

"I hate to insist on my husband's taking me away for the summer," she said in tones of sympathy. "It costs a great deal of money."

"Why do you require it, then?" asked the mother.

"I've got to keep him in a stuffy ho-

**A Double Dose.**

"Jack, you seemed worn out with Commodore Mizentop's reminiscences."

"Well, you see, he's been in two wars."

**The Only One of Her Kind.**

"There's something decidedly original about that Miss Le Claire, the new star."

"Is that so? I hadn't noticed it."

"Then you are not very observing. She doesn't claim that she belongs to an old and aristocratic Southern family."

**A Poor Quality of Glass.**

Miss Pusle—What poor material the mirror manufacturers have used for the last few years! Positively, the looking-glasses make one appear almost plain nowadays!—New York Herald.

**A Suggestion of Wisdom.**

"That fortune-teller said if I paid her \$5 she would reveal to me why I don't get rich."

"Did you give it to her?"

"Yes, and she told me I had a great weakness for fooling away money."

**Men Are Cowards.**

"Talk about the men at home being patriotic is all moonshine," said the boarding house mistress. "Yesterday



Miss Pusle—What poor material the mirror manufacturers have used for the last few years!

when I thought to surprise my boarders by getting up a dinner that would thrill them with patriotic fervor, they kicked like wild men."

"What did you have?"

"Hardtack, weak coffee and fried bacon."—Philadelphia Item.

**A Truthful Young Man.**

Anna-Jack, dear, was you ever in love before?

Jack—Sure. You don't think for a minute I'd practice on a nice little girl like you, I hope.

**Nearing the Drink.**

He (feeling his way)—I wish we were good friends enough for you to—to call me by my first name.

She (helping him along)—Oh, your last name is good enough for me.—New York Weekly.

**Good at Finesse.**

"I think we ought to get Maud into our whist club."

"Why—has she a good head?"

"Good head? She has a san ice-cream beau for every night in the week."

**Abnormal Energy.**

"Kirby tells me he walks in his sleep."

"How remarkable! He doesn't do anything but sit around while he is awake."

**Another Spanish Joke.**

Yeast—So the Spaniards at Santiago have surrendered?

Crimsonbeak—Yes; I guess when Gen. Toral saw the size of Gen. Shafter he was afraid to have the enemy fall on him.—Yonkers Statesman.

**The Strange Part of It.**

Mrs. Wedderly—Yes, my husband and I met and became engaged at the seaside.

Mrs. Van Laub—Dear me, how singular!

Mrs. Wedderly—I don't see anything so remarkable about it. Young folks are always getting engaged at the seaside.

Mrs. Van Laub—I know, but you seem to have subsequently got married to each other.

**The Cuban Machete.**

Much has been said of the terrible machete, a deadly weapon indeed in the hands of a desperate man, and when used against a defenseless person. The machete was never in tended for a weapon of warfare; it is an instrument of husbandry carried by the Cuban peasant in times of peace, and is his one familiar daily companion. It cuts his fire-wood, aids him in building his hut, hews his path through the mangrove, and performs many other offices. The machete is a straight, heavy blade about two feet long, with a wooden or bone handle, having no guard; consequently it is utterly unsuited as a weapon to be used in a conflict with an armed man. The Cuban, of course, by reason of his long familiarity with the instrument, is an adept in its use, and its effect upon a group of unarmed workmen is truly terrible. It is in the foray against the defenseless and unarmed that the most serious work of the machete has been done in the island of Cuba.—Century.

The quiet action of the little wasp is responsible for many loud words.

## UNPLEASANT COMMENTS.



First small boy—I guess he's a circus man. Second small boy—He's a-going to jump through 'is at—Pick-Me-Up.

tel for a few weeks every year to make him appreciate the way I keep house."—Detroit Free Press.

**Her Specialty.**

"I understand that Miss Le Cleaver is a very clever artist."

"Yes; she is."

"In what line, oil or water colors?"

"Neither. Manicuring."

**A Filibuster Girl.**

"That palm-reader said I must never 'Good head? She has an ice-cream would always want her own way."

"Look at my thumb; see how limber it is."

**Relief in Sight.**

"There is one thing certain."

"What's that?"

"When our army gets back from Cuba the oldest inhabitant will have to stop talking about the hot weather he has known."

**His Idea of It.**

She—Do you play whist? He—No; I sometimes work at it.

**Took the Hint.**

He—Well, did your cook take the hint and leave?

She—I suppose she took the hint. She had already taken everything else.

**The Whole Story.**

"When a man is angry he tells you what he thinks of you."

"Yes, and when a woman is angry she tells you what she thinks of you and what everybody else thinks of you."

**Is Free to Kick.**

"Widdies must have paid up. Have you noticed how he has been sassing the landlady lately?"

"No, Widdies has not paid up, but he owes more than his trunk is worth."—Indianapolis Journal.

**Rations.**

"Isn't he a man of rather luxurious tastes?" said one girl.

"Yes. I am afraid he will never make a soldier," answered the other.

"I'm sure he wouldn't quail at the enemy's fire."

"No, indeed. But I don't believe he could face salt pork as calmly as he could saltpeter."—Washington Star.

**Why He Is Single.**

Hattie—I wonder why your brother Charley doesn't marry?

Ella—Oh, he says he can't afford it. Hattie—Can't afford it! Why, he and his wife could live on "bread and cheese and kisses," couldn't they?

Ella—Well, they might; but I guess Charley hasn't been able to find any girl willing to provide the necessary bread and cheese.



He—Well, did your cook take the hint and leave?

She—I suppose she took the hint. She had already taken everything else.

"When a man is angry he tells you what he thinks of you."

"Yes, and when a woman is angry she tells you what she thinks of you and what everybody else thinks of you."

"Widdies must have paid up. Have you noticed how he has been sassing the landlady lately?"

"No, Widdies has not paid up, but he owes more than his trunk is worth."—Indianapolis Journal.

"Isn't he a man of rather luxurious tastes?" said one girl.

"Yes. I am afraid he will never make a soldier," answered the other.

"I'm sure he wouldn't quail at the enemy's fire."

"No, indeed. But I don't believe he could face salt pork as calmly as he could saltpeter."—Washington Star.

Hattie—I wonder why your brother Charley doesn't marry?

Ella—Oh, he says he can't afford it. Hattie—Can't afford it! Why, he and his wife could live on "bread and cheese and kisses," couldn't they?

Ella—Well, they might; but I guess Charley hasn't been able to find any girl willing to provide the necessary bread and cheese.