

He was the blacksmith of the county, a powerful, brawny man, with a terrible temper, they said, one who was feared by all who would avoid a fight.

He was on the very outskirts of the crowd, but began now to push his way right and left.

'Have you become cravens, men?' he cried, and then he hurled his words at the Padre in a voice of thunder.

'Stand aside, old man!' he said. 'There has been enough of this delay. Open that door or I will knock you down.'

'Never!' answered Padre Paul.

The men swayed back and forth, the smith tried to reach the Padre, but the crowd was now too closely packed for him to force an opening. With a terrible oath the man raised his right hand high in the air, and just as I, who had heard that the men were now beyond the Padre's control, and who had got out of the tower through the door leading into the Padre's study, dashed into the church, the smith let fly his iron bellows at the Padre's head.

There was only one second of pain, the doctor afterward told me, one moment only of agony, my little one, and then all was over. The good Padre had been struck on the right temple and fell to the ground like a stone.

I knew when I knelt by him that he was dead.

That put an end to the lynching. The men dispersed; all but the smith, whom I took into custody and handed over to the sheriff, who arrived at the church with his men a second after the Padre died. The smith was tried and paid the penalty with his life, twenty years ago, my little one, but we have never had another lynching since then.

We laid all that was mortal of the poor Padre beside his mother in the little burying-ground up on the hill.

Such a funeral as it was! His people turned out for miles around to follow him to the grave, and the Archbishop from the distant city said the Requiem Mass. He preached to us from the hill after the burial so that all might hear.

'This man has not died in vain,' he said. 'To many it will seem a poor exchange, the life of a great and good priest to be given for the life of an unknown, ignorant negro, but such was the teaching of the Master. None were too poor or too low for Him. Who recognised in man the universal brotherhood in the universal fatherhood of God, and what the Christ believed and taught, that also Father Paul sought to follow with all his heart. My brethren, let us return thanks for such an example and pray God to grant him eternal rest.'

That was all, little one; but how we missed him, alas! alas!

What became of the negro, you say? I let him out of the tower after dark and gave him money to leave the country.

It was some comfort to me that afterward the real criminal was caught and confessed his guilt and that the dear Padre had not died in vain for the poor soul, around whom he hung the mantle of his divine charity. — 'Messenger of the Sacred Heart.'

## JEAN-VICTOR.

The young Duke de Hardimont had just breakfasted at his hotel at Aix, where he was sojourning to take the water to remove the effects of a cold caught at the races. Before leaving the table he cast a careless glance at a morning paper and read there the news of the French defeat at Reichshoffen. He thereupon drained his glass of Chartreuse, ordered his valet to pack his boxes, and two hours later was on his way to Paris. On reaching that city he went at once to a recruiting office and enlisted as a private in a regiment that was to go to the front.

From the time he was sixteen the Duke had led a useless life, dividing his time between racing stables and opera singers; but he had never for a moment forgotten that one De Hardimont had died of the plague at Tunis on the same day as St. Louis, that Jean de Hardimont had commanded the Grands Compagnies under Du Guesclin, and that Francois de Hardimont had been killed at the charge of Fontenoy.

Enervated as he was by his dissipations, when the young Duke read that the French army had been defeated on French soil, the hot blood lashed to his head and he felt as if he should smother. This explains why, in the first days of November, 1870, having returned to Paris with his regiment, Henry de Hardimont, private in the Second, was stationed with his company in front of the redoubt of Hautes-Bruyeres, a position hastily fortified to protect the guns of Fort Bicetre.

It was a sinister spot. The road was obstructed by

young saplings and deep ruts; beside it stood an abandoned tavern, and here the soldiers had taken quarters. There had been fighting here some days before; many of the trees had been broken off by shells, and all were scarred by shot. As for the house, the mere sight of it would make one shiver; the chimney had been shot away and the moss-grown walls seemed dyed in blood. Battered wine casks, the rotting ropes of an old swing, the sign above the door—a rabbit over a pair of billiard cues tied together with a ribbon in the shape of a cross—suggested with cruel irony festal joys of Sundays in the past. Over the whole scene hung a wintry sky overcast with leaden clouds—a lowering, threatening sky, that seemed in sympathy with the foe.

The young Duke stood in the doorway of the old tavern, shivering under his sheepskin jacket. His cap was pulled down over his eyes and his hands were thrust deep into the pockets of his red trousers. He was a prey to the gloomiest of thoughts, and he glanced with an expression of poignant sorrow toward the line of hills where at every instant he could see white clouds of smoke belch forth from the great Krupp guns.

He suddenly remembered that he was hungry. He knelt down and took from his sack a large piece of army bread. As he had no knife to cut it, he munched it as best he could. After a few mouthfuls he had had enough. The bread was old and had a bitter taste; he knew he would get no better until the morrow's distribution—perhaps not then. He reflected that a soldier's life was a pretty rough one. He remembered how in the past, after a late dinner, he had often ordered what he termed a 'hygienic' breakfast—cutlets, new-laid eggs, a bottle of delicious wine—which he ate sitting in front of a window of the Cafe Anglais. Ah, those were indeed good days, and he felt that he could never learn to eat this bread of misery! With a gesture of impatience, he tossed the rest of the loaf into the road.

Just as he did this a private like himself came out of the inn. The man stooped down, picked up the bread, wiped it off with his sleeve, and, withdrawing a short distance, began to devour it greedily. The young Duke was already ashamed of his conduct, and he watched the poor fellow with pity as he gave proof of such an excellent appetite. He was a tall and lank, shuffling and loose-jointed man, whose hollow eyes denoted recent illness, and who was so emaciated that his shoulder-blades seemed about to project through his shabby jacket.

'Are you so very hungry, comrade?' said the Duke, approaching the soldier.

'You can see for yourself,' answered the young man, his mouth full.

'If I had thought you wanted the bread, I wouldn't have thrown it into the dirt.'

'That didn't hurt it any,' was the calm reply.

'It wasn't the right thing to do, and I reproach myself for it,' said the Duke. 'I don't want you to think badly of me. I have some old brandy in my canteen: we will take a drop together.'

The two men then took a swallow of the liquor and their acquaintance was made.

'What's your name?' asked the hungry one.

'Hardimont,' answered the Duke, purposely suppressing his title. 'And yours?'

'Jean-Victor. I've just been sent back to the company from the hospital. I was hit at Chatillon. It was all right in the hospital; I got good soup made of horse meat. But I had only a scratch: the major signed my dismissal, and here I am, starving again. Believe it or not, comrade, but I tell you I've been hungry all my life.'

This statement astounded the voluptuary who but a moment before had been longing for the cuisine of the Cafe Anglais to tempt his appetite. He looked at his companion with unconcealed surprise.

The soldier smiled sadly, showing his wolf-like teeth, which were even whiter than his blanched face; then continued, as if he felt that an explanation of his extraordinary statement was expected:

'Let us walk up and down the road to keep our feet warm, and I'll tell you some things that you probably never heard of before. My name is Jean-Victor, as I told you; there is no more to it, for I am a foundling. The only happy remembrance I have is of the days of my earliest childhood when I was at the hospital where I was brought up. One Sister in particular was like a mother to me. When I was twelve years old and had made my First Communion my misery began. I was then apprenticed to a manufacturer of cane-bottomed chairs. It isn't a good trade, you know, and a man can't possibly earn a living at it. It was then that I began to suffer from hunger. My master and his wife were utter misers. The bread was kept locked except at mealtime; then they used to cut off little pieces as we ate them. You should have heard the mistress sigh each time she gave us a spoonful of broth. I tried many ways to make a living and failed every