

the guns. I don't think we are as likely to be as badly off for meat as for bread, for after the flocks and herds are all eaten up there are the horses, and of these there must be tens of thousands in Paris."

"That is a comfort, certainly," the Frenchwoman said, calmly, while Mary Brander made a little gesture of disgust.

"I have never tried horseflesh myself, at least that I know of, but they say it is not so bad; but I cannot think that they will have to kill the horses for food. The country will not wait until we are reduced to that extremity."

"Mr. Hartington has joined one of the regiments of volunteers, Madame Michaud."

"That is good of you, monsieur; my husband is in the National Guard, and they say every one will have to take up a musket; but as you are a foreigner, of course this would not apply to you."

"Well, for the time being I consider myself a Parisian, and as a German shell is just as likely to fall on the roof of the house where I live as on any other, I consider myself to be perfectly justified in doing my best in self-defence."

"I trust that you will call whenever you are disposed in the evening, monsieur," Madame Michaud said, cordially; "it will give my husband pleasure to meet an English gentleman who is voluntarily going to fight in the cause of France."

"Thank you, madame. I shall be very glad to do so. Mademoiselle's father is a very old friend of our family, and I have known her ever since she was a little child. It will be pleasant to me to make the acquaintance of monsieur. And now, Miss Brander, I must be going."

CHAPTER VII.

As he sauntered back into the city, Cuthbert met an English resident with whom he had some slight acquaintance.

"So you are not among the great army of deserters, Mr. Phipson?"

"No, I thought it better to stay here and see it out. If the Germans come in I shall hang out the English flag and I have no doubt that it will be all right. If I go away the chances are that I should find the place sacked when I return."

"Then, of course, you will keep your place open."

"It will be closed to the public to-morrow—to the public, mind you. My English customers and friends, if they come to the little door in the Arcade, and give two knocks, and then three little ones with their knuckles on the door, will find it open, and can be served as long as there is any liquor left; but for the last three days I have been clearing out nearly all my stock. The demand has been tremendous, and I was glad enough to get rid of it, for even if the place isn't looted by the mob all the liquors might be seized by the authorities and confiscated for public use. I shall be glad when the doors are closed, I can tell you, for these people are enough to make one sick. The way they talk and brag sets my fingers itching, and I want to ask them to step into the back room, take off their coats, those uniforms they are so proud of, and stand up for a friendly round or two just to try what they are made of.

"I reckon if a chap can't take one on the nose and come up smiling, he would not be worth much when he has to stand up against the Prussians. I thought I understood them pretty well after having been coachman here for over twenty years, but I see now that I was wrong altogether. Of course I knew they were beggars to talk, but I always thought that there was something in it, and that if it came to fighting they would show up pretty well; but to hear them going on now as to what France will do and doing nothing themselves, gives one a sickener. Then the way as they blackguard the Emperor, who wasn't by any means a bad chap, puts my monkey up I can tell you. Why there is not one in fifty of them as is fit to black his boots. He had a good taste in horses too, he had; and when I hear them going on, it is as much as I can do not to slip in to them.

"That is one reason why I am stopping. A week ago I had pretty well made up my mind that I would go, but they made me so mad that I says to myself, I will stop and see it out, if it

is only for the pleasure of seeing these fellows get the licking they deserve. I was out yesterday evening. There was every café crowded; there was the singing-places fuller than I ever saw them; there were drunken soldiers, who ought to have been with their regiments outside the walls, reeling about the streets. Any one as seed the place would have put it down that it was a great fête-day. As to the Prussians outside no one seemed to give them a thought. If you went from table to table you heard everyone saying that the Germans would be destroyed, and that every one who talked of peace now was a traitor."

"I quite agree with you," Cuthbert said, "they are most extraordinary people. Still I do think they will fight."

"Well, sir, I don't know whether you have heard the news that they have been licked this morning somewhere out near Clamart. I heard just now that a lot of the linesmen bolted and never stopped running till they got into Paris, but they say the Breton mobiles fought well, though they had to fall back at last."

"The troops are disorganized at present," Cuthbert said; "but when you see what a tremendous thrashing they have had it is hardly to be expected that they should fight with any confidence, but when discipline is restored and they have had a few skirmishes they will be different men altogether. As to the mobiles, they are mere peasants at present, but a month of hard work will turn them into soldiers, and I should say better soldiers than the linesmen; but I am afraid they will never make anything out of the National Guard. The only way to do so will be to establish big camps outside the walls and send them all out there and put strict army men in command, with a regiment of regulars in each camp to carry out their orders. It would be necessary, no doubt, to shoot a few hundred of them before anything like discipline could be established; and once a week the whole should be sent out to attack the Germans so as to teach them to be steady under fire. In that way they might be turned into decent soldiers."

"Lord bless you, sir, Government would never try that. There would be barricades in the streets in no time, and as

the soldiers are all outside the walls the mob would upset the Government in a week."

"I am not at all saying it would do, but it is the only thing to make soldiers of them."

"Well, sir, you will know where to come when things get bad. I don't expect there will be any beer to be had, but I have been down with my son Bob into the cellar for the last four nights. I could not trust the French waiters, and we dug holes and have buried a couple of dozen kegs of my best spirits, so if they make a clear sweep of the rest I reckon we shall be able to keep that door open a goodish while."

"I shan't forget, and I hope that your spirits may escape the searchers, but you know just at present we are not popular in Paris. They have got an idea in their heads that we ought to have declared war against the Germans on their behalf; why, Heaven knows, but you may be sure that all the English places will be very strictly searched."

"Yes, I reckon on that, and we have got them twelve feet deep. It will be a job to get them out as we want them, but there won't be anything else to do and it will keep us in health."

Cuthbert had asked all the students to come in and smoke a pipe that evening in his room, and had ordered supper to be sent in."

"I am going to have it there instead of one of the usual places," he said, "because I don't think it is decent to be feasting in a public at a time like this. I expect it is about the last time we shall have anything like a supper. Things will be altogether beyond the reach of our purses in another week. Besides, I hope we shall be outside before long."

Arnold Dampierre was the first to come in.

"I am disgusted with the Parisians," he said, moodily.

"Well, yes, I am not surprised. It is not quite the spirit in which your people entered on their struggle, Dampierre."

"No, we meant it; the struggle with us was to get to the front. Why, do you know, I heard two or three of the National Guard grumbling in the highest state of indignation, and why, do you think? Because they had to sleep in the open air last night.

Are these the men to defend a city? There will be trouble before long, Cuthbert. The workmen will not stand it; they have no faith in the Government nor in Trochu, nor in any one."

"Including themselves, I hope," Cuthbert smiled.

"They are in earnest. I have been up at——" and he hesitated, "Montmartre this afternoon, and they are furious there."

"They are fools," Cuthbert said, scornfully, "and no small proportion are knaves besides. They read those foul pamphlets and gloat over the abuse of every decently dressed person. They rave against the Prussians, but it is the Bourgeois they hate. They talk of fighting, while what they want is to sack and plunder."

"Nothing of the kind," the American said, hotly. "They want honesty and purity, and public spirit. They see vice more rampant than it was in the days of the Empire. They see the Bourgeois shirking their duty. They see license and extravagance everywhere."

"It is a pity they don't look at home," Cuthbert laughed, good-temperedly. "I have not yet learnt that either purity or honesty, or a sense of duty are conspicuous at Montmartre or Belleville. There is just as much empty vamping there as there is down the Boulevards. As to courage, they may have a chance presently of showing whether they have more of it than the better class. Personally, I should doubt it." Then he added more seriously, "My dear Dampierre, I can of course guess where you have learnt all this. I know that Minette's father is one of the firebrands of his quarter, and that since she has been earning an income here he has never done a stroke of work, but has taken up the profession of politician. I am not doubting his sincerity. He may be for aught I know perfectly in earnest, but it is his capacity I doubt. These uneducated men are able to see but one side of the question, and that is their own."

"I am not at all blind to the danger. I believe it is possible that we are going to have another red revolution. Your men at Belleville and Montmartre are capable of repeating the worst and most terrible features of that most awful time, but you know

what came of it and how it ended. Even now some of these blackguard prints are clamoring for one man to take the supreme control of everything. So far there are no signs of that coming man, but doubtless, in time, another Bonaparte may come to the front and crush down disorder with an iron heel; but that will not be until the need for a saviour of society is evident to all. I hope, my dear fellow, you will not be carried away with these visionary ideas. I can, of course, understand your predilections for a Republic, but between your Republic and the Commune, for which the organs of the mob are already clamoring, there is no shadow of resemblance. They are both founded, it is true, on the will of the majority, but in the States it is the majority of an educated and distinctly law-abiding people—here it is the majority of men who would set the law at defiance, who desire power simply for the purposes of spoliation."

Dampierre would have replied angrily, but at this moment the door opened and two or three of the other students entered.

"Have you heard about that affair at Clamart," they demanded eagerly. "They say the line behaved shamefully, and that Trochu declares they shall be decimated."

"You may be quite sure that if he said so he will not carry it out," Cuthbert said. "The army has to be kept in a good humor, and at any rate until discipline is fully restored it would be too dangerous a task to venture on punishing cowardice. It is unfortunate certainly, but things will get better in time. You can hardly expect to make the fugitives of a beaten army into heroes all at once. I have not the least doubt that if the Germans made an attack in full force they would meet with very slight resistance; but they won't do that. They will go to work in a regular and steady way. They will erect batteries, commanding every road out of the town, and will then sit down and starve us out, hastening the process, perhaps, by a bombardment. But all that will take time. There will be frequent fighting at the outposts, and if Trochu and the rest of them make the most of the material they have at hand, poor as much of it is, they will be able to turn out an army that should be strong enough to throw itself upon any point in the German line and

break its way out ; but it must be an army of soldiers, not a force composed of disheartened fugitives and half-drilled citizens."

"The National Guard are drilling earnestly," René Caillard said. "I have been watching them this afternoon, they really made a very good show."

"The father of a family with a comfortable home and a prosperous business can drill as well as the most careless vaurien, René ; better, perhaps, for he will take much greater pains ; but when it comes to fighting, half a dozen reckless daredevils are worth a hundred of him. I think if I had been Trochu I would have issued an order that every unmarried man in Paris between the ages of sixteen and forty-five should be organized into, you might call it, the active National Guard for continual service outside the walls, while the married men should be reserved for defending the *enceinte* at the last extremity. The outside force might be but a third of the whole, but they would be worth as much as the whole force together. That is why I think that our corps may distinguish itself. We have none of us wives or families and nothing much to lose, consequently we shall fight well. We shan't mind hardships for we have not been accustomed to luxuries. We are fighting as volunteers and not because the law calls us under arms.

"We are educated and have got too much self-respect to bolt like rabbits. I don't say we may not retire. One can't do impossibilities, and if others don't stand, we can't oppose a Prussian Army Corps. There is one thing you must do, and that is preserve good discipline. There is no discipline at all in the National Guard. I saw a party of them yesterday drilling, and two or three of them quietly marched out of the ranks and remonstrated on terms of the most perfect equality, with their colonel as to an order he had given. The maxim of the Republic may do for civil life, though I have not a shadow of belief either in equality or fraternity ; nor have I in liberty when liberty means license ; whether that be so or not equality is not consistent with military discipline. An army in which the idea of equality reigns is not an army but a mob, and is no

more use for fighting purposes than so many armed peasants. The Shibboleth is always absurd and in a case like the present ruinous. The first duty of a soldier is obedience, absolute and implicit, and a complete surrender of the right of private judgment."

"And you would obey an officer if you were sure that he were wrong, Cuthbert ?"

"Certainly I would. I might, if the mistake did not cost me my life, argue the matter out with him afterwards, if, as might happen among us, we were personal acquaintances ; but I should at the same time carry out the order, whatever it might be, to the best of my power. And now I propose that for this evening we avoid the subject of the siege altogether. In future, engaged as we are likely to be, we shall hardly be able to avoid it, and moreover the bareness of the table and the emptiness of the wine-cups will be a forcible reminder that it will be impossible to escape it. Did you show Goudé your sketch for your picture for the Salon, René."

"I did, after you had all gone, and I have not got over the interview yet. His remarks on the design, conception, and the drawing were equally clear and decisive. He more than hinted that I was a hopeless idiot, that the time he had given me was altogether wasted, that I had mistaken my avocation, and that if the Germans knocked me on the head it would be no loss either to myself or to society in general. It is true that after he had finished he cooled down a bit and made a number of suggestions from which I gathered that if the whole thing were altered, my idea of the background altogether changed, the figures differently posed, the effect of light and shade diametrically reversed, and a few other trifling alterations made, the thing might possibly be hung on the top line. Ma foi, I feel altogether crushed, for I had really flattered myself that the sketch was not altogether without merit."

When the laugh had subsided Cuthbert said—

"Courage, René, Goudé's bark is always worse than his bite, and I have no doubt he will take a much more favorable view of it as you get on."

"It is all very well for you to say so," René said, ruefully. "You are a spoiled child, Goudé has never a word of reproof for you."

"Probably because he knows very well that I shall not break my heart over it. We must hold a committee of inspection on your work to-morrow; none of us have seen your design yet, and we may be able between us to make some useful suggestion."

"No, no," René exclaimed. "Heaven protect me from that. Do you come, Cuthbert; none of us mind what you say about our pictures. Your criticisms do not hurt. One would no more think of being angry with you for using your knife than with a surgeon for performing an operation."

"Very well, René, I will come round early. I have no doubt your sketch is a very good one on the whole, and after a few little changes it will satisfy even Goudé. By the way, have you heard we are to elect our company officers to-morrow?"

"Will you stand? I am sure you would have all our votes—that is twenty-five to start with, and as we know most of the fellows in the company we certainly could secure all those who have not any candidate they want to run; besides, there are, of course, to be three officers, so we should be able to traffic votes."

"No officering for me," Cuthbert laughed. "In the first place I have no greater qualifications for the post than anyone else, and in the second place, I am English, and though I might be elected—thanks to your votes—I should never be liked or trusted; besides, I have not a shadow of ambition that way, I am going to fight if necessary. I shall have my note-book in my pocket, and I have no doubt that when we are lying waiting for our turn to come, I shall have lots of opportunities for jotting down little bits that will work into the great battle picture which is to have the place of honor some day in the Salon. I think it will certainly be pleasant to have one of our own number among the officers, and I propose that each of us puts down on a slip of paper the name of the man he thinks will make the best leader and throw it into a hat; then, whoever gets the

most votes, we will all support, and, as you say, by a little traffic in the votes, we ought to be able to get him in among the three."

"Are you absolutely determined not to stand?"

"Absolutely and positively. So please do not any of you put my name down, two or three votes thrown away like that might alter the decision."

He tore up a sheet of paper into small slips and passed them round.

"Before we begin to write," he said, "let it be understood that no one is to vote for himself. I don't mind telling you who I am going to vote for. It is Henri Vancour. This is a matter in which it should be no question of personal liking. We should choose the man who appears to us best fitted for the post."

The name came as a surprise upon the others, for Henri was one of the last whom it would have occurred to them to choose. Pencils were already in their hands and they were on the point of writing when he spoke, and almost all would have given their votes either for René Caillard or Pierre Leroux, who were the two most popular men among the party. There was a pause for some little time before the pencils went to work.

They had not thought of Henri, but now they did think of him they acknowledged to themselves that there was a good deal to be said in his favor. He was a Norman—quiet, hard-working, and even-tempered. His voice was seldom heard in the chorus of jokes and laughter, but when asked for an opinion he gave it at once concisely and decidedly. He was of medium height and squarely built. His face was cast in a rough mould and an expression of resolution and earnestness was predominant. He had never joined either in the invective against the Emperor, or in the confident anticipations of glorious successes over the Germans.

He listened but said nothing, and when questioned would reply, "Let us see some one do better than the Emperor before we condemn him. We will hope for the best, but so far predictions have been so wrong that it would be better to wait and

see before we blow our trumpets." He had but little genius, this young Norman, but he had perseverance and power.

M. Goudé scolded him less than others with far greater talent, and had once said, "you will never be a great painter, Henri. I doubt if you will ever be in the first line, but you will take a good place in the second. You will turn out your pictures regularly and the work will always be good and solid. You may not win any great prizes, but your work will be esteemed, and in the end you will score as heavily as some of those who possess real genius."

Yes, Henri was, they all felt, now they thought it over, one they could rely upon. He would not lose his head, he would be calm in danger, as he was calm at all other times, and he certainly would show no lack of courage. Accordingly when the papers were opened he was found to have received a considerable majority of the votes.

"Thank you for choosing me, comrades," he said, quietly. "I can only say that if elected I will do my best. A man can't say more than that. Why you should have fixed upon me I cannot think, but that is your business. I think I can promise at any rate that I won't run away."

When the Franc-tireurs des Écoles assembled the next morning, half an hour was given for consultation; then the vote was taken, and Henri Vancour was declared elected first Lieutenant of the company composed entirely of the art students, the Captain being François des Valles, who belonged to an old provincial family, a tall, dark, handsome young man, extremely popular among his comrades.

"I think he will do very well," Cuthbert said, as the company fell in. "There is no fear of his leaving us when under fire; his failing, if he has one, will be that he may want to keep us there too long. It is quite as necessary when you are fighting by the side of fellows who are not to be relied on, to know when to retreat as it is to know when to advance."

This was their first parade in uniform. This had been decided upon at the first meeting held to settle the constitution of the corps, and a quiet gray had been chosen which looked neat

and workmanlike by the side of many of the picturesque but inappropriate costumes, selected by the majority of the Franc-tireurs. They had already had three days' drill and had learned to form from line into column and from column into line, to advance as skirmishers and to rally on the centres of the companies. They now marched out through the gates and were first taught to load the chassepots which had been bought by a general subscription in the schools, and then spent the morning in practising, and skirmishing, and advancing and retreating in alternate files.

When they were formed up again the old colonel said, "You are getting on well, men. Two more mornings' work and we will go out and complete our lessons in the face of the enemy."

When dismissed at the end of the third day, they were told to bring next morning, the gray greatcoats and blankets that formed part of their uniform. "Let each man bring with him three days' provisions in his bag," the colonel said, "ammunition will be served out to you and you will soon learn how to use it to advantage."

CHAPTER VIII.

M. Goudé grumbled much when he heard that his whole class were going to be absent for three days.

"A nice interruption to study," he said, "however, you were none of you doing yourselves any good, and you may as well be out in the fields as hanging about the streets gossiping. We can always talk, but during the past six weeks Paris has done nothing but talk. Don't come back with any of your number short. You have all got something in you and are too good for food for Prussian powder."

Cuthbert went that evening to the Michauds, in his uniform, not for the purpose of showing it off, but because men in plain clothes, especially if of fair complexions, were constantly stopped and accused of being German spies, were often ill-treated, and not unfrequently had to pass a night in the cells before