

called Cuthbert's attention to her. The American had opened his eyes.

"What has happened, Minette," he asked, as she laid her head down on his breast and burst into another fit of passionate sobbing.

"You are out of luck, Arnold," Cuthbert said, cheerfully; "a villain has fired at you, but you have got off this time more lightly than the last, and I think it is nothing more than a broken collar-bone, and that is not a very serious business, you know; be quiet for a little time; we shall have the surgeon here directly. Of course Minette is terribly upset, for she thought for a moment that you were killed."

Arnold lay still, stroking Minette's head gently with his right hand; gradually her sobs ceased, and Cuthbert then left them to themselves. The two bodies had by this time been carried into another room, and one of the delegates took his seat at the table and drew out a formal report of the occurrences that had taken place which was signed by the others present and by Cuthbert. A surgeon presently arriving confirmed Cuthbert's view that the collar-bone had been broken, and proceeded to bandage it.

As soon as it was done Arnold stood up unsteadily. "Citizen Rigaud, I presume that, as a high official of the Commune, you can replace the citizen who has fallen and complete the ceremony."

"Certainly, if it is your wish."

"It is my wish more even than before."

"The matter is simple," the delegate said, "my predecessor has already recorded your answers, there remains but for me to complete the ceremony."

A minute later Arnold Dampierre and Minette were pronounced man and wife, and signed the register, Martin Dufaure, Cuthbert, and the various deputies present signing as witnesses. A fiacre had been called up, and was in readiness at the door. Cuthbert assisted Arnold to take his place in it.

"If I were you, Arnold," he whispered, "I would go to the old lodgings; of course they are still vacant; if you prefer it,

you can take mine, I still keep them on though I have moved for a time. It will be better for you in every way not to be up here at Montmartre."

"Thank you; it would anyhow be quieter. Will you tell the coachman where to drive?"

"I will go on the box," Cuthbert said, "of course Dufaure will go with you." He told the Communist what they had decided on.

"That will be best," he agreed; "this is not a quiet quarter at present. What with drumming and drinking, it is not a place for a wounded man."

"You had better go inside with them, and I will go on the box," Cuthbert said, "keep Minette talking, it will prevent her breaking down, it has been a terrible shock for her."

The landlady was heartily glad to see Dampierre back again. Cuthbert and the Communist assisted the wounded man to bed.

"I will see about getting things in at present," Cuthbert said, "so do not worry over that, Minette; if everything goes well he will be about again in a few days, but keep him quiet as long as you can, I will come in to-morrow and see how he is getting on."

After going round to a restaurant and ordering meals to be sent in regularly, with some bottles of wine for Martin Dufaure's benefit, Cuthbert returned to Passy.

CHAPTER XXIV.

MARY was greatly shocked upon hearing the tragic circumstances that had occurred at the wedding.

"Who is the man that fired, Cuthbert?"

"His name is Jean Diantre. I heard from Dufaure that he has been a lover of Minette's; he said she had never given him any encouragement, but acknowledged that he himself believed she might have taken him at last if she had not met Dampierre. He said that he had been uneasy for some time, for the man

had become so moody and savage that he had feared ill would come of it. He was the same man who nearly stabbed me three months ago, taking me for Dampierre."

"It is shocking to think that you have killed a man, Cuthbert."

"It may be shocking to you, Mary, but the matter does not weigh on my conscience at all. In the first place I had no idea of killing him, and in the second, if I had not hit hard and quickly he would have fired again and killed Arnold; lastly, I regard these Communists as no better than mad dogs, and the chances are ten to one that he would have been shot at the barricades, or afterwards, if he had not died when he did."

"It is all very terrible," Mary sighed.

"It has all been terrible from beginning to end, Mary, but as hundreds of men are killed every day, and there will probably be thousands shot when the troops enter Paris, I cannot regard the death of a would-be murderer as a matter that will weigh on my mind for a moment. And now what has been going on here? I hardly had time to notice whether the firing was heavy."

"It has been tremendous," she said. "Several houses have been struck and set on fire lower down but no shells have come this way."

"I have no doubt the troops imagine that all the houses down near Pont du Jour, are crowded with Communists in readiness to repel any assault that might be made. The army is doubtless furious at the destruction of the Column of Vendôme, which was in commemoration, not only of Napoleon, but of the victories won by French armies. Moreover, I know from newspapers that have been brought in from outside, and which I have seen at the café, that they are incensed to the last degree by being detained here, when but for this insurrection, they would have been given a furlough to visit their families when they returned from the German prisons. So that I can quite understand the artillerymen taking a shot occasionally at houses they believe to be occupied by the insurgents.

"You may be sure of one thing, and that is that very little

quarter will be shown to the Communists by the troops. Even now, I cannot but hope, that seeing the impossibility of resisting many days longer, and the certainty of a terrible revenge if the troops have to fight their way through the streets, the Communists will try to surrender on the best terms they can get. Thiers has all along shown such extreme unwillingness to force the fighting, that I am sure he would give far better terms than they could have any right to expect, rather than that Paris should be the scene of a desperate struggle, and, if the Communists fulfil their threats, of wholesale destruction and ruin."

Two more days passed. Cuthbert went down each day to his old lodging and found that Arnold was doing well. On the second day, indeed, he was out of bed with his arm in a sling and sitting partly dressed in an easy-chair. Martin Dufaure had left that morning for his own lodging, having slept for the last two nights on the sofa. Minette had made everything about the rooms tidy and fresh, the windows were open, and the distant roar of the bombardment could be plainly heard. She had a white handkerchief tied over her head, a neat, quiet dress, and was playing the rôle of nurse to perfection. Cuthbert had been round to Monsieur Goudé and had told him what had happened, and he had the evening before dropped in for a talk with Arnold.

"I am getting on wonderfully, Cuthbert," Arnold said, on the latter's second visit. "Of course it is trying to be sitting here incapable of taking a part in what is going on."

"You have taken quite enough part, Arnold, and I own I think your wound at the present moment is a fortunate one, for it will keep you out of mischief. When the surgeon comes next I should strongly advise you to get him to write you a certificate certifying that you have been wounded by a pistol ball, so that if, as is probable, there will sooner or later be a general search for Communists, you can prove that your injury was not received in the fighting outside the walls, and you can refer to Goudé and me as to the fact that you are an art student here. Both documents had better be made out in another name than your

own, for, unfortunately, yours has been rendered familiar to them by the frequent notices of your doings and speeches in the papers here."

"I will see about it," Arnold said; "I do not know that I can bring myself to that."

"You will be very foolish and wrong not to do so, Arnold. You are a married man now, and have your wife to think about as well as yourself. You may be sure that there is not a single leader of the insurrection here who will not endeavor to escape under a false name; besides, even granting that, as you believe, the cause is a righteous one, you certainly cannot benefit it in the slightest by sacrificing your life. Your wife was a Communist Vivandière a few days ago, now she is a quiet little wife nursing a sick husband." Glancing at Minette he saw an angry flush on her face, and a look of dogged determination; he made no remark, however, and after chatting with Arnold for some time returned to Passy.

"That woman will bring destruction on them both or I am mistaken," he said to Mary; "fond as she may be of Dampierre, her enthusiasm for the Commune will take her from his side when the last struggle begins. Do you know, Mary, my presentiments about her have turned out marvellously correct." He opened his sketch-book. "Look at that," he said; "at the time I sketched it she was poised as a Spanish dancer, and had castanets in her hand; the attitude is precisely that in which she stood as a model, but it struck me at the moment that a knife would be more appropriate to her than a castanet, and you see I drew her so, and that is the precise attitude she stood in, dagger in hand, when I caught her wrist and prevented her from stabbing the man at her feet."

"Don't show them to me, Cuthbert, it frightens me when you talk of her."

"You must remember that she is a mixture, Mary; she is like a panther, as graceful, and as supple; a charming beast when it purrs and rubs itself against the legs of its keeper, terrible when, in passion, it hurls itself upon him. In the early days the students were, to a man, fascinated with her. I stood

quite alone in my disapproval. Seeing her as I saw her to-day, I admit that she is charming, but I cannot forget her fury as she bounded, knife in hand, upon the man I had knocked down. Listen! do you hear that rattle of musketry down by Pont du Jour? The troops must be working their way up towards the gate. Possibly, it is the beginning of the end."

Presently a Communist, with a red sash, rode furiously past, and in a quarter of an hour returned with a battalion of National Guards who had been stationed near the Arc de Triomphe.

"Evidently, there is a some sharp business going on, Mary. It is hardly likely the troops can be attacking at this time of day, they would be sure to choose early morning, mass their forces under cover of darkness, and go at the gate at daybreak; still, there is no doubt from that musketry firing, they must be trying to establish themselves nearer the gate than before."

The batteries that had all day been playing upon Pont du Jour, had suddenly ceased firing, but the rattle of musketry in that direction continued as hotly as ever for another two hours, and a number of field-guns joined in the conflict on the side of the Communists.

"I really must go and find out what it is all about," Cuthbert said; "if I could get up near the Viaduct, I should be able to look down into the bastions at Pont du Jour."

"Don't be away long," Mary urged, "I shall be feeling very nervous till you get back."

"I won't be long; I shan't stay to watch the affair, but only just to find out what the situation is. The fact that the Communists have brought up Field Artillery, shows that it is something more than ordinary, although, why the batteries opposite should have ceased to play I cannot make out; they are hard at work everywhere else."

Cuthbert made his way towards the Viaduct, and as he approached it saw that some of the field-guns he had heard had been placed there, and that the parapet was lined with National Guards who were keeping up an incessant fire. Shells from Meudon and Fort Issy were bursting thickly over and near the bridge, and Cuthbert, seeing that he could not get further with-

out being exposed to the fire, and might, moreover, get into trouble with the Communists, made his way down towards Pont du Jour. Several people were standing in shelter behind the wall of one of the villas.

"You had better not go farther," one of them said, "a shell burst twenty yards lower down a few minutes ago. Several of the villas are in flames, and bullets are flying about everywhere."

"What is going on, gentlemen?" Cuthbert asked, as he joined them.

"The troops have entered Pont du Jour."

"Impossible!" Cuthbert exclaimed, "the firing has been heavy, but no heavier than usual, and although the village is knocked to pieces, as I saw for myself yesterday, no great harm was done to the bastions."

"They have entered for all that," one of the gentlemen said. "Several wounded Communists have come along here, and they have all told the same story. Of course, they put it down to the treachery of their leaders, but at any rate, owing to the tremendous fire from the upper batteries and Issy, it was absolutely impossible to keep men in the bastions, and they were all withdrawn. A few were left in the houses and gardens, but the greater part fell back behind the Viaduct, which afforded them shelter. Somehow or other, the troops in the sap that had been pushed forward to within fifty yards of the gate must have come to the conclusion that the bastion was not tenanted, and trying the experiment, found themselves inside the wall without a shot having been fired. More must have followed them, at any rate a considerable force must have gathered there before the Communists found out they had entered. There can be no doubt that it was a surprise, and not a preconcerted movement, for the batteries continue to fire on the place for some time after they had entered.

"In a short time, small bodies of soldiers ran across the open where the shells were still bursting thickly, established themselves in the ruins of the village, and, as they received reinforcements, gradually worked their way forwards. The Communists have brought up strong forces, but so far, they have been unable

to drive back the troops, and, of course, their chance of doing so grows less and less. We can hear heavy firing all along to the right, and it seems as if the troops were pushing forward all along the line from here to Neuilly. Thank God, the end of this terrible business is approaching, and by to-morrow morning we may see the troops in Passy, where there is scarce a soul but will welcome them with open arms. Our battalion of National Guards was one of the last to accept the orders of the Commune, and as it must be known in Versailles as well as in Paris, that this quarter is thoroughly loyal, we need fear no trouble. We are going back there with the news, for we can see nothing here, and if a battalion of Communists came along beaten, they would be as likely as not to vent their fury on all whom they see by their appearance and dress are likely to sympathize with the troops."

Cuthbert walked back with them to Passy.

"Good news," he exclaimed, as he entered the room, where Mary and the Michauds were standing at the open window; "the troops are masters of Point du Jour, and the Communists have tried in vain to drive them back. No doubt, at present, the whole French army is being brought up, in readiness to enter as soon as it is dark, and by to-morrow morning this part of the town at any rate may be clear of the Communists."

Exclamations of delight burst from the others. "I will run up to the roof," Cuthbert said, "there is heavy musketry fire going on all along this side, and one may get an idea how matters are going, but we may be sure that the Communists will all fall back upon the city as soon as they know the troops have entered here."

Mary went up with him, and they found the astronomer had already his telescope in position.

"I have good news for you, Monsieur," Cuthbert said; "the troops have entered Pont du Jour, and although the Communists are opposing them in great force, they are making their way forward. It has evidently been a surprise all round, and so far no great body of troops have been brought up, but no doubt they will soon be ready to advance in force."

"That is good news indeed. I have been watching Asnieres, and as far as I can make out a large body of troops have crossed the bridge there, and are skirmishing towards the enciente, and gradually driving back the Communists. They have advanced too from Neuilly and are pressing forward towards Porte Maillot. Mount Valerien seems to be firing at Montmartre."

Nightfall brought no cessation of the roar of cannon, and the roll of musketry seemed to be continuous, both from the left and right. Every window at Passy was lit up; there was a crowd of women at every shop where colored materials could be obtained, and in every house the females were engaged in sewing red, white, and blue stuff of every description to make the National tri-colored flags, in readiness to hang out when the troops came along. Occasionally adventurous boys and young men came in with scraps of news; the Viaduct had been carried before darkness set in, a heavy column of troops had captured a strong barricade across the road, and, following the bank of the river, had taken possession of the bridge of Grenelle. Another division turning to the left had carried the gas works, while a third had captured the Asylum of St. Perrine.

It was at the Trocadero that the insurgents were expected to make a stand in earnest. Here they had erected formidable works, and were reported to be hard at work mounting guns and mitrailleuses there. The troops, however, gave them no time to complete their preparations. A column entered a little before midnight by the gate of Passy, pushed on to the bridge of Jena, carried it after a sharp fight, and then charged at the double towards the heights of the Trocadero, where the Communists, taken completely by surprise, fled precipitously after a slight resistance, and at one o'clock in the morning the loyalists were in possession of this important position. At midnight another division entered at the Porte Maillot, and advancing took possession of the Arc de Triomphe.

At two o'clock the head of the French column came down the street. In an instant candles were placed at every window, flags were hung out, and the inhabitants poured into the street

and welcomed their deliverers with shouts of joy. The troops piled their arms and fell out, and as soon as they did so, men and women brought out jugs of wine and provisions of all kinds. In half an hour the inhabitants were ordered to return to their houses, and the troops wrapping themselves in their blankets laid down in the roadway to get two or three hours' sleep before the heavy work expected in the morning. At five they were on their feet again. Already the din of battle had recommenced. At daybreak Bruat's division crossed the Seine by the Viaduct, kept along the left bank, drove the insurgents from the great iron foundry of Cail, and entered the Champs de Mars.

The Communists fought stubbornly here, but a corps was sent round to turn their position, and seeing their retreat threatened, they broke and fled, and the École Militaire was taken possession of without further resistance. General Cissey's division entered by the gate of Mont Rouge, where the Communists, threatened in the rear by Bruat's advance, fell back at their approach. Moving along the Boulevard Mont Rouge they came upon very strong and formidable barricades, defended by six cannon and mitrailleuses, supported by musketry fire from the houses. The position was so strong that even with the assistance of the artillery Cissey was unable to advance farther in this direction.

Bruat's division met with strong opposition at the Cartridge Factory in the Avenue Rapp, and the Reds were only driven out at last by artillery being brought up and shelling them out. After this Bruat pushed on, captured and occupied without resistance the Invalides, and the Palais Legislatif, opposite the Place de la Concorde.

On the right bank the troops advanced from the Arc de Triomphe at the double and carried the Palais de L'Industrie after a short resistance. By mid-day the whole of the Champs Elysées as far as the barrier of the Place de la Concorde were in possession of the troops.

Late in the afternoon the division of General Clinchamp marched down on the Rue Faubourg St. Honoré, came out

upon the Boulevard and took possession of the Madeleine and the Grand Opera House. While these operations had been carried on the Communists, batteries on Montmartre had thrown shells over the whole area occupied by the troops, while Mont Valerien and the other batteries facing the western side maintained a heavy fire upon those of Montmartre.

Early in the morning all the members of the National Guard of Passy and Auteuil were summoned to arms and ordered to assist the troops, and were specially enjoined to maintain order in their rear as they advanced. Numbers of Communist prisoners were taken by the troops as they worked their way forward, and upwards of 8,000 were despatched under a strong escort to Versailles. The order for the National Guard to assemble was received with intense satisfaction, the younger and unmarried men had been forced into the ranks of the Communists, but many had during the last day or two slipped away and remained in hiding, and all were anxious to prove that it was loyalty and not cowardice that had caused them to desert.

Cuthbert was out all day watching, from points where he could obtain shelter from the flying bullets, the advance of the troops. When he returned he told Mary that everything was going on well so far, but he added, "The work is really only beginning; the barrier at the Place de la Concorde and the batteries on the terrace of the Tuileries are really formidable positions, and I hear that on the south side the advance has been entirely arrested by one of the barricades there. The Insurgents never intended to hold the outlying suburbs, and even the batteries on the Trocadero were built to aid the Forts and not for fighting inside the walls. You see every yard the troops gain now drives the Communists closer and closer together, and renders the defence more easy. It may be a week yet before the Commune is finally crushed. I should think that before the troops advance much further on this side they will storm Montmartre, whose batteries would otherwise take them in rear."

The next day three divisions marched against Montmartre, and attacked it simultaneously on three sides. The Communists

here who had throughout the siege been the loudest and most vehement in their warlike demonstrations, now showed that at heart they were cowards. Although their batteries were armed with over a hundred guns, they offered but a momentary resistance and fled, panic-stricken, in every direction, some thousands being taken prisoners by the troops. On the other hand, throughout the rest of Paris, the fighting became more and more severe and desperate. The Northern Railway Station was defended successfully throughout the day. On the south side of the river but little progress was made by the troops, and they remained stationary also in the Champs Elysées, the barriers in front being too strong to be stormed without frightful loss. These, however, would be turned by the divisions who had captured Montmartre, and the troops descending by different routes to the Boulevard des Italiennes, worked their way along as far as the Porte St. Denis, and this threatened the flank of the defenders of the Place de la Concorde and the Tuileries.

The roar of fire was unbroken all day, the Forts, that had not yet fallen into the hands of the troops, bombarded all the quarters that had been captured, and were aided by powerful batteries at Belleville, at Vilette, and above all by those on the Buttes du Chaumont, where the Cemetery of Père la Chaise had been converted into an entrenched camp, the positions here being defended by 20,000 of the best troops of Paris. In the western quarters things had resumed their normal state; the shops were opened, children played in the streets, and women gossiped at the doors, there were men about too, for the order for the reassembling of the National Guard of this quarter had been cancelled, having met with the strongest opposition in the Assembly at Versailles.

The astronomer downstairs turned out a very useful acquaintance, for hearing from Cuthbert, that he was extremely anxious to obtain a pass that would permit him to move about near the scenes of fighting without the risk of being seized and shot as a Communist, he said that he was an intimate friend of Marshal McMahon and should be glad to obtain a pass for

him. On going to the quarters where the Marshal had established himself, he brought back an order authorizing Cuthbert Hartington, a British subject, to circulate everywhere in quarters occupied by the troops.

"It is too late to go down this evening, Mary," he said, "but I expect that to-morrow a great attack upon the positions round the Tuileries will take place, and I shall try and get somewhere where I can see without being in the line of fire. I will take care to run no risk, dear; you see my life is more precious to me now than it was when I joined the *Franc-tireurs des Écoles*."

It was difficult to stop quietly indoors when so mighty a struggle was going on almost within sight, and at ten o'clock in the evening he and Mary went out to the Trocadero. The flashes of fire from the Loyal and Communist batteries were incessant. Away on the south side was a constant flicker of musketry as Cisse's troops struggled with the defender of the barricades. An incessant fire played along the end of the Champs Elysées, flashed from the windows of the Tuileries and fringed the parapet of the south side of the river facing the Palais. Fires were blazing in various parts of Paris, the result of the bombardment. The city looked strangely dark, for the men at the gas works were for the most part fighting in the ranks of the insurgents. The sky was lined with sparks of fire moving in arcs and marking the course of the shell as they traversed to and fro from battery to battery, or fell on the city.

"It is a wonderful sight, Mary."

"Wonderful, but very terrible," she replied; "it is all very well to look at from here, but only think what it must be for those within that circle of fire."

"I have no pity for the Communists," Cuthbert said, "not one spark. They would not pull a trigger or risk a scratch for the defence of Paris against the Germans, now they are fighting like wild-cats against their countrymen. Look there," he exclaimed, suddenly, "there is a fire broken out close to the Place de la Concorde, a shell must have fallen there. I fancy it must be within the barricades, but none of the batteries on either side

would have been likely to send a shell there at night, as it is so close to the line of division that the missile would be as likely to strike friend as foe."

Higher and higher mounted the flames, spreading as they went till a huge mass of fire lighted up all that part of Paris.

"It must be a great public building of some sort," Cuthbert said.

"See, another building is on fire a short distance away from it; look, Cuthbert, look is that the reflection of the flames in the windows of the Tuileries or is it on fire?"

"It is fire," Cuthbert exclaimed after a minute's pause; "see the flames have burst through that window on the first floor. Good heavens, the Communists are carrying out their threat to lay Paris in ashes before they yield."

In five minutes all doubt was at an end, the flames were pouring out from every window on the first floor of the Palais, and it was evident the fire must have been lighted in a dozen places simultaneously.

By this time the Trocadero was thronged with spectators attracted by the light in the sky, and by the report that one of the public buildings was on fire; exclamations of fury and grief, and execrations upon the Communists rose everywhere, when it was seen that the Tuileries were in flames. From points at considerable distances from each other fresh outbreaks of fire took place. Most of those standing round were able to locate them, and it was declared that the Palace of the Court of Accounts, the Ministries of War and Finance, the palaces of the Legion of Honor and of the Council of State, the Prefecture of Police the Palace de Justice, the Hôtel de Ville and the Palais Royale were all on fire. As the night went on the scene became more and more terrible. Paris was blazing in at least twenty places, and most of the conflagrations were upon an enormous scale. The scene was too fascinating and terrible to be abandoned, and it was not until the morning began to break that the spectators on the Trocadero returned to their homes.