

THE CAT AND THE KING.

A STORY.

BY STANLEY J. WEYMAN,

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IT was in the spring of the year 1609 that at the king's instance I had a suite of apartments fitted up for him at the Arsenal, that he might visit me whenever it pleased him, without putting my family to inconvenience. He honored me by using these rooms, which consisted of a hall, a chamber, a wardrobe, and a closet, two or three times in the course of that year, availing himself of my attendants and cook. On the occasion of his last visit he had been staying at Chantilly, and came to me from Lusarche, where he lay the intervening night. My coaches went to meet him at the gates a little before noon, but he did not immediately arrive; and being at leisure, and having assured myself that the dinner of twelve covers, which he had directed to be ready, was in course of preparation, I went with my wife to inspect his rooms and satisfy myself that everything was in order.

They were in charge of La Trape, a man of address and intelligence. He met me at the door and conducted us through the rooms with an air of satisfaction; nor could I find the slightest fault, until my wife, looking about her with a woman's eye for minute things, paused by the bed in the chamber, and directed my attention to something on the floor.

She stooped over it. "What is this?" she asked. "Has something been——"

"Upset here?" I said, looking also. There was a little pool of white liquid on the floor beside the bed.

La Trape uttered an exclamation of annoyance, and explained that he had not seen it before, that it had not been there five minutes earlier, and that he did not know how it came to be there now.

"What is it?" I said, looking about for some pitcher that might have overflowed, but finding none. "Is it milk?"

"I don't know, your excellency," he answered. "But it shall be removed at once."

"See that it is," I said. "Are the boughs in the fireplace fresh?" For the weather was still warm, and we had not lit a fire.

"Yes, your excellency; quite fresh."

"Well, see to that, and remove it," I said, pointing to the mess. "It looks ill."

And with that the matter passed from my mind; the more completely as I heard at that moment the sound of the king's approach, and went into the court-yard to receive him. He dined well, and after dinner amused himself with seeing the young men ride at the ring, and even rode a course himself with his usual skill; that being, if I remember rightly, the last occasion on which I ever saw him take a lance. After supper, pronouncing himself tired, he dismissed all, and retired with me to his chamber. Here we had some talk; but about eleven o'clock he yawned, and, after thanking me for a reception which, he said, was quite to his mind, he bade me go to bed.

I was half way to the door when he called me back. "Why, Grand Master," he said, pointing to the little table by the head of the bed on which his night drinks stood, "you might be going to drown me. Do you expect me to drink all these in the night?"

"I think that there is only your posset, sire," I said, "and the lemon-water, which you generally drink."

"And two or three other things?"

"Perhaps they have given your Majesty some of the Arbois wine that you were good enough to——"

"Tut-tut!" he said, lifting the cover of one of the cups. "This is not wine. It may be a milk-posset."

"Yes, sire; very likely," I said drowsily.

"But it is not," he answered, when he had smelled it. "It is plain milk. Come, my friend," he continued, looking drolly at me, "have you turned leech, or I babe in arms, that you put such strong liquors before me? However, to show you that I have some childish tastes left, and am not so depraved as you have been trying to make me out for the last hour, I will drink your health in it. It would serve you right if I made you pledge me in the same liquor."

The cup was at his lips when I sprang forward and, heedless of ceremony, caught

his arm. "Pardon, sire!" I cried, in sudden agitation. "If that is milk, I gave no order that it should be placed here, and I know nothing of its origin. I beg that you will not drink it until I have made some inquiry."

"They have all been tasted?" he asked, still holding the cup in his hand, with the lid raised, but looking at it gravely.

"They should have been," I answered. "But La Trape, whom I made answerable for that, is outside. I will go and question him. If you will wait, sire, a moment——"

"No," Henry said. "Have him here."

I gave the order to the pages who were waiting outside, and in a moment La Trape appeared, looking startled and uncomfortable. Naturally, his first glance was given to the king, who had taken his seat on the edge of the bed, but still held the cup in his hand. After asking the king's permission, I said: "What drinks did you place on the table, here, sirrah?"

He looked more uncomfortable at this, but he answered boldly enough that he had served a posset, some lemon-water, and some milk.

"But orders were given only for the lemon-water and the posset," I said.

"True, your excellency," he answered. "But when I went to the pantry hatch, to see the under-butler carry up the tray, I found that the milk was on the tray; and I supposed that you had given another order."

"Possibly Madame de Sully," the king said, looking at me, "gave the order to add it?"

"She would not presume to do so, sire," I answered sternly. "Nor do I in the least understand the matter. But at one thing we can easily arrive. You tasted all of these, man?"

La Trape said he had.

"You drank a quantity, a substantial quantity of each, according to the orders given to you?" I persisted.

"Yes, your excellency."

But I caught a guilty look in his eyes, and in a gust of rage I cried out that he lied. "The truth!" I thundered, in a terrible voice. "The truth, you villain! You did not taste all?"

"I did, your excellency; as God is above, I did!" he answered. But he had grown pale, and he looked at the king in a terrified way.

"You did?"

"Yes."

Yet I did not believe him, and I was about to give him the lie again, when the

king intervened. "Quite so," he said to La Trape, with a smile. "You drank, my good fellow, of the posset and the lemon-water, and you tasted the milk, but you did not drink of it. Is not that the whole truth?"

"Yes, sire," he whimpered, breaking down. "But I—I gave some to a cat."

"And the cat is no worse?"

"No, sire."

"There, Grand Master," the king said, turning to me, "that is the truth, I think. What do you say to it?"

"That the rest is simple," I answered grimly. "He did not drink it before, but he will drink it now, sire."

The king, sitting on the bed, laughed and looked at La Trape, as if his good nature almost led him to interpose. But after a moment's hesitation he thought better of it, and handed me the cup. "Very well," he said; "he is your man. Have your way with him. After all, he should have drunk it."

"He shall drink it now, or be broken on the wheel!" I said. "Do you hear, you?" I continued, turning to him in a white heat of rage at the thought of his negligence, and the price it might have cost me. "Take it, and beware that you do not drop or spill it. For I swear that that shall not save you!"

He took the cup with a pale face, and hands that shook so much that he needed both to support the vessel. He hesitated, too, so long that had I not possessed the best of reasons for believing in his fidelity I should have suspected him of more than negligence. The shadow of his tall figure seemed to waver on the tapestry behind him, and with a little imagination I might have thought that the lights in the room had sunk. The soft whispering of the pages outside could be heard, and a stifled laugh; but inside there was not a sound. He carried the cup to his lips, then he lowered it again.

I took a step forward.

He recoiled a pace, his face ghastly. "Patience, excellency," he said hoarsely. "I shall drink it. But I want to speak first."

"Speak!" the king answered.

"If there is death in it, I take God to witness that I know nothing, and knew nothing. There is some witch's work here; it is not the first time that I have come across this devil's milk to-day. But I take God to witness I know nothing. Now it is here I will drink it——"

He did not finish the sentence, but, draw-

ing a deep breath, raised the cup to his lips. I saw the apple in his throat rise and fall with the effort he made to swallow, but he drank so slowly that it seemed to me that he would never drain the cup. Nor did he; for when he had swallowed, as far as I could judge from the tilting of the cup, about half of the milk, Henry rose suddenly, and, seizing it, took it from him with his own hand.

"That will do," the king said. "Do you feel ill?"

La Trape drew a trembling hand across his brow, on which the sweat stood in beads; but instead of answering he remained silent, gazing fixedly before him. We waited and watched, and at length, when I should think three minutes had elapsed, he changed his position for one of greater ease, and I saw his face relax. The unnatural pallor faded, and the open lips closed. A minute later he spoke. "I feel nothing, sire," he said.

The king looked at me drolly. "Then take five minutes more," he said. "Go, and stare at Judith there, cutting off the head of Holofernes"—for that was the story of the tapestry—"and come when I call you."

La Trape went to the other end of the chamber. "Well," the king said, inviting me by a sign to sit down beside him, "is it a comedy or a tragedy, my friend? Or, tell me, what was it he meant when he said that about the other milk?"

I explained, the matter seeming so trivial now that I came to tell it—though it had doubtless contributed much to La Trape's fright—that I had to apologize.

"Still it is odd," the king said. "These drinks were not here at that time, of course?"

"No, sire; they have been brought up within the hour."

"Well, your butler must explain it." And with that he raised his voice and called La Trape back, who came looking red and sheepish.

"Not dead yet?" the king said.

"No, sire."

"Nor ill?"

"No, sire."

"Then begone. Or, stay!" Henry continued. "Throw the rest of this stuff into the fireplace. It may be harmless, but I have no mind to drink it by mistake."

La Trape emptied the cup among the green boughs that filled the hearth, and hastened to withdraw. It seemed to be too late to make further inquiries that night; so after listening to two or three explanations which the king hazarded, but which had all too fanciful an air in my eyes, I took my leave and retired.

I found it impossible to sleep, and spent

the greater part of the night in a fever of fears and forebodings. The responsibility which the king's presence cast upon me lay so heavily upon my waking mind that I could not lie; and long before the king's usual hour of rising I was at his door, inquiring how he did. No one knew, for the page whose turn it was to sleep at his feet had not come out; but while I stood questioning, the king's voice was heard, bidding me enter. I went in and found him sitting up with a haggard face, which told me, before he spoke, that he had slept little better than I had. The shutters were thrown wide open, and the cold morning light poured into the room with an effect rather sombre than bright, the huge figures on the tapestry looming huger from a drab and melancholy background, and the chamber presenting all those features of disorder that in a sleeping-room lie hid at night, only to show themselves in a more vivid shape in the morning.

The king sent his page out, and bade me sit by him. "I have had a bad night," he said, with a shudder.

Seeing the state in which he was, I could think of nothing better than to rally him, and even laugh at him. "You think so now, sire," I said. "It is the cold hour. By and by, when you have broken your fast, you will think differently."

"But, it may be, less correctly," he answered; and as he sat looking before him with gloomy eyes, he heaved a deep sigh. "My friend," he said mournfully, "I want to live, and I am going to die."

"Of what?" I asked gayly.

"I do not know; but I dreamed last night that a house fell on me in the Rue de la Feronnerie, and I cannot help thinking that I shall die in that way."

"Very well," I said. "It is well to know that."

He asked me peevishly what I meant.

"Only," I explained, "that, in that case, as your Majesty need never pass through that street, you have it in your hands to live forever."

"Perhaps it may not happen there—in that very street," he answered.

"And perhaps it may not happen yet," I rejoined. And then, more seriously, "Come, sire," I continued, "why this sudden weakness? I have known you face death a hundred times."

"But not after such a dream as I had last night," he said, with a grimace—yet I could see that he was already comforted. "I thought that I was passing along that street in my coach, and on a sudden, between Saint

Innocent's Church and the notary's—there is a notary's there?"

"Yes, sire," I said, somewhat surprised.

"I heard a great roar, and something struck me down, and I found myself pinned to the ground, in darkness, with my mouth full of dust, and an immense beam on my chest. I lay for a time in agony, fighting for breath, and then my brain seemed to burst in my head, and I awoke."

"I have had such a dream, sire," I said dryly.

"Last night?"

"No," I said, "not last night."

He saw what I meant, and laughed; and being by this time quite himself, left that and passed to discussing the strange affair of La Trape and the milk. "Have you found, as yet, who was good enough to supply it?" he asked.

"No, sire," I answered; "but I will see La Trape, and as soon as I have learned anything, your Majesty shall know it."

"I suppose he is not far off now," he suggested. "Send for him. Ten to one he will have made inquiries, and it will amuse us."

I went to the door and, opening it a trifle, bade the page who waited send La Trape. He passed on the message to a crowd of sleepy attendants, and quickly, but not before I had gone back to the king's bedside, La Trape entered.

Having my eyes turned the other way, I did not at once remark anything. But the king did; and his look of astonishment, no less than the exclamation which accompanied it, arrested my attention. "Saint Gris, man!" he cried. "What is the matter? Speak!"

La Trape, who had stopped just within the door, made an effort to do so, but no sound passed his lips; while his pallor and the fixed glare of his eyes filled me with the worst apprehensions. It was impossible to look at him and not share his fright, and I stepped forward and cried out to him to speak. "Answer the king, man," I said. "What is it?"

He made an effort, and with a ghastly grimace, "The cat is dead!" he said.

For a moment we were all silent. Then I looked at the king, and he at me, with gloomy meaning in our eyes. He was the first to speak. "The cat to whom you gave the milk?" he said.

"Yes, sire," La Trape answered, in a voice that seemed to come from his heart.

"But still, courage!" the king cried. "Courage, man! A dose that would kill a cat may not kill a man. Do you feel ill?"

"Oh, yes, sire," La Trape moaned.

"What do you feel?"

"I have a trembling in all my limbs, and ah—ah, my God, I am a dead man! I have a burning here—a pain like hot coals in my vitals!" And, leaning against the wall, the unfortunate man clasped his arms round his body, and bent himself up and down in a paroxysm of suffering.

"A doctor! a doctor!" Henry cried, thrusting one leg out of bed. "Send for du Laurens!" Then, as I went to the door to do so, "Can you be sick, man?" he asked. "Try!"

"No, no; it is impossible!"

"But try, try! When did this cat die?"

"It is outside," La Trape groaned. He could say no more.

I had opened the door by this time, and found the attendants, whom the man's cries had alarmed, in a cluster round it. Silencing them sternly, I bade one go for Monsieur du Laurens, the king's physician, while another brought me the cat that was dead.

The page who had spent the night in the king's chamber fetched it. I told him to bring it in, and ordering the others to let the doctor pass when he arrived, I closed the door upon their curiosity, and went back to the king. He had left his bed and was standing near La Trape, endeavoring to hearten him; now telling him to tickle his throat with a feather, and now watching his sufferings in silence, with a face of gloom and despondency that sufficiently betrayed his reflections. At sight of the page, however, carrying the dead cat, he turned briskly, and we both examined the beast, which, already rigid, with staring eyes and uncovered teeth, was not a sight to cheer any one, much less the stricken man. La Trape, however, seemed to be scarcely aware of its presence. He had sunk upon a chest which stood against the wall, and, with his body strangely twisted, was muttering prayers, while he rocked himself to and fro unceasingly.

"It's stiff," the king said in a low voice. "It has been dead some hours."

"Since midnight," I muttered.

"Pardon, sire," the page who was holding the cat said; "I saw it after midnight. It was alive then."

"You saw it!" I exclaimed. "How? Where?"

"Here, your excellency," the boy answered, quailing a little.

"What? In this room?"

"Yes, excellency. I heard a noise about—I think about two o'clock—and his Majesty breathing very heavily. It was a noise

like a cat spitting. It frightened me, and I rose from my pallet and went round the bed. I was just in time to see the cat jump down."

"From the bed?"

"Yes, your excellency. From his Majesty's chest, I think."

"Are you sure that it was this cat?"

"Yes, sire; for as soon as it was on the floor it began to writhe and roll and bite itself, with all its fur on end, like a mad cat. Then it flew to the door and tried to get out, and again began to spit furiously. I thought that it would awaken the king, and I let it out."

"And then the king did awake?"

"He was just awaking, your excellency."

"Well, sire," I said, smiling, "this accounts, I think, for your dream of the house that fell, and the beam that lay on your chest."

It would have been difficult to say whether at this the king looked more foolish or more relieved. Whichever the sentiment he entertained, however, it was quickly cut short by a lamentable cry that drove the blood from our cheeks. La Trape was in another paroxysm. "Oh, the poor man!" Henry cried.

"I suppose that the cat came in unseen," I said, "with him last night, and then stayed in the room?"

"Doubtless."

"And was seized with a paroxysm here?"

"Such as he has now," Henry answered; for La Trape had fallen to the floor. "Such as he has now," he repeated, his eyes flaming, his face pale. "Oh, my friend, this is too much! Those who do these things are devils, not men. Where is du Laurens? Where is the doctor? He will perish before our eyes."

"Patience, sire," I said. "He will come."

"But in the meantime the man dies."

"No, no," I said, going to La Trape, and touching his hand. "Yet he is very cold." And turning, I sent the page to hasten the doctor. Then I begged the king to allow me to have the man conveyed into another room. "His sufferings distress you, sire, and you do him no good," I said.

"No, he shall not go," he answered. "Ventre Saint Gris! man, he is dying for me! He is dying in my place. He shall die here."

Still ill satisfied, I was about to press him further, when La Trape raised his voice, and feebly asked for me. A page

who had taken the other's place was supporting his head, and two or three of my gentlemen, who had come in unbidden, were looking on with scared faces. I went to the poor fellow's side and asked what I could do for him.

"I am dying," he muttered, turning up his eyes. "The doctor! the doctor!"

I feared that he was passing, but I bade him have courage. "In a moment he will be here," I said; while the king, in distraction, sent messenger on messenger.

"He will come too late," the sinking man answered. "Excellency?"

"Yes, my good fellow," I said, stooping that I might hear the better.

"I took ten pistoles yesterday from a man to get him a scullion's place, and there is none vacant."

"It is forgiven," I said, to soothe him.

"And your excellency's favorite hound Diane," he gasped. "She had three puppies, not two. I sold the other."

"Well, it is forgiven, my friend. It is forgiven. Be easy," I said kindly.

"Ah, I have been a villain," he groaned. "I have lived loosely. Only last night I kissed the butler's wench, and——"

"Be easy, be easy," I said. "Here is the doctor. He will save you yet."

I made way for Monsieur du Laurens, who, having saluted the king, knelt down by the sick man and felt his pulse, while we all stood round, looking down on the two with grave faces. It seemed to me that the man's eyes were growing dim, and I had little hope. The king was the first to break the silence. "You have hope?" he said. "You can save him?"

"Pardon, sire, a moment," the physician answered, rising from his knees. "Where is the cat?"

Some one brought it, and Monsieur du Laurens, after looking at it, said curtly: "It has been poisoned."

La Trape uttered a groan of despair. "At what hour did it take the milk?" the physician asked.

"A little before ten last evening," I said, seeing that La Trape was too far gone for speech.

"Ah! And the man?"

"An hour later."

Du Laurens shook his head, and was preparing to lay down the cat, which he had taken in his hands, when some appearance led him to examine it again and more closely. "Why what is this?" he exclaimed, in a tone of surprise, as he took the body to the window. "There is a large swelling under its chin."

No one answered.

"Give me a pair of scissors," he continued; and then, after a minute, when they had been handed to him, and he had removed the fur, "Ha!" he said gravely, "this is not so simple as I thought. The cat has been poisoned by a prick with some sharp instrument."

The king uttered an exclamation of incredulity. "But it drank the milk," he said. "Some milk that——"

"Pardon, sire," du Laurens answered positively. "A draught of milk, however drugged, does not produce an external swelling with a small blue puncture in the middle."

"What does?" the king asked, with something like a sneer.

"Ah, that is the question," the physician answered. "A ring, perhaps, with a poison-chamber and hollow dart."

"But there is no question of that here," I said. "Let us be clear. Do you say that the cat did not die of the milk?"

"I see no proof that it did," he answered. "And many things to show that it died of poison administered by puncture."

"But, then," I answered, in no little confusion of thought, "what of La Trape?"

He turned, and with him all eyes, to the unfortunate equerry, who still lay seemingly moribund, with his head propped on some cushions. Monsieur du Laurens advanced to him and again felt his pulse, an operation which appeared to bring a slight tinge of color to the fading cheeks. "How much milk did he drink?" the physician asked after a pause.

"More than half a pint," I answered.

"And what besides?"

"A quantity of the king's posset and a little lemonade."

"And for supper? What did you have?" the leech continued, addressing himself to his patient.

"I had some wine," he answered feebly; "and a little Frontignac with the butler, and some honey-mead that the gypsy wench gave me."

"The gypsy wench?"

"The butler's girl of whom I spoke."

Monsieur du Laurens rose slowly to his feet, and, to my amazement, dealt the prostrate man a hearty kick, bidding him at the same time to rise. "Get up, fool! Get up," he continued harshly, yet with a ring of triumph in his voice; "all you have got is the colic, and it is no more than you deserve. Get up, I say, and beg his Majesty's pardon."

"But," the king remonstrated in a tone of anger, "the man is dying."

"He is no more dying than you are, sire," the other answered. "Or, if he is, it is of fright. There, he can stand as well as you or I."

And, to be sure, as he spoke, La Trape scrambled to his feet, and with a mien between shame and doubt stood staring at us, the very picture of a simpleton. It was no wonder that his jaw fell and his impudent face burned; for the room shook with such a roar of laughter, at first low, and then, as the king joined in it, swelling louder and louder, as few of us had ever heard. Though I was not a little mortified by the way in which we had deceived ourselves, I could not help joining in the laugh, particularly as the more closely we reviewed the scene in which we had taken part, the more absurd seemed the jest. It was long before silence could be obtained; but at length Henry, quite exhausted by the violence of his mirth, held up his hand. I seized the opportunity.

"Why, you rascal!" I said, addressing La Trape, who did not know which way to look, "where are the ten crowns of which you defrauded the scullion?"

"To be sure," the king said, going off into another roar. "And the third puppy?"

"Yes," I said, "you scoundrel; and the third puppy?"

"Ay, and the gypsy girl?" the king continued. "The butler's wench, what of her? And of your evil living? Begone, begone, rascal!" he continued, falling into a fresh paroxysm, "or you will kill us in earnest. Would nothing else do for you but to die in my chamber? Begone!"

I took this as a hint to clear the room, not only of La Trape himself, but of all; and presently only I and du Laurens remained with the king. It then appeared that there was still a mystery, and one which it behooved us to clear up, inasmuch as du Laurens took the cat's death very seriously, insisting that it had died of poison administered in a most sinister fashion, and one that could not fail to recall to our minds the Borgian popes. It needed no more than this to direct my suspicions to the Florentines who swarmed about the queen, and against whom the king had let drop so many threats. But an indisposition under which I was suffering, but which excitement had for a time kept at bay, began to return upon me, and I was presently glad to drop the subject and retire to my own apartments, leaving the king to dress.

Consequently, I was not with him when the strange discovery which followed was made. In the ordinary course of dressing,

one of the servants, going to the fireplace to throw away a piece of waste linen, thought that he heard a rat stir among the boughs. He moved them, and in a moment a small snake crawled out, hissing and darting out its tongue. It was killed, and then it at once occurred to the king that he had the secret of the cat's death. He came to me hot-foot with the news, and found me with du Laurens, who was in the act of ordering me to bed.

I confess that I heard the story almost with apathy, so ill was I. Not so the physician. After examining the snake, which, by the king's orders, had been brought for my inspection, he pronounced that it was not of French origin. "It has escaped from some snake-charmer," he said.

The king seemed to be incredulous.

"I assure you that I speak the truth, sire," du Laurens persisted.

"But how then did it come in my room?"

"That is what I should like to know, sire," the physician answered severely; "and yet I think that I can guess. It was put there, I fancy, by the person who sent up the milk to your chamber."

"Why do you say so?" Henry asked.

"Because, sire, all snakes are inordinately fond of milk."

"Ah," the king said slowly, with a change of countenance, and a shudder which he could not repress; "and there was milk on the floor in the morning."

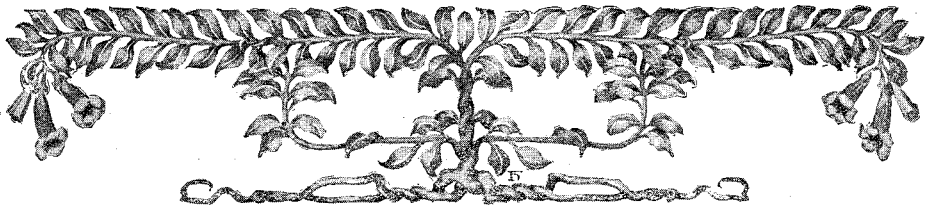
"Yes, sire; on the floor, and beside the head of your bed."

But at this stage I was attacked by a fit of illness so severe that I had to break in on the discussion, and beg the king to withdraw. The sickness increased on me during the day, and by noon I was pros-

trate, neither taking interest in anything, nor allowing others, who began to fear for my life, to divert their attention. After twenty-four hours I began to mend, but still several days elapsed before I was able to devote myself to business; and then I found that, the master-mind being absent, and the king, as always, lukewarm in the pursuit, nothing had been done to detect and punish the criminal.

I could not rest easy, however, with so abominable a suspicion attaching to my house, and as soon as I could bend my mind to the matter I began an inquiry. At the first stage, however, I came to an *impasse*; the butler, who had been long in my service, cleared himself without difficulty, but a few questions discovered the fact that a person who had been in his department on the evening in question was now to seek, having, indeed, disappeared from that time. This was the gypsy girl whom La Trape had mentioned, and whose presence in my household seemed to need the more elucidation the farther I pushed the inquiry. In the end I had the butler punished; but though my agents sought the girl through Paris, and even traced her to Meaux, she was never discovered.

The affair, at the king's instance, was not made public; nevertheless, it gave him so strong a distaste for the Arsenal that he did not again visit me, nor use the rooms I had prepared. That later, when the first impression wore off, he would have done so, is probable; but, alas! within a few months the malice of his enemies prevailed over my utmost precautions, and robbed me of the best of masters; strangely enough, as all the world now knows, at the corner of that very Rue de la Ferronnerie which he had seen in his dream.



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THE STORY OF A MEMBER OF THE STAFF WHO ASSISTED IN ARMING THE "TRIBUNE" OFFICE.

BY JAMES R. GILMORE ("Edmund Kirke").



IN July, 1863, General Lee had invaded Pennsylvania, John Morgan was riding roughshod over Ohio, and President Lincoln had called for another half million of men to aid in suppressing the Southern Confederacy. Congress had passed an injudicious law exempting from the operation of the draft all who should pay into the treasury the sum of three hundred dollars. Discontent was almost universal, and it was systematically fomented, especially in New York City, by a class of "pot-house politicians," who, haranguing in barrooms and on street corners, declared that the draft was unconstitutional, that no allowance had been made for seven thousand men who had recently been sent from New York City to repel Lee's advance into Pennsylvania, and that it bore with peculiar oppressiveness upon the poor man. Blind to the gathering storm, the government, after denuding New York City of all but three hundred troops, went on with the enrolment; and on Saturday, the 11th of July, began the draft in the Ninth District. Twelve hundred and thirty-six names were drawn, but no trouble occurred. Early in the morning of Sunday, though, throngs of excited men began to crowd the hotels and barrooms in the locality where the draft was to continue on the morrow. Gathering in little knots, they denounced the conscription, and openly talked of attacking the drafting officers. Mingling among them were men in common, and in some instances shabby, clothing, but whose speech indicated cultivation, and whose hands showed them unused to labor. They advised concert of action, and the gathering together of clubs, fence-rails, stones, rusty guns, and every variety of offensive weapon, to be secreted in convenient places, in readiness for a grand outbreak on the morrow.

In the evening excited crowds paraded the streets, singing and shouting; but towards midnight they dispersed, leaving New York to its usual quiet.

About three o'clock on the following morning (Monday), Sidney Howard Gay, the managing editor of the "Tribune," having finished his work on Monday's paper, left his office in the dingy building then standing on the corner of Spruce and Nassau Streets, and boarded a street car to go to his up-town lodgings. The driver on the platform said to him: "Stirrin' times, sir. Fa' th, an' ye'll have something to talk about to-morrow."

"How so? What do you mean?"

"Nothing; only a mob will resist the draft to-morrow, and New York will see the biggest riot in history."

Mr. Gay went to his lodgings, and slept quietly until nine o'clock on the following morning. Then he arose, took a hasty breakfast, and went out upon the avenue. The stores were closed, the streets deserted, but excited crowds were gathered on every corner. This recalled to him the words of the car-driver. Evidently a storm was brewing, and, it might be, it was about to break in a torrent of bloody rain on the defenceless city. His post was with the "Tribune"; so he boarded a street car, and two hours before his usual time entered his office, two miles away, all unconscious of the high havoc already reigning in the upper part of the city.

Soon tidings came in to him that the enrolment offices had been sacked and burned, and all uptown was in the control of an infuriated mob. Meanwhile, an excited crowd had gathered in Printing House Square, that was being harangued by a Virginian named Andrews, who denounced the "Tribune" in violent language, and raised his hands with threatening gestures to those who were looking down from the windows of the editorial rooms. While he did so, there rose every now and then from the crowd a cry

NOTE.—It is proper to state that many of the facts incorporated in this article were derived from Sidney Howard Gay, and that it was read to him by his daughter, during his last illness, who then made, at his dictation, several additions to it. It may therefore be regarded as the joint production of Mr. Gay, Mr. James Parton, and the writer.