

could be heard whizzing overhead for twenty minutes, and one did actually knock a chip off a wall. That was the sole damage done to the Republican position; the damage to the Carlist must have been less. Two of the Miqueletes ventured stealthily down a road leading towards the point from which the nearest jets of smoke curled, following the ditch by the side, stooping and peering through the bushes. There was a volley from afar. They hesitated and stood, as if undecided whether to advance.

“Sound the retire for those men,” said the captain; and as the call rang out they returned.

That volley was the last sign the Carlists gave; and after waiting ten minutes, the captain shut up my glass, returned it to me, and remarked that the attack was a feint, and had no object beyond worrying his men. He gave the order “March,” the gate was opened, Barbarossa rejoined me, and we returned to Irun, taking care to keep as near the regulars as we could. “Nada—nothing,” cried the captain to an inquiring lady on a balcony, and the town-gates were closed after the volunteers had

returned and tramped to the Plaza with the proud bearing of citizens who had done their duty.

How that heroic Tomas did strut! A fighter he of the choicest brand, one not to stop at trifles; there was martial ire in his flaming glance; defiance breathed from his nostrils; triumph sat on his lips; he swung his arms like destructive flails; and as he entered a tavern one could only fancy him calling in a voice of Stentor for a jug of rum and blood plentifully besprinkled with gunpowder and cayenne pepper to assuage the thirst of combat.

O'Donovan gave me his letter. Barbarossa hinted that it was our best course to slope, and slope we did, as soon as the horse was harnessed. As we passed down the street a grinning face saluted me from a doorway. It was that of my acquaintance from the barber's shop. He gave me a meaning wink. The artful Carlists had evidently succeeded in their object, whatever it might have been. On the river-bank our fair and faithful ferry-maid awaited us. We were conveyed over in safety, and at the hotel of Hendaye soon forgot the perils we had encountered.

Barbarossa was dead-beat, and threw himself on a sofa, where he sank back heavy-eyed and exhausted; and I almost feared that he would drop into a coma, as the penalty of overstraining nature, until the sight of a pack of cards restored him as if by a spell to his normal wakefulness.

Even in a disturbed region it is needful to have a change of linen, so we got back next morning to St. Jean de Luz, where I had left my baggage. There I met M. Thieblin, a colleague, whom I had seen last at Metz, previous to the siege of that fortress in the Franco-German war. He was now representing the *New York Herald*, and had just returned from Estella, at the taking of which place, the most important the Carlists had yet seized, he had the luck to be present. He assured me that it was utter fatuity to dream of following the Carlists, except I had at least one horse—but that it would be sensible to take two if I could manage to procure them. It was more than an ordinary man was qualified to cope with, to make his observations, write his letters, and look after their transmission, without having to attend to his nag, and

do an odd turn of cooking at a pinch. The riddle was how to get the horse—a sound hardy animal that would not call for elaborate grooming, or refuse a feed of barley. Horse-flesh was at a premium, but he thought I might be able to have what I wanted at Bayonne, on payment of an extravagant price. A requisition for forage and corn could be had through the Junta; and I should have no trouble in getting an orderly on applying with my credentials to the chief of staff of any of the Carlist columns to which I might attach myself. We had a long conversation, and Thieblin frankly informed me that in his opinion the Carlists had not the ghost of a chance outside their own territory. There they were cocks of the walk. What the end might be he could not pretend to vaticinate, but “El Pretendiente” would never reign in Madrid. The conflict might last for months—might last for years; but the Carlists owed the vitality they had as much to the divisions and inefficiency of their adversaries as to their own strength. There would be no important engagements—to dignify them by the epithet—until the organization of the insurrec-

tionary forces was regularized, and they had a stronger artillery and an adequate cavalry. M. Thiéblin did not stray far from the bull's-eye in his prophecy.

I went to bed in the mood of Crookback on Bosworth Field, and felt that my dream-talk would shape itself into the cry, "A horse! a horse!"

Until that coveted steed had been lassoed, stolen, or bought, I must only endeavour to justify my existence—that is to say, render value for the money expended on me by picking up "copy" anywhere and everywhere.

I was advised to go to Bilbao by sea, but the advice came too late. The last steamer from Bayonne had ventured there four-and-twenty hours before I sought my passage, and even on that last steamer the few voyagers were unable to insure their lives with the Accidental Company, although they consented to promise that they would descend into the hold the instant they heard a shot. It was almost as full of jeopardy to travel to Bilbao by sea as to sail down the Mississippi with a racing captain and a lading of rye-whisky on board.

One Monsieur Gueno, master of the barque *Numa*, of Vannes, made moan that he was seriously knocked about while he lay in the Nervion, off the Luchana bridge, during a skirmish between the Carlists and the troops. They both fought vigorously, but they gave him most of the blows. One of his crew, in a punt behind, was killed, and twenty-five bullets were embedded in a single mast. He had the tricolour flying all the time. A fellow-countryman of his, Monsieur Jarret, of the ship *Pierre-Alcide*, of Nantes, sent in a claim for an indemnity of £160 for damages sustained by his vessel much in the like manner. A Spanish war-craft, moored behind him, began pelting the Carlists with shot; the Carlists replied, and the *Pierre-Alcide* came in for the bulk of the favours distributed. Three bullets penetrated the captain's cabin, and four rent holes in the French flag. Neither pilots nor tugs were for hire at Bilbao, and captains of sailing vessels had only to whistle for a favouring wind and rely on their own good fortune and skill. Bilbao had to be dismissed on the merits.

Taking it for granted that I had that evasive

horse, I reasoned, as I tossed on my bed, to the restless whimper of the Bay of Biscay, over which a storm was brewing, that "el Cuartel Real," the headquarters of the King, was the natural goal. There first information was to be had, and it was felt that it was about the safest place to be; but the King seldom stopped under the same roof two nights successively, and no one could tell where he would be two days beforehand. If he was at Estella when one started, he might be at Vera or Durango, or goodness knows where, when one got to Estella. So far his progress had been a success; he was present at the taking of Estella, and exercised his Royal clemency by releasing the captured prisoners. It would have been more politic to have demanded an exchange, for there were partisans of his own in Republican dungeons (Englishmen amongst them); but then prisoners have to be fed and guarded, so on the whole it was as well they were set free. It was very much the case of the man who won the elephant at a raffle. If the stories, spread assiduously by the Republicans, of the massacre and maltreatment of captives by the

Carlists were correct, here was the opportunity for the exercise of wholesale cruelty; but there was not a particle of truth in such charges, which, by the way, one hears in every civil war. Where Don Carlos might advance next, or where severe fighting—not such brushes as that I witnessed at Irun—might take place, was a mystery. The movements of the Republican leaders were inexplicable, and conducted in contravention of all known principles of the art of war. They harassed their men by long and objectless marches. They ordered towns to be put in a state of defence at first, and then withdrew the garrisons. They engaged whole columns in defiles, where a company of invisible guerrilleros could tease them. They acted, in most instances, as if they had no information or wrong information. The latter, I believe, was nearer the truth. Their system of espionage was inefficient, as the information they got was untrustworthy, and always would be, in the northern provinces, for the feeling of the masses of the people was against them. Instead of making headway they were losing ground every day, and would so

continue until they received reinforcements with fibre, and were commanded by officers who really meant to win, and had the knowledge or the instinct to conceive a proper plan of campaign. The generals could hardly be censured, for their hands were tied; they were forbidden to be severe; they dared not squelch insubordination. Capital punishment, even in the army, and at such a crisis as this, was abolished. There had been, I heard, something suspiciously resembling a mutiny in the column of Sanchez Bregua. A certain Colonel Castañon was put under arrest on a charge of Alfonsist proclivities; but the Cazadores and Engineers threatened to rebel unless he was liberated; and Sanchez Bregua, instead of decimating the Cazadores] and Engineers, as Lord Strathnairn would have done, liberated the Colonel.

But to that question of my route. Peradventure the presence to my dozing vision of the General commanding the Republican troops of the north that had been might help me towards a solution.

“That had been” is written advisedly, for Sanchez Bregua had been recalled to Madrid, not a

day too soon. He was one of those generals whose spine had been curved by lengthened bending over a desk. Loma, who was active and dashing, and had the rare gift of confidence in himself, had taken his stand at Tolosa, and was awaiting the advent of Lizarraga. All his men, and every able-bodied male in the town, were diligently excavating ditches and making entrenchments. Until Tolosa was captured by the Carlists, no serious attack on Pampeluna was probable; and that attack was likely to assume the form of an investment. Estella was to the south of Pampeluna, and all the country round, from which provisions could be drawn, was in the occupation of the Carlists. Tolosa was the objective point of the moment, and to Tolosa I determined to go. An attempt on San Sebastian could not enter into the calculations of the Carlist leaders at this stage of their revolt. The stronghold was almost inaccessible on the land side, and men, munitions, and provisions could be easily thrown into it by water. Irun, Fontarabia, and even Renteria (were artillery available) could be seized whenever the comparatively small sacrifice of

lives involved would be advisable. But the game was not worth the candle yet. Were Irun or Fontarabia in the hands of the Carlists, there was the always-present danger of shells being pitched into them from a gunboat in the Bidassoa ; and Renteria, outside of which the Republican troops only stirred on sufferance, was to all intents as serviceable to the Carlists as if it were tenanted by a Carlist garrison, which would thereby be condemned to idleness.

That whirlwind ride from Renteria to Irun would come before me as the storm battalions mustered outside, and the waves began lashing themselves into violence of temper. What if I had to go to Madrid while such weather as this was brooding? To get to the capital one is obliged to embark at Bayonne for Santander, and proceed thence by rail—so long as no Carlist *partidas* meddle with the track. Romantic Spain!

But are not those Republicans who affect that they know how to govern a country primarily and principally to blame? Only consider the continued interruption of that short piece of road between

San Sebastian and Irun. Is it not disgraceful to them? One of our old Indian officers, I dare venture to believe, with eighteen horsemen and a couple of companies of foot, could hold it open in spite of the Carlists. But such a simple idea as the establishment of cavalry patrols of three, keeping vigil backwards and forwards along the line of eighteen miles, with stout infantry posts always on the alert in blockhouses at intervals, seems never to have entered into the obtuse heads of those officers lately promoted from the ranks. Seeing that the intercourse of different towns with each other and with the coast and abroad has been so long broken up, I cannot fathom the secret of how the population lives. The troops arrive in a village one day and levy contributions, the guerrilleros arrive the next and do the same; the fields must be neglected, trade must droop, yet nobody apparently wants food. True, the land is wonderfully fat; but some day the cry of famine will be heard. No land could bear this perpetual drain on its resources. And then I thought of Carlists whom I met in France, who had given of their goods to support the cause.

With them I talked on this very subject. They were respectable and respected men; they prayed for success to Don Carlos with sincere heart; but they had left Spain, and they complained that this condition of disturbance was lasting too long.

“You ask me why I did not remain,” said one to me; “wait, and you shall see.”

He opened a door and pointed to three lovely little girls at play, and continued, “These are my reasons; I have made more sacrifices than I was able for the Royal cause, and they asked me at last for another contribution, which would have ruined me. I love my King; but for no King, señor, could I afford to make those darlings paupers.”

Had these Carlists any glimmer of the sunshine of a victorious issue to their uprising? (egad, that was a strong blast, and the waves do swish as if they were enraged at last!). Thieblin thinks not. And yet they are active, and, like the storm outside, they are gaining strength. Those of them under arms are four times as numerous as the Republicans in the northern provinces. Leader swears to me that everyone who can shoulder a musket is a

Carlist. There are no more Chicos to be had, unless the volunteers of liberty come over, rifles, accoutrements and all, to Prince Charlie—a liberty they are volunteering to take somewhat freely.

I was rash in saying there were no more Chicos. Did not a company of "bhoys" trudge over to Lesaca to offer their services recently? But they were very ancient boys. The youngest of them was sixty-five. They were veterans of the Seven Years' War, and mostly colonels. Their fidelity was thankfully acknowledged, but their services were not gratefully accepted. The aged and ferocious fire-eaters were sent back to their arrowroot and easy-chairs. At all events, they had more of the timber of heroism in them than those diplomatic Carlists of the *gandin* order, who are Carlists because it makes them interesting in the sight of the ladies, but whose campaigning is confined to an occasional three days' incursion on Spanish territory, with a cook and a valet, saddle-bags full of potted lobster and *pâté de foie gras*, and a dressing-case newly packed with *au Botot* and essence of Jockey Club. There are personages of this class

not unknown to society at Biarritz and Bayonne, who have been going to the front for the last three months, and have not got there yet. One would think their game of chivalry ought to be pretty well "played out;" but to the folly of the vain man, as to the appetite of the lean pig, there is no limit.

By Jove! There is a clatter; the casement is blown open, and the light is blown out, and through the gap whistles the cool, briny breath of the Atlantic, and I can almost feel the wash of the white spray in my hair. Better a stable cell in the Castle of the Mota to-night than a tumbling berth in the *San Margarita*. This was the close of my interview with myself, and I turned over on my pillow and fell precipitately into a profound dreamless sleep.

CHAPTER XIII.

Nearing the End—Firing on the Red Cross—Perpetuity of War—Artistic Hypocrites—The Jubilee Year—The Conflicts of a Peaceful Reign—Major Russell—Quick Promotion—The Foreign Legion—An Aspiring Adventurer—Leader's Career—A Piratical Proposal—The "Ojaladeros" of Biarritz—A Friend in Need—Buying a Horse—Gilpin Outdone—"Fred Burnaby."

AND now I take up the last chapter of this book, and I have not half finished with the subject I had set before myself at starting. By the figures at the head of the last page I perceive that I have almost reached the orthodox length of a volume, and perforce must stop. For some weeks past I have been looking and longing for the end, for I have been ill, weary and worried, and my labour has become a task. Slowly toiling day by day, I knew I must be nearing the goal; yet, like the strenuous Webb on his swim from Dover to Calais, the horizon seemed to come no closer. The land in sight

grew no plainer, although each breast-stroke—the pleasure of a while agone, but oh! such a tax now—must have lessened the distance. Even to that excursion there came an hour of accomplishment and repose; but to this, of pen over paper, I cannot flatter myself that the hour is yet. I have to abandon the work incomplete. As it has happened to me before, the theme has expanded under my hands, and I shall have to rise from my desk before I penetrate to the Carlist headquarters, of which I had to say much, or have experiences of that strangest of Communes in Murcia, with its sea and land skirmishes and its motley rabble of mutineers, convicts, and nondescripts, of which I had to say much likewise.

Whether I shall have the privilege of recounting my adventures at the court and camp of Don Carlos, and by the side of the General directing the siege of Cartagena, who admitted me as a sort of supernumerary on his staff, will depend on the reception of this, the first instalment of my experiences in Spain.

An act of unjustifiable barbarism or stupidity, or

both—for barbarism is but another form of stupidity—was perpetrated by some Carlists outside Irun while I was negotiating for that indispensable horse. An ambulance-waggon, displaying the Red Cross of Geneva, had sallied from the town, and was fired upon. The Paris delegate I had met at Hendaye was in charge of it, and averred that it was wantonly and wilfully attacked. I thought it singular that nobody was hurt, and reasoned that the man was excitable, and got into range unconsciously. The duty of the Geneva Society properly begins after, and not during a combat; and when gentlemen are busy at the game of professional manslaughter, no philanthropic outsider has any right to distract them from their occupation by indiscreet obstruction. The Parisian did not view it in that light, and downfaced me that these rustics, to whose aid he was actually going, tried to murder him of malice prepense. It was useless to represent to him that these rustics may have never heard of the modern benevolent institution for the softening of strife, and may have regarded the huge Red Cross as a defiant symbol of Red Republicanism,

and perhaps a parody of what is sacred. So in the estimation of that citizen of the most enlightened capital in the universe, these Basques were ruthless boobies with an insatiable passion for lapping blood. But mistakes and exaggerations will occur in every war. The only way to obviate them is to put an end to war altogether—*which will never be done!* When Christ came into the world, peace was proclaimed; when He left it, peace was bequeathed. War has been the usual condition of mankind since, as it had been before; and Christians cut each other's throats with as much alacrity and expertness as Pagans, often in the name of the religion of peace.

I heard two eminent war-correspondents lecture recently, and I noticed that those passages where fights were described were applauded to the echo. The more ferocious the combat the more vigorous the cheers. The faces of small boys flushed, and their hands clinched at the vivid recital. The nature of the savage, which has not been extirpated by School Boards, was betraying itself in them. Yet these two war-correspondents thought it an

acquittal of conscience after their kindling periods to dwell on the immorality of war. The one spoke of the beauty of Bible precepts, the other disburdened himself on the cruelty and wickedness of a battle. What artistic hypocrisy! It was as if one were to strike up the "Faerie Voices" waltz, and tell a girl to keep her feet still; as if one were to lend "Robinson Crusoe" to a boy, and warn him not to think of running away to sea. Still, I must even add my voice to the orthodox chorus, and affirm that warfare is bad, brutal, fraudulent, a thing of meretricious gauds, a clay idol, fetish of humbug and havoc, whose feet are soaking in muddy gore and salt tears; yet in the privacy of my own study I might sadly admit that the Millennium is remote, that the Parliament of Nations exists but in the dreams of the poet, and that Longfellow's forecast of the days down through the dark future when the holy melodies of love shall oust the clangours of conflict is a pretty conceit—and no more.

War is inexcusable, and is foolish and ugly; but, like the poor and the wailing, we shall have it always with us. It is criminal, except as protest against

intolerable persecution, or in maintenance of national honour or defence of national territory; and even in these cases it should be undertaken only when all devices of conciliation have been tried in vain. Next to the vanquished, it does most harm to the victor. Yet about it, as about high play, there is a fascination, and I have to plead guilty to the weak feeling that I would not look with overwhelming aversion on an order, should it come to me to-morrow, to prepare to chronicle a new campaign and face the chronicler's risks; and they are real. But I should not go into it with a light heart, like M. Emile Ollivier. I might be, in a quiet way, happy as Queen Victoria was (according to Count Vitzthum) for she danced much the night before the declaration of hostilities against Russia, but spoke of what was coming with amiable candour and great regret.

We are on the eve of a Jubilee Year, when the halcyon shall plume his wing, and we shall hear much oratorical trash and hebetude about the peacefulness of this happy reign.

Does the reader reflect how many wars we have

had in the pacific half-century which is lapsing? The tale will astonish him, and should silence the thoughtless word-spinners of the platforms. The door of the temple of Janus has been seldom closed for long. Our campaigns, great and small, and military enterprises of the lesser sort, could not be counted on the fingers of both hands. We have had fighting with Afghans and Burmese (twice); Scinde, Gwalior, and Sikh wars; hostilities with Kaffirs, Russians, Persians, Chinese, and Maoris (twice), Abyssinians, Ashantis, Zulus, Boers, and Soudanese, not to mention the repression of the most stupendous of mutinies, a martial promenade in Egypt, and expeditions against Jowakis, Bhootanese, Looshais, Red River rebels, and such pitiful minor fry.

In St. Jean de Luz, the nearest point to the disputed ground and the best place from which to transmit information, there was a small and select British colony, mostly consisting of retired naval and military officers. A dear friend of mine amongst them was Major Russell, who had spent a lengthened span of years in the East—an admirable

type of the calm, firm, courteous Anglo-Indian—who had never soured his temper and spoiled his liver with excessive “pegs,” who understood and respected the natives, who had shown administrative ability, and who, like many another honest, dutiful officer, had not shaken much fruit off the pagoda-tree, or even secured the C.B. which is so often given to tarry-at-home nonentities. Russell used to pay me a regular visit to the Fonda de la Playa. One morning as we were chatting, Leader strode into the coffee-room, a vision of splendour. He had got on his uniform as Commandant of the Foreign Legion—a uniform which did much credit to his fancy, for he had designed it himself. He wore a white boina with gold tassel, a blue tunic with black braid, red trousers, and brown gaiters. He had donned the gala-costume with the object of getting himself photographed. Commandant is the equivalent of Major in the British service, so we agreed to dub the young Irishman henceforth and for ever, until he became colonel or captain-general, Major Leader.

“Promotion is quick in this army,” murmured

Russell. "I served all my active life under the suns of India, and here I am only a major at the close. Leader joined the Carlists less than three months ago, and he is already my equal in rank."

"The fortune of war, Russell," said I; "don't be jealous. I was offered command of a brigade under the Commune, but I declined the tribute to my merit, or I would not be here to-day. I met a man in Bayonne yesterday, and he was ready to assume control of the entire insurrectionary forces."

"Who? Cabrera?"

"No," I answered; "catch Cabrera coming here. He is too much afraid of a ruler who is no pretender. The renowned Commander-in-Chief of Aragon and Valencia, Don Ramon the Rough and Ready, is Conde Something-or-other now, a willing slave to petticoat government. He is to be seen any day pottering about Windsor."

"And who is this speculator in bloodshed?"

"A foreign adventurer," I explained, "who does not know a word of Spanish, much less Basque, is unacquainted with the topography of the country, and has not the faintest inkling of the idiosyn-

crasies of the lieutenants who would serve under him, or of the mode of humouring the prejudices of the people of the different provinces in revolt."

"What answer did they give to his application for employment?"

"A polite negative. They told him they could not appoint him a leader without offending the susceptibilities of adherents with claims upon them men of local influence, and so forth. Behind his back, they laughed at his entertaining temerity."

That Foreign Legion never came to maturity. Leader showed me a commission authorizing him to organize it. Lesaca was to be the depôt, French the language of command, and Smith Sheehan the adjutant. It might have developed into a very fine Foreign Legion, but no volunteers presented themselves to join it but two young Englishmen, one of whom was sick when he was not drunk, and the other of whom felt it to be a grievance on a campaign that a cup of tea could not be got at regular hours. How Sheehan did chaff this amiable amateur!

"You will have nothing to do but draw your

pay, my lad," he said. "The cookery is hardly A 1, but 'twill pass. Think of the beds, pillows of hops under your head; and every regiment has its own set of billiard-markers and a select string-band, every performer an artist."

After an arduous service of one day and a half that gentleman returned to the maternal apron-strings, laden to the ground with the most harrowing legends of the horrors of war. Leader was not a warrior of this stamp—far from it; he had vindicated his manliness at Ladon outside Orleans, where Ogilvie, of the British Royal Artillery, had met his fate by his side, and there was something soldierly in the way he bore himself in his vanity of dress. Not that I think the dandies are the best soldiers—that is merest popular paradox. To me it is as ridiculous for a man to array himself in fine clothes when he is going to kill or be killed, as it would be for him to put on gewgaws when he was going to be hanged. As Leader disappears from my account of Carlist doings after this—we were associated with different columns—it may be of interest to tell of his subsequent career. He served in a cavalry