

THE ENEMY'S RE-ENFORCEMENT

(Original.)

"Why don't you shell that grove, Captain Birney?" cried the general angrily, riding up to a battery that was receiving a heavy fire without replying.

"General," stammered the captain, "do you—must I—fire into that grove?"

The general glared at the officer and half drew his sword, then, sheathing it, hissed: "Do you want me to cut you down for munity? Have you lost your head through cowardice or are you afraid of hurting the Yankees?"

Birney seized the lanyard of one of his guns and pulled it so fiercely as to break it. The shot was a signal for every gun in the battery to open fire, and a storm of shells went crashing through the trees.

"Now move your guns forward," said the general, "and give it to them."

Birney, with a life in death expression, advanced his battery, stopping occasionally to empty his guns, till at last the fire from the grove ceased altogether. The general continued beside Birney, directing the operations in person, and now ordered him to take his battery through an open gate along a carriage way past a large dwelling with colonial pillars in its front and place them on the crest of a slope, looking toward the valley, where the Federals were in evidence. As soon as this was done the commander turned to Birney and said sharply:

"Go to the rear under arrest."

"General," replied the young officer, sheathing his sword, "I crave your permission to first go into the house yonder."

"What for?"

"To see if the inmates are alive."

"The inmates? What are they to you?"

"The world. There I was born. There less than a year ago I was married. It is not a week since I received word from my wife that she had in that very house just been delivered of a son. General, for God's sake let me go in and see if I have killed my wife and child."

The general stared at the young captain for a moment, then threw himself from his horse, and the two hurried into the house. They found desolation. There was neither sound of footsteps nor voice. But hark! The cry of an infant. With a common impulse they started forward, Birney leading the way, to a door, through which they passed to the cellar.

On a wicker lounge lay a young woman, her face white as ashes, her eyes closed. Standing beside her was a white haired man holding a tumbler, while kneeling an elderly lady fanned the invalid or the dead, none knew which. At the head of the couch stood a negro mammy rocking in her arms a baby and soothing it with soft words.

In a fury of tears the young husband and father, pointing to the livid woman, exclaimed:

"This, general, is what has induced you to brand me as a coward. You have forced me to fire on my wife, who but a few days ago had endured the pains of childbirth—on an innocent babe. You have ordered me to the rear under arrest. Here is my sword; take it. I have no further use for it. I will never draw it again. I wish to God I had disobeyed your order and you had cloven my skull."

The general seized the young man's hand and whispered hoarsely:

"Boy, it wasn't I. It was war—grim, murderous, horrible war—war not for Christians, for fiends; not for a fair world, for hell!"

At the moment there was a cry from the babe. The mother heard it and opened her eyes. There came a lighting up of the white face as she recognized her husband. Then the lids fell again.

A heavy tread was heard on the floor above, and a voice asked for the general. An officer's face appeared at the head of the stairway.

"General," he said, "the Second brigade is being cut to pieces. They need re-enforcements."

"Never mind the Second brigade. They are men. Ride, quick, and bring a surgeon—for a woman."

The general turned to the group. Birney was kneeling beside his wife, begging her to open her eyes again—to live for his sake. She raised her lids languidly and tried to put her arms around his neck, but they would have fallen limp had he not clasped them for her. The old lady took the babe from its nurse and placed it with its father and mother. The old soldier stood by with bowed head, vainly endeavoring to keep the moisture from his eyes.

Then he turned to attend to sterner duties.

The next morning the southern forces withdrew from the field and moved southward. The young wife and mother was so far recovered that Birney, though permitted by the general to remain with her, stuck by his command.

The general could never be brought to look complacently upon his having ordered a husband and father to drop his wife and newborn babe. He wished to make reparation and at the same time refrain from laying bare so delicate a situation. His deliberations resulted in publishing the following order:

The gallant conduct of Lieutenant Clarence Birney in driving the enemy from the Birney homestead, he having to face a re-enforcement, requiring courage of the highest order, afforded an example of perfect soldierly never before witnessed by the commanding general.

Meanwhile the "re-enforcement" was not troubling himself about the general's order. He slept fifteen hours a day and when awake was principally interested in pulling on a bottle.

F. A. MITCHELL.

AN INSECT MENU.

Every Item Thereon Long Known and Esteemed by Epicures.

Here is a typical insect menu of which no one need be afraid to partake, since every item has been known and esteemed by insect eaters for generations past. It was served not long ago, according to Pearson's Weekly, at the table of a rich Londoner who is also an enthusiastic advocate of an insectarian dietary:

Green Caterpillar Soup.
Fried Locust with Wood Louse Sauce.
Curried Cockchafers.
Wasp Grubs Baked in the Comb.
Stag Beetle Larvae on Toast.
Moths Baked in Batter.
Deviled Wireworms.
Grasshoppers au Gratin.

The green caterpillars that compose the soup feed entirely upon vegetables, and mostly upon particular vegetables most relished by man, such as cabbage and lettuce.

In appearance the soup itself is not unlike clear turtle, while its flavor is delicious.

The locusts, which constitute the second course, have, as every one is aware, been esteemed by gourmands the world over and from the remotest antiquity. "Eat ye the locust after his kind" is the Biblical injunction, and we know that John the Baptist is recorded as having lived for some considerable time upon "locusts and wild honey."

There are of course many ways of preparing them. They can be fried after their legs and wings have been plucked off, which was, as a matter of fact, the process adopted in this particular instance, or they may be powdered and baked into cakes or curried or boiled, turning red, like lobsters, in the process.

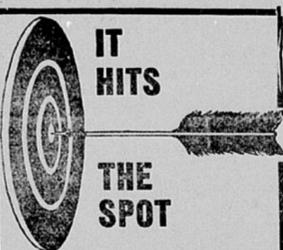
The wood louse sauce if properly made with fresh butter, flour, milk, pepper and salt will be found fully equal to shrimp, which it much resembles in taste. Indeed the wood louse, although he lives on land, is first cousin to that much relished crustacean.

Cockchafers, curried or otherwise, are delicious if selected of a serviceable size and plumpness. So, too, are their grubs when full grown. They should then be at least two inches in length and fat in proportion and may be eaten uncooked, like oysters, or stewed in milk.

Perhaps, however, the most toothsome of all insect delicacies is that which comes forth on our "menu of the day," wasp grubs baked in the comb. These grubs have been fed by their parents on a saccharine fluid composed of fruit and vegetable juices and are simply tiny balls of sugary fat possessing a flavor as exquisite as it is unique. No one who has once tasted them will ever again be surprised at the preference shown by fish for this particular grub when used as a bait.

The stag beetle larva is of course identical with the cossus, which the old Roman epicures used to fatten for their table upon flour and wine. The sixth course should be served steaming hot, since there is no more appetizing odor than that emanating from a plump baked moth.

Deviled wireworms are eaten in the form of a paste, spread upon sippets of toast, and taste not unlike anchovies when treated in similar fashion.



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SOLD AND RECOMMENDED BY

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Divorce in New Guinea.

There is no need of divorce courts in New Guinea. When a woman becomes weary of her husband she simply leaves him and goes back to her mother. When a husband tires of his wife he simply hits her over the head with a paddle, and if not killed outright she is certainly made to realize that she is no longer wanted. When a "divorced" woman marries again her former husband rallies all his friends and conducts a war dance in front of her new home. This ceremony, however, is not as ugly as it looks. Its purpose is not to kill anybody, but simply to satisfy the grass widow's honor.

Had Them All.

A well known writer of humorous prose and verse was talking with a bibliomaniac when the latter said: "By the way, I am collecting first editions of American authors. I want to add your first book to my collection. Have you any copies of the first edition?"

"Yes," answered the author. "I have all of them."—Critic.

Thrice Blest.

"A pair of deaf and dumb lovers ought to consider themselves fortunate."

"Why so?"

"Why, they can sit down in the middle of the largest crowd and have a nice, quiet talk."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

When a man goes into the kitchen to help his wife she has to drop everything and wait on him.