

CARAMOLICHE

by Rafael Sabatini

(Continued from Our Last Issue)

"You are coming in regard to that?"

Andre-Louis shrugged and half smiled. "One must live," said he.

"But come in. Take off your coat," M. des Amis said, "and let us see what you can do. Nature, at least, designed you for a swordsman. You are light, active, and supple, with a good length of arm, and you seem intelligent. I make teach you enough for my purpose, which is that you should give the elements of the art to my pupils. Take that mask and fall, and come over here."

"He had been to the end of the room, where the bare floor was scored with lines of chalk to guide the beginner in the management of his feet."

At the end of a ten-minute's bout, M. des Amis offered him the situation, and explained it. In addition to supervising the rudiments of the art to beginners, he was to brush out the swordsmen every morning, keep the salle furnished, assist the gentleman who came for lessons to dress and undress, and make himself generally useful. His wages for the month were to be fifty francs a month.

The position had its humiliations. But, if Andre-Louis would hope to rise, he must begin by eating his pride as an honest fencer.

"And so," he said, controlling a grimace, "the robe yields not only to the sword, but to the broom as well. Be it so."

It is characteristic of him that, having made that choice, he should have thrown himself into the work with enthusiasm.

Every morning before the opening of the academy, the master would fence for half an hour with his new assistant. Under this really excellent tuition Andre-Louis improved at a rate that both astounded and flattered M. des Amis. He would have been less flattered and more astounded had he known that at least half the secret of Andre-Louis' amazing progress lay in the fact that he was devouring the contents of the master's library, which was made up of a dozen or so treatises on fencing by great masters of the sword.

At the end of a month it suddenly dawned upon M. des Amis that his assistant had developed into a fencer with whom it became necessary to exert himself if he were to escape defeat.

"I said from the first," he told him one day, "that Nature designed you for a swordsman."

"To the master be the glory," said Andre-Louis.

His relations with M. des Amis had meanwhile become of the friendly sort, and he was now beginning to receive from him other pupils than mere beginners. M. des Amis, a chivalrous, open-handed fellow, rewarded his seal by increasing his wages to four francs a month.

CHAPTER II
M. des Amis was in the garden of the Palais Royal, the universal rendezvous, on that Sunday morning in June when the news of Necker's dismissal spread, carrying with it dismay and fury. He beheld a slight young man with a powdered hair, a top hat, and a white cravat, who drew a sword in his hand, crying, "To arms!" and then upon the silence of astonishment that cry imposed, this young man poured a flood of inflammatory eloquence.

Enthusiasm swept the crowd, a

motley crowd made up of men and women of every class, from vagabond to nobleman, from harlot to lady of fashion.

Andre-Louis looked on, and grew afraid. This crowd, he felt, must be restrained. That hot-headed, irresponsible sturter would have the town in a blaze by night unless something were done. The young man, Camille Desmoulins, later to become famous, leapt down from his table still waving his sword, still shouting, "To arms! Follow me!"

Andre-Louis advanced to occupy the improvised rostrum, and came suddenly face to face with a tall man beautifully dressed.

Thus face to face, each looking into the eyes of the other. Then Andre-Louis laughed.

"The fellow, too, has a very dangerous gift of eloquence, M. le Marquis," he said.

"Gallows-bird!" he answered.

"I shall tell the Lieutenant-General that you are to be found in Paris."

"My God, man!" cried Andre-Louis. "Will you talk like that of a Lieutenant-General who has just been killed?"

"A man of men hurled against him, swept him along with them, and what he would, separating him from M. de La Four d'Asny, so easily met, bloodied his nose, and then, as if in Paris, on the Place Vendome a detachment of dragoons awaited the sword-out of which Andre-Louis had slipped. The horsemen swept down upon the mob, dispersed it."

The victims were taken up and borne hence, and amongst them was Bertrand des Amis, himself like all who lived by the sword—an ardent upholder of the noblesse, trampled to death under hoofs of foreign horsemen lunched by the noblesse and led by a nobleman.

To Andre-Louis four men of the people brought that broken body of one of the earliest victims of the Revolution that was now launched in earnest.

CHAPTER III
The ferment of Paris which, during the two following days, resembled an armed camp rather than a city, delayed the burial of Bertrand des Amis until the Wednesday of that eventful week. Andre-Louis succeeded to the fencing-school in which he was himself so well established as an instructor.

And so, one fine day in early August, he received a visit from Le

Chapelier.

"I have news for you, Andre. Your godfather is at Meudon. There have been fresh disturbances in Brittany."

Not until Sunday was Andre-Louis able to satisfy a wish which the impatience of the intervening days had converted into a yearning. Dressed with more than ordinary care, his head elegantly coiffed—Andre-Louis mounted his hired carriage, and drove out to Meudon.

It was late in the presence of a peer and other sommeliers M. de Keradoul that Andre-Louis was admitted. He was unannounced, as had ever been the custom at Meudon.

"What do you want here?" growled M. de Keradoul.

"No more than to kiss your hand, monsieur my godfather," said Andre-Louis, submissively, bowing his sleek black head.

"You can't. You'll never make me understand how you came to render yourself so adroitly notorious in Brittany."

"Ah, not odiously, monsieur!" "Certainly, odiously. It is said even that you were Guines Omnibus, though that I cannot, will not believe."

"Yet it is true."

M. de Keradoul choked. "And you

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To obtain membership in this club, you must first of all show yourself friendly, have an idea what comes are going for, and half passing farmers. After you have fulfilled these conditions, the next step is to get out the old straw hat that you have been wearing. It is yellow with the golden sun of several summers. Saunter into the nearest notions or drug store and call for a package of red 'Colortite.' This name is important.

Then fly away home, and without your wife's knowledge, dip the brim into hot water colored the dye, then the crown, and in ten minutes you will have a new hat. There is one caution, do not put it on until it is dry unless you want your hair to match—your straw. At the same time red haired men are not excluded from this organization which gains in number and importance as the days fly by."

Why not test upon on the road to Goldsboro? You ride out on the highway and have no destination. When you get to the detour, you turn around and come back to the drug store for ice cream. How much nicer it would be to have ice cream or a sandwich out there. Such a ten room would attract swimming parties in the afternoon, motorists all day long, and young people in the evening. All one needs to begin this is a porch, some chairs and tables and a cook. The rustic sign to hang over the gateway of "Toodle Inn" would