

"Then," interrupted Prescott, "at that time you were unconnected with revolutionary politics!"

"As far as it was possible for me to be so, yes. I had little or no sympathy for aggression, and had been even reduced to the moderate party at home whose grand principle it was to act constitutionally. The object of my conference with C— at Paris was simply to arrange about the side we should take on being restored to our rights in Hungary."

"Had you nothing to do with Italian affairs?"

"Absolutely nothing; still less with French, though I was repeatedly pressed to join some one or other of the republican clubs which were springing up all over the country in spite of the strict surveillance of the police. I had had quite enough of universal philanthropy and preferred to devote my whole energies to the service of my country."

"But you were a determined opponent of the Napoleonic dynasty and system? At least I always understood you were. But the other day Giulio Néro told me there was no bitterer enemy of Louis among the reddest republicans than Eugén Bersomji."

"Néro is a man given to remarkable exaggeration, and was compromised in several plots which I declined to have anything to do with. I detested the Bonaparte system, and not without cause. My grandfather was for years a prisoner of war in the hands of the French in the time of the great Napoleon, and my father likewise suffered for his opposition to the intrigues of the late Emperor. But beyond heartily condemning the man's internal policy, and pitying the fate of the French people, I took no part with his adversaries, and it was the consciousness of my innocence in this respect that made me so savage when arrested on the wharf at Calais."

"Faith!" laughed Prescott, "I can well understand that a man with an uneasy conscience should be savage. Nothing like the consciousness of injured guilt, after all, to promote indignation."

"Bosh and nonsense! I tell you there was not a more innocent traveller on the boat. But to return to my story."

I arrived in London early in the morning with the full intention of proceeding the same night to Dover, but happening to meet young Baird, whom you must remember, I agreed to stay till next evening, and enjoyed a run through the metropolis with him. Baird, as you are aware, was by no means a very courageous fellow, and before long I discovered that one reason at least, for his pressing invitation to me to stay, was his dread of burglars. At the time he lived alone with his mother in a house in the north-western part of London, and the night before my arrival, the residences on either hand had been broken open and robbed. He and his mother had made up their minds that they were to be the next victims, and entreated me to consent to sleep in a small room next the drawing room, so that I might be ready to exterminate any felons making an improper entrance."

"Were you armed?"

"I possessed a satisfactory walking-stick requiring no more than a slight exertion of will and muscle to convert it into a formidable bludgeon, and the small revolver you have frequently handled. I objected that fire arms would not be necessary, but nothing would satisfy my friends but seeing me load every one of the chambers, and lay the weapon ready to hand by my bedside. It might have been miles away for all the good it did; I never woke from the moment I lay down until the breakfast-bell rang downstairs, and burglars might have broken into the house and carried off jewellery, silver, and electro-plate, without my being a bit the wiser."

Reassuring my host as to the probability of danger, I started by the 6 P. M. train for Dover, travelling in the same compartment with a Scotchman, who was likewise going on to Paris, although disregarding Lord Bacon's injunction to learn the language of a foreign country before entering it. A few courtesies exchanged soon led to our better acquaintance, and before we reached the end of our railway journey, we had struck up one of those friendships which beguile the tedium of travel. He confided to me his apprehensions of being cheated from one end of the road to the other, his whole stock of French consisting of *Monsieur*, and *Oui*, and *Non*, supplemented by an endless number of grimaces and contortions which he fondly fancied were idiomatic. I proffered him my assistance during the time we were together, promised to steer him clear of sharks, and show him the lions of Paris, and on reaching Dover insisted on his reinforcing the inner-man with a capital supper we had ample time to discuss before the boat left.

I do not remember so perfectly exquisite a night on the channel as the one we were favored with. The sea was calm as calm could be, "the heavens hushed and full of stars," and a magnificent full moon shining down on the waters. My new friend, Broderick by name, was nevertheless afraid of qualms if he ventured down to the saloon, and chimed in at once with my proposal to spend the time in the crew's quarters forward, which were scrupulously clean and well ventilated. One of the old hands, who had seen service in the navy, entertained us with yarus and generous draught beer, until the boat was made fast to Calais pier.

And now began my troubles.

We had landed, being untroubled with luggage, and were hurrying from the *Bureau de Change* to the refreshment room, when my progress was unceremoniously barred by an official attended by a couple of *gendarmes* fully got up with *Kepis*, long cloaks and swords:

He brought me up sharp with a "Pardon, Monsieur, you cannot pass."

I looked at him in angry surprise.

"And why not, if you please?"

"Monsieur must be good enough to accompany us."

"Monsieur will do nothing of the kind," replied I quickly. "I am going to have my *bouillon* first of all. Afterwards I shall listen to you."

"You took things coolly, at all events," quoth Prescott, a little more attentive than before.

"I saw no reason for doing otherwise, being perfectly convinced that the

*gendarmes* had made a mistake. My friend, the official, however, would not be deterred."

"Voyons," said I in a conciliatory tone, "you are mistaken. It is not I whom you want."

"It is you, Monsieur, and nobody else. Our instructions are precise."

I began to get a little uneasy. What the deuce could this mean, and why should I be plucked out of the whole crowd? My friend Broderick, who could not comprehend a word of the dialogue, carried on as it was in rapid French, appealed to me to know what was the matter. I hastily explained that as far as I could, make out, I was arrested for some mysterious deed:

"Am I arrested too?" asked he breathlessly.

"That is more than I can tell." And turning to the official—"Is my friend here included in the order?"

"No, Monsieur, it refers to you, alone."

"In that case," exclaimed Broderick pluckily, "I'll be hanged if I don't stick to you. Find out what they want."

It struck me that was the best course, acquainted as I was with French ways.

"*Eh bien!* I will follow you, but under protest," said I bowing very politely to the chief who returned my salute and motioned to his satellites—on my objecting they had closed up on either side of me—to fall back.

We all together entered an office near the refreshment room in which every passenger was busy devouring *bouillons* and *patés*, making my mouth water and my heart curse.

"Now then," said I sharply to the commissary, "I shall be glad to hear why I am thus arrested while peacefully travelling from London to Paris, without political motives and on a simple private business. Stay!" I went on, as he endeavoured to interrupt me, "I have not yet done. Out of the hundreds of passengers on board I am the only one thus detained, and it shall be my first act on regaining my liberty to complain to the proper authorities of this unwarrantable outrage. I bid you beware of the consequences of hindering me, and I formally and solemnly protest against your action."

Having delivered this brief, and I flattered myself, rather impressive allocution, I drew myself up proudly and awaited the official's reply. I could perceive at once that my firmness had told, both on him and his subordinates, for it was with much deference that he assured me he was only obeying the orders of his superiors in demanding the production of my passport.

"My passport!" I exclaimed with remarkably well feigned indignation, "my passport! Are you not aware, sir, that your government no longer requires passports from English subjects?"

"This was a bold stroke, but it failed."

"Monsieur is English?"

I was dumb for a moment. Broderick who had caught then our *Anglais*, whispered to me excitedly—

"Swear you're English; they'll let you go then."

"Thanks," replied I, "I am too proud to belong to Hungary, to have recourse to a subterfuge. No," I continued, addressing the chief, "I am not English?"

"Then I must insist on seeing your passport."

"I distinctly refuse to produce it," returned I with inflexible mien.

"What the deuce did you do that for," broke in Prescott:

"Because I had no passport to show."

"Oh!"

My official friend looked puzzled. He could not reconcile my frank denial of English birth with my no less frank refusal to produce my papers. He could see I was not afraid of consequences and perhaps imagined he had caught a Tartar.

Whatever the reason, he informed me most urbanely that he would respect my protest, but I must prove my identity.

This appeared to me singularly ludicrous, seeing that I know absolutely no one in Calais. I was not unwilling, nevertheless, to avail myself of the chance of getting off, and my desire was suddenly increased twenty-fold by the recollection of the weapon I carried in the breast-pocket of my coat.

I confess that when I remembered that every chamber of the infernal revolver was still loaded; I foresaw matters would be apt to get highly complicated, for of course my account of the way in which said six-shooter happened to be in my possession, and of the purpose for which it had been loaded, would not be believed by the *gendarmes*, especially after it was found that I had no passport.

I did not think it prudent, however, to betray the alarm which I now began to feel, aware as I was of the manifold difficulties which would impede my liberation, and mindful of more than one letter and rhapsody which, ton to one, was on record in duplicate in the *Bureau Noir*.

"I shall be most happy," said I, "to prove my identity." I did not say with whom, my name not having been once mentioned. "What is the necessary form?"

The chief seemed delighted with my ready compliance.

"Oh! anything—anything. A letter addressed to you—an official paper—a document—it matters not. Simply to *constater votre identité*."

"So you were all right, eh?"

"Not so soon, my dear Prescott. The process was undoubtedly easy and the way clear, but a new obstacle arose."

"What was it?"

"I had not a single letter about me."

"By Jove! how was that?"

"Well, I left all my papers, carefully arranged as is my wont, with young Baird in London. I knew I should not want them, and any letters coming in my absence, I had directed to be sent to me at Paris. I was regularly cornered, and that abominable revolver seemed to be getting bigger and