

I stepped back and laid my revolver on the writing-table, then turning to her again, exclaimed:

"Speak, Blanche, what does this mean, in what act do I find you?"

I saw that her bosom heaved with the wild beating of her heart, yet she still stared at me with the same expression of terror, pale as a corpse, without uttering a single word.

I advanced a step nearer; she sprang forward suddenly and placed her foot on one of the little casks. I only saw that the cover had been burst open; the next instant she had covered it with the hem of her dress.

"No nearer!" she cried, in a tone of agony; "not a step nearer, or you, we are all doomed to death!"

"Why, what do you mean?" I exclaimed, pausing. "Blanche, I must know what you are doing here, why my presence excites such deadly terror, what is in these casks?"

"Go back and you shall know, shall know all," she said, drawing a heavy, sobbing breath; "only go back as far as the writing-table."

"Very well," I answered, stepping a few paces backward; "now speak."

"You wish to know what is in these casks? They contain powder. The Franciscans whom you pursued were commissioned to take them to the Garde Mobile at Doubs, who were anxiously expecting them, as their ammunition was exhausted. In their fear of being captured by you, they fled to our court-yard, and we had just time to conceal the casks in this room, the nearest place of security that offered! Then you came, and, to our great terror, took possession of these apartments—from which we vainly tried to remove you—while the French battalion imperiously demanded their ammunition."

"Ah!" said I, "so this is the whole secret! And you, Blanche, are now occupied in letting this powder down from the window, while people stand outside to receive it? You thought because I was fatigued and wounded, and Friedrich—where is he?—as fast asleep as a marmot, that the right time had come? Poor Mlle. Blanche! I am very, very sorry that I have disturbed your arrangements—because I did not sleep, but watched—and that the Garde Mobile at Doubs will never receive this powder, but must seek some other source of supply, for I must take possession of this at once as the property of the French Government. Let me see it!"

She shrank back, then extended her arms towards me with a gesture of passionate entreaty.

"Not a step nearer," said she; "I have given my word to the people who confided it to my care, that it should be safe with me; I will not allow the property of my native land to fall into the hands of its enemies. Go, forget what you have seen, leave me to complete my task undisturbed."

"But, Blanche," said I in an imploring tone, "you cannot ask me—you know that it is my duty!"

"Ah! your men have plenty of ammunition; the matter is infinitely more important to us. If the battalion obtains no powder for their guns they will indignantly disperse; therefore go, go—I beseech—I implore you—I conjure you by all the vows that you have made; I ask it as a proof of the love you have professed for me, and to which I did not refuse to listen."

"Blanche, what you ask is impossible! You yourself demand that a man should have strength to conquer his passion at the command of duty. No, no," I exclaimed, approaching her, "you cannot be angry with me if!"

"Then, if you are inexorable," she exclaimed with an indescribably agitated manner, her sweet voice sharp with despair and resolute defiance, "then let destruction fall upon you, upon me, upon us all!"

She withdrew the foot that had been resting on the open cask, and lowered the candle, exclaiming:

"If you do not go this instant I will light this powder and hurl the whole household into the air!"

She held the flaring wick close to the opening of the little cask.

"What you could not win from my love, the fear of death would certainly not wrest from me," I answered quietly, folding my arms and looking at her steadily. "To die amidst the smoke of powder is a soldier's destiny. Throw the light in, Blanche, we will die together!"

She suddenly trembled so violently that the request was unnecessary; the candle must have fallen from her hands the next instant, had I not stepped forward and taken it from her.

"After all, Mademoiselle Blanche," I continued, "you are deceiving me; these casks contain no powder, with which you could send your mother and the whole household to eternity and shatter your beautiful Chateau Giron into fragments, if you really harbour such evil designs; these pretty little barrels have very different contents—namely, gold!"

I bent over the cask on which her foot had rested, and whose cover was partially removed; the lid had been forced open with a long iron chisel, which still lay on the floor beside it, and which had doubtless caused the noise that aroused me. The upper part of the little cask was filled with several layers of grayish paper; on removing these I found the small pyramidal packages in which rolls of money are usually stored; they were stamped with a large official seal, and the amount contained in each inscribed on the outside.

"Look, Blanche, your powder is gold!" I took up the broken lid and read, "10,000 francs in pieces of 5 and 20." A hasty glance

showed me that there were eighteen of the little casks, so that the whole amount was one hundred and eighty thousand francs.

Mlle. Blanche had tottered back and was leaning against one of the iron chests gazing at me with large wild eyes, and cheeks from which every trace of colour had disappeared.

"Gold!" she repeated with panting breath; "what will you do now? If you rob me of this money I am lost forever."

"Blanche," I cried in a trembling voice, "do you not believe that if this were true I too should be forever wretched—that to the end of my life I should curse the hour when I found this gold and was compelled to renounce you?"

"Then for heaven's sake have pity on yourself, and—me; leave this horrible gold where it is—think that it was only a bad dream caused by the fever of your wound. Go back and dream on while I have this demon-sent gold removed through the window with all the torment it has caused me; then all will be well."

"What did you intend to do?" I asked.

"To remove the mystery which has stood between us and been a source of pain to both. I determined upon this course while talking to you to-day. The casks could not be squeezed between the window bars, so I intended to throw out the packages separately; Etienne and the gardener stand below to receive and remove them. Now you know all and can pronounce your sentence—for life or death. If you are resolute we are parted forever, and I am—a beggar!"

"You are cruel, Blanche, to tempt me. What can it avail to torture my heart thus? If it is so—if what you say is really true—take my revolver after I have done my duty and send a bullet through my heart; that is all I ask. This money—the property of the French government, destined to fill the chests of one of its army corps—belongs to my superior officers."

I could add no more; my attention was distracted by the noise I had already noticed for some time, and which constantly increased in violence. Knocks, calls, and the rattling of a door echoed through the ante-room where Friedrich slept—at first gently, then more and more violently. The cause was easily explained; if the abbé and gardener were standing under the window they must have heard the sound of the conversation between Blanche and myself, and, greatly alarmed by it, had hastened to her assistance; Blanche must have come by this way, and doubtless locked the door behind her. I had at first paid no attention to the noise, supposing that Friedrich, whom I had called, was up, and expecting every moment to hear him undertaking to deal with those who were so loudly demanding admittance. But Friedrich gave no sign of life. I listened and heard him snoring loudly, therefore I seized the best means of giving my men information and calling them to my assistance in case of any disaster, by stepping forward, raising my revolver, and firing twice through the open window.

Blanche covered her face with her hands, uttering a low cry of despair as she saw her last hope of saving the treasure disappear; then, without looking at me, tottered across Friedrich's chamber to the door—which at this moment was burst open with a tremendous crash—hastily whispered a few words to the two men who rushed in, and disappeared in the dark corridor.

The abbé and the gardener stood before me, both evidently at a loss what course to pursue. The gardener carried a double-barreled gun; if he could have followed his wishes he would gladly have fired it at me, but a remnant of caution—perhaps a command from Blanche—restrained him. The abbé too stepped before him, exclaiming in French:

"Sir, you are a man of honour—you are no robber: you will not take this money from us; you!"

"Monsieur," I replied, holding him back by the shoulder, "I am very sorry that I must appear a robber in your eyes. Keep back, my men will be here immediately; you can delay nothing here, save nothing, undo nothing."

At this moment Friedrich awoke with a long-drawn sigh that sounded as loud as a child's rattle; the bursting of the door seemed at last to rouse him from his strangely profound slumber, and with a deep breath he sat up, staring in astonishment at the scene before him.

The abbé answered me with great impetuosity, while the gardener uttered exclamations and curses. I understood the meaning of the priest—who in his excitement spoke very voluble French—no better than I did the gardener, both chattered far too rapidly; but it afforded Friedrich time to start up, seize his musket, and stagger sleepily to my side.

"You see," I continued, "you can do nothing more, M. l'abbé; even if you attempted a struggle with me, you would gain nothing, for my men will come to our aid and overmaster you, even if we did not succeed in doing so. Let us part in peace. Yield to the inevitable, as I must bow to the demands of my duty. Do you suppose my task is any less painful and difficult?"

He murmured something, raised his hands entreatingly, then turned as if to listen; steps and the clanking of spurs sounded along the hall. One of the Uhlans, who had reached the spot before the others, came rushing in and rattled violently at my locked door. Friedrich ran into my room to open it, and the abbé and gardener disappeared down a long, dark alley. I took up the lamp to light the way for my men, who were hurrying to my aid. Soon some half-dozen were in the chamber besieging me with questions,

among them Glauroth. It was a striking group—the half-clothed soldiers, with muskets and unsheathed swords in their hands, crowding around the spot where I stood holding the lamp above my head.

"Where is the enemy?" exclaimed Glauroth. "What has happened? on whom did you fire? I declare you look like Wallenstein in the midst of his murderers—pale, with disordered hair, and surrounded by naked swords."

"I will show you the enemy, comrades," said I. "It is no foe of flesh and blood; we have to do with the well-known enemy of the human race, the destroyer of the soul—unrighteous Mammon!"

To be continued.)

## OUR ILLUSTRATIONS.

**THE ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS AT SHOEBURYNESSE.**—The fortnight camp-work annually performed at Shoeburyness by the Artillery Volunteers is of a too complicated and technical character to admit of complete description within the space at our command. It will be sufficient for us to say that favoured by fine weather the practice generally was good, that discipline was well maintained from first to last, and that all the duties were performed with such a degree of zeal, intelligence, and precision, as to elicit the praise of Colonel Keate, the Camp Commandant. Turning to our engraving it may be necessary to explain to the uninitiated reader the nature of the Repository Competition for the Marquis of Lorne's prize. In operation A, a 64-pounder gun had to be dismantled from its carriage and platform and conveyed by means of rollers, skids, and other gear, used in conformity with the Brill-Book regulation, through a passage only seven feet in width, to another carriage and platform upon which it had to be remounted. In operation B, the work was of a like nature, except that the gun had to be conveyed round certain obstacles instead of through a passage, and that the drill regulations were not enforced, the No. 1 of our detachment being allowed to use the appliances at his own discretion, subject only to the proviso that life and limb should not, in the opinion of the umpire be imperilled. The result of the struggle on the Monday was that a tie was declared between the Kent and Canadian teams, and next day the tie was worked off, the victory resting with our own team, who got through their task in 4min. 30 sec., the Kentish men only being two seconds behind. The Canadian Prize (shown in our engraving) was presented by Lieut-Colonel W. R. Oswald, Canadian Artillery the Commanding Officer of the Canadian Detachments, whose portrait with that of the second officer, Captain Peters, we also engrave. The prize consists of a silver centre-piece representing a gun on a sleigh, as used during winter in Canada, resting on a huge block of ice and snow. It was competed for by selected detachments (one from each brigade represented in camp, and in the 40-pounder Armstrong contests of each week, and was carried off by the 3rd Detachment of the 2nd Durham, who made twelve points in 5 min. 33 sec. On the Thursday there was a Division Parade, Inspection, and March, Past, in the presence of the Princess Frederica of Hanover, the Marquis and Marchioness of Londonderry, Colonel Hastings, R.A., Baron Von Rammingen, and Colonel Keate, the Camp Commandant. The Queen's Prize of £100 was won by the 4th Detachment of the 2nd Durham, of which Sergeant Cowley is the No. 1, this being the second time that he has achieved that honour. At the presentation of Prizes by the Princess Frederica, he and the Canadian came in for the largest share of the applause.

**BUILDING A RAILROAD WITH NEGRO LABOR.**—For some weeks past the spectacle—novel in the Northern States—of negroes engaged in the construction of a railroad has been observed along the Hudson River, on the line of the new West Shore Railway. The first squad consisted of 150 sturdy fellows from Maryland, and were employed in the gravel banks and rock cuts of the Highlands. When the second and third installments have been made somewhat familiar with the work, the entire force will be distributed along the line. Many of them are scantily clothed, working with bare feet and bare heads. It is a curious sight to see the brawny blacks bending over their work busily plying shovel and pick, and a more cheerful company of laborers it would be difficult to find anywhere. There are no dissensions among them, and all day long they join their melodious voices in some refrain. It is believed they will prove superior to the Italians, who have been employed mainly on railway grading heretofore. The latter are a quarrelsome, high-tempered, dissatisfied class generally, and give much trouble in their management. The colored force are not generally skilled in drilling and rock-cutting, but are very effective in the removal of gravel and dirt, although a few are found to be good hammer-men, both at the drill and at stone-breaking. It is interesting to visit their tenements and lodgings after working hours, and observe their rude methods of living. They all mess together, and their board, washing and mending costs less than \$8 per month for each man. They live on ham and bacon, with fresh meat once a week. Receiving \$1.50 per day for their work, they are absolutely astonished at their earnings, and feel like rich men, not knowing what to do with their money. Their evenings are spent in singing and dancing. Among their number are several clergymen and exhorters, as well as a

band of good singers, who form the choir at bush meetings, which are regularly held on Sundays and largely attended by summer visitors sojourning at Cornwall and Newburg. The preaching is in the true Southern dialect, and is of the most extraordinary character. Almost every part of the work, and the novel daily scenes, greatly amaze these dusky laborers. From being amazed at the manner the Italians do their washing to being thoroughly frightened at the rendings of rock by explosives, the darkies scarcely seem to know what to make of their position. There have been rumors of interferences by Italian and white laborers, but the contractors have been thus far able to protect the negroes from outrage, and they toil away faithfully from morning to night, eager, as everybody is, to make their fortunes and retire from business.

**THE reception of the Governor-General at Newmarket is the object of an illustration in this number.** The Governor stands in the middle, with Mayor W. Crane presenting the address, and Rev. E. Jackson with his hand out bidding the crowd be still. On the dais with the Governor's party are the Town Council, High School and Public School Boards, Clergy, etc.

**INSTALLATION OF THE CONSTABLE OF THE TOWER.**—Our illustration represents the installation of General Sir Richard Dacres, G.C.B., as Constable of the Tower of London. The ceremony took place on the Governor's parade ground, Tower Green, where the garrison, composed of a detachment of the Coast-guard Royal Artillery and a battalion of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment, was drawn up in review order, with band and colours, together with the Yeomen Warders in their ancient full-dress costume. The Lord Chamberlain, Lord Kenmare, K.P., accompanied by the Hon. Spencer Ponsonby Fane, arrived at the Queen's House at one o'clock, and the representative of Her Majesty received the Queen's keys of the Tower from Lieutenant-General Maitland, C.B., the Lieutenant of the Tower, who was attended by the other chief officials. A move was then made to the parade ground, where, after the band had played "God Save the Queen," the Ceremonial of the Tower Hamlets read the Queen's patents appointing Sir R. Dacres "Lieutenant and Custos Rotulorum of the Tower Hamlets" and "Constable of the Royal Palace and Fortress of the Tower." The Lord Chamberlain delivered the keys of the Tower, in the Queen's name and on Her Majesty's behalf, into the Constable's hands. The Yeoman Porter cried, "God Save the Queen," and Yeomen Warders answered, "Amen." The troops presented arms to the Queen's keys, whilst the band played "God Save the Queen." The Constable thereupon handed over the keys to Lieutenant-General Maitland, C.B., for the Resident Governor, and proceeded with the Lord Chamberlain to inspect the troops and the Yeomen Warders. The Lord Chamberlain then returned to the Queen's House with the Constable, and gave him formal possession of it, upon which Sir Richard Dacres gave it to Major-General Milman, C.B., for his occupation as the Resident Governor, and the ceremony concluded by the Constable being officially presented to the assembled officers.

**"A STRUGGLE FOR THE MASTERY."**—This is a picture which appeals more or less to everybody's sympathies, especially to those who have undergone the same ordeal as this driver. Sometimes a pair of well-fed high-spirited horses act thus from mere "devilment," but more often something has frightened them. In Mr. Charlton's drawing the horses are endeavouring to bolt, but the driver is still able to exercise a certain amount of control over them, and can even partially check them.

**"THE MAN OF LAW."**—In this picture, which was one of those most worthy of notice in the late Exhibition of the Royal Academy, Mr. H. S. Marks, R.A., has exerted his faculty of humorous and sympathetic perception of the main peculiarities of character belonging to special classes and kinds of people, whose human nature is "subdued to what it works in" by the habitual impression and constant influences of their social condition and their ordinary pursuits. The costume is that of an early period of English history; and we are thereby reminded of the description of a lawyer in the Prologue to Chaucer's Canterbury Tales, which seems very appropriate to such a personage as the artist has here depicted:—

A sargent of the law, wary and wise  
That often had y-been at the parvisse,  
There was also, full rich of excellence,  
Discreet he was, and of great reverence;  
He seemed such, his wordes were so wise.  
Justice he was, tull often, in assize,  
By patent and by pleine commission.  
For his sovereyn, and for his high renown,  
Of fees and robes had he many one.  
So greet a purchasour was nowhere none.  
All was fe simple to him, in effect;  
His purchasour might not be in suspect.  
Nowhere so busy a man as he, there n'as,  
And yet he seemed busier than he was.

We are further told by Chaucer, of his Man of Law, that he could recite in precise terms, all the cases and "dooms" or judgments, that had been decided in the Courts since the time of King William the Conqueror, as well as all the statutes:—

Thereto, he could indite, and make a thing,  
Thare shoulde no wight pinch at his writing.

The lawyer in this picture seems to be engaged in carefully scrutinizing a legal document, whether or not one of his own concoction, to detect any possible flaw or fault in the writing.