

we have been in Paris we have done absolutely nothing. It is time we set to work. This morning I saw the Seigneur Tévalés, who is starting with a company of a hundred men to join the king's brother, now besieging Cambrai. From there they go together into Flanders. The Seigneur Tévalés has proposed to me to join him, as second captain. Shall I solicit a comrade's commission for you? The troops which follow the fortunes of Monsieur le Duc d'Alençon enjoy great privileges. The king winks at their peccadilloes. Now, I have not my equal in knowing how to sweep a town or village clean of money. I am strongly inclined to reckon that this journey will be worth four or five thousand crowns to me."

"I thank you, captain. If I were offered the rank of a duke and a hundred thousand crowns in gold to leave Paris, I should decline the offer. I want to see the king."

De Maurevert sighed deeply, and shook his head with an air of pity.

"Poor chevalier!" he cried, "how green you are! You still believe in the justice and power of his majesty Henry III. You imagine that the king, at the recital of your misfortunes, will fly into a passion, and at once send off an army to Auvergne, to punish the Seigneur de la Tremblais? His majesty employs his leisure in a manner infinitely more agreeable to himself and more profitable to his favorites."

"Captain," interrupted Sforzi, "it is not like a faithful servant to speak in this way of his master. The king is not a man—the king represents power and justice. Never will I believe that his majesty, if I succeed in gaining access to him, will refuse me the reparation due to me. Moreover, before I can undertake any kind of office, I have to remove myself of my dishonor. I seem every moment to feel the infamous contact of Benois's hand upon my cheek. I no longer belong to myself, but to vengeance."

"So be it, chevalier. Our association leaves you entirely free to act as you please. Try and reach the king's presence, relate to him your misfortunes, endeavor to obtain from him ten thousand men to besiege the Château de la Tremblais; nothing of all this concerns me. Only I cannot refrain from warning you, for the hundredth and last time, that you are going altogether on the wrong road. One last word. If you are in want of money, don't forget that the fourteen hundred crowns got out of the League of Equity, and the ransom of Crommore, are available, and that it will be a pleasure to me to help you with that sum. Let me at once add, so as not to awaken your susceptibility or shock your delicacy, that I will willingly accept your note of hand in exchange for this loan; and further, as the advance appears to a certain degree hazardous, I will not object to your adding whatever sum by way of interest you may think fit. Now, my dear chevalier, let us return to our hostelry."

"My chest and head are on fire," replied Raoul. "Nothing but bodily fatigue can overcome the agitation of my mind. I prefer to continue my walk."

"As you like. My supper waits; I will leave you. Take care of yourself; the banks of the Seine at night are dangerous; every tuft of grass hides an Italian and a poignard."

"Have I not my sword?"

"And the Italians? You fancy they prow about with pea-shooters in their hands, I suppose? However, I have given you warning. Good-bye, my dear Raoul."

"Good-bye for the present."

As soon as he was alone, Sforzi abandoned the Quai St. Paul and, absorbed in his reflections, mechanically turned up the first street he came to, which was the Rue Petit-Muse, which ran alongside of the arsenal and opened into the Rue St. Antoine.

A loud clap of thunder, booming like a discharge of artillery, recalled the chevalier to reality. Large drops of rain began to fall. Judging that the storm would speedily burst forth, and giving up, though not without regret, his solitary walk, he determined to make his way to the Rue des Tournelles, in which the Stag's Head was situated.

Still knowing very little of Paris, and though he was but a short distance from his hostelry, he looked about him for the purpose of finding somebody of whom to inquire his way; but whether it was in consequence of the coming on of the storm or of the approach of night, no one was visible in the street, which appeared completely deserted.

Raoul pursued his way at hazard, and the storm coming on with great violence, he was soon obliged to seek shelter in a deeply recessed doorway in the wall of the Hôtel de Lesdiguières, which ran nearly the whole length of the almost uninhabited Rue de la Cerisaie.

The rain fell in torrents.

For nearly ten minutes the chevalier had stood pressed within the doorway, which was sheltering him, when a strange sight attracted his attention.

From an old building, falling into ruin and plunged in darkness, he saw four men, masked and enveloped in heavy Italian cloaks, come out one after the other. Two of these men placed themselves on the right and two on the left-hand side of the street.

Sforzi noiselessly drew his sword and waited and watched in silence.

As hardly a day passed in the year 1581 without an assassination being committed by the crowd of Italian adventurers brought by the Queen Mother into France, Raoul did not long remain in doubt as to the character of the scoundrels ambuscaded on either side of the street. The only point on which he was left in doubt was as to whether they were lying in

wait for a victim already indicated to them, or whether they were trusting to chance to send them a prize.

While greatly regretting the absence of De Maurevert, the chevalier's courage did not in the least waver. He reflected that the Italians were not less renowned for their cruelty and treachery than for their cowardice, and he felt convinced that he should easily make head against this party of adventurers.

Ten minutes—which appeared as long as hours—passed without anything occurring.

At length he perceived, coming from one of the corners of the Rue Neuve St. Paul, a narrow litter carried by two men and lighted by link bearers.

The chevalier was debating with himself whether he should commence the attack, or wait and see what was to happen, when the four men sprang from their hiding-places and rushed towards the litter the first time it entered the Rue Petit-Muse.

Sword in hand, Raoul flew after them. Fear lest the crime should be effected before he could oppose it, redoubled his natural agility, and he reached the litter almost at the same moment as the bandits.

A scream of terror came from behind the heavy curtain of the litter, which one of the ruffians had roughly drawn aside.

"Scoundrels!" said Raoul. Then charging the bandit who still held the litter-curtain in his hand, he drove the sword deep into the wretch's breast, who fell bleeding and motionless to the ground.

Without a moment's loss of time, and taking advantage of the surprise which his unexpected attack had caused the bandits, Raoul sprang upon them crying: "Hullo, Captain De Maurevert! This way, pages and valets, we have them!"

The assassins did not wait to hear more. Frightened out of their wits, they scattered and fled in all directions, leaving the chevalier master of the field.

"Madame," said Raoul, addressing the unknown lady in the litter; "I do not think these rascals will venture to return to the charge. Permit me, however, by way of precaution, to escort you to your destination."

Whether it was from emotion or from distrust, the lady within the litter remained silent for a considerable time before replying to the offer made to her.

"Monsieur," she said at length, in a musical voice, the tones of which penetrated at once to the chevalier's heart, "excuse me if the expression of my gratitude falls in due fervour. I cannot but think with regret that, but for the accident which brought you to this spot, I should now be delivered from the sufferings that weigh upon my life. Do not, I beg of you, take the trouble to follow me. Those who wished to assassinate me may at any moment return, and it would be with sorrow that I should see you fall a victim to your courage and humanity. Once more, I thank you, monsieur, for your good intention. Adieu!"

The answer caused the chevalier singular astonishment. It implied that the disgust of life felt by the unknown lady was perfectly sincere, since, at the moment of escaping from so imminent a danger, she could speak with so much calmness and resolution.

"Madame," he replied, "duty compels me not to quit you until I have seen you in security. I shall do my duty."

The unknown threw herself back in the litter, the curtains of which she drew close. Raoul thought he heard stifled sobs.

Strongly interested by the strangeness of this adventure, he forgot for a moment his own distresses in thinking of the mystery presented by the conduct of the unknown lady.

For a moment the thought crossed his mind that she might be, after all, nothing but an intriguante; but with instinctive indignation he quickly repudiated this odious supposition. At the end of a quarter of an hour, the porters stopped in front of a house of modest appearance, situated near the canal on the vast space, then uninhabited, of the Boulevard of the Forte St. Antoine.

It was not without emotion that the chevalier held out his hand to the unknown lady, to assist her to descend from the litter. He felt a strong desire to see the face of this disconsolate woman, whose voice had so surely found the way to his heart. He was disappointed in his hope, for the lady wore an Italian mask over her features, which were thus perfectly concealed from his sight. He was able to admire, however, the suppleness of her form, the nobleness of her carriage, the graceful ease of all her movements.

As soon as she had descended to the ground, she turned toward the litter and called:

"Phœbus!"

A thoroughbred spaniel, of admirable shape, immediately sprang from the litter, and ran up to Raoul in the most friendly manner.

"Phœbus!" cried the lady again.

But the spaniel paid no heed to her call, and danced and frisked about the chevalier's feet, as if seeking to attract his attention.

"You see, monsieur," said the masked lady, in a tone of heart-melting sadness that brought the tears in Raoul's eyes—"you see that I inspire all that surround me with indifference! Phœbus himself, the spoiled companion of my solitude, abandons me without hesitation for an utter stranger. I was born under a fatal star. It is my destiny to see my affections ceaselessly turned against myself. Monsieur, keep Phœbus; he will be happier with you; he will recall to your mind, if not the service you have

rendered me, at least the courage you have displayed this evening."

"Madame," replied Raoul, somewhat moved, "I know not whether your sorrows arise from a too sensitive imagination, rather than from a real source; but I can assure you that Phœbus will gain nothing by belonging to me. I have always brought misfortune to those I have loved. I no sooner see a ray of sunshine in my sombre sky than the gloom of the storm instantly comes to turn it into darkness! I, too, have often dreamed of the repose of the grave. I too, in my moments of despair, have doubled of heaven's goodness! It is in the name of the torments which these revolts against Providence have made me suffer that I preach resignation and patience to you! I am wrong perhaps, not having the honor to know you, to express myself with such familiar liberty; forgive me, madame. I obey a feeling of sympathy which I find it impossible to repress. I know not whom you are, and I have never even seen you features; yet it seems to me as if I had found in you a long lost sister. Misfortune, perhaps, has bound us together by a mysterious link. I beg of you, madame, to grant me the honor of seeing you again."

"I believe you to be a noble-hearted gentleman, monsieur," replied the unknown lady after a brief pause; "still, before breaking in your favor the solitude in which I live, it is necessary for me to reflect. To admit into my life a stranger on the footing of a brother"—

"Madame," said Raoul, "I am the Chevalier Sforzi—a man without employment, credit, or fortune. I have nothing but my devotion to offer you."

The unknown lady seemed desirous of addressing a question to Raoul; but after a short hesitation, she bowed to him, and moved silently towards the door of the house and knocked. An old man-servant almost instantly opened the door.

The spaniel remained crouched quietly at the chevalier's feet.

"Phœbus!" the lady called gently. The spaniel did not move.

For a moment the unknown appeared undecided; but then she entered the solitary house, and closed the door behind her with a precliptation for which there was no obvious reason. Sforzi took Phœbus up in his arms, mounted the litter, and directed the porters to carry him to the Stag's Head.

This hostelry situated in the Rue des Tournelles, near the Hospice of Charity, and not far from the School of the Knights of the Crossbow and Arquebuse, founded in 1393, by Charles VI., at no great distance from the Boulevard St. Antoine. When Raoul arrived, he found De Maurevert seated at supper.

"Devil's horns!" he cried on seeing the young man. "I am delighted to see you back. I was beginning to argue ill from your long absence."

"By my faith, you would not have gone far wrong, captain," replied Raoul, and he proceeded to relate his recent adventure.

"Thunder and lightning!" cried the captain, when Raoul had finished speaking. "To save a lady, covered with jewels like that, and receive nothing for the exploit but a spaniel! My dear chevalier!—it is throwing away your sword! In your place, I should have made at least a thousand crowns out of the affair!"

The next day, towards two o'clock in the afternoon, De Maurevert abruptly entered the chevalier's room, crying:

"Ho, chevalier! here's the king, with all his suite, passing our hostelry, on his way to Bel-Ebat. You could not have a better chance of satisfying your desire to see his majesty. Come quickly!"

Sforzi immediately descended to the door of the hostelry; but when he reached the threshold, the *coiffe* had already passed. He was on the point of returning to his room, when he perceived one of the gentlemen in attendance on the king quit the rank of the royal escort, and gallop back in the direction of the Stag's Head. He remained at the door, to see what was the gentleman's purpose.

The messenger—for such he was—dismounted in front of the Stag's Head, and addressed Raoul himself:

"Monsieur," he said, "is this pretty little spaniel playing at your feet yours?"

"Yes, monsieur," replied the chevalier.

"In that case, monsieur," said the gentleman, "allow me to congratulate you. His majesty has deigned to notice the pretty creature, and I am sent to buy it of you."

"Monsieur," replied Raoul, turning suddenly crimson, "it appears to me that you might easily have delivered your message in a better manner. I am not a dog-seller. His majesty's wishes are to me orders, and"—

"And what price does his majesty offer for this really unique animal?" demanded De Maurevert, abruptly interposing.

The gentleman cast a not very respectful look at the captain; but the colossal height, athletic limbs, and energetic features of the adventurer appeared to him to merit the favor of a response:

"Has this spaniel two masters, then?" he inquired.

De Maurevert winked at Raoul, to let him understand that he was to take no further part in the transaction; then, bowing to his interlocutor, he replied:

"This phenomenon of grace and gentleness belonged, it is true, to the Chevalier Sforzi; but Monsieur le Chevalier has been good enough to part with it to me, in consideration of a sum of money he owed me, and I am now the sole proprietor of this phoenix of spaniels."

"It is with you, then, I have to deal for its purchase?"

"With me alone."

"Well, how much do you ask for the dog?"

"Twenty thousand crowns," replied De Maurevert, coolly.

The gentleman knit his brows.

"Monsieur," he said, "a serious offer on the part of his majesty is not to be met with a bad joke."

"Monsieur," replied De Maurevert, "I am not in the least jocular. I do not intend to part with my Phœbus for less than twenty thousand crowns. I will not abate one denier of that sum—take it or leave it."

"But this is absurd!"

"Ah, monsieur—if you knew all the qualities of Phœbus, you would not say that."

"That is your final decision, then?"

"My last word, monsieur."

The gentleman remounted his horse and rode off without deigning to speak another word.

"Have you gone out of your senses, De Maurevert?" cried Raoul. "What is the meaning of this ridiculous demand for twenty thousand crowns?"

"This ridiculous demand, my dear friend, signifies that you know nothing of the affairs of life. What I do you not see that my extravagant demands, by being carried to the king, will rouse his curiosity and double his desire to possess Phœbus? I will lay you a wager that the morning of to-morrow will not pass without his majesty sending us an ambassador. Then will be the time for us to play the magnanimous and the disinterested! You will declare that in your eyes Phœbus is inestimable, that no money could pay for him, but that you will be too happy, and rewarded above your utmost desires, if his majesty will deign to permit you to offer this phoenix of spaniels for his acceptance."

"You are ignorant, my dear Sforzi, of Henry III.'s passion for spaniels and fops; but I, who know his passion, assure you he will not hesitate to grant you an audience. Now, as your liveliest desire, your fixed idea, indeed, is to speak with the king, I do not think that my conduct in this little affair has been quite so senseless as it has appeared to you."

"Ah, captain!" cried Sforzi, embracing his companion; "you are certainly the most ingenious man of this epoch! To reach the king's presence, to be enabled to lay before him the crimes of the Marquis de la Tremblais, and by obtaining justice to save Diane!—oh, it will be too great a happiness!"

(To be continued.)

NIAGARA.

BY PROF. TYNDALL.

It is one of the disadvantages of reading books about natural scenery that they fill the mind with pictures, often exaggerated, often distorted, often blurred, and, even when well drawn, injurious to the freshness of first impressions. Such has been the fate of most of us with regard to the Falls of Niagara. There was little accuracy in the estimates of the first observers of the cataract. Startled by an exhibition of power so novel and so grand, emotion leaped beyond the control of the judgment, and gave currency to notions regarding the waterfall which have often led to disappointment.

A record of a voyage in 1535 by a French mariner named Jacques Cartier, contains, it is said, the first printed allusion to Niagara. In 1603 the first map of the district was constructed by a Frenchman named Champlain. In 1648 the Jesuit Ragueneau, in a letter to his superior at Paris, mentions Niagara as "a cataract of frightful height." In the winter of 1678 and 1679 the cataract was visited by Father Hennepin, and described in a book dedicated "to the King of Great Britain." He gives a drawing of the waterfall, which shows that serious changes have taken place since his time. He describes it as "a great and prodigious cadence of water, to which the universe does not offer a parallel." The height of the fall, according to Hennepin, was more than 600 feet. "The waters," he says, "which fall from this great precipice do foam and boil in the most astonishing manner, making a noise more terrible than that of thunder. When the wind blows to the south, its frightful roaring is heard for more than fifteen leagues." The Baron de Hontan, who visited Niagara in 1687, makes the height 500 feet. In 1721 Charlevoix, in a letter to Madame de Maintenon, after referring to the exaggerations of his predecessors, thus states the result of his own observations:—"For my part, after examining it on all sides, I am inclined to think that we cannot allow it less than 140 or 150 feet,—a remarkably close estimate. At that time, viz. a hundred and fifty years ago, it had the shape of a horse-shoe, and reasons will subsequently be given for holding that this has been always the form of the cataract from its origin to its present site."

* A Discourse delivered in the Royal Institution of Great Britain, on Friday, 4th April, 1873.

* From an interesting little book presented to me at Brooklyn by its author, Mr. Holly, some of these data are derived: Hennepin, Kalm, Bakewell, Lyell, Hall and others, I have myself consulted.