

the year 1871, and that, when you entered his service, he was living near Amiens?"

"Yes, sir," replied the voice of Gabrielle. "Mind," said Monsieur Pontneuf, "don't let me catch you mistaking facts, or it will go very hard with you."

"I am telling you truly, so far as I know, so I am a good Catholic," replied the girl.

"He left Amiens hurriedly one night?" said Monsieur.

"Yes, sir. We were at supper in the kitchen when he came in, and told me to pack up as soon as I could, for we had to catch the English mail-train at ten o'clock."

"Did he seem flurried or confused?"

"Not particularly, sir. He was pale and spoke rapidly—that was all."

"I suppose you never heard him allude to a Madame Arosa?"

"You mean the old lady who?"

"Yes, yes—of course I do."

"Never, sir."

"Of course nobody knows that you are in the habit of meeting me? At any rate he does not?"

"I don't think so, sir; I am very cautious."

There was a movement of feet in the summer-house, which warned me to get out of the way, so I slid behind a clump of bushes, and presently the two appeared in the moonlight.

"Report to me all you see and hear," said Monsieur.

"I will, sir."

The Frenchman slipped something which chinked like coin into her hand and they separated, he taking the path leading to the village, she going in the opposite direction towards the Cedars. From this conversation it was quite clear to me that whatever might be their relationship to one another, Monsieur Pontneuf and Gabrielle were not lovers; and, putting circumstances together, I made up my mind that my professor, like so many others in his calling, was a political refugee, either Napoleonist or Communist; and I knew very well that the French republican government, to whom both were equally hateful, was sparing no pains or expense to find out the whereabouts and to keep itself informed of the actions of all such offenders. Evidently, he was making use of the girl Gabrielle as a spy and informer; or it might even be that he was engaged in a plot against the government. During my artist life in Paris and London, I had been brought into constant contact with this class of gentry; and I knew that we should often shudder if we knew what sort of individuals make use of our free island as an asylum and live amongst us as harmless bread-winners. However, Bonapartist or Communist, criminal or innocent, Monsieur Pontneuf performed his duty to me satisfactorily and thoroughly; and it was not for me to pry behind the scenes of his life. I found John Corner in the smoking-room when I arrived at home; but I said nothing to him about what I had overheard during my walk.

"Well," he said, "you know I don't want to meddle in your affairs; but I've been rather put out and puzzled lately about a matter concerning which perhaps you can enlighten me; I mean about this Monsieur Pontneuf, who gives Helen her French lessons. Do you know anything about him?"

"Nothing more than that he was accredited to me by the French Consulate in London, and that he showed me very high testimonials. —But why do you ask?"

"Well," he replied, "because there's something going on between him and my aunt's maid Gabrielle. She has never asked so frequently for leave to go out of an evening as she has since Monsieur Pontneuf came here."

"Perhaps there is a little affection between them." Even to Jack Corner, whom I loved as my own son, I did not feel justified in confiding what I had chanced to overhear in the summer-house.

"I don't think so," said Jack, shaking his head. "He's a middle-aged man, and she's a mere girl of eighteen. Besides, she has never spoken to my aunt about it, and servant-girls always like to confide these little matters to mistresses who take an interest in their welfare. No; I think he is what we don't suspect him to be—a plotter perhaps, or a proscribed Communist leader."

"It doesn't much matter if he is, so long as he performs his duties."

"No. But I don't care about our maid being mixed up in this sort of business," said Jack; "for not only does it distract her attention from her duties, but it might involve us in unpleasantness."

"Well, I don't know how we can find out; and I must admit that I fail to see how we can suffer by whatever two French people choose to concoct together."

But it suddenly struck me that Jack must have seen me near the summer-house, for he was looking curiously at me, as much as to say: "I should like to ask you about it, but

I don't like to." However, I was resolved not to say anything unless pressed, and changed the conversation. But I noticed that Jack seemed uncomfortable during the remainder of our talk, and I was puzzled to account for it. Our conversation at length turned on the trips abroad we were severally going to make during the next week—he to Switzerland, for a clamber amongst the High Alps; I and my ladies to Paris, for the important purpose of choosing the trousseau for Helen's wedding, which was to be celebrated in the autumn.

But I saw that his mind was uneasy about Gabrielle and Monsieur Pontneuf, for, as we were bidding each other good-night at the door, he said: "You keep an eye on Monsieur Pontneuf, or perhaps you will be astonished one of these fine days."

"What do you mean, Jack?"

"Why, that I believe him to be nothing less than one of these Socialist dynamitards, and that he is in the thick of a plot, against our own government here at home."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

### Wanted One More.

"I have witnessed many curious death bed scenes," said Mrs. Jeannette Robinson, a professional nurse employed at the Toronto hospital. "I am now forty years of age and have been a nurse for twenty years, though I have been in this country only ten."

"A few years ago I called into a very aristocratic family. This family is very rich as well as aristocratic. As I am usually called upon only in critical cases I was not surprised to find the patient very low. She was the loved and petted only daughter. She had just made her debut the season before and her second social season was at its height. It appears that she was a very lively girl—a spoiled child—and had caught a severe cold at an entertainment. Instead of taking care of herself she went about as usual every night in evening dress. When I arrived at the house I found her lying in a magnificent room practically at the point of death with pneumonia. Three physicians were in consultation. The family was terribly frightened. The girl was very lovely, for pneumonia is a sudden disease and she had not been in bed more than two days. I found her wandering in her mind. She seemed to half comprehend what I was, for she turned her dark eyes on me a moment and inquired:

"Will I be able to go to the ball?"

"Ball! Mercy, child," said I, trying to soothe her, "don't think about balls. After a while"—

"Ring for champagne!" she ordered imperiously. "I'm going to dress for the ball. I must go." She tried to hum a waltz, then suddenly exclaimed: "Champagne! Champagne! Bring champagne! It warms the heart so! My heart is getting cold! Bring more champagne!"

"She choked and gurgled and her voice sank to a whisper."

"The doctors were at her side in a moment. It was evident her young life was fast ebbing. The stimulant was brought. Rising on her elbow she grasped the freshly opened bottle from the tray and before we had time to recover from our astonishment poured its sparkling contents down her throat. Her eyes shone like stars."

"Champ—," but the word was never finished.

"She flung the bottle from her, sank into the soft pillows and expired. I hadn't been there ten minutes."

"There was a rich old merchant over in Thirty-fifth street whom I was called upon to attend. He had spent a lifetime in the accumulation of considerable wealth and in his old age went straight from his counting-house to his bed. He could scarcely be brought to realize that his stay on earth was short. His large family was very anxious concerning his future, but couldn't get him to consider the question. The family doctor told me his case was hopeless and instructed me to impress this fact on his mind, which was inclined towards business and trivial things. His daughter met me in the library and took me up to the sick room. She was a richly dressed and very lovely lady."

"That is the way you spend my money," said he from the bed as soon as we came forward. He paid no attention to me. "Just look at that dress!"

"Dear me! Never mind, papa—please don't talk of such things now. Try and fix your mind on more serious things now. This is the nurse."

"Nurse? nurse? I don't want any nurse. She can't be more serious than this thing of throwing away hard-earned money!"

"While he had resisted every attempt to prepare him for death, a day or two later

he was a little restless and lay eyeing me for a long time. He suddenly spoke up:

"So I'm going to die, am I?" His voice was deep and harsh and sounded as if it came from the grave. I was startled almost out of my usual self-possession, but finally managed to tell him as gently as possible that his time on earth was very short indeed. If he had anything on his mind he'd better act accordingly."

"Well, I suppose I might as well get ready to go," he growled, as if it bored him. "Bring 'em in," referring to his family."

"I hurriedly summoned his wife and children. He feebly tried to raise himself, but gave it up. Then he gave them an extended lecture on their mode of living. He reminded them that he had worked early and late to leave them a competence, and he hoped they wouldn't waste it in riotous living. They ought to curtail expenses and reform on certain matters of dress. Though he was terribly exhausted when he finished, he waved them aside abruptly, and growled:

"Now get out and send in the other gang!"

"He lectured the rest in the same way. One of the members of his family remained after the rest had gone out. It was his young son. I held my finger on the old man's pulse. It was flickering."

"Can you pray," he suddenly asked the young man.

"Yes, father," sobbed the lad, his heart almost bursting."

"Well, then, preach up," was the hoarse reply."

"The boy fell upon his knees by the bedside and uttered a few choking words, while the old man rested his hand upon his son's head. In half a minute the old merchant was dead."

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"Widely different," continued the nurse, "was a case I was called upon to attend when I was in England. It was that of an old man, too—a rich country Squire. He was a terrible old fellow, who had a reputation all over the country side of having lived a reckless life, of being a grinding landlord, an atheist and even a terror to his family. In fact he had driven them out doors, one by one, until he was practically alone with his servants, a few greedy relatives keeping a risky place in the near background. But a single daughter had stuck to him, and she was afraid to say or do anything. Poor girl, she didn't know what to do. I had been sent for, and came up from London. The old man seemed to be about breathing his last when I got there, which was after dark. I shall never forget that night. It had been sultry all day. The sky was black with lowering clouds, and as I was driven from the station in a mail cart by a servant the road was lighted by vivid flashes of lightning that almost blinded us."

"They had darkened the windows of the sickroom, but the occasion flashes penetrated even there. I went straight to the bedside and took up the withered wrist. At first I thought the patient was already dead, his pulse was so weak and irregular and the breathing so feeble. But close attention for a moment convinced me he was still alive. A minute later I said to the terrified daughter: 'He's gone' and so it seemed."

"At that instant there was a terrible burst of thunder. It rocked the solid old country mansion on its foundations. The old man started up in bed to a sitting posture—just doubled up like a galvanized corpse twitching in every muscle."

"What's that?" he asked, the death rattle in his throat."

"I began to explain that it was a thunderstorm, when he flung his hands aloft and shouted with an awful oath:

"It's the gates of hell opening for my soul!" and he fell back a corpse."

"I have the reputation of being the possessor of good magnetic powers. In some cases this influence serves greatly to reduce and soothe intractable and suffering patients. Once in an English hospital a difficult and dangerous surgical operation was being performed on a man who had been severely injured in an accident. He was a powerful young man and at times two able-bodied attendants were unable to hold him still. I was called in to assist. The moment I touched his hand he glanced at me appealingly and grasped mine. From that moment he bore the pain unflinchingly. I had turned his face away from the operators and laid my cheek against his. He scarcely murmured again during the whole time."

"When all was over, he placed both of his great arms around me and pressing me gently to his bosom kissed me on the lips. When they disengaged his arms he was dead."

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"I remember a teamster I nursed once in this hospital. His legs had been run over and crushed. An operation had been performed. He was constantly delirious. He drove a team all day and all night, swearing the most fearful and original oaths all the time. He was the roughest character I ever had to watch. His foul language fairly rang through the ward. He had probably formerly enjoyed torturing the poor brutes he managed, for he would swing his right arm on high in the act of snapping a whip, all the time accompanying the motion with curses and demonical laughter. He seemed to be intent on putting an eye out, cutting an ear off, or bringing blood in some way, and when he imagined he had made an especially skillful stroke of this kind he would laugh and curse. It was terrible. He finally went off in one of these fiendish paroxysms. I believe that is the only case in all my experience in which I could feel no human pity—in which I was satisfied to see a man suffer and was almost if not quite glad that my patient was dead."

"I knew a case where a genial, good-hearted, whole-souled gentleman in New York lay sick with quick consumption. He had been a man about town and had hosts of friends. When he was convinced that he could live no longer he called some of these watchers about him, called for glasses, made each person fill up with him 'for the last time,' and lightly waving his own finger of whiskey above his head, cried:

"Well, boys, I've had many a good time with you; here's for the parting drink! Good-by!" and he died as he had lived, a convivial man of the world."

### The Blind in England.

Out of the 32,000,000 of subjects over whom her Majesty now reigns as Queen of Great Britain, taken in round numbers, about 32,000 are said to be blind. This estimate, however, must be understood to include a considerable number of those partially deprived of sight, as, during the last forty years, the ratio of blind persons in every million has slowly but steadily fallen from 1,020 to 819, a decrease of one-fifth of 1 per cent. The smallness of this decrease, when so much has been done in other directions to lessen the ravages of disease, arises from two facts—first, that in a considerable number of cases blindness is the result of some untoward accident—stone throwing, a splinter of broken glass, a sudden blow or fall—and secondly, and in a still larger number of cases, is the result of neglect, ill-treatment, or exposure to cold when the victim was but few days or weeks old. So large a percentage of blindness, indeed, is due to this cause that the Royal Commissioners, while noting it, suggest a special remedy, viz., the employment of trained midwives among the poor, and the careful use of perchloride of mercury for washing the eyes."

Thirty per cent. of all the cases in schools and asylums are due to purulent ophthalmia, for which this preparation is found to be the best remedy, at once cheap, harmless, and easily procured, a point of vital importance when it is remembered that "one or two days make all the difference between saving and losing vision." The number of children actually blind from birth is comparatively small, but that of those who afterwards become blind from accident or disease goes on increasing; and it is on these two latter points, therefore, that legislation is demanded and can do good. In such trades as are found to be directly injurious to the sight as iron ship building, granite work, grinding of cutlery, &c., where a chance spark or splinter is too often fatal, the use of some special covering for the eye might be made compulsory, while in the case of infantile disease preventive measures are still more easily within reach."

The attention of archaeologists and the learned generally is still largely occupied with the discovery made at Thebes. A letter alike interesting and instructive has just been received in Paris by Prof. G. Maspero from M. Grebant, director-general of the excavations now in progress at Thebes. Prof. Maspero formerly held in Egypt the position now held by M. Grebant. It appears from this letter that the rock-cut chamber was found at a depth of fifteen meters, consisting of two floors on galleries. In the lower floor were found 180 mummy-cases, piled one on top of the other, together with a large number of funeral objects, including some fifty Osirian statues. Ten of the statues were opened at once and in each was found a roll of papyrus. The period to which the mummies and statues belonged was that of the twenty-first dynasty. No such find has been made since 1881. The soil had, to all appearance, remained untouched for a period of 3,000 years."