SAM LOYD'S PUZZLES.

[Copyright by Sam Loyd, New York.]

ANSWERS TO PICTURE ARITHMETIC, PRINTED WEDNESDAY.

Sole x goats — oats — leg x weight — sow—EIGHT.

A ROYAL WARD

By Percy J. Brebner, author of "Princess Maritza," "Vayenne," etc.

"I was thinking chiefly of the strange circumstances which have made us acquainted," Dubuisson answered.

"And wondering a little why you accepted my suggestion to come to Hungerford Market this morning?"

"Some such thought may have been in the back of my mind," Dubuisson admitted.

"It is my business to read men's thoughts," said Baxter; "and it required no great subtlety to understand that you were quite unprepared for the scene you entered upon at the Brazen Serpent last night."

"I imagine you were hardly expecting that such an attack would be made upon you," said Dubuisson.

"Well, no. I don't remember that I've ever run away from a danger, but I am equally sure I have never run into one unnecessarily. That's a fool's game, and Finley Baxter does not reckon himself among the fools. The fact is, sir, I had been found out, and it was, therefore, considered that a quiet funeral was the safest thing that could happen to me. It is not certain that there was not good sense at the bottom of their opinion."

"Then you are a——?"

"A spy, sir, but not a government one," was the answer. "I don't worm myself into men's secrets for the purpose of hanging them; but if my business were known, I should hang as soon as a halter could be slipped round my neck. Now, you did me a service last night, and I have a mind to give you the power of putting that rope into position."

"But why?" said Dubuisson, rising. "I pray you let us each keep our own secret."

"Whatever your secret may be, indirectly, at any rate, I can be of service to you," Baxter went on. "A few words of yours last night sufficed to change the aspect of affairs, and the frequenters of the Brazen Serpent were inclined to look upon you as a friend. They were surprised that you were not as willing to fit me for an early grave as they were, and therefore not great cleverness on my part is required to know that, although you had their jargon on your tongue, you had no hand in their crimes. Now a man of that kind wants a word of warning, and you are here with me to listen to that word. Sit down, sir; it is never wise to scorn a man who desires to be friendly."

"Believe me, it was not a question of scorn," Dubuisson answered, reseating himself; "it is merely that I do not want to be entangled in other men's secrets."

"Entagled is the word I was going to use presently," Baxter returned; "and do not imagine that I am angling for your confidence. Your secret is no affair of mine. Two things make me friendly towards you: I like your face, and in some way I fancy you have been deceived. Now I cannot explain my meaning unless I tell you something of myself."

"I am all attention, and shall forget what is necessary once I am outside these four walls," said Dubuisson.

"I expected no less of you," said Baxter, going to a cupboard fixed in the wall, "and since there is nothing drier than listening to a long speech, unless it be the making of it, honor me by sharing this bottle of burgundy I paid full price for it, though heaven knows whether the duty on it lies in the king's treasury or the merchant's pocket. Let me mention my good deeds first. You doubtless understood last night, from the gentlemen so anxious to play the part of undertakers to my corpse, that I had baulked them in some project, and that I could inform against them?"

"I supposed there was something of the kind," said Dubuisson.

"The excellent plot which failed had for its object the shooting of a member of the government on his way home from White's Club."

"Assassination!"

"No, sir, diplomacy; that is the name they would have given to it," Baxter returned. "For this particular nobleman I care nothing, but I had no desire to see him die a sudden death of that kind for want of a warning; so I gave that warning, and the nobleman remained at home. I did not expect that the frequenters of the Brazen Serpent would attribute this failure to me, or I should have probably passed my evening elsewhere."

"It was certainly a good deed," said Dubuisson.

"I thought you would agree with me. To put the matter in a nutshell the Brazen Serpent is the meeting-place of men who are dissatisfied with things as they are, and would change them by assassination or any other vile method that presents itself. That half-witted fellow, Bellingham, who shot Mr. Perceval in your House of Commons recently, used to go there, and learnt much of his personal enmity to the unfortunate minister from these fellows second-hand, I warrant. I say your House of Commons, but I do not think you are entirely English."

"I am not."

"You may ask why, since I know the nature of the Brazen Serpent, did I frequent it. I feel inclined to answer you like a parson of a Sunday, with a firstly, secondly, and so forth for a good forty minutes by the clock, since there are many reasons. You may understand them all, however, if you remember that I am a spy. I grant you, sir, the word has an unpleasant sound, but in war a man takes his chances. I am an American, and since there is war between the two countries, and Englishmen play the game in my country, I play it in this. It is, at least, a dangerous calling, and, under the circumstances, an honorable one."

"I will not pretend that I like the calling, but your secret is safe with me," said Dubuisson.

"I did not suppose that you would love me for my profession," Baxter went on; "but, after all, it is only my profession, and does not affect the man. I should like you, sir, to know more of the man. Finley Baxter was born under a comet rather than a star, and, like a comet, is eccentric in his movements and methods. I doubt if I would admit it to a countryman, but to you I will confess that it was the spice of danger which made the profession appeal to me. I serve my country, true; but I serve myself chiefly. I love intrigue as a kitten loves milk, and I am not so busy with my own affairs that I have no time to help you in yours, if there is sufficient danger in them."

"Danger! I hardly think there is danger in them."

"Judging by our meeting place, I would beg to differ with you. I ask no confidences, although I am an open receptacle into which you can cast such things and never hear of them again unless you please; but I reckon the man who told you the jargon of the Brazen Serpent didn't inform you what kind of company you would meet there."

"That's true."

"Then, sir, there's danger enough. A man who deals in that kind of secrecy has chestnuts in the fire which he is anxious that somebody else shall pull out."

"You perplex me, Mr. Baxter," said Dubuisson.

"I'm sorry for that, for I've been opening myself like a large printed folio for you to read. Come to the epilogue. I am an honest companion where a friend is concerned, but I don't happen to have a friend. I want one, and I drain this glass to you," and Finley Baxter lay back in his chair as he set the empty glass down upon the table.

"Truly, I may stand in need of a good companion before I am much older," said Dubuisson. There was much in Baxter that pleased him.

"I am at your service," was the answer.

"It may astonish you to learn, Mr. Baxter, that I am partly your countryman. My mother was an American."

"I am seldom surprised, it's too fatiguing an occupation, and this doesn't surprise me at all. All the best things I know of have some connection with the United States. Shake hands on our cousinship, anyway. Now go right ahead and tell me what you will. If you want anything, and I can get it for you, why, it's yours."

Dubuisson shook his companion's hand and crossed to the window looking out towards the river. He was not very worldly wise, he had had small opportunity of judging men keenly, yet he felt convinced that Finley Baxter was honest.

"I see no reason why I should not tell you," he said, turning towards his host and leaning by the window. Mine is a small affair, no large issues are concerned in it. I would gladly profit by your advice."

"I believe my place is a tight corner rather than the council chamber, Baxter returned; "but my advice is at your service."

"My father fought in America against the English," Dubuisson went on; "he married my mother there, and then returned to France, little dreaming what horrors were in store for him. You know something of the Reign of Terror; blood-stained pictures are imprinted on my child's memory, things I actually saw, yet hardly understood the meaning of. By the help of an Englishman, at the risk of his own life, we escaped to England, and lived here for some years. Then came the time when Englishmen hated Frenchmen, because of Napoleon, and my father deemed it wiser to return to France. Possibly, this Englishman helped him again, and I fancy my father must have been afraid of compromising him in some way. I used to think that he did not really know who his benefactor was. We retired to a small estate in Brittany, living in seclusion. Whether my father had any communication with Napoleon, I cannot say. He was of the old regime, and had little love for the Corsican adventurer, as he called him; but we were left in peace. As for me, I longed to be playing a man's part; it was not the Emperor I thought of, but my country. I wanted to share in her glory, and I wonder that I was not forced to fight her battles, since there was little of the weakling about me. Perhaps my father could have explained why I was exempt, but, at any rate, my plea to go was always met by a firm refusal. We were under a sacred oath, he explained. But for my mother, I might have demanded to judge the nature of this oath for myself. She was a great invalid, and to lose me would have killed her, I think. Truly, my presence could not save her. She had been with the bon Dieu these two years."

Finley Baxter poured wine into his glass, perhaps to excuse himself from offering sympathy. He was a bad hand in such matters.

"My father seemed to dry up and wither after her death. I could not leave him then. I was all that he had."

"And you fretted like an eagle in a narrow cage."

"Something like that, Mr. Baxter. I was impatient, and complained. How could it be otherwise, when the great world was so full of enterprise and I had no part in it? My father became worse, and then I learnt the truth. He had taken a solemn oath to this Englishman that neither he nor his would bear arms against England. For himself, I can understand the oath. He owed much to this Englishman; he hated the Corsican and the Revolution, which had made Napoleon possible; but for me——? Ah, I complained bitterly."

"I don't remember a father, and I never had a son," said Baxter. "My opinion on such a situation is hardly worth the breath necessary to utter it."

"He sought to bring me to patience by recounting what he and my mother had suffered, how much they owed to this man," Dubuisson went on. "He bound me to respect the oath he had made. I promised, on one condition, that he would let me travel to England and ask to be absolved by this man, and to this my father agreed. He told me that this Englishman was a power in the country, an aristocrat, in the best society; and he went to write a letter for me to carry to England."

"And who is this Englishman?"

"The letter was never written," Dubuisson answered. "I was called to my father barely an hour afterwards, and found him speechless, and with limbs that refused to do his bidding. He had had a stroke, and all he could do was to indicate a certain drawer in his writing table, in which I found this," and Dubuisson took from his pocket a broken silver cross. It had been severed down the middle of the upright piece, and had, therefore, just half this and one arm. "My father could just show that this was what he meant me to have, and in two days he was dead."

"Were there no papers?"

"Only a few sheets relating to my mother, but they contain no names but those of her family in America."

"This looks a fairly hopeless quest," said Baxter, examining the broken cross.

"But consider, the man I seek is a well-known man," said Dubuisson, taking the cross and replacing it carefully in his pocket. "It should not be so difficult, after all. I came to England secretly, and I already have a promise of help."

"From the man who told you of the Brazen Serpent?" asked Baxter.

"Yes; and haven't you promised me help, too?"

"It will be no easy matter fitting that half-cross to its fellow. I might find out some one who had been active in helping Frenchmen, but they don't speak of such things easily nowadays. As for this other friend——Hush!" Baxter held up a warning finger as a heavy tread sounded on the rickety stairs, and then a knock came at the door.

"Come in."

"I fear I am late, my friend, but——" Sir Rupert Ashton stopped suddenly and remained in the doorway. "Pardon, I did not know you were engaged."

Victor Dubuisson was about to speak, but seeing that Sir Rupert made no sign of recognition he remained silent.

"We had just completed our business," said Baxter, and then, turning to Dubuisson, he went on: "Tonight, at the Golden Cross, we will dine together. I grant you, a pretty woman is always worth the hunting, but not on an empty stomach."

The closing door cut short Baxter's laugh as Victor Dubuisson went thoughtfully down the stairs.

To Be Continued.

Advertiser Patterns

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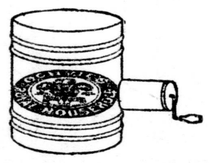

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TRAVELERS' GUIDE

GRAND TRUNK RAILWAY.

CARNIA TUNNEL TO SUSPENSION BRIDGE AND TORONTO.

Corrected to Jan. 10, 1909.

Arrive from the east—*3:48 a.m., 10:56 a.m., *11:12 a.m., *11:28 a.m., *6:30 p.m., *8:00 p.m., 10:10 p.m.

Arrive from the west—*12:09 a.m., *3:35 a.m., *11:28 a.m., 1:10 p.m., *4:10 p.m., 6:25 p.m.

Depart for the east—*12:14 a.m., *3:40 a.m., 7:30 a.m., 9 a.m., *11:38 a.m., 2:05 p.m., *4:25 p.m., *6:53 p.m., (Eastern Flyer).

The trains leaving at 7:30 a.m. and 2:05 p.m. stop at all stations.

Depart for the west—*3:50 a.m., 7:40 a.m., *11:18 a.m., *11:43 a.m., 1:40 p.m., *8:18 p.m.

The 7:40 a.m. and the 1:40 p.m. trains stop at all stations.

LONDON AND WINDSOR.

Arrive—10:23 a.m., 4 p.m., *6:50 p.m. (Eastern Flyer), 11 p.m.

Depart—6:35 a.m., *11:35 a.m., 2:20 p.m., *8:10 p.m. (International Limited).

STRATFORD BRANCH.

Arrive—*3:25 a.m., 11:15 a.m., 1:33 p.m., 6:45 p.m., 11:25 p.m.

Depart—6:00 a.m., 10:26 a.m., 2:45 p.m., 4:55 p.m.

LONDON, HURON AND BRUCE.

Arrive—10:10 a.m., 6:10 p.m.

Depart—8:30 a.m., 4:50 p.m.

Trains marked thus * run daily. Those not so marked run daily except Sunday.

PERE MARQUETTE RAILWAY.

Depart—5:40 a.m., *7:10 a.m., 9:45 a.m., 2:30 p.m., *3:40 p.m.

Arrive—8:45 a.m., *12:20 p.m., 1:50 p.m., 4:40 p.m., *9:20 p.m.

* To and from Walkerville without change. Trains not "starred" to Port Stanley.

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY.

Arrive—From the east—*11:50 a.m., 8 p.m., *10:52 p.m. From the west—*4:30 a.m., **8:35 a.m., *5:20 p.m.

Depart—For the east—*4:40 a.m., 8:43 a.m., *5:28 p.m. For the west—*11:38 a.m., ***8:10 p.m., *11:00 p.m.

Trains marked thus * run daily. Those not so marked run daily except Sunday. **From Chatham only ***Runs only to Chatham.

MICHIGAN CENTRAL RAILWAY.

Arrive—6:55 a.m., 11:10 a.m., 5:10 p.m., 9:50 p.m.

Depart—7:15 a.m., 2:20 p.m., 5:35 p.m., *10:25 p.m.

*Runs through to Waterford.

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Portland—Liverpool Direct (Winter).

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