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The Secret of the Old Chateau

By DAVID WHITELAW.

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Synopsis of Previous Chapters. Vivian Renton and Eddie Haverton, modern soldiers of fortune, have been gambling with Hubert Baxenter, a prosperous attorney, in his London apartments. After their departure late at night Renton returns to the house, murders Baxenter and hides the body on the roof. While waiting for night to come again in order to make his escape, he finds in a desk a curious old yellowed document telling of a mysterious chest left in the care of one of Baxenter's ancestors by a French nobleman, the Marquis de Dartigny, of the Chateau Chauville. The chest has been handed down from one generation of Baxenters to another and carefully guarded in the hope that some day its rightful owner will be found. Renton decides to pose as the missing heir and claim the chest. He goes to Franco to make some needful inquiries about the Dartigny family. The story of the mysterious chest goes back to the troubled days of the French Revolution and the escape of the Marquis and his little granddaughter to England, where the chest and document were given to the Baxenters for safe keeping. Now, more than one hundred years later, Hubert Baxenter's body is found, but the police find no clue. Meanwhile, Renton changes his name to Baptiste Dartin, and visits Canada; then he presents his fictitious claims to Robert Baxenter, new head of the firm.

CHAPTER VIII.—(Cont'd.)

During the last century our family has suffered many vicissitudes, but in the main we have prospered. From father to son the tradition of our motto has been handed down. It is said that the head of the de Dartigny family, a cousin of my great-grandfather, emigrated to England at the time of the Terror, and that this gentleman's son, who took an active part in the Royalist cause, on his way to the guillotine, had time to whisper to a man dressed as a peasant in the crowd that he should go to Baxenton, in London, and that his credentials should be the motto of our house. That peasant, Mr. Baxenter, was my great-grandfather, Armand, who went to Canada in 1801.

"Why he did not choose to act upon the advice I do not know. They were times of stress and when anyone who showed signs of gentle birth was hounded from pillar to post. I imagine, too, that he was very short of this world's goods, and I expect the party of young bloods about to start for a new land appealed to him more than the vague utterances of a man about to die. He, no doubt, thought it better to join them than to take what might be a fruitless journey to England.

"Fifty years, however, he had not returned and the Baxenton affair was rather a joke. A

of the shut-up house in Mortimer Terrace. There was a clock upon the office wall, and to Vivian's ears it took up the monotonous refrain of that other clock—tick—tick—mur—det—tick—tick. And then the cool voice of the solicitor came through the maze of his reminiscences, and, with an effort, he braced himself to listen.

"And so," Robert Baxenter was saying, "perhaps you may have heard of the name of this ancestor of yours, whom, you think, came to London?"

"I have—it was Marie Brissac de Dartigny."

"And can you produce any papers—any documents of family affairs?"

His visitor had been evidently expecting that this question would be asked him soon or later, for he answered readily:

"Ah! there I'm afraid I have only my bare word to give you. Before I was fifteen my father joined an expedition to the Yukon. He had had heavy losses, and the tales of gold to be found in the North tempted him. He never returned, and I was taken care of by a good woman of the village. I had a little money, and when my protectress died I rounded the world. I visited Australia and India, and finally drifted back to Canada, where I have built up a good little business. It is this business which has brought me to London—not this other 'pig in a poke,' he added, with a laugh.

Robert Baxenter had referred to the parchment when the old aristocrat's name had been mentioned; now he put the papers back and sat for a moment drumming the tips of his fingers together. He reasoned rapidly. Perhaps it was unwise to part with this trust to a man without written credentials; but again, his visitor in mentioning the motto had done all that was required. The transaction was a little loose than half anxious to see the end of the white elephant in his strongroom—and he told himself that this man was beyond all doubt the legitimate descendant of the aristocrat who had visited old Adam more than a century ago.

His mind made up, Robert rose and held out his hand.

"I am more than satisfied, Mr. Dartin. True, I would have preferred some documentary evidence as to identity—just as a matter of form. I offer you my very sincerest congratulations. Please come with me."

As the solicitor crossed the room he drew from his pocket a key-chain, and selecting a flat key from the ring, proceeded, followed by Mr. Baptiste Dartin, through the clerk's office and down a flight of stone steps.

At the foot, great double doors guarded the entrance to the strong-room. Each of these, fitted with combination locks, delayed the solicitor for a few moments; then he switched on the light of a couple of green-shaded lamps that they stood

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with the plaid sash has lost her nurse. You were saying—

Mrs. Benham rescued her ball of wool from the kitten and placed it on the table.

She was saying, Robert, that Miss Foster was taken ill very suddenly, and Stella has to play her part till the end of the run. I thought she telephoned to you. Perhaps she forgot; she is very excited, and there is so much to learn in—

There came the rattle of a key in the outer lock and the drawing-room door was burst open and a

of brown sugar, two tablespoons of butter, one teaspoon of cinnamon. Work to fine crumbs and then spread over the top of the berry and bake in a slow oven for three-quarters of an hour.

Caramel sauce—Place one-half cup of sugar in an iron frying pan and cook slowly until a dark mahogany color and then add one and one-half cups of cold water, five tablespoons of cornstarch dissolved in the water, two-thirds cup of sugar, two table-

His Trade Training. The detail had just arrived at the front lines when the captain looked around and noticed a private, hatless and coatless.

"Where's the rest of your uniform?" he demanded.

"Back where we came from."

"Go back and get it."

The private vanished and later reappeared, correctly uniformed, but without his rifle.

"Where's your gun?"

"Put it back where we came from."

"Ten!" bellowed the captain: "You're a fine soldier. What were you doing with that rifle?"

"The number's assistant."

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"Yes, darling; and it shall be a part of my life to surround you with every comfort and to anticipate every wish."

"How good of you, Harry! I'll be on \$15 a week, too."

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