

# THE STROLLERS

By **FREDERIC S. ISHAM**,  
Author of "Under the Rose"

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His mind was active. His thoughts dwelt upon the soldier's reticence, his disinclination to make acquaintances and the coldness with which he had received his Marquis's advances in the Shadanga valley. Why, asked Mauville, lying there and putting the pieces of the tale together, did not Saint-Prospere remain with his new found friends, the enemies of his country? Because, came the answer, Abd-el-Kader, the patriot of Algerian independence, had been captured, and the subjection of the country had followed. Since Algeria had become a French colony, where could Saint-Prospere have found a safer asylum than in America? Where more secure from "that chosen curse" for the man who owes his soul to his country's foe?

In his impatience to possess the promised proof he day passed all too slowly. He even hoped the count would call, although that worthy brought with him all the "dazzling devices, sweet poison and deadly sin" of lubrication. But the count, like a poor friend, was absent when wanted, and it was a distinct relief to the land baron when Francois appeared at his apartments in the evening with a buff colored envelope, which he handed to him.

"The suppressed report?" asked the latter, weighing it in his hand.  
"No, monsieur; I could not find that. My master must have destroyed it."  
The land baron made a gesture of disappointment and irritation.  
"But this," Francois hastened to add, "is a letter from the Duc d'Anjou, governor of Algeria, to the Marquis de Ligne, describing the affair. Monsieur will find it equally as satisfactory. I am sure."

"How did you get it?" said the patron thoughtfully.  
"My master left the keys on the dresser."

"And if he misses this letter?"  
"Oh, monsieur, I grieve my master is so ill he could not miss anything but his ailments. These he would willingly dispense with. My poor master!"  
"There! Take your long, hypocritical face out of my sight!" said Mauville curtly, at the same time handing him the promised reward, which Francois calmly accepted.

## CHAPTER XXII

THE city, bustling and animated by day, like an energetic housewife, was at night a gay delectable, awakening to new life and excitement. The clerk betook himself to his bowling or billiards and the mechanic to the cinema, while beauty and fashion repaired to the concert room or to the Opera. Francois to listen to Halcyon or Donizetti. Restless Americans or Irishmen rubbed elbows with the burring Frenchman or Spaniard, and the dignified creole gentleman of leisure alone was wrapped in a pleat of dignity, computing probably the interest he drew on money loaned these audacious foreigners.

Soldiers who had been granted leave of absence or had slipped the guard at the camp on Andrew Jackson's battle ground swaggered through the streets. The change from a diet of pork and beans and army hard tack was so marked that Uncle Sam's young men threw restraint to the winds, took the mask balls by storm and gallantly as called and made the "ladies" of the Dominion Brewery Company.

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the fair sex. Eager to exchange their likeable life in camp for the active campaign in Mexico, it was small wonder they relished their impatience by many a valiant dash into the hospitable town.

"Carriages drove by with a rattle and a clatter, revealing a beaming smile. She was not silent as a mouse, glimpse of some beauty with full, dark eyes. Vendors of flowers impudently the passively, doing a brisk business; the oyster and coffee stands reminded the spectator of a thoroughfare in London on a Saturday night, with the people congregating about the street stalls, but the brilliantly illuminated places of amusement, with their careless patrons plainly apparent to all from without, resembled rather a bohemian scene in the metropolis of France. "Probably," says a skeptical chronicler, "here and there are quiet drawing rooms and tranquil fireplaces, where domestic love is a chaste, presiding goddess." But the writer merely presumes such might have been the case, and it is evident from his manner of expression he offers the suggestion of afterthought charity, with some "outrils in his mind. Certainly he never, personally encountered the chaste goddess of the hearth or he would have qualified his words and made his statement more positive.



From the life of the streets the land baron turned into a well lighted entrance, passing into a large, luxurious furnished saloon, at one end of which stood a table somewhat resembling a roulette board. Seated on one side was the phlegmatic cashier and opposite him the dealer, equally impassive. Unlike Paris, the popular New Orleans game, no deal box was needed, the dealer holding the cards in his hand, while a cavity in the center of the table contained a basket, where the cards, once used were thrown. A large chandelier cast a brilliant light upon the scene.

"Messieurs, faites vos jeux," drawled the monotonous voice of the dealer, and expectation was keenly written on the faces of the double circle of players. As the dealer began to shuffle together six packs of cards and place them in a row on the table he called out:  
"Nothing more goes, gentlemen!"  
The rapidity with which the cashier counted the winnings at a distance and showed them here and there, with the loud rake was amazing and bewildering to the novice risking a few gold pieces for the first time on the altar of chance.

"Oh, dear!" said a light feminine voice as the rapacious rake unceremoniously drew in a poor, diminutive pile of gold. "Why did I play? Isn't it provoking!"  
"You have my sympathy, Mistress Susan," breathed a voice near her. Looking around, she had the grace to blush becomingly and approached Mauville with an expressive gesture, leaning Adonis and Kate at the table.  
"Don't be shocked, Mr. Mauville," she began hurriedly. "We were told it was among the sights, and, having natural curiosity,"  
"I understand. Armed with right common sense, why should not one go anywhere?"  
"But I'm afraid I'm taking you from your play?"  
"I'm not going to play any more tonight."

"No, but—haven't I a cent. That miserable table has robbed me of everything. All I have left"—pitiously—"are the clothes on my back."  
"Just so," he agreed. "But it might have been worse."  
"How?" in dismay. "Didn't that stony looking man take in my last gold piece? He didn't even look sorry, either. But what is the matter with your arm?" The land baron's expression became ominous. "You seek hands with your left hand. Oh, I see the duel!"  
"How did you hear about it?" asked Mauville irritably.  
"Oh, in a roundabout way. Murder will out! And Constance—she was so suspicious about Mr. Saint-Prospere, but I'm afraid, I believe, because he—" with a laugh—"came off victoriously."

Susan's fratricide, although accompanied by innocent glances from her blue eyes, was sometimes the most irritating thing in the world, and the land baron, goaded beyond endurance, now threw

off his careless manner and swore in an undertone by "every devil in Satan's calendar."  
"Can you not reserve your colloquy until you leave me?" observed Susan sweetly. "Otherwise—"  
"I regret to have shocked your ladyship," he murmured apologetically.  
"I forgive you," raising her guileless eyes. "When I think of the provocation I do not blame you so much."  
"That is more than people do in your case," muttered the land baron savagely.  
Susan's hand trembled. "What do you mean?" she asked, not without apprehension regarding his answer.  
"Oh, that affair with the young officer, the lad who was killed in the duel, you know?"  
Her composure forsake her for the moment, and she bit her lip cruelly.  
"Don't," she whispered. "I am not to blame. I never dreamed it would go so far. Why should people—"  
"Why?" he interposed ironically.  
"Susan pulled herself together. "Yes, why?" she repeated defiantly. "Can women prevent men from making fools of themselves any more than they can prevent them from amusing themselves as they will? Today it is this tomorrow another. At length—bitterly—"a woman comes to consider herself only a toy."

Her companion regarded her curiously. "Well, well," he ejaculated. "Lying at cards doesn't agree with your temper."  
"Nor being worried by Saint-Prospere with yours," she retorted quickly.  
Mauville looked irritated, but Susan, feeling that she had retailed in ample measure, recovered her usual equanimity of temper and placed a conciliatory hand sympathetically on his arm.  
"I have both had a good deal to try us, haven't we? But how stupid men are!" she added suddenly. "As if you could not find other consolation!"  
He directed toward her an inquiring glance.  
"Some time ago, while I was acting in London," resumed Susan thoughtfully, "the leading lady refused to receive the attentions of a certain odious English lord. She was to make her appearance in a piece upon which her reputation was staked. Mark what happened. She was hissed—hissed from the stage. My lord led this hostile demonstration, and all his hired claqueurs joined in. She was ruined; ruined!" concluded Susan, smiling amiably.  
"You are ingenious, Mistress Susan, not to say a trifle diabolical. Your plan!"  
She opened her eyes widely. "I have suggested no plan," she interrupted hurriedly.  
"Well, let us sit down and I will tell you about a French officer who—but here is a quiet corner, Mistress Susan, and if you will promise not to repeat if I will regale you with a bit of interesting gossip."  
"I promise, they always do," she laughed.  
For such a frivolous lady Susan was an excellent listener. She who on occasions chattered like a magpie was now silent as a mouse, drinking in the other's words with parted lips and sparkling eyes. First he showed her the letter Francois had brought him. Unmarked by postal indications, the missive had evidently been entrusted to a private messenger of the governor whose seal it bore. Dated about three years previously, it was written in a somewhat illegible but not unintelligible scrawl, the duke's own handwriting.  
"I send you, my dear marquis," began the duke, "a copy of the secret report of the military tribunal appointed to investigate the charges against your kinsman, Lieutenant Saint-Prospere, and here is one of enigma of treason."  
"Saint-Prospere and Abd-el-Kader met near the tomb of a marabout. From him the French officer received a famous ruby which he thrust beneath his zaboot, the first fee of their compact. That night, when the town lay sleeping, a turbaned host armed with yaghasms stole through the flowering casements. The gate opened to them; they swarmed within. In a distance, the ruthless invaders cut them down while they were sleeping or before they could sound the alarm. The bravest blood of France flowed lavishly in the face of the treacherous onslaught—blood of men who had been his fastest friends, among whom he had been so popular for his dauntless courage and devil may care temerity. But a period, fearfully brief, and the beloved tricolor was trampled in the dust. The barbarian flag of the emir floated in its place."  
"All these particulars and the part Saint-Prospere played in the terrible drama Abd-el-Kader, who is now our prisoner, has himself confessed. The necessity for secrecy you, my dear marquis, will appreciate. The publicity of the affair now would work incalculable injury to the nation. It is imperative to preserve the army from the taint of scandal. The nation hangs on a thread. God knows there is iniquity abroad. I, who have labored for the honor of France and planted her flag in distant lands, look for defeat not through want of bravery, but from internal causes. A matter like this might lead to a popular uprising against the army. Therefore the king will it shall be buried by his faithful servants."  
As Mauville proceeded Susan remained motionless, but when he concluded she leaned back with a pleased smile.  
"Will he said that?"  
"How plausibly veiled he is!" she exclaimed.  
"Plausibly, indeed!" repeated the land baron.  
"And he carries it without a twinge! What a petrified conscience! That accounts for his unwillingness to talk

about Africa," went on Susan. "Soldiers, as a rule, you know like to tell all about their sanguinary exploits. But the treated field was a forbidden topic with him. And once when I asked him about Algiers he was almost rudely evasive."  
"He probably lives in constant fear his secret will become known," said Mauville thoughtfully. "As a matter of fact, the law provides that no person is to be indicted for treason unless within three years after the offense. The tribunal did not return an indictment. The three years have just expired. Did he come to America to make sure of these three years?"  
But Susan's thoughts had flitted to another feature of the story.  
"How strange my marquis should be connected with the case! What an odd compliment monger he was! He vowed he was deeply smitten with me."  
"And then went home and took to his bed," added Mauville grimly.  
"You wretch!" said the young woman playfully. "So that is the reason the dear old molly coddle did not take me to any of the gay suppers he promised? Is it not strange Saint-Prospere has not met him?"  
"You forget the marquis has been confined to his room since his brief, but disastrous, courtship of you. His infatuation seems to have brought him to the verge of dissolution."  
"Was it not worth the price?" she retorted, rising. "But I see my sister and Adonis are going, so I must be off too. So glad to have met you!"  
"You are no longer angry with me?"  
"No, you are very nice," she said. "And you have forgiven me?"  
"Need you ask?" pressing her hand. "Good evening, Mistress Susan!"  
"Good evening. Oh, by the way, I have an appointment with Constance to rehearse a little scene together this evening. Would you mind loaning me that letter?"  
"With pleasure, but remember your promise!"  
"Promise?" repeated the young woman.  
"Not to tell."  
"Oh, of course," said Susan.  
"But if you should?"  
"Then?"  
"Then you might say the marquis your friend and admirer, gave you the letter. It would, perhaps, be easier for you to account for it than for me."  
Susan's feet fairly danced as she flew toward the St. Charles and burst into Constance's room, breathless and new importance. She remained there for some time, and when she left it was noteworthy her spirits were still high.

"It is strange," said the marquis half to himself, "what could have become of it. I destroyed other papers, but not that. You are sure, Francois, you did not steal it?"  
By this time the servant's knees began to tremble, and had the marquis' eyesight been better he could not have failed to detect the other's agitation. But the valet assumed a bold front as he asked:  
"Why should I have stolen it?"  
"True, why," grumbled the marquis. "It would be of no service to you. No; you didn't take it. I believe you honest in this case."  
"Thank you, my lord."  
"After all, what does it matter?" muttered the nobleman to himself. "What's in a good name today, with traitors within and traitors without? 'Tis love's labor lost to have protected it. We've fostered a military nest of traitors. The scorpions will be faithful to nothing but their own ends. They'll fight for any master."  
Recalled to his purpose of attending the play by Francois' bringing from the wardrobe sundry articles of attire, the marquis underwent an elaborate toilet, recollecting his good humor as this complicated operation proceeded. Indeed by the time it had reached a triumphant end and the valet had set the marquis before a mirror the latter had forgotten his dissatisfaction at the government in his pleasure with himself.

"Too much excitement is dangerous. It's been mumbled. 'I am afraid there will be none at all.' A stage struck young woman, a doll-like face probably, a milk and water performance! Now, in the old days actors were artists. Yes, artists," he repeated as if he had struck a chord that vibrated in his memory.  
Arriving at the theater, he was surprised at the scene of animation—the line of carriages, the crowd about the doors and in the entrance hall. Evidently the city eagerly sought novelty and Barnes' company offering new diversion after many weeks of opera drew a fair proportion of pleasure seekers to the portals of the drama. The noise of rattling wheels and the banging of carriage doors, the aspect of many fair ladies, irreproachably gowned; the confusion of voices from vendors hovering near the gallery entrance, imparted a cosmopolitan atmosphere to the surroundings.

"You'd think some well known player was going to appear. Francois," grumbled the marquis as he thrust his head out of a Chesterfield to look for the actor of the Strand. And there's an orange girl, a dusky Peggy!"  
The vehicle of the nobleman drew up before the brilliantly lighted entrance. Mincefully the marquis dismounted, assisted by the valet. Within he was met by a lodge director, who with the airs of a Chesterfield bowed the people in and out.  
"Your ticket, sir," said this courteous individual, scraping unusually low.  
The marquis waved his hand toward his man, and Francois produced the box of the nobleman settled himself in an easy chair, after which he stared indelicately and inquisitively around him.

To be Continued.  
Beware of the individual who is lost to all sense of shame.

## CHAPTER XXIII

AVERTABLE dramatic poet is grim Destiny, making with equal facility tragedy, farce, burlesque, mask or mystery. The world is his lun, and, like the wandering master of lunatics, he sets up his stage in the courtyard beneath the windows of mortals, takes out his figures and evokes charming comedies, stirring melodramas, spirited baronquades and moving diversions. But it is in tragedy his constructive ability is especially apparent, and his characters, tripping along unperceived in the sunny byways, are suddenly confronted by the terrifying mask and realize life is not all pleasant pastime and that the Greek philosophy of retribution is nature's law, preserving the unities. When the time comes the master of events, adjusting them in prescribed lines, reaches by stern obligation the avoidless conclusion.  
Consulting no law but his own will, the Marquis de Ligne had lived as though he were the autocrat of fate itself instead of one of its servants, and therefore was surprised when the venerable playwright prepared the unexpected denouement. In pursuance of this end it was decreed by the imperious and incontestable dramatist of the human family that this crabbled,

"Impossible!" he murmured, "vicious, antiquated marionettes should wind his way to the St. Charles on a particular evening. Since the day at the races the eccentric nobleman had been ill and confined to his room, but now he was beginning to hobble around, and, immediately with returning strength, sought diversion."  
"Francois," he said, "what is there at the theater tonight?"  
"Comic opera, my lord."  
The marquis made a grimace. "Comic opera outside of Paris," he exclaimed, with a shrug of the shoulders. "A new actress makes her debut at the St. Charles."  
"Let it be the debut, then! Perhaps she will fall, and that will amuse me."  
"Yes, my lord." But Francois became just a shade paler.



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SENATOR HANNA  
Tribute and Criticism by Herbert S. Bigelow in One of His Popular Sermons.  
Cincinnati, O., Feb. 21.—At the Vine Street Congregational Church this morning the pastor, Herbert S. Bigelow, took for his subject, "Senator Hanna." He said in part:  
One of Senator Hanna's conspicuous virtues was plainness of speech. His example is a rebuke to those who are betrayed by his death into paying him forced and evasive tributes. The character of his life is not changed by his death. The political principles which he championed remain the same.  
Quarrel With Principle.  
The mystery of death, for those summons we all wait, has sobered the judgment and touched the heart of every sincere opponent. We feel to-day what we should never forget, that our quarrel is not with men, but with principles. No where is there more need than in the realm of politics, of the injunction, "Judge not, that ye be not judged." The zealous advocate is prone to impugn the motives of those who oppose the truth he sees. Psychology should teach him the error of this. It is one of the strangest and yet one of the commonest facts of history that men of unquestioned ability and virtue have remained blind to the most obvious of truths. We should not be led for astray if we make a rule always to assume the sincerity of our opponent. Then earnestness will never degenerate into bigotry and calumny will never be used for argument. We remember Lowell's advice to call tyrants tyrants.  
"For men in earnest have no time to waste in petting fig-leaves for the naked truth."  
We remember, too, the scathing words in which the Pharisees of old were reprimanded by the gentlest of men. Yet, it is a terrible responsibility one takes when he points his finger at his fellow and says, "Hypocrite!" if we rightly estimate the hypnotic influence of training and environment, we shall be able to explain the opinions of men without questioning their sincerity.  
Hanna's Sincerity.  
We recall Boss Tweed's complaint that the cartoons showed him in stripes so much that the people came to think he ought to be in prison. Senator Hanna lived down the dollar mark. If, a few years ago, he had announced the conversion of his life to the cause of industrial peace, the world would have answered with a cynical smile. To-day there is little doubt that he was in earnest.  
Defective Statesmanship.  
To the hour of his death, however, Senator Hanna exercised as altogether wrong and revolutionary the plan of Henry George to clear the way for industrial peace by the abolition of land ownership. He did not see the relation of the land question to the labor revolt. The owners of the bare land in New York City take nearly two hundred million dollars a year—a grand rent. Capital and labor counsel over what is left. These two hundred millions represent social values which are appropriated by individuals.  
Basis of Peace.  
Thirty years ago, in Iowa, a farm hand got \$20 a month. He will not get more to-day. But now, to become an in-

dependent farmer, he must pay from \$50 to \$75 for land worth \$10. Owing to the steady appreciation of land values it is increasingly difficult for capital and labor to find profitable employment. The door of hope is being closed to those who toil, while capital that is invested in monopoly privileges yields an increasing return. There can be no statesmanship worthy the name which ignores this tremendous factor in the industrial problem. Men will come and men will go, but industrial strife will not be abated until we have statesmen who will dig through the same heaps of monopoly and lay the temple of industrial peace on the solid rock of justice.

PARRY HOT AIR  
What Constitutes a Patriotic Workman and Employer.  
An organization which is ashamed to back up its opinions by a signature is circulating the following reply widely throughout Canada and the United States:  
The Rights of Workmen.  
He can join a labor organization if he sees fit to do so.  
He can refuse to join a labor organization.  
He has a right to labor whether he belongs to a union or not.  
No employer has a right to refuse a man employment because he does not belong to a labor organization, or because he is a member of a labor organization.  
No workman is a good, patriotic or loyal citizen who refuses to work with a brother workman because he is not a member of his union.  
An organization which has anything in its constitution, its by-laws, obligations, ritual, secret work or policy, that causes its members to refuse to work with another workman because he does not and will not join said organization, is at enmity with the Government and the United States, its constitution and the very spirit of our free institutions. Such organization is revolutionary and should be suppressed.  
An employer who will not employ a man except he belongs to, or promises to join one of these revolutionary societies, is not a good citizen, and loses money more than he does his country or its institutions.  
An organization of employers that enters into an agreement to employ only members of a labor organization does an illegal act, contrary to the constitution of this country, and together with the labor organization becomes revolutionary in its character.

This has no signature, but bears all the earmarks of the Parry agitators. According to the document, you are unpatriotic unless you are a slave to your master the capitalist. An employer who treats with a union is a traitor. They have a lot of traitors in the United States rated by the Parry standard.  
If we would beg Mr. Parry's permission to live and do several other dirty and unclean actions, we would then to our wives and families, we would then become patriotic citizens and entitled to gather up the crumbs which fall from rich man Parry's bountiful table.  
If a man can find no excuse for himself, his wife will find it for him.  
The men is mightier than the sword, but both together are feeble compared to the hairpin.  
Every married man knows exactly how many straws his cigar bill for a week would buy."

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