

# The Castle Comedy

By THOMPSON BUCHANAN

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more politeness. Still, Sir John, angry at being baffled, struggled desperately with the panel. Now the Frenchman was turned that way.

"Yes," he said, "I tried only to disarm monster, but he was violent, and with his inimitable shrug, 'I was forced to wound him slightly.' The prisoner's tone expressed just a passing regret at having been compelled to perform a small, disagreeable duty.

"Lying comes easy to Frenchmen," blurted Sir John at the panel.

"And one must lie to catch a liar," retorted the other, "but—eh bien! as the French say—I'm glad the little comedy is played out."

The Englishman looked surprised.

"Comedy played out?" he sneered, with British candor. "Not till you're hanged."

"I spoke of this comedy," said Durbarr, smiling with quiet amusement, sure in the consciousness of something yet to come.

Sir John turned toward him, puzzled now.

"I don't see that you have cause for laughter."

"Sir John does not see everything," answered the old dancing master gently. "But it is just as I have said. He unbent his coat, took from the inside pocket the newspaper containing the story about 'French Percy' and held it toward Sir John.

"Will monsieur read? Possibly this may explain many things."

Winemering came over quickly to take the paper. He stood beside the table on the Frenchman's right to read it. May Percy, eager, anxious, had stolen to his other side. As Sir John read, her eyes questioned her lover's, but his quick smile of encouragement told her only to be brave and wait.

"Sir John looked up from his reading. 'Good! Good!' he cried. 'We English can always fool you dull French spies. The government is awake.'"

"And, as usual, when awake it played the fool," broke in the Frenchman bitterly. "This, now—'It is safe to wager that 'French Percy' will fall in this, his last desperate undertaking, as if he should get to the castle, will certainly be captured. The place is now being watched.' The reader cast the paper down angrily. 'Fools! Idiots! That's what spoiled it.'"

"Spoiled it?" questioned Sir John. "Yes," blurted Durbarr, angry now clear through. "spoiled it, I said. Send a man down here to watch, then publish stuff."

"What's this? What do you mean?" interrupted the slower Englishman, while even Mistress Percy began to show some signs of uneasiness.

"Mean?" ejaculated Durbarr. "I mean that while I fooled with a country bumpkin over his pastoral love affair because of this paper 'French Percy' slipped through my fingers."

Sir John fell back to gaze at him in angry, blank amazement. "French Percy" gone! he blurted. "All know you are the renegade himself."

The other had recovered his temper by this time. Now he shrugged his shoulders.

"Only when it pleased me. I'm no more 'French Percy' than I am Gaston Durbarr. And with his old mocking laugh he looked at the two astonished faces before him. May Percy fell away from him with a little cry of horror.

"Who? What? was all Sir John could mutter stupidly.

The self confessed stranger drew himself up and bowed to them both deeply. "Jacques Fournay, the government's private emissary, at your service," he said.

"Jacques Fournay! Wellington's spy?" blurted Sir John.

Mistress Percy looked for a moment at the Frenchman, faint and amazed, then she turned to her lover, clasped his hand and buried her face in his arms upon the table. The acknowledged spy appeared nettled. He drew a small case out of his coat pocket and extracted therefrom a bit of old paper, which he spread out and offered to the Englishman.

"Read this, sir, and change your mind." Then as Sir John glanced at it he added aloud, "Mistress Percy might like to hear."

The girl who had rested in the man's arms so few minutes before heard Sir John read of her lover:

"This is to certify that the bearer, Jacques Fournay, is a faithful, loyal and highly efficient officer in the British service. All soldiers and loyal subjects whom he may meet are hereby commanded to do everything in their power to aid him in whatever way he may desire, especially in the matter of the capture of the notorious outlaw and spy 'French Percy.' This order is to be considered a pass through all lines and is to serve as a requisition in case anything is needed by the bearer. All soldiers will see that it is duly honored. It will be shown only in case of grave necessity. WELLINGTON.

General Commanding.

Up and down, back and forth, before the door of the waiting chamber paced Captain Thornecliffe and Sir Henry Percy, laboring in earnest argument.

"You, Captain Thornecliffe, you have fought the French, you have bled for England, yet you give such counsel. I cannot understand it."

Captain Thornecliffe dropped his hand with light touch on the old baronet's arm before replying sternly. "And believe me, Sir Henry, that is the very reason I advise you to permit his escape. The fighters are not the haters, Sir Henry."

The older one shook off the restraining hand angrily.

"But," he protested, "this man humbled you and the British arms in outrageous fashion. Do you forget the stealing of the headquarters papers that early morning in the Spanish pass?"

On the instant flashed back the soldier's question, "When came it the part of an English gentleman to bear malice against a gallant enemy?"

Sir Henry's face grew hard at the re-

ouk. His hands began to clench and unclench rapidly. He was working fast into a characteristic rage.

"Your duty, Captain Thornecliffe!"

"Will be in nowise evaded by letting this man go," broke in the soldier.

"He is counted one of the dangerous men in the French army."

"He is your cousin, a brave gentleman, here on private business and practically your guest," was the retort.

"He is an enemy to England, the minion of the Corsican spawn and practically a spy. Don't presume to touch me my duty, sir," roared the head of the Percys, advancing with threatening fist upon the soldier. But the man who had stood before the French Percy's sword did not fear the English one's anger. Instead—calm, contemptuous, accusing—he faced the old man down.

"Your cousin disclosed himself to defend your daughter's honor, Sir Henry Percy, and that done, he fought no more, though he might easily have got away. You seem to have forgotten that."

Sir Henry stood silent, overwhelmed with argument, too angry for coherent speech. With increase of the Percy stubbornness Thornecliffe's temper had been rising steadily; but now, fighting hard, he kept sufficient self control to assume his quiet, convincing argument. He knew that behind that door he guarded two men, his friends, enemies to the death, faced each other before the woman they both loved. The door of heavy oak let through no sound. What was going forward within he could but surmise, only he knew there would be a tragedy should Sir Henry in his present mood cross the threshold or any one from within come forth. And so for the life of a brave enemy he had come to love the gallant English gentleman fought hard with his friends.

"Sir Henry"—the question came forth sharp and straight—"if Colonel Latapie were not in love with your daughter would you wish to see him meet a felon's end?"

That struck home. The father's eyes opened wide.

"By my soul, Captain Thornecliffe, you take strange liberties!"

The soldier diplomat went on, unheeding the interruption:

"And yet he is a brave gentleman and asked you for her fairly."

"Sir, I'll—How do you know that?" roared Sir Henry, taken quite off his guard.

Thornecliffe tried hard not to show his triumph.

"Because," he said simply, "Latapie is a French officer and a Percy. Besides a man does not often throw away his life needlessly for a woman he does not love. And—and—as he said this the pleader watched the old baronet carefully—"she loves him much, Sir Henry."

Mistress Percy's father fairly exploded in rage and sorrow.

"What! What! My daughter—my little May—marry a Frenchman, a Johnny Crepand, a frog eater! Yes—yes—that is what the scoundrel asked me. I'll own it, Thornecliffe. I had decided to allow him to escape because—because he is such a gallant rascal, and—and—with a burst of family pride—"after all, he is a Percy. You can't hurt the old stock, Thornecliffe, even with the weakening strain of the French blood. But marry May—may little May—take my only child over the water! Not that, Thornecliffe, not that. No one could ask that." The stern old voice trembled and broke.

A lump in his own throat, the soldier ventured to put his hand again, on the shoulder of the older man.

"But why, old friend," he questioned gently, "merely because your cousin loves your daughter should you let the hangman's noose dangle over one branch of your family tree? Is that quite fair?"

The head of the house laughed aloud in sudden revision of feeling.

"I was mad, Thornecliffe—mad!" he cried. "The boy is a Percy. That was the reason. Do you think a Percy would give up while he lives?"

Thornecliffe took a turn along the little passage and back again. It was the life of a brave man he wanted. The Frenchman must look out for his own love affairs, and besides his latent racial prejudice made the soldier feel that there was some justice in the father's words. Accordingly the pleader's next question was put carefully.

"Suppose—suppose, Sir Henry, Mistress May should marry Wilmerding? The Percys have two qualities—courage and honor. Your French cousin has proved that he possesses both. Marry her to Wilmerding tonight!"

"Tonight!" murmured Sir Henry blankly. "I told him, Durbarr, Percy, that, but I did not mean it. Tonight!"

"Tonight," insisted Thornecliffe. "It must be tonight. The soldiers you brought should be here now. Besides I recognized Wellington's spy, Fournay, in one of your French visitors yesterday. Now I know why he was here. Marry her to Wilmerding tonight, for not until she is married will the French Percy leave England. She will be safe from him then—and God help her!" muttered the soldier.

Sir Henry Percy drew a long breath of relief; then, with sudden feeling, gripped the soldier's hands impulsively.

"Thank you, Thornecliffe—thank you. You have kept me worthy of my name. I'll start for Sir Harry Johnston's at once and drive over tonight with the bishop. You—ah—you," with a wise nod, "you arrange things. And—may the good God speed the boy!" he ended softly.

Within the waiting chamber the self confessed spy stood laughing with cynical contempt at the girl he had won and the man he had conquered.

(To be continued.)

## ALEXANDER POPE

He Was Considered in His Day the Greatest of All Poets.

Few men of our day comprehend the "sounding intellectual position" held by Pope during the latter period of his life and for a long period after his death. There has never been anything approaching it in the history of our own literature or of any literature.

In the opinion of vast numbers he was not only the greatest English poet of his time, but the greatest English poet of all time; not merely the greatest of English poets, but the greatest of all poets that ever existed.

Even those who took the lowest estimate of his character—and such there were—admitted that he was the highest admiration for his genius. They expressed themselves with an extravagance of praise which astounded the modern reader, too apt to go to the other extreme of unwarranted depreciation. They did not content themselves, to him, belunged perfect greatness. It was assumed by his friends as a matter of course; it was conceded by the indifferent and even by those personally hostile. As one illustration out of many, a poem appeared in 1788, entitled "An Epistle to the Little Satyrist of Twickenham."

It was full of the severest reflections upon Pope's character. It spoke of him as an object of universal scorn. It charged him with being under the influence of ill nature, spleen, envy, malice, and avarice. Yet it admitted that not only in early youth did he surpass others, but that his powers had increased with advancing years.

Till to perfection you at last arriv'd, Which none have ever excell'd that ever liv'd.

There was no sentiment of a solitary individual. It was a widespread feeling at the time, and it did not die out suddenly. If anything, the belief increased in strength after Pope's death. We can get some idea of its force by the few verses summing up his character, which were immediately produced by the man against whom for a quarter of a century the poet had been directing the shafts of his satire. The year before Pope died Colley Cibber had been substituted in place of Theophilus in the "Dunciad." He had every reason to feel and express the bitterest resentment against the author of the satire, so far as a nature almost absolutely free from rancor could entertain such a sentiment.—T. R. Lounsbury in Scribner's.

## The Stag Hound's Secret.

Hounds with very fine noses are not and perhaps never have been too common. The hound that never loses the line, but threads his way through coverts, along roads and turns with a stag when the latter runs beside a hedge, is invaluable, and such hounds help greatly to the death of the stag. There is another quality which is invaluable and rare—the faculty of discriminating not only the scent of the quarry from that of all others, but of distinguishing the scent of the hunted animal from that of others of the same kind. When we consider how foxhounds in a well preserved country are allowed and perhaps sometimes even encouraged to change foxes it is remarkable that they should have retained any of this quality of their stag-hound ancestors. But the fact remains that of the drafts which make up in each dog develop the faculty of holding to the line in spite of the many temptations to change, thus reverting to the qualities of their ancestors.—T. F. Dale in Blackwood's Magazine.

## The Longest English Novel.

"Clarissa Harlowe," written by Samuel Richardson (1689-1761), and generally regarded as his masterpiece, is the longest novel in the English language. It ran to eight volumes, and in publishing it Richardson said: "Ashamed, as I am, of the prolixity, I thought I owed the public eight volumes in quantity for the price of seven." He knew very well that it was not a page too long for the public for which he wrote, and the result justified his faith in himself as an author and in the public appetite, which, created by himself in the first instance by his "Pamela," an earlier novel of great length, grew by what it fed upon. His third work, "Sir Charles Grandison," extended to seven volumes. "We do not," says Professor Masson, "read Richardson's novels now. These are the novels of eight to ten volumes, written in the tedious form of letters and recording conversations and meditations in which the story creeps on inch by inch without so much as an unexpected pistol shot or a trick of harlequin or pantalone to relieve the attention."

## How Words Change.

Words undergo all sorts of changes, not so much in form as in meaning. Their forms remain traceable, but the way in which many of them shift their meanings is very interesting and remarkable. Take our common word "resentment." It now means a manifestation of anger or displeasure. In its origin it meant almost precisely the opposite. It signified civil attention or recognition of a friendly act. To equivocate was at first merely to call two things by the same name, not to utter a falsehood. Hypocrite meant originally nothing but a player or actor and had no sinister meaning. Tinsel at first was made of the precious metals, and the word was in good repute till detection of repeated frauds caused its degradation. The word "admiration" once meant wonder merely. Now it also means approval and delight. There are thousands of words in English that thus have changed their significance for the worse. But their forms have changed little in many cases not at all.—Portland Oregonian.

## ALD. McDONALD GETS AFTER REEVES CO.

At City Council Manager of Abell Company Fights Request of Opposition Concern Committee Reports

M. T. Reeves the president of the

Reeves Mfg. Co., who have made their Canadian headquarters in this city appeared before the city council last evening and made application to have their warehouse and office building front on Eighth avenue. Mr. Reeves gave sound and convincing reasons why the city should grant the request, and while the majority of the board appeared to consider the request favorably, Ald. McDonald fought the proposition to the last ditch, but was finally defeated on division, and the Reeves company will now arrange their building plans accordingly and proceed with the construction at once. It would have been much better had Ald. McDonald refrained from opposing as he did the request of President Reeves, for as manager of an opposition concern it looked too much like using his position at the board for business purposes, and if any such thought influenced his attitude it was certainly a very small game.

A mild sensation was created round the board by Ald. Sowen asking whether the city has any control of the salary of the police magistrate, and he gave notice of motion that the salary be discontinued.

Another notice of motion was given by Ald. Cowan as follows:

That the council should petition the Legislative Assembly at its next sitting to amend the existing law to confer on the council the power of issuing debentures to the amount of \$15,000, the said debentures to be used in installing certain water drainage connections required by householders who were not in a position to remit the entire cost immediately on completion of the work, and that repayment should be made in seven equal annual payments.

The finance committee also recommended (1) That a grant of two hundred dollars be made to the Provincial Rifle association towards the prizes to be given by that association to be competed for at the rifle shooting competition to be held at the barracks on Aug. 27, to 29.

(2) That the application of the Tennis Club for a grant of a cup for the Provincial Tennis Tournament to be held at Regina in September, be granted and that the chairman be authorized to choose one, at a cost not to exceed \$50.

(3) That a grant of \$100 be made to the Regina Trades and Labor Council towards the prizes to be given by them for the Provincial Labor celebration on Labor day.

(4) That the city treasurer be authorized to issue a cheque for \$500 being the balance of the grant made to the board of trade for this year.

Waterworks

Ald. Cowan reported for his committee recommending:

(1) That the report of the city clerk with reference to the outstanding water account against the C.P.R. for the closets at the depot and the watering of coaches, and showing a balance due to the city of \$64, be accepted and that the treasurer be instructed to issue an account therefor to Supt. Brownlee.

(2) Messrs. Wm. Newman & Co., having reported that they had struck quicksand when digging foundations for the new compensating basin, and the city engineer having reported thereon, the committee secured the services of Mr. O. W. Smith, consulting engineer, Toronto, formerly engineer of the waterworks, to visit the site of the basin and report on the foundation, which he did and recommended that the work be carried out as suggested in his report.

(3) Mr. N. B. Molnais of the municipal Construction Co. having attended a committee meeting and stated that their firm were ready to go on with their contract and in view of the fact that the city engineer had stated that he was unable to get men to do the work by day labor it was agreed to recommend that the Municipal Construction Co. be permitted to go on with their work to lay the pipe.

Ald. Kramer said it seemed to him rather strange that the city engineer could not get men to undertake the work referred to. There was "a screw loose somewhere." Day after day men came to him looking for work.

Ald. Peverett did not think sufficient effort had been directed to get men.

The mayor said he thought the instruction was to hire employees at \$2 per day; but they were not to be had at that price. This view seemed to be borne out by the fact that men on another contract struck that day for \$2.25. The report was adopted.

Fire, Light and Power

Ald. Ball reported:

(1) That in accordance with the city electrician's report, dated 14th inst., the tender of Darling Bros., Ltd., of Montreal, for a Webster star vacuum feed water heater for \$700 f.o.b., Montreal, be accepted.

(2) That in accordance with the city electrician's report dated 17th inst., the tender of H. W. Petrie, Toronto, for a surface condenser, including combined air circulating pump for \$1600 f.o.b., Toronto be accepted.

(3) That in accordance with the city electrician's report dated 17th inst., the tender of H. W. Petrie for a fan and engine for \$650 f.o.b., at Montreal be accepted.

Health and Relief

Ald. Thomson reported recommending:

(1) That the council take over the Regina Victoria Hospital and assume the indebtedness of that institution, amounting to \$6000, so soon as the

hospital board are ready a transfer to the city and that the city solicitor be instructed to prepare a by-law authorizing the payment of said indebtedness on receipt of said transfer.

Ald. Thompson moved the adoption of the report.

Ald. Peverett advised the insertion of the following clause, to follow the word "transfer": "conveying to the city free of all incumbrances and on the production of the proper title."

The mover accepted the addition and the report was adopted.

Cemetery

Ald. Kusch reporting for his committee, moved:

(1) That the tender of Messrs. Murphy & Martin to build the mortuary chapel at the cemetery with pressed brick face for \$7,434 be accepted and their deposit cheque be returned as soon as the contract is prepared by the city solicitor and a start made on the work.

(2) That the city engineer be instructed to stake out the site for the mortuary on the ground recently acquired from the Dominion government.

(3) That the council record their high appreciation of the gift of a free grant by the Dominion government to the city of Regina of 66.55 acres of land adjoining the Regina cemetery for the purpose of extending the cemetery and that the thanks of the council on behalf of themselves and the citizens of Regina be tendered therefore by the city clerk to the Dominion government and particularly to Sir Wilfrid Laurier for the active interest he has displayed in securing this gift to Regina.

An amendment, proposed by Ald. Ball, to substitute sand lime brick for the pressed variety was defeated and the report adopted on the motion of Ald. Kusch.

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