

GASTON OF THE FERRY

(Continued from page 8.)

about to rise. And shortly after he had gone to bed the tempest burst in all its fury.

Suddenly his bell rang loudly.

"I cannot cross now," he cried, throwing up his window. "For I dare not tempt God."

"Nor the devil?" laughed a man's voice. "Don't be a fool. You who love, listen to this; a woman's life rests on your decision! If you cross you save her!"

Gaston raised his eyes to Yvonne's distant window. The light burned steadily in it. He leaned further out. "I'll come," he murmured to the two cloaked figures below.

The boat was half way across when the undercurrents of the river began to toss it unmercifully. An angry gust of wind wrenched the man's cloak from his shoulders, and tore the woman's veil aside.

At that moment the heavens flamed and Gaston recognized the travellers.

The woman was Yvonne; the man Raoul de Montant. Gaston dropped his oars and laid his hand on Raoul's shoulder.

"I gave you alms once," he said sternly, "and now you rob me of my most precious belonging. Is that the way you pay your debts?"

"My debt!" sneered Raoul, "I paid it some hours ago."

Gaston pulled a gold coin from his pocket and flung it in Raoul's face. The latter drew his dagger. Gaston did likewise.

It was a strange fight. The boat, no longer guided by Gaston's skilful hand, rolled so violently that the fighters had difficulty in standing, whilst Yvonne, frightened, fainted and slipped to the bottom of the boat.

"Give her up!" cried Gaston as he threw Raoul.

"She loves me!" smiled Raoul.

"Ah! She loves you!" reiterated Gaston hesitating.

"Yes! She loves me!" cried Raoul.

At this moment the boat struck against a rock and broke athwart. Raoul thought of himself and seized a piece of wreckage. Gaston thought of Yvonne, who had recovered consciousness, and held her up until a wave threw them close to the portion of boat to which Raoul clung, exclaiming: "There is only room for two here."

Gaston raised his arm to strike Raoul, who, without attempting to defend himself, repeated triumphantly, "She loves me!"

"Yvonne," cried Gaston, "is it true?"

"Yes," she sobbed.

For a few seconds a dead silence succeeded her answer. Then murmuring:

"Lord Raoul, make her happy," Gaston pushed Yvonne towards his rival, loosened his hold of the timber and slid silently into the seething waters.

"Oh Gaston! Gaston!" called Yvonne, in a voice full of remorse.

The wind brought a distant adieu, and then nothing more was heard but the uproar of the tempest.

Seeing the Town.—"To-morrow you shall see our public library. It is a magnificent building."

"I'll take your word for it. What have you got in the way of a ball team?"—Washington Herald.

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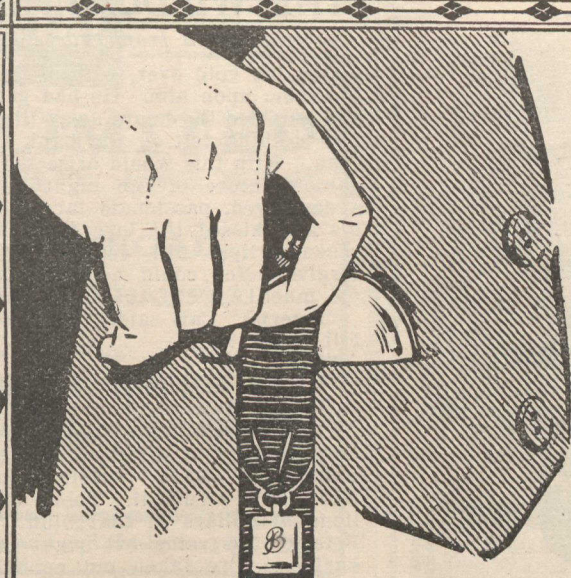
No Monopolist.—"That girl in the breakers is evidently in distress. Why don't you swim to her rescue?"

"It would be very bad form. I rescued her yesterday."—Kansas City Journal.

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This One is on Hugh.—"When I came into the Union Station the other morning, after travelling all night," said Hugh Reilly, at the Commercial Club, "I went into the barber shop. 'When you spend the night in a sleeping car,' I said to the barber, 'it doesn't improve your personal appearance, does it?'"

"Well," said he, as he looked me over, "I don't know how you looked when you started, but perhaps you're right."—Washington Herald.



The Test of Time and Wear

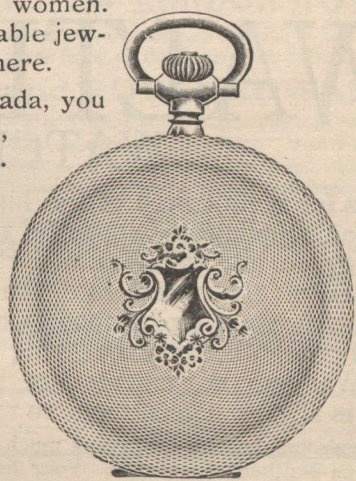
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