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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 France to make some needful inquiries about the Dartigny family. The story recalls the events of the French Revolution.

CHAPTER V.

Another Victim.

As Remy waited in the dining-hall for the Marquis to join him he ran over in his mind their program. With his hands clasped lightly behind his back he paced up and down the long room, his eyes fixed on the wall before him. Suddenly he stopped, then walked swiftly to the panelling of the wall to the right of the fire-place.

The panels were large and plain, with the exception of a minute beading and a carved device at the corners. It was the latter which had caught Remy's eye—a device conventional enough, of a cornucopia shedding its wealth of fruit. It was the carved form of an apple which brought vividly to the young man the scene of the night before.

He advanced his hand to touch it when a voice came from the doorway, and turning quickly Remy saw the Marquis—a new Marquis, looking like a provincial merchant, in a long black frock-coat of coarse fustian, black cloth breeches, stockings and well-worn buckled shoes.

"The carriage waits, Monsieur de Perancourt," he said, smiling, and Remy, glancing from the window, saw drawn up in the courtyard a shabby, covered cart, with broken and patched harness, and filled with cases and boxes packed in straw. This was the first step in the journey to the "Taverne de la Lune" at Fecamp.

"Really, monsieur, it seems to me that the Comedie Francaise lost a likely recruit when Remy Perancourt took to the profession of arms."

The young man, flattered, leaned back in his chair and laughted.

"Come, Monsieur le Marquis, the game's been easy. It's poor sport to make fools of these provincials, these jacks-in-office, who tie a three-colored sash around their shapeless figures and proclaim themselves the friends of the people. They can no more penetrate the curtain of their self-importance than—pah!"

The fugitives had rested since midday. They were a few leagues beyond Bolbec, and the sight of the "Croix d'Argent," which lay invitingly back from the road, had proved too attractive to the travel-worn men. The rain had poured down incessantly and pitilessly, and the interminable Normandy roads had been for the last few hours rivers of mud and at points almost impassable. The flat fields of the countryside lay desolate to the horizon and the stately rows of poplars loomed up, gray silhouettes, in the mist.

But the little room of the "Croix d'Argent" told nothing of the dreariness without. The light from the wood fire glinted pleasantly on the dark furniture and on the brass and china of the dresser. It was now past ten and the remains of a meal still littered the table; on the shelf over the fireplace two candles burned steadily in their brass stands.

In the kitchen behind the hostess could be heard humming a love-song, a song which was acting as a lullaby on the Marquis, who, comfortably seated in a corner of the settle, was blinking at the flames. A half-empty bottle of excellent port stood at Remy's elbow. The young man took it up to replenish the glasses.

Suddenly his figure straightened rigidly into an attitude of listening. The song in the kitchen had ceased and a voice, gruff and forbidding, was raised in authority. The listener leaned forward and breathed a word of caution into the ear of the Marquis. Then he again took up the bottle.

The door was thrown violently open and a man entered. He shook the rain from his sodden hat and threw it upon the table. Remy saw that a bunch of tri-colored feathers drooped from the brim. The newcomer, bending his brows, glanced suspiciously across at the pair by the fireside as he drew off his gloves.

"A wet night, citizens."

He was a man of about forty, thin and wiry. His small stature was accentuated by the carriage of his head, which was sunk, birdlike, between his high shoulders. His eyes, large and set close to the bridge of his nose, shone fixedly from beneath his overhanging brows, and gave one the impression that he was always looking up at one. A tangle of reddish hair was pushed back from a large forehead and was tied carelessly behind in a short pigtail. The face showed shrewd cunning and was deeply marked with the smallpox. Altogether, thought Remy, a most undesirable acquaintance for Monsieur the Marquis de Dartigny.

But he returned the stranger's salutation and pushed his chair back invitingly. The newcomer came forward and stretched his riding-boots out to the blaze. The moment before the man's entrance had sufficed for Remy to give the nobleman his cue and the old man in the settle seemed to slumber.

"You must excuse the citizen here" —Remy was speaking with a strong provincial accent; "a keener judge o a bottle of port I never knew. Come Citizen Braille, get up to bed."

The old man looked up sheepishly blinking at the stranger. He smile foolishly and rose unsteadily to hi legs. Remy, as he watched him thought that the stage had lost an other capable actor in the person o the master of the Chateau Chauville The Marquis reached out to grasp the bottle, missed it cleverly, and clutche at the table. The younger man rose and took him by the arm. There was a little tortuous staircase opening out into the corner of the room and leading to the bedrooms, and to this harbor of refuge the old man was piloted

When Remy returned he threw himself into his chair with a short laugh The stranger was standing as he had left him, before the fire, the steam rising from his rain-soaked clothes Remy pushed the bottle over to the motionless figure.

"You will join me, citizen? Our friend appreciates his own wares over much, I am afraid. A wine-merchant, citizen, from Limoges. We are on our way to Havre with samples for shipment—that is, if we have any samples left when we get there."

"Ah! And you have been on the road to-day?"

"Yes. And you in the saddle?"

"Since the morning, citizen. The work of the republic needs fleet horses. You have your passports—you are patriots?"

For answer Remy stood up and raised his glass. "To the Convention," he said, "and to those brave men who are fighting the people's battle in Paris!" And, when he had drained his glass, "Good wine, citizen, but wish it were the blood of the Austrian woman!"

The other man smiled his approbation.

"The Austrian's blood will flow su enough, citizen. Your sentiments you a vast credit. They are wanti men such as you in Paris."

"Ah, Paris! What room is th for a wine-merchant's clerk among patriots there?"

"You would help, eh? Give your name, citizen; I have influen friends in the committee."

The speaker paused and took at his glass.

"I wonder," he went on, eyein other shrewdly, "whether you p on your road a party of an old with a child—a little girl—an English nurse? I am acting on o received from Paris."

"They are emigres?"

"Surely!"

For some moments Remy sat ing at the dying fire, his brow together in thought. The Repu watched him narrowly.

"Supposing I can help you— do I——"

"Then there is a career aw you in Paris. Great events make opportunities. You have my wo it."

"Well, citizen, my news may ount to but little. It was a leagu other side of Lilleburne. We passing a little wood of pines th back from the road. We had n a thin spiral of smoke above the but had given it no thought. A drove on, however, a woman running from the little wood, calling to us and asking for a little milk. She was English, citizen, and said she wanted the milk for a little girl who was ill."

The man from Paris was drawing on the boots he had taken off as Rem finished speaking. He was laboring under intense excitement and in his eyes was the ferocious look of the animal who scents its game. His instructions had been explicit. Herat, his master, looked upon the arrest of ci-devant M...

haps release you, but I have not the time. My brother, Armand de Perancourt, was bound when your hellish crowd delivered him to the executioner. Yes, there were women in the tumbril with him that day—bound—bound—all bound! Think you that Sanson or Outredebanque would receive their guests for the fete of Madame Guillotine if they were not rendered helpless? No, little citizen, 'Equality' in all things. That is your watchword, is it not? We of Gaspard's company are sworn to kill when and we please, so long as no mercy is shown. Does one consider the feelings of the viper beneath the heel—the manner of killing the rat?"

(To be continued.)

Imposing Heights.

Among other big things, the British Empire contains the tallest mountains the world, particularly Mount Everest, of which the native name is Chomolankar, the "Lady of the Snows," which is supposed to be the loftiest mountain in the world.

Very little is known of Everest, but its next neighbor, Mount Kanchenjunga (24,015 feet), was climbed so long ago as 1883. Mr. Graham, who achieved this feat, also climbed Jaonli, another peak of 21,400 feet—which is nearly 6,000 feet higher than Mont Blanc.

The Himalayas contain the tallest mountains in the world, but it is in the Andes of South America that are found the greatest number of peaks over 20,000 feet in height. In these are the Cordilleras de la Paz, ...

Smokestack Cooled by Small Stream.

The heavy vegetation-killing acid fumes from a copper smelter in Wales are carried up the steep side of a mountain and discharged high above its summit by a smokestack which is a novelty in chimney construction. A near-by brook was diverted to flow alongside the long tube, partially submerging it, thereby cooling and condensing most of the rich vapors upon its walls. That this is well worth while is demonstrated yearly at the time of cleaning, when a ton or more of high-grade metal is recovered.

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Life Sentences Reviewed.

In England a sentence of life imprisonment is always reviewed at the end of fifteen years, and if the prisoner's conduct has been uniformly good, he is usually released. This is particularly the case where a prisoner has been sentenced for murder, for murderers are usually well-behaved prisoners.

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