



Andreas Höfer—The Inn-keeper Patriot of Switzerland

TO THIS peasant-leader Liberty was as much the breath of life as it is to the strong-winged eagles of the Alps. To achieve it for himself and his mountain brothers he gladly laid down his life. No less a personality than Napoleon vanquished him, and it was because he feared him that the Great Emperor ordered Höfer shot. Every atom of Andreas Höfer loved Liberty. He demanded it for himself and willingly gave it to others. In this respect he is no different than are our millions of Swiss citizens. Personal and National Liberty to those of Swiss blood is a religion. To a man they will fight for it, and to a man they will die for it. When asked to vote for Prohibition they do as would do the great patriot Höfer—VOTE AGAINST IT. "Thou shalt NOT eat this—thou shalt NOT drink that" is insolent legislation to those of Swiss blood. Anheuser-Busch are proud to serve their thousands of Swiss patrons. For 7 years the Swiss people have been moderate users of their honestly-brewed beers. BUDWEISER is a favorite wherever these folk are found. Seven thousand, five hundred people are daily required to meet the constantly increasing demand for BUDWEISER. Its sales exceed those of any other beer by millions of bottles. ANHEUSER-BUSCH · ST. LOUIS, U.S.A. Bottled only at the home plant.

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A Great Intrigue, Mistress of Darracourt.

CHAPTER XXIV. He grew so excited by the thought that he sprang up, and Marie Verner, crouched still lower. Mr. Pollard laughed, a dry, harsh, spectral laugh that sounded like the autumn wind among the trees. "Exactly," he assented, quietly. "The last marquis said what was not his to sell, therefore this girl, this Miss Darracourt, holds what does not belong to her, but to Harry Herne, as you call him, but as I call him—the Marquis of Merle!" Sinclair sat with his head in his hands, his small black eyes half closed. He was thinking the case out. It seemed too wonderful; too good to be true. "Does anyone besides you know of all this?" he asked, anxiously. The old man shrugged his shoulders, thinking for a moment. "No," he said, wearily; "no! The marriage occurred long ago! This Harry Herne must be a man by this time! Bessie Richards, that is, the real-marchioness, must have died still keeping her secret; the marquis can have told no one. No, it is a secret to all but me—and you!" he added.

Sinclair trembled in his excitement and eagerness. "Look here," he said, in a hurried whisper; "you must keep it a secret; do you hear?" "I hear," assented Mr. Pollard, dully. "You mustn't tell any one. It's—it's too good to be cried on the house-tops! There—there's a fortune in it!" The old man stared at him, vacantly, then he smiled wearily. "Fortune! What is money to me? I want none of it! No, it is the knowledge—the grand knowledge; that is enough for me! To feel as they roll past me in their carriages, scattering the mud over my coat—these great ones of the earth—to feel that I know their secrets, that is enough!" and he stretched out his thin, wasted hands and shook them feebly in the night air. Sinclair nodded thoughtfully, as if he were quite convinced that the knowledge was sufficient. "Yes, yes!" he said; "you are quite right! We'd better go now; it's getting late, and we must catch the last train. Come on!" and he drew the old man's arm through his and led him away, with a careful tenderness that was quite filial and touching. Marie Verner waited until they had gone out of sight, then rose from her hiding place, and leaned against the seat. The importance of the revelation overwhelmed her. She felt dizzy and

bewildered. Harry Herne the real Marquis of Merle! The Court and the estate not Lucille's, but his! And she, she—Marie Verner—alone knew the secret besides these two men! She put her hands to her forehead, and clasped it tightly. "If I ever had any brains, now is the time to use them," she muttered; "now is the time!" While she stood revolving the great undertaking she had set herself, the marquis had finished his cigar, and had come strolling to the terrace, his hands folded behind him, his head lowered thoughtfully. She waited until he came within reach of her, then touched him upon the arm. He started, and muttered, "Who is it? Ah, you!" "Hush," she said, in a whisper; "do not wait any longer. Get her to give you her promise to-night. She was here on the terrace a little while ago, and alone. I have reasons for advising you to lose no more time. Good-night." And she glided past him. The marquis went musily up the steps. He had resolved before she had spoken to play his last card that night, and her words encouraged him. The sound of music came out through the half-opened windows, and he stood and looked within at the magnificent room. Lucille was seated almost within reach of him, and quietly opening the window, he bent and whispered her name. She started and turned her face up to him with an involuntary expression of fear and dread that would have discouraged the most ardent lover. "Will you come outside a moment?" he said; "I have something I wish to tell you." She rose and stepped out, and he closed the window behind them. She shrank a little at the action, but he drew nearer to her with his insidious air of respect and devotion. "Are you cold? Shall I get you something warmer than that shawl?" "No; I am hot—burning hot!" she replied with a forced laugh. "At least, let me draw the shawl around you!" and he attempted to do so, but she threw it round her shoulders with a quick, nervous gesture. "Lucille, are you afraid of me?" he murmured, reproachfully, his voice sunk to a soft whisper.

"No; oh, no!" she answered quickly. "What is it you wish to say to me?" "Something I have scarcely the courage to utter," he replied. "When one's heart is so set upon a thing that it beats one long throbs of desire, it is so difficult to speak. Ah, Lucille! have you forgotten our compact?" "Compact!" she echoed, wearily, apprehensively. "Yes," he murmured; "our compact. If you have forgotten it, I have not. I have thought of it, day and night, since we made it. It has become my most precious possession; it represents to me my only hope of happiness, now and to come. Lucille, you know that I love you!" She shuddered and drew back a little, but he followed her with a stealthy, almost imperceptible step, his eyes fixed on her face, watching its every expression. "I love you, Lucille, passionately, devotedly. I have loved you ever since I first saw you—I think you know that. You are the only woman that has stirred the pulses of my heart." He was going on with the speech he had rehearsed over his cigar, glibly, smoothly, but she stopped him with a gesture. "Not now—not now," she said, brokenly; "some other time. Do not—pitifully—do not ask me now. It is so short a time since—" "Since we met! Ah, it seems an age to me, Lucille, an age of mingled torture and delight! Do not be hard with me! Be my wife, Lucille; give me your promise here, to-night!" "No, no!" she panted. "Not now. Give me time!" His face darkened. "You have, indeed, forgotten!" he said, significantly. She shuddered and leaned against the balustrade. "It was only gratitude after all. You meant nothing more than a civil 'Thank you,' Miss Darracourt. And it

was a compact! Well, you have broken it. You will not complain if I am forced to follow your example!" "Silly and soft as was the voice, it contained a threat, and she knew it. Cold and trembling she turned to him. "What do you mean? Ah, you cannot mean that you will break your word! You would not do that!" "Love such as mine makes a man desperate!" he retorted darkly. "Day by day you seem to be going farther from me. You are surrounded by men—" She waved her hand impatiently. "For whom I care nothing!" she said. "But one of whom you may marry!" he broke in. "Lucille, I can bear it no longer; we must decide, you and I, and to-night!" "Why to-night?" she demanded, almost piteously. "Give me a little longer." "To-night!" he repeated. "Do not think me hard; consider how much I have at stake—all my earthly happiness! Ah, Lucille, if you knew how fully I have setled up to my promise. Even now I am keeping to my share of the compact. To-day I have heard that the police—" "Hush!" she panted, putting her hand upon his arm and looking round fearfully. "For Heaven's sake be careful! Some one may hear; there were men below there, just now. Ah, be careful!" He smiled inwardly at her alarm. "I will be careful. No one will hear." "Well, go on, go on!" she said, feverishly. "What have you heard?" "I have intelligence that the police can put their hands upon—" "No name, no name!" she gasped, with a terrified glance round her. "Upon the person whom we know," he said, darkly. She looked at him. "Then—then you have set the police upon his track!" she said in a low voice. "I have kept myself acquainted with his movements?—yes," he assented. She clung to the balustrade, and her proud head drooped. "For my own sake I have done this!" he murmured. "Do not be hard upon me, Lucille! See how loath you are to keep your part of the bargain! Was I not right to act for my own protection?" She hid her face in her hands. "A word from me and he will be arrested!" he whispered, darkly. "It is for you to decide whether that word shall be uttered!" She remained silent, motionless. "I see!" he said. "There is no hope for me! You will break our compact! Well, at any rate, I shall have the satisfaction of bringing a scoundrel to justice!" and with a deep sigh he took a step or two from her. She sprang up and caught his arm. "Stop—wait!" she panted, her white face working piteously, despairingly. "You must not do that! No! I—I will keep to the agreement! I will—" she stopped, and put her hand to her throat; the words could not be got out, try as she would. "You will marry me!" he whispered. "You will be my wife!" and he caught at her hand. She let her hand remain in his, but he could feel the shudder that ran through her. "Yes," she said, hoarsely, "I will be your wife, Lord Merle—I will be your wife on one condition—that—that you will take the police"—she shuddered again—"off his track, and never mention his name to me again!" "Never again!" he responded, fervently. "He is as safe from me as if he were dead, now! You will be my wife! Ah, Lucille!" and he tried to draw her toward him, but she shrank back, white to the lips. (To be Continued.)

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