

Although nobody doubted who he really was, although the name of Arsène Lupin and the name of Don Luis Perenna consisted of the same letters, and people ended by remarking the coincidence, legally speaking, Arsène Lupin was dead and Don Luis Perenna was alive; and there was no possibility of bringing Arsène Lupin back to life or of killing Don Luis Perenna.

He is to-day living in the village of Saint-Maclou, among those charming valleys which run down to the Oise. Who does not know his modest little pink-washed house, with its green shutters and its garden filled with bright flowers? People make up parties to go there from Paris on Sundays, in the hope of catching a sight, through the elder hedges, of the man who was Arsène Lupin, or of meeting him in the village square.

He is there, with his hair just touched with gray, his still youthful features, and a young man's bearing; and Florence is there, too, with her pretty figure and the halo of fair hair around her happy face, unclouded by even the shadow of an unpleasant recollection.

Very often visitors come and knock at the little wooden gate. They are unfortunate people imploring the master's aid, victims of oppression, weaklings who have gone under in the struggle, reckless persons who have been ruined by their passions.

For all these Don Luis is full of pity. He gives them his full attention, the help of his far-seeing advice, his experience, his strength, and even his time, disappearing for days and weeks to fight the good fight once more.

And sometimes also it is an emissary from the Prefect's office or some subordinate of the police who comes to submit a complex case to his judgment. Here again Don