An Enemy of The King

By Hagenbuch Wyman

CHAPTER XVI.—(Continued.)

"By conferring your hand, mademoiselle," said Montignac, following her and grasping her wrist. "Your father will be glad to give his consent for his liberty, if he knows that you have given yours. But we can arrange to proceed without his consent. Do not draw back, mademoiselle. It is marriage that I offer, when I might make other terms. My family is a good one; my prospects are the best, and I have to lay at your feet a love that has never been offered to another, a love as deep as it is fresh——"

I clutched the curtain to give vent to my rage. Mademoiselle was looking toward me, and saw the curtain move.

"Say no more!" she cried, fearful lest his continuance might be too much for my restraint. "I cannot hear you!"

"I love you, mademoiselle," he went on, losing his self-control, so that his face quivered with passion. "I can save you and your father!"

He thrust his face so close to hers that she drew back with an expression of disgust.

"A fine love, indeed!" she cried scornfully, "that would buy the love it dare not hope to elicit free!" And she turned to La Chatre as if for protection. But the governor shook his head, and remained motionless at the window.

"A love you shall not despise, mademoiselle!" hissed Montignac, stung by her scorn. He was standing by the table near the bed, and, in his anger, he made to strike the table with his dagger, but he struck instead the tray on the table, and so produced a loud, ringing sound that startled the ear.

"Your fate is in my hands," he went on, "so is your father's. As for this Tournoire, concerning whom you have suddenly become scrupulous, he is, doubtless, by this time in the hands of the troops who have gone for him, and very well it is that we decided not to wait for you to lead him to us. Accept me, and your father goes free! Spurn me, and he dies in the chateau of Fleurier, and you shall still belong to me! Why not give me what I have the power and the intention to take?"

"If you take it!" cried mademoiselle, "that is your act. Were I to give, that would be mine. It is by your own acts that we stand or fall in our own eyes and God's!" She spoke loudly in a resolute voice, as if to show me that she could look to herself, so that I need not come out to her defence—for well she guesed my mind and knew that, though she had consented a thousand times to betray me, I would not stand passive while a man pressed his unwelcome love on her. And now, as if to force a change of theme by sheer vehemence of manner, she turned her back toward Montignac and addressed La Chatre with a fire that she had not previously shown.

"You have heard the proposal of this buyer of love! You hear me reject it! M. de la Chatre, I hold you to your word. I have been of some service to you in the matter of La Tournoire, and you would, in some measure, reward me! You have said it! Very well! You expect to capture him to-night at his hiding place. Through me you learned that hiding place, therefore through me you will have taken him. There is but one possible way in which you can reward me: Keep your word! What if I did refuse to plan the ambush? You yourself had already decided to dispense with that. In the circumstances, all that I could have done for you I have done. Would I could undo it! But I cannot! Therefore, give me now, at once, an order that I may take to Fleurier for my father's release!"

La Chatre was plainly annoyed, for he loved to keep the letter of his word. He could not deceive this woman, as he had at first felicitated himself on doing, with a false appearance of fair dealing. She saw through that appearance. It was indeed irritating to so honest a gentleman. To gain time for a plausible answer, he moved slowly from the window to the centre of the chamber. At the same time, mademoiselle, to be further from Montignac, went toward the door by which she had entered the room on my arrival. The sceretary, with wolf-like eyes, followed her, and both turned so as still to face the governor.

"I shall devise some proper reward for you," said La Chatre, slowly. "I adhere always to the strict letter of my word; but I am not bound to free your father. The strict letter of my word, remember! Recall my words to you at the inn. I recall them exactly, and so does Montignac, who this very evening reminded me of—ahem, that is to say, I recall them exactly. I was to send the order to the governor of Fleurier for your father's immediate release the instant I should stand face to face with Sieur da la Tournoire in the chateau of Clochonne."

I threw aside the bed curtain, stepped forth, and said:

"That time has come, monsieur!"

CHAPTER XVII.

Sword and Dagger.

M. de la Chatre could not have been more surprised if a spirit had risen from the floor at his feet. He stared at me with startled eyes. I had sheathed my sword while behind the curtains, and now I stood motionless, with folded arms, before him. Mademoiselle uttered a slight cry. Montignac, who stood beside her, was as much taken aback as La Chatre was, but was quicker to comprehend the situation. Without moving from his attitude of surprise, he regarded me with intense curiosity and hate. This was his first sight of me, hence his curiosity. He had already inferred that mademoiselle loved me, therefore his hate.

"Who are you?" said La Chatre, at last, in a tone of mingled alarm and resentment, as one might address a supernatural intruder.

"The Sieur de la Tournoire," said I, "standing face to face with you in the chateau of Clochonne! You shall give mademoiselle that order for her father's relase, or you shall never break your word again."

And I drew my sword, and held it with its point toward his breast.

The fear of death blanched his cheeks and spurred his dull wits.

"Montignac," he cried, keeping his eyes fixed on mine, "if this man makes a move, kill the woman!"

In his situation of peril, his mind had become agile. He had suddenly perceived how things were between mademoiselle and me.

As I have shown, Montignac stood with mademoiselle at some distance from La Chatre and myself. I dared not take my eye from the governor, lest he should step out of reach of my sword; but I could hear Montignac quickly unsheath his dagger, and mademoiselle give a sharp ejaculation of pain. Then I turned my head for a moment's glance, and saw that he had caught her wrist in a tight grasp, and that he held his dagger ready to plunge it into her breast.

For a short time we stood thus, while I considered what to do next. It was certain that Montignac would obey the governor's order, if only out of hatred for me and in revenge on her for his depised love, though he might fall by my sword a moment later. Therefore, I did not dare go to attack him any more than I dared attack La Chatre. The governor, of course, would not let her be killed unless I made some hostile movement, for if she were dead nothing could save him from me, unless help came. He feared to call for help, I suppose, lest rather than be taken I should risk a rush at Montignac and have himself for an instant at my mercy, after all.

I cast another glance at Montignac, and measured the distance from me to him, to consider whether I might reach him before he could strike mademoiselle. La Chatre must have divined my thought, for he said:

"Montignac, I will deal with this gentleman. Take mademoiselle into that chamber and close the door." And he pointed to the door immediately behind mademoiselle, the one by which I had first seen her enter.

"But, monsieur——" began Montignac.

"I had not quite finished, Montignac," went on La Chatre. "I have my reason for desiring you and the lady to withdraw. Fear not to leave me with him. Lame as I am, I am no match for him, it is true, but mademoiselle shall continue to be a hostage for his good behavior."

"I understand," said Montignac, "but how shall I know——?"

'Should M. de la Tournoire make one step toward me," said the governor—here he paused and took up the hunting horn and looked at it, but presently dropped it and pointed to the bowl of fruit on the table near the fireplace—"I shall strike this bowl, thus." He struck the bowl with his stick, and it gave forth a loud, metallic ring, like that previously produced by Montignac's dagger from the tray on the other table. "The voice is not always to be relied on," continued the governor. "Sometimes it fails when most needed. But a sound like this," and he struck the bowl again, "can be made instantly and with certainty. Should you hear one strike on the bowl—one only, not followed quickly by a second stroke—let mademoiselle pay for the rashness of her champion!"

"Yes, monsieur," replied Montignac, a kind of diabolical triumph in his voice.

"It may be," said La Chatre, "that no such violent act will be necessary, and that I shall merely require your presence here. In that case, I shall strike twice rapidly, thus. Therefore, when you hear a stroke, wait an instant lest there be a second stroke. But if there be no second, act as I have told you."

"After you, mademoiselle," said Montignac, indicating by a motion his desire that she should precede him backward out of the chamber. He still clutched her arm and held his dagger aloft, intending thus to back out of the room after her.

"I will not go!" she answered, trying to resist the force that he was using on her arm.

This was the first resistance she had offered. She had previously stood motionless beneath his lifted dagger, feeling herself unable to break from his grasp of iron, and supposing that any effort to do so would bring down the dagger into her delicate breast. A woman's instinctive horror of such a blow deterred her from the slightest movement that might invite it. She had trusted to me for what action might serve to save us from our enemies. But now her terror of leaving my presence, and her horror of being alone with Montignac, overcame her fear of the dagger. "I will not go!" she repeated.

"Go, mademoiselle," said I, gently, taking her glove from my belt, where I had placed it, and kisisng it, to show that I was still her devoted chevalier. "Go! 'Tis the better way." For I welcomed any step that might take Montignac from the chamber, and leave La Chatre's wit unaided to cope with mine.

Her eyes showed submission, and she immediately obeyed the guidance of Montignac's hand. Facing me still, he went out after her and closed the door.

I was alone with La Chatre.

"My secretary stood a little too near the point of your sword," said the governor, "for the perfect security of my hostage. There was just a possibility of your being too quick for him. I saw that you were contemplating that possibility. As it is now, should I give him the signal as I shall if you move either toward me or toward that chamber—he could easily put mademoiselle out of the way before you could open the door. Not that I desire harm to mademoiselle. Her death would not serve me at all. It would, indeed, be something that I should have to deplore. If I should deplore it, how much more would you! And since you surely will not be so ungallant as to cause the death of so charming a lady, I think I have you, let us say, at a slight disadvantage!" And he sat down beside the table near the fire place.

"I think not so, monsieur," said I, touching lightly with my sword's point the tray on the table near the bed; "for should you strike once on your bowl, I should very quickly strike once on this tray, so that two strokes would be heard, and the obedient Montignac, mindful of his orders, would enter this chamber, not having slain mademoiselle."

I ought not to have disclosed this, my advantage. I ought rather to have summoned Montignac by two strokes on the tray, and been at the door to receive him. But I had not waited to consider. I spoke of the advantage as soon as I noticed it, supposing that La Chatre, on seeing it, would thing himseld at my mercy and would come to my terms. He was taken back somewhat, it is true, but not much.

"Pah!" he said. "After all, I could shout to him."

"It would be your last shouting. Moreover, your shouted orders would be cut off unfinished, and the punctilious Montignac would be left in doubt as to your wishes. Rather than slay mademoiselle on an uncertainty, he would come hither to assure himself, in which case God pity him!"

"Thank you for your warning, monsieur," said La Chatre, with mock courtesy. "There shall be no shouting."

Whereupon he struck the bowl with his stick. Taken by surprise, I could only strike my tray with my sword, so that two strokes might surely be heard, although at the same time he gave a second stroke showing that his intention was merely to summon Montignac. In my momentary fear for mademoiselle's life, and with my sword, so that two strokes might surely be heard, although at the same time he gave a second stroke showing that his intention was merely to summon Montignac. In my momentary fear for mademoiselle's lips, and with my thoughts instantly concentrated on striking the trap, I did not have the wit to leap to the door and receive Montignac on my sword's point, as I would have done had I myself summoned him, or had I expected La Chatre's signal.

So there I stood, far from the door, when it opened, and the secretary advanced his foot across the threshold. Even then I made a movement as if to rush on him, but he brought forward his left hand and I saw that it still clutched the white wrist of mademoiselle. Only her arm was visible in the doorway. Montignac still held his dagger raised. One step backward and one thrust, and he could lay her dead at his feet. Had I been ready at the door for him, I could have killed him before he could have made these two movements; but from where I stood, I could not have done so. So I listened in some chagrin to the governor's words.

"I change the signal, Montignac. At one stroke, do not harm the lady, but come hither; but should you hear two strokes, or three, or any number more, she is to be sacrificed."

"My dagger is ready, monsieur!"

Again the door closed; again I was alone with La Chatre.

I had lost my former advantage. For now, should I strike my tray once, for the purpose of summoning Montignac, so that I might be at the door to slay him at first sight, the governor could strike his bowl, and Montignac would hear two strokes or more—signal for mademoiselle's death.

"And now, monsieur," said the governor, making himself comfortable in his chair between table and fireplace, "let us talk. You see, if you approach me or that door, or if you start to leave this chamber, I can easily strike the bowl twice before you take three steps."

I could see that he was not as easy in his mind as he pretended to be. It was true that, as matters now were, his life was secure through my regard for mademoiselle's; but were he to attempt leaving the room or calling help, or, indeed, if help were to come uncalled, and I should find my own life or liberty threatened, I might risk anything, even mademoiselle's life, for the sake of revenge on him. He would not dare save himself by letting me go free out of his own chateau., To do that would bring down the wrath of the Duke of Guise, would mean ruin. That I knew well. If I should go to leave the chamber, he would give the signal for Montignac to kill meademoiselle. As for me, I did not wish to go without her or until I should have accomplished a certain design I had conceived. Thus I was La Chatre's prisoner, and he was mine. Each could only hope, by thought or talk, to arrive at some means of getting the better of the other.

La Chatre's back was toward the door by which I had entered. By mere chance, it seemed, I turned my head toward the door. At that instant, my man Frojac appeared in the doorway. He had approached with the silence of a ghost. He carried the arquebus that had belonged to the guardsman, and his match was burning. Risking all on the possible effect of a sudden surprise on the governor, I cried sharply:

"Fire on that man, Frojac, if he moves."

La Chatre, completely startled, rose from his chair and turned about, forgetful of the stick and bowl. When his glance reached Frojac, my good man had his arquebus on a line with the governor's head, the match dangerously near the breech.

"I have looked after the guards, monsieur," said Frojac, cheerily, "both of them."

"Stand where you are," said I to him," and if that gentleman attempts to strike that bowl, see that he does not live to strike it more than once."

"He shall not strike it even once, monsieur!"

"You see, M. de la Catre," said I, "the contents of an arquebus travel faster than a man can."

"This is unfair!" were the first words of the governor, after his season of dumb astonishment.

"Pardon me," said I. "It is but having you, let us say, at a slight disadvantage, and now I think I may move."

I walked over to the governor's table and took up the bowl. La Chatre watched me in helpless chagrin, informing himself by a side glance that Frojac's weapon still covered him.

"You look somewhat irritated and disgusted, monsieur," said I. "Pray sit down!"

As I held my sword across the table, the point in close proximity to his chest, he obeyed, uttering a heavy sigh at his powerlessness. I then threw the bowl into the bed, taking careful aim so that it might make no sound. At that moment I saw La Chatre look towards the chamber in which were Montignac and mademoiselle, and there came on his face the sign of a half-fomed project.

"See also, Frojac," said I, "that he does not open his mouth to shout."

"He shall be as silent as if born dumb, monsieur."

"Oh, he may speak, but not so loud as to be heard in the next chamber. Look to it, Frojac."

"Very well, monsieur."

For I did not wish, as yet, that Montignac should know what was going on. Through the closed door and the thick tapestried walls, only a loud cry, or some such sound as a stroke on the resonant bowl or tray, could have reached him. We had spoken in careful tones, La Chatre not daring to raise his voice. Thus the closing of the door, intended by the governor to make Montignac safer from a sudden rush on my part, now served my own purpose. It is true, since Frojac had appeared, and the governor could not make a signal, I might have summoned Montignac by a single stroke, and dispatched him in the doorway. But now that my own position was easier, I saw that such a manoeuvre, first contemplated when only a desperate stroke seemed possible, was full of danger to mademoiselle. I might bungle it, whereupon Montignac would certainly attempt one blow against her, though it were his last. I must, therefore, use the governor to release her from her perilous situation; but first I must use him for another purpose, which the presence of the keen-witted Montignac might defeat. Hence, the secretary was not yet to be made aware of the turn things had taken.

There were three quills on the table. I took up one of them and dipped it in the horn of ink.

"Shall I tell you of what you are thinking, monsieur," said I, observing on the governor's face a new expression, that of one who listens ana makes some mental calculation.

"Amuse yourself as you please, monsieur," he answered.

"You are thinking, first, that as I am in your chateau, and not alone, I have, doubtless, deprived you of all the soldiers left to guard your chateau; secondly, that at a certain time, a few hours ago, your troops set out for my residence; that they have probably now learned that I am not there; that they have sonsequently started to return. You are asking yourself what will happen if I am here when they arrive. Will I kill you before I allow myself to be taken? Probably, you say. Men like me value themselves highly, and sell themselves dearly. You would rather that I leave before they come. Then you can send them on my track. Very well; write, monsieur!" And I handed him the pen.

He looked at me with mingled vindictiveness and wonder, as if it were remarkable that I had uttered the thoughts that any one in his position must have had. Mechanically he took the pen.

"What shall I write?" he muttered.

"Write this: To M. de Brissard. Governor of Fleurier. Release M. de Varion immediately. Let him accompany the man who bears this and who brings a horse with him."

With many haltings, many side glances at Frojac's arquebus and my sword-point, many glum looks and black frowns, he wrote, while I watched him across the table. Then he threw the document toward me.

"Sign and seal," I said, tossing it back to him.

With intended slovenliness he affixed the signature and seal, then threw the pen to the floor. I took the order, scanned it, and handed him another pen.

"Excellent!" said I. "And now again!"

He made a momentary show of haughty, indignant refusal, but a movement of my sword quelled the brief revolt in him.

"The bearer of this," I dictated, "M. de Varion, is to pass free in the province, and to cross the border where he will."

This time he signed and affixed the seal without additional request. He threw the second pen after the first, and looked up at me with a scowl.

"A bold, brave signature, monsieur! There is one pen left!" and I handed him the third quill.

He took it with a look of wrath, after which he gave a sigh of forced patience, and sat ready to write.

"The bearer of this, Ernanton de Launay——"

"Ernanton de Launay, Sieur de la Tournoire," I went on.

He started at me aghast, as if my presumption really passed all bounds, but a glint of light on my sword caught his eye; he carried his eye along to the point, which was under his nose, and he wrote:

"Is free to pass in the province, and from it, with all his company."

"No, no, no! I will never write that!"

Without an instant's hesitation, I drew back my sword as if to add weight to an intended thrust. He gasped, and then finished the pass, signed it, and attached the seal.

"Be assured," I said, as I took up the last order, "these will be used before you shall have time to countermand them." He gritted his teeth at this. "I thank you heartily, monsieur, and shall ask you to do no more writing. But one favor will I claim the loan of a few gold pieces for M. de Varion. Come, monsieur, your purse has ever been well fed."

With a look of inward groaning he negligently handed me some pieces, not couuting them.

"Parbleu!" he said. "You will ask me for my chateau next."

"All in good time. It is a good jest, monsieur, that while you visit me at Maury by proxy, I return the visit at Clochonne in person and find your chateau unguarded. To complete the jest, I need only take possession. But I am for elsewhere. Frojac, come here."

While Frojac approached, I held my sword ready for any movement on the part of my unhappy adversary, for I saw him cast a furtive look at the tray on the other table, and I read on his face the birth of some new design.

Rapidly I gave Frojac my commands, with the gold and the two orders first written.

"Take this order immediately, with my horse and your own, to the chateau of Fleurier. Secure M. de Varion's release, and fly with him at once from the province, leaving by the western border, so that you cannot possibly be forestalled by any troops or counter-orders that this gentleman may send from here. Make you way speedily to Guienne."

"And in Guienne, monsieur?"

"You will doubtless find me at the camp of Henri of Navarre. As soon as you see M. de Varion, assure him of the safety of his daughter. And now to horse!"

"I am already on my way, monsieur!" And the good fellow ran from the chamber and down the stairs. In a few moments I heard the horses clattering out of the courtyard and over the bridge. Pleased at his zeal and swiftness, I stepped to the window to waive him a godspeed. I thus turned my back toward La Chatre.

Frojac saw me and waved in response, as he dashed down the moonlit way toward the road to Fleurier.

I hard a steathly noise behind me, and, turning, saw what made me fiercely repent my momentary forgetfulness and my reliance on the governor's lamness. The sight revaled plainly enough what new idea had come into La Chare's mind—simply that, if he should give the signal for mademoiselle's death, I would probably not stay to attack him, but would instantly rush into the next chamber in the hope of saving her. He could then fasten the door, and hold me prisoner in that chamber until the return of his troops. Well for us that he had not thought of this before the arrival of Frojac!

He was already near the table on which was the tray, when I turned and saw him. He raised his tick to strike the tray. I rushed after him.

He brought down his stick. The tray sounded, loud and bell-like. He heard me coming, and raised his tick again. The second clang would be the death-knell of my beloved!

But my sword was in time, my arm served. The blade met the descending stick and knocked it from the governor's grasp. The same rush that took me between La Chatre and the table carried me across the chamber to a spot at one side of the door which Montignac at that moment threw open.

"You struck once, did you not, monsieur?" said Montignanc, not seeing me, for he naturally looked forward to the centre of the chamber.

He held mademoiselle's wrist in his left hand, his dagger in his right. I was at his right side. I was too near him to use my sword with effect, so I contented myself with stepping quickly behind him and bringing my fist down on his left arm above the elbow. This unexpected blow made him voluntarily release mademoiselle's wrist, and informed him of my whereabouts. The impulse of self-preservation caused him to rush forward and turn. I then steped in front of mademoiselle and faced him. All this, from my turning from the window, was done in a moment.

"And now, M. de la Chatre," said I, "you may strike the bowl as often as you please."

"M. de la Chatre," said Montignac, in a quick, resolute voice, "give me leave to finish this!"

"As you will, Montignac!" repiled the governor moving toward the window. His movement betrayed his thought. If his troops should return in the next few minutes, I would be too busy with Montignac to attack himself. There were two hopes for him. One was that, by some miracle, Montignac might kill or wound me. The other was that the troops might return before I should have finished with Montignac. La Chatre had doubtless inferred that I had brought with me none of my men but Frojac; therefore I alone was to be feared.

Montignac, keeping his eyes fixed on me, trasferred his dagger to his left hand, and drew his sword with his right. I, with my sword already in my right hand, drew my dagger with my left.

"Monsieur," said I to Montignac, "I see with pleasure that you are not a coward."

"You shall see what you shall see, monsieur!" he answered, in the voice of a man who fears nothing and never loses his wits.

It was indeed, a wonder that this man of thought could become so admirable a man of action. There was nothing fragile in this pale student. His eyes took on the hardness of steel. Never did more self-reliant and resolute an antagonist meet me. The hate that was manifest in his countenance did not rob him of self-possession. It only strengthened and steadied him. At first I thought him fool-hardy to face to boldly an antagonist who wore a breastplate, but later I found that, beneath his jerkin, he was similarly protected. I suppose that he had intended to accompany the troops to Maury, had so prepared himself for battle, and had not found opportunity, after the change of intention, to divest himself

Conscious of mademoiselle's presence behind me, I stood for a moment awaiting the secretary's attack. In that moment did I hear, or but seem to hear, the sound of many horses' footfalls on the distant road? I did not wait to assure myself. Knowing that if the governor's troops had indeed found Maury abandoned and had returned, quick work was necesary. I attacked at the same instant as my adversary did. As I would no more than disable an antagonist less protected than myself, I made to touch him lightly in his right side; but my point, tearing away a part of his jerkin, gave the sound and feel of metal, and thus I leraned that he, too, wore body armor. I was pleased at this; for now we were less unequal than I had thought, and I might use full force. He had tried to turn with his dagger this my first thrust, but was not quick enough, whereas my own dagger caught neatly the sword-thrust that he made simultaneously with mine.

"Oh, M. de Launay!" cried mademoiselle, behind me, in a voice of terror, at the first swift clash of our weapons.

"Fear not for me, mademoiselle!" I cried, catching Montignac's blade again with my dagger, and giving a thrust which he avoided by leaping backward.

"Good, Montignac!" cried La Chatre, looking on from the window. "He cannot reach you! If you canont kill him, you may keep him engaged till the troops come back!"

"I shall kill him!" was Montignac's reply, while he faced me with set teeth and relentless eyes.

"Listen, monsieur!" cried mademoiselle. "If you die, I shall die with you!" And she ran from behind me to the centre of the chamber where I could see her.

"And if I live?" I shouted back, narrowly stoping a terrible thrust, and stepping back between the table and the bed.

"If we live, I am yours forever! Ernanton, I love you!"

At last she had confessed it with her lips! For the first time, she had called me by my Christian name! My head swam with joy.

"You kill me with happiness, Julie!" I cried, overturning the table toward Montignac to gain a moment's breath.

"I shall kill you with my sword!" Montignac hurled the words through clenched teeth. "For, by God, you shall have no happiness with her!"

His white face had an expression of demoniac hate, yet his thrusts became the more adroit and swift, his guard the more impenetrable and firm. His body was as sinuous as a wild beast's, his eye as steady. The longer he fought the more formidable he became as an adversary. He was worth a score of Viscomtes de Berquin.

"Ernanton," cried mademoiselle, "you know all my treachery!"

"I know that you would have saved your father," I answered, leaping backward upon the bed, to avoid the secretary's impetuous rush; "and that I have saved him, and that, God willing, we shall soon meet him in Gpienne!"

"If he meets you, it will be in hell!" With this, Montignac jumped upon the bed after me, and there was some close dagger play while I turned to back out between the posts at the food.

At this moment La Chatre gave a loud, jubiliant cry, and mademoiselle, looking out of the window, uttered a scream of consternation.

"The troops at last!" shouted La Chatre. Hold out but another minute, Montignac!"

So then I had heard aright. Alas, I thought, that the river road to Maury should be so much shorter than the forest road; alas, that the governor's troops should have had time to return ere Blaise had reached the junction of the roads!

"My God, the soldiers have us in a trap!" cried mademoiselle, while I caught Montignac's dagger point with a bed curtain, and stepped backward from the bed to the floor.

"And mademaiselle shall be mine!"

As he uttered these words with a fiendish kind of elation, Montignac leaped from the bed after me, releasing his dagger by puling the curtain from its fastening, while at the same time his sword point, directed at my neck, rang on my breast plate.

And, having given ground a little, I made so quick an onslaught that, in saving himself, he fell back against a chair, which overturned and took him to the floor with it.

"Help, moniseur!" he cried to La Chatre, raising his dagger just in time to ward off my sword.

The governor now perceived the sword that stood by the fireplace, took it up, and thrust at me. Mademoiselle, who in her distress at the sight of the troops, had run to the priedieu and fallen on her knees, saw La Chatre's movement, and, rushing forward, caught the sword with both hands as he thrust. I expected to see her fingers torn by the blade, but it happened that he sword was still in its sheath, a fact which in our excitement none of us had observed; so that when La Chatre tried to pull the weapon from her grasp he merely drew it from the sheath, which remained in her hands. By this time I was ready for the governor.

(To be continued.)

MORE COMPETITIONS.

Season's Trapshooting Programme Decided Upon at Meeting of Capital Gun Club.

A meeting of the Capital Gun Club was held last evening at which dates were set for the different trophies yet to be competed for. There was a large attendance.

It was decided that the Dupont cup should be open to members of both the Capital and Victoria organizations. The conditions as outlined were that it should be shot for five times and become the property of the individual successful in the majority of instances. The first shoot, it was agreed, will take place on the 22nd inst. (to-morrow) at the Willows traps, the second on the 29th, the third on the 5th of August, and the fourth on the 12th of the latter month. The final shoot will be held on a date to be fixed when it becomes necessary. Thirty birds will be the limit of the contest in each case.

The Peters cup competition was arranged to take place on the 5th of August. It will be at forty birds, twenty singles and twenty reverse, use of both barrels. This trophy has to be won three times before falling into the possession of any marksman. Up to the present it has been won twice by Weller and by Lenfesty, once by Banfield, Pears and Maclure. If either of the former are successful, therefore, the cup will be placed out of the reach of any other aspiring trapshooters.

It was announced that another medal had been put up by an enthusiastic member of the club. The conditions for this are somewhat unusual. Both the traps and angles will be unknown and the gun will be held under the elbow. The shooters thus will be confronted with conditions almost exactly similar to those experienced when in the field after the pheasant or grouse. The contest will take place on one of the aforementioned dates and the number of birds will be decided by the committee.

Five new members were elected and other routine business transacted before the adjournment.

THE ECLIPSE STAKES.

London, July 20.—Liangebber, ridden by Mayer, won the Eclipse stakes at Sandown park to-day. Beppo was second and Wombwell was third. Nine horses started.

A SAVINGS BANK FOR CITY SCHOOLS

PRACTICAL PROPOSAL IS BEING CONSIDERED

Committee of Trustees Will Warmly Recommend Scheme For Children to Save Small Amounts.

The school savings bank is a very practical proposal and of great educational value which will in all probability be introduced into the city schools. The progressive manager of the Bank of British North America (Mr. Mackenzie) suggested the scheme to the chairman of the school board some two or three months since. After he had looked into the question of school banks the matter was presented to the board of school trustees at their last regular meeting. A committee was appointed, consisting of Trustees Mrs. Jenkins, Jay and the chairman, to discuss the scheme with the bank's manager, with the result that the scheme will be warmly recommended to the board early in the week.

The method is a very simple one, entailing not more than thirty minutes of the teacher's time during the week, excepting perhaps that of the principal, who will be entrusted with the funds deposited by each child, until the sum of one dollar has been reached, when the young depositor will open a direct account with the bank. The educational feature of the scheme is quite obvious, for the training of the child into ways of thrift and care of the small amounts is to be highly commended, and the committee consider that Mr. Mackenzie is deserving of thanks for introducing the system to the local board of school trustees. Mr. Huggett, during his recent business trip, took pains to look into the workings of the plan in other places, and speaks highly of the effort to train the young along lines calculated to make careful and first class citizens.

It is to be hoped, he says, that parents and teachers will take an interest in the school savings bank system, and encourage the children to save at least some of their dimes, thus furthering a movement in the financial world that is approved by all who are really interested in the future citizenship of Canada.

The following are some extracts from a recent article by J. H. Thiry of Long Island City, who has had ample opportunity of proving the very great value of the system:

This twenty-first anniversary of the introduction of school savings banks in the United States, means that the system has reached its majority, and has a right to citizenship.

To record its history, to give the names and opinions of thousands of educators, bankers and philanthropists in general, who have encouraged the movements of the introducer would fill a large volume, which would pleasantly astonish the reader and, perhaps, win many more friends to the firmly established work of the system.

The experience in school banking of the last twenty years has evolved no alteration in its principles and precepts. There can be no doubt that theory and practice which inculcate in children the habits of frugality, thrift and self-dependence, all of which are essential to a life of individual responsibility, answer a high practical ideal. It has been averred by many philanthropists and social reformers that the universal introduction of the school savings bank system into our public schools would be a most important step toward the elimination of idleness, pauperism and crime, which, notwithstanding the numerous remedial means employed by generous associations and individuals, seem to be increasing instead of diminishing.

The school savings bank system is now in operation in 1,023 schools of 122 cities of 25 states of America, and the scholars of these schools have saved $4,864,575.98, of which $3,641,015.66 has been withdrawn, leaving a balance of $1,223,560.32 due little depositors to January 1st, 1906. There are many school savings banks in Canada as well.

PRESS CORRESPONDENTS.

Party From Washington, D. C., Visiting the New Province.

Saskatoon, Sask., July 20.—The Washington correspondents arrived in the city yesterday. They were met at Warman by Mayor Clinkskill, A. E. Young, treasurer, and Jas Weir, commissioner of the board of trade, who accompanied them to this city. On their arrival they were met by the representative reception committee with carriages in waiting, in which they were driven to Smith's Grove, Smithville, where luncheon was served on the prairie On the way out they viewed the Canadian Pacific railway steel laying operations They were then driven about the city, and, the train being late, were dined at the Empire hotel. The party left for Prince Albert at 6.45 p. m. very much surprised at the marvellous growth of the city, and the restful stay was much enjoyed.

Chief Antony Sacobi, head of the New Brunswick Micmas Indians, is lying at death's door as a result of a terrible beating received at the hands of his wife.

DODD'S KIDNEY PILLS
FOR ALL KIDNEY DISEASES
CURES RHEUMATISM
BRIGHT'S DISEASE DIABETES BACKACHE
Dealers discontinued the use of our famous pills when offered a substitute. The public may rely on our guarantee. Beware of imitations. Sold only in boxes, 50 cents.