

THE PRINCE'S WAGER

[It is easier to get around for nothing than to get around for something; as is shown conclusively in this amusing story, which is translated by Sophie-Earl from the French of Henri Fagot.]

Toward the end of the second Empire, Prince Edmond de Karival was one of the most brilliant and popular of the Boulevard des Italiens.

Very blond, pale and slender, imperceptibly elegant, with a temperance touching zero,—with the aid of his enormous fortune he amused society by his freaks and fancies, even confounding occasionally to astonish the populace.

One evening he gave a grand dinner at his own mansion; the cheer was exquisite, and the dessert was served in a whirl of gaiety.

"Very well; let us wager," cried the prince suddenly, replying to a challenge from the opposite end of the table, "that without having stolen, murdered, injured my fellow-beings in any way, without having committed any sort of crime, broken any law or regulation, I get myself arrested when I please and dragged to a station like a vagabond, a thief, an assassin."

He spoke in an icy tone from which never departed, even when making the most extraordinary statements or propositions, and his words cut clearly through the laughter and conversation. Every one turned toward him in surprise. During the silence which followed he added:

"I wager two thousand louis—who will take it up?"

There were wealthy men around the board, well used to heavy stakes; but the magnitude of the sum startled them. Before taking up the wager they wished to determine the conditions clearly.

"There is no doubt in my mind," quipped the Duke de Morville, "that you are on words, or anything like that?" cried the Prince.

"I am the Prince Edmond de Karival," "Why not the King of England?" sneered the officer.

"England is governed by a queen," began the man.

"Enough, enough! no need for further explanations. Follow me!"

And grasping his shoulder with his large hand, the policeman forced him to rise and conducted him to the station.

The wager was won.

Then, from the lower end of the restaurant, the Duke de Morville, the lively Gastamidis, and the others, rose, followed, and interposed, explaining the adventure to the man.

He was so overcome with astonishment, so eager to apologize, and so confused, that he had only time to say to the policeman, who was bent over him, "I am Prince Edmond de Karival."

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a prudent resolution, he returned the thanks to its owner.

The latter made a movement as if to rise, saying:

"Now if you refuse to serve me, I will go elsewhere."

But the head-waiter quickly begged him to remain.

"No, no; stay. Give your order." Then calling one of his subordinates, he pointed to the man. "Take this gentleman's order," adding rapidly in a low tone, "Do not lose sight of him. Do not let him go out." He presently disappeared.

Five minutes later, he returned, accompanied by a policeman.

All of the occupants of the restaurant had opened their eyes wide when the vagabond installed himself at the table, and watched him since then with marked disapproval. No one doubted that it was the whom the officer had come to seek, and every hand was turned to see what was going to happen.

Sure enough, the officer went directly toward him. He continued to enjoy a savory slice without seeming to notice the sensation he had created. He even started, like one suddenly awakened, when the man in uniform touched his shoulder.

"What? What? Is anything the matter? He did not seem to understand."

They explained. Bank-notes for a thousand francs were not usually produced from such pockets as his. To have them he must have stolen them!

"I doubt if you can show a single paper or certificate of character," observed the agent.

"It is true! I cannot. But probably none of these people present can immediately produce passports or proofs of identification."

"No certificates. You have at least a name. Come then, who are you?"

"I am the Prince Edmond de Karival," "Why not the King of England?" sneered the officer.

"England is governed by a queen," began the man.

"Enough, enough! no need for further explanations. Follow me!"

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NEWS OF THE JUNCTION

The Charge of Criminal Libel Against the Editor of The Reporter.

The trial of the late editor of The Reporter, A. T. Stevenson, for criminal libel took place yesterday before P. M. Ellis. It lasted nearly all day, and the P. M. reserved his decision until next Friday.

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