

THE THIRD CAMPAIGN

THE Viscount Pierre Ferdinand Napoleon Gricourt de Perpignan, pacing the length of the salon with nervous steps, turned suddenly to confront his father, the noble Baron de Perpignan.

"Enough, mon pere," he cried, with a dramatic sweep of his hand, "I go to the land of the dollaire. In one week I embark myself to make the sacrifice. I give to the beautiful but cruelle Americaine mees the name of Gricourt de Perpignan; her papa terrible upon me restore the fortune that is lost. It is the resolution irrevocable."

If the Baron de Perpignan received this decision without display of enthusiasm, he nevertheless acquiesced in it to the extent of nodding his head as he tossed a wreath of smoke upward from his cigarette.

"Good," he exclaimed. "Go, my dear Pierre, with my benediction. To you has come courage in the great misfortune. Already I see the Chateau de Perpignan swept of those tigers, the money-lenders, and dots the most suitable provided for your sisters."

The viscount rose lightly upon the tips of his toes to fall back upon his heels reflectively.

"It is well, mon pere," he said, "that I go with your approval, because for this campaign d'amour it is necessary that I have ten thousand francs."

The Baron de Perpignan raised his eyebrows as if surprised by the demand.

"Impossible," he returned. "This is the third campagne d'amour, my dear Pierre. First there was that of the Alps, in which you were defeated by the widow of the Russian grain dealer. That cost five thousand francs. Then there was the affaire Londres. Mon Dieu! seven thousand francs to be told by the big Anglaise that she preferred of her own coldbath roasts-biffs. Ten thousand francs for the third campagne, impossible."

"But," protested the viscount, "one cannot swim all the way to the land of the dollaire."

The baron shrugged his shoulders negatively.

"Neither is it necessary to engage the suite royale, mon enfant," he retorted, adding with a smile, "it is the return you make in that way. Besides, read in the Petit Boulevardier that the dollaire so plentiful in America is no longer worshipped, but blood the most ancient, and of the latter, my dear Pierre, you have a superb capital. Therefore, with two thousand francs is to be well fortified."

WHILE inclined to detract nothing from the value of his ancestry, the viscount nevertheless had found in his campaign of the Alps and the affaire Londres that a successful termination to the contest d'amour depended in great measure upon material resources, having lost the widow of the Russian grain dealer to a rival by a glacier picnic, and the big Anglaise through lack of means to pursue the fox, so he held to it that for the conquest of the beautiful Americaine two thousand francs was impossible.

"Very well," said the baron, "I deny myself the pleasure of a new set of furs for your mother, and make it three thousand francs, that is fifteen thousand francs in all. Considering your previous failures it is a great risk to advance you another sou; therefore, we will call the debt fifty thousand francs. That you will easily obtain from the rich father of the beautiful Americaine. Bah! it is too little, but I

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"Mademoiselle, I you love since your portrait I behold in the Journal."

trust to your generosity, my son. Go! Bon voyage! And return speedily with Madame la Vicomtesse. I already kiss the hand which opens the golden purse, as that old pig, the generale, is bothering me for the trifle I lost to him at cards."

With three thousand francs, and some odd hundreds borrowed from other sources, the Viscount Gricourt de Perpignan therefore sailed for America, doubting nothing that he had but to announce himself as arrive upon that hospitable shore—hospitable for viscounts particularly—and rich fathers would present themselves with a beautiful daughter in one hand and the key to a safety deposit vault in the other. But alas! he survived perhaps the most distressing peril of the deep, the unceremonious ways of the New York port authorities, and the curiosity of the reporters, to discover in a few days after his establishment at the Hotel Golconda, that his conception of things American was substantially lacking in foundation. Beautiful Americaines in bewildering numbers he encountered in the courts and lobbies of the Golconda, whose attire proclaimed the most desirable fathers-in-law, but who seemed disinclined to capitulate spontaneously even to a Perpignan.

With this he realized that if the funds provided for his former campaign in the Alps and London had been insufficient, the three thousand odd francs changed into dollars became a pitiful sum in America for any purpose. As he was then living the whole would be swept away in a month, and in that space he might not succeed in making the first sympathetic impression. What then? From a countryman he heard the most distressing stories of similar cases. Barons and counts had arrived with great enthusiasm to adore and be adored, but to be tossed

aside by the cruelle Americaine mees for roasts-biff English milords. It seemed they were the prevailing fashion. Nay, visual proof of it was given him in the person of an Italian marquis—Di Spagliochetti—actually balancing a tray in a miserable restaurant. These distressing facts he wrote at once in detail to his father, the baron, begging for an immediate reinforcement of ten thousand francs, which might be regarded as making the original debt owing by the American father-in-law to be, as one hundred thousand. In conclusion he emphasized with tearful eloquence how unfortunate would be his lot if he lost the beautiful Americaine—the grand prix—as he had done the Russian grain dealer's widow and the big Anglaise for some such trivial stake as a box of bonbons.

BUT the waves of the Atlantic rolled too far to break upon the sympathy of the impecunious old baron. In response he warmly thanked his son for raising the debt of the American father-in-law to be to one hundred thousand francs, upon which he devoutly breathed a blessing. For the rest, he explained that as he had received a bullet in the leg from that pig of a general on the field of honour, he was placed completely hors de combat, financially and otherwise. If, however, he might presume to offer his brave son a word of advice, it was to debit the father-in-law to be with all such incidental expenses of the campaign as bonbons.

For the viscount, the immediate future loomed desperate. What was to be done? The forthcoming weekly hotel bill would necessitate the hypothecating of his baggage, and no beautiful Americaine with a rich papa had noticed him at all seriously. A bas the English milords! Their vogue was as surprising as it was deplorable. He foresaw himself balancing a tray like the Italian Marquis di Spagliochetti, unless some plan suggested itself. His sharpened wits prompted advertising in the daily press. Considering the original altitude of his confidence, it was a heart-rending expedient, but the crisis in his affairs was too swiftly approaching to be over discriminating. Let the world behold his plight, and cold print convey to his father the miserable degradation of it. Thus he sought the office of a daily journal, and with the assistance of a clerk offered himself—a genuine viscount of the old regime, young, handsome and honourable—to a beautiful lady suitably endowed. As he arranged for replies to be sent to the office, he feared that their number would be a burden upon the good nature of the clerk.

IT was more than disappointment, therefore, in fact a shock with which he was informed that after the second insertion there were no replies at hand.

"Nothing doing for you, viscount," said the unemotional clerk, glancing at the pigeonhole marked P for Perpignan. "Guess the fish ain't biting in your line. Your goods are not as scarce over here as they used to be. But you might take another chance and run the ad. again."

The viscount, but vaguely comprehending the drift of this form of the English language, declared with emphatic gesticulation that while circumstances might force upon him a terrible sacrifice, run he would not—never—never.

"Oh, pshaw!" returned the clerk, "I mean the advertisement, not you. Insert it again. That's what I say."

"Ah," exclaimed the viscount, with the light of perception breaking upon him, "you think if I place him once more, he bring the letters!"

"It may," tersely responded the clerk. "It often