

**A FRENCH TRAGEDY.**

**THE FRATRICIDE OF COUNT DE KERMEI.**

(From N. Y. World correspondent.)

PARIS, July 18.—All Paris, and especially the Faubourg St. Germain, was shocked last April by rumours that Count Olivier de Kermel had assassinated his brother, Ernest de Kermel. The friends of the family attempted to refute the rumour by attributing the sudden death to misadventure, but it was confirmed by the action taken by the magistrates, and by an advertisement which immediately appeared in the Paris newspapers, and which offered for sale Chateau de Kersalaun, the seat of the de Kermel family. At Quarter Court Olivier de Kermel has just been arraigned before the Court of Assizes for this crime. Count Olivier de Kermel is a tall, dark-complexioned, black-haired man. He wears all his beard. He is lame. He is only thirty, but he looks fully forty years old. When arraigned he wore deep black gloves included. He hung down his head, and kept his arms folded on his breast. The two brothers, Olivier and Ernest de Kermel, lived with their mother in Chateau de Kersalaun, Finisterre (Land's-end) County, one of the bleakest portions of Brittany. Their mother became a widow several years since. Olivier de Kermel was Mayor of the township and lieutenant of the wolf-hunters of that district. He, being the eldest male member of the family, managed the family estate. He was a passionate, violent man. His deformity made him more ill-tempered; it grated continually on his nerves. His brother, Ernest, was only twenty-four years old, was extremely handsome and winning, was of a gentle, quiet temper, and his mother's favorite child. There never had been kind feelings between the brothers. Nature had separated them by an abyss—their opposite characters. The eldest brother especially hated and was jealous of his brother; the latter, Ernest, looked with unfriendly eyes on Olivier. In January last Mme. de Kermel hired a peasant girl of twenty for cook. Marie Le Clech had no personal advantages to recommend her except the gloss of youth, which in Brittany (the Wales of France) is a very clear complexion, a white skin, and ruddy cheeks. Her countenance has all the insignificance with which an uneducated, vacant mind defaces blue eyes, blonde hair, and youth's glow. Despite some giddiness (not inexcusable in young blood), Marie Le Clech's character is stainless. She had scarcely entered Mme de Kermel's service when both brothers became enamoured of her. Each sought to make her his mistress. Baffled in their designs, both offered her marriage. She declined suits and offers. This passion of the brothers for their cook, and their common jealousy, burst through all disguises. The whole neighbourhood knew that the brothers were rivals. Olivier, especially, had no scruple about venting in anybody's ear his animosity against his lameless brother, his preferred rival—so he thought Ernest. He surprised Ernest talking with the cook (it was a very few days before the perpetration of the crime), and he yelled:—"Tis lucky for him that he is my brother; for, but for this relation, I should fill his head with shot." The 12th of April a most violent quarrel took place between the brothers. Ernest, exasperated as he had never before been, declared that he should beg his mother to discharge Marie Le Clech. Olivier begged, implored him to do no such thing. Marie Le Clech herself, notwithstanding her youth and ignorance, had a womanly instinct of the dangers and perils of her situation, and determined to ask her discharge. The very next morning (13th April) she settled accounts with Mme. de Kermel and instantly quitted the house. Olivier was frantic with rage. He pressed his mother to recall the girl. Mme. de Kermel positively refused to do so. He then abused Ernest in most vituperative terms. He swore he would resign all his offices, quit the house, and never set foot in it again. Ernest overheard some of these ravings, and the same evening gave Olivier a slip of paper containing threats. This note was the last communication which passed between the two brothers. This same evening (13th April) Olivier wrote resignations of his offices of mayor, municipal councillor, and lieutenant of wolf-hunters. The next day (14th April) he went up stairs immediately after breakfast to complete his preparations for departure. The noise made as he pulled about his portmanteaus showed how excited he was. His mother went to his chamber to dissuade him from leaving home; she ended, "God will not bless you if you quit in this way your kith and kin." He rudely replied: "I don't care." When left alone, with all the arrangements for leaving home completed, and the last step which severed him from his family about to be taken, he probably imagined his future position—an isolated wail in the world, without social position, with none of those influential offices which increased his influence, and with his brother in undisturbed possession of Marie Le Clech. He became frenzied. He took his loaded revolver, hid it under his overcoat, and went in search of Ernest. He had to go down a long passage, a staircase of twenty-five steps, through the billiard-room, into the library. Ernest was seated in the library and attentively reading a newspaper. He did not raise his eyes when Olivier entered. Olivier drew his revolver, and without saying a word fired at Ernest. They were not a foot apart. The ball went through and through Ernest's head, and he fell on the floor writhing in death's last throes. Olivier leaned over him and fired two more shots into his head, both going clear through it. Olivier threw his revolver on a table, went to the stable, saddled his horse, and galloped to Chateau du Faou. He stopped in front of the Justice of the Peace's house, leaped from his horse, ran into the Justice's office; his face was haggard; his eyes wild, his voice gasping. He said: "I have just killed my brother at Chateau de Kersalaun. I shot him with a revolver. I am going to surrender myself prisoner." He did not wait for a reply, got on his horse, galloped to Chateaulin, rang at the house of the Prosecuting Attorney, and when admitted, said, "I come to declare I have murdered my brother and to ask for meet punishment." Justice and Attorney each thought him crazy, or the author of a deplorable accident. The former went to Chateau de Kersalaun, and the first object which he saw was Mme. de Kermel kneeling by the corpse of her youngest son as it lay on the library floor.

When Oliver de Kermel was arraigned, his counsel moved postponement of trial till the next term of the Court of Assizes. His counsel allege him to be insane, and ask time that his mental condition may be examined by experts. The trial was upon these rounds postponed.

The following advertisement is going the round of the Paris papers:—"After a war so disastrous and the total dislocation of French fortunes, it would be easy to reconstitute one's fortune by a brilliant marriage under the most desirable conditions; to reach this difficult end the mediation of M. de F. will be found especially valuable in these critical times. After such a chaotic condition of affairs, to remould such an administration as his is an arduous and costly task—so much so, indeed, that a man must be actuated by a sincere love of his profession, and must be borne up by the experience of forty-five years' success, to continue the career. Sums varying from 50,000 have often been paid down by M. de F. to an intermediary for his assistance in arranging the marriage of a widow or a young lady. This rôle, generally committed only to men versed in business, may now be undertaken by ladies in society who may have only a secondary aptitude, as they will always be guided by the counsels of M. de F., who will, however, always remain in the background. The name and address are given in full, and desirable parties are requested to apply early."

A correspondent of a Vienna paper recently saw the ex-Prince Imperial of France at Chiselhurst, and gives the following description of him:—"An overgrown boy with a pleasant face, dreamy, but meaningless eyes, manners not very graceful, and a smile which reminds you of that cold, freezing smile which his father, the ex-Emperor, would put on when he wanted to make himself amiable. The Prince's forehead is low, and shows that his intellectual capacity cannot be very great. His teachers are said to be much dissatisfied with the slow progress he makes in his studies."

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