

THE MYSTERY CLEARED UP;

OR, THE HERITAGE OF MADAME YALTA.

CHAPTER IV.—(Cont'd)

"A name which will tell you nothing. It was Ladislav. But I know the man."

"Ah!" said the countess, tranquilly. "Who is he?"
"He is a foreigner, a Slav who led a mysterious life here, and suddenly disappeared. He lived in Rue Jouffroy, and had for companion a marvellously beautiful creature who vanished with himself. Dr. Villagos pointed her out to me at the Rink."

"And no doubt you made love to her?" said Madame Yalta, smiling.

"No. I accompanied her to her door, where I narrowly escaped being murdered. It was Georget who saved me from them. Being their accomplice he was aware of their plans, and manoeuvred so as to deliver me from them without denouncing them."

"We see now that Georget knows better than any one what has transpired, since he knows the thief. Let us return, then, I beg, to M. de Carnoel. It is he alone who interests me, and whom I wish to find."

"I think I have discovered him."

"You have seen him?"

"No, but I know where he is. It chanced that, on returning with Georget to his grandmother, he recognized a certain wall, from the top of which he had fallen, and remembered at last why he had climbed it. He had in the morning seen Robert de Carnoel enter a house, the garden of which was enclosed by that wall, and having watched before it all day, ascertained that he did not leave the house. An instant before his fall he saw him again, holding a torch which he waved as a signal. I shall give you a surprise when I make known to you that this house is occupied by the Russian whose casket was stolen from my uncle's."

"Borisoff! ah, the wretch! He only would be capable of so infamous a proceeding!"

"Then you believe as I do, that the colonel has made use of a ruse to get M. de Carnoel in his power, and of violence in keeping him?"

"I think we may esteem ourselves fortunate if he has not killed him. This man is a secret agent of the Russian foreign police. He wishes at any price to discover by whom his papers have been taken. M. de Carnoel was accused. He began by obtaining possession of his person, and has made frightful threats with the hope of inducing him to confess what has been done with the casket. M. de Carnoel has not been able to say, since he did not know, and Borisoff, having compromised himself by his arbitrary arrest, cannot set him at liberty. Borisoff will make an end of him if he has not already done so. I have not a moment to lose in saving the unfortunate young man, and it is I only who can. I beg you, therefore, to abstain from taking any step."

"But," said Maxime, "it is—I have already taken one."

"What?" asked the countess, quickly.

"The most natural. After having taken Georget to his grandmother, I returned quickly to Rue Vigny and asked for Col. Borisoff."

"It was folly. He did not see you, I suppose?"

"I beg pardon, madame. He received me immediately. He thought I was sent by my uncle."

"Mon dieu! what did you say?"

"I asked what he had done with M. de Carnoel."

"Ah!" murmured the countess, "all is now lost."

"What?" exclaimed Maxime, "if I had not gone directly to the point he would have had time to prepare his reply. I hoped to surprise and embarrass him."

"Do you flatter yourself that you succeeded?"

"I cannot affirm that he seemed perplexed. These Russians have a marvellous sang froid."

"What was his reply?"

"He began by asking why I applied to him for news of the young man, and feigned ignorance. Then I told him plainly that M. de Carnoel had been seen to enter his house, that he had not been seen

to come out, and that he must be still there."

"And in proceeding thus you hoped M. Borisoff would confess what he had done and yield up his prisoner to you?"

"I confess I had not reflected much—I followed the first impulse—which I regret, since you disapprove of it," added Maxime, sadly, feeling conscious that his conduct appeared absurd in Madame Yalta's eyes.

"Oh, I do not reproach you; you acted for the best! Tell me now the interview terminated."

"The Russian denied the charge with disdain. I threatened him with recourse to the commissary of police."

"Nothing more was wanting—"

"I was irritated, else I should not have gone so far, especially as I have no idea of mixing the police up with this affair. And the colonel did not seem to attach any importance to this menace, for he assumed a haughty and contemptuous tone, which exasperated me. I redoubled my urgency, he requested me to leave, and I went out announcing that I should send him my seconds."

"But you have not done so, I hope?"

"Not yet; I have not had time to look for them."

"And I hope you will not look for them."

"Borisoff expects them."

"Borisoff knows well enough that an affair entered upon in such a manner will have no consequences. And he has his reply all ready in case you send two of your friends. Forget, then, the false step you made yesterday, and let us consult as to the best means of repairing it."

"So," asked Maxime, timidly, "you judge me still worthy of seconding you in your generous enterprise?"

"Do you doubt it? If I had not an absolute confidence in you, do you think I should initiate you into my most secret projects? I have no other friend on whose aid I could rely: Dr. Villagos least of all."

"He fears for your health, and he is right."

"Not only for my health. You have never reflected on the danger attending an attack on Col. Borisoff?"

"I confess I have not. We are not in Russia, and in Paris I do not see how this Russian agent can exercise his occult powers."

"You have, however, under your eyes, a striking illustration of his mode of proceeding with a Frenchman who incommoded him."

"M. de Carnoel's case is peculiar. He was accused of theft; he had taken flight. It was probable that no one, unless it were his accusers, would concern themselves to know what had become of him. The colonel would scarcely undertake such a game with you or me."

"He would find some mode of attack. I tell you this man is formidable, for he shrinks from no means of vengeance, and in this affair he has a great vengeance to execute. He has been overreached by those who have taken his papers, and if he could annihilate them every one he would not hesitate."

"You believe that this theft had only a political end. But by whom?"

"By proscribed unfortunates, probably. Europe is full of exiles who, having suffered from Muscovite despotism, make war upon it from afar. I have the good fortune not to be a Russian subject. I have therefore, nothing to do with persons of the Borisoff species. But I am always of the party of the weak, and therefore it is that I interest myself in those whom this spy persecutes."

"Then if M. de Carnoel had aided the persecuted in getting possession of this casket, you would defend him still?"

"Yes, certainly; but it is not true. We know who committed the theft since Georget has designated a certain Ladislav. It is a Polish name—some refugee, doubtless."

"Before placing myself at your disposal, let me enlighten you further as to the history of the theft. It is well you should know all. One

Wednesday evening, Vignory and I, who were going to pass the evening at my uncle's, observed a light in the office, and on going in made a frightful discovery. The safe is defended by an apparatus so constructed as to seize by the arm any one who shall attempt to open it without taking certain precautions. Well, a woman's hand was found remaining in the vice. To avoid being arrested, she had caused her hand to be amputated."

"Do you believe an ordinary thief would have done that?" asked the countess, in a quivering voice.

"Assuredly not. I thought from the first this attempt at theft had a special motive. Afterward, when I learned the disappearance of the Russian's casket, I was convinced of it. We conceived—Vignory and I—the unfortunate idea of keeping what we had learned, secret. The attempt was not repeated by the woman, who must have been suffering the consequences of the amputation."

"If she did not die of it," murmured the countess.

"It is certain that she had an accomplice—this Ladislav mentioned by Georget—and the next day this accomplice succeeded without accident."

"You say that there were two attempts at theft, and that the first took place during a soiree at M. Dorgeres'. M. de Carnoel was doubtless in your uncle's salon at that time?"

"Yes, certainly; he never missed the Wednesday reception."

"He was not, therefore, with the thieves. It might be said he had given them instructions. It is inadmissible. Information, furnished by the secretary of M. Dorgeres, the intimate friend of the cashier, would have been more complete. The unfortunate woman, who was mutilated, would not have lost her hand. He who took the casket the next evening understood how to avoid its terrible embrace. Do you still maintain that in this interval M. de Carnoel might have warned them? It would be an absurd supposition. The secretary, initiated into all his master's secrets, must have long known the existence of the trap, and had he been in league with the thieves, would not have waited for a grave accident before pointing out the means to avoid it."

"All that is very just," murmured Maxime.

"So just," resumed the countess with energy, "that I am lost in amazement at the blindness which struck you all at the moment the theft was discovered. To accuse a man for the simple reason that he is absent is something unheard of."

"It was not I,—I did not accuse him,—I was not present."

"No; Georget told me there were only this Russian and the cashier. The Russian was in the waiting-room. The cashier was alone when he discovered the theft."

"True; but he called Col. Borisoff, and sent immediately for my uncle. Vignory verified the contents in his presence."

"And they recognized the disappearance of the casket. The cashier also made known that a sum of money was taken—I don't know what, something comparatively insignificant,—and it was believed on his affirmation."

"But—unless it could be supposed he had taken it himself—"

"No such question was raised. The case is simply this: Here are three men brought together by an event which touches them all in different ways; and without reflection, without investigation, these three men agree to impute the misdeed to a youth whose life hitherto had been irreproachable."

"Appearances were against him, his abrupt departure—"

"But they knew the cause of this departure. Your uncle knew very well that he had dismissed M. de Carnoel, who was in despair. The cashier had received the young man's confidence after the event took place, and the Russian was made by them aware of the situation. No matter—these gentlemen forthwith decide that M. de Carnoel is the last of scoundrels; that he has dishonored himself to oblige an enemy of M. Borisoff and to appropriate a few bank-notes. And instead of delivering him to the authorities, who would at least have allowed him a chance to vindicate himself, they agree to abandon him to the investigations and the vengeance of a man interested, and consequently partial. In truth, one appears to be dreaming when he examines calmly the strange features of this affair."

Maxime, struck dumb as he listened, lowered his head and spoke not a word, having no reply to make to the close reasonings of the countess.

(To be continued.)

GERMANY'S HARD LESSONS.

As Europe's Battleground She Has Been Ravaged Time and Again.

Occupying the greater portion of Central Europe, Germany is, in political respects, the most unfavorably located country in the world.

Nowhere protected by such natural boundaries as large rivers or high mountain ranges, which would block the way of enemies, but easily accessible and vulnerable on all sides, Germany has been, since remotest times, the object of hostile assaults.

For a period of 400 years the German tribes were compelled to defend their independence from the Romans. Later came the horrible invasion of the Huns; the piracies by the Northmen; the frequent attacks by the Magyars, Mongols and Turks.

During the Thirty Years War Germany served as the great battleground for Spanish, Swedish, Italian and Hungarian troops, who reduced the population from seventeen to four millions and made the country an almost uninhabitable desert. In Saxony, during the two years 1631 and 1632, 931,000 persons were killed or swept away by sickness.

In Wurttemberg over 500,000 lost their lives, and eight cities, 45 towns, 65 churches and 36,000 houses were burned. The Palatinate, having at that time a population of 500,000, suffered a loss of 467,000, and in some parts of Thuringia more than 90 per cent. of the population perished.

The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries brought the frequent raids by the French, who left the ruins of hundreds of beautiful castles on the Rhine, Moselle and Neckar as lasting monuments of their visits.

The beginning of the nineteenth century saw the onslaught of that monstrous adventurer, Napoleon I., by whom Germany was humiliated as never before. The imperial mantle was torn into shreds and stamped into the dust. The German kingdoms and States were given by Napoleon as presents to his relatives and favorites, who made the German cities ring with their gay life. Would any nation, says Rudolf Cronan in McClure's, ignore the lessons taught by such an unhappy, terrible past?

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Write for a trial bottle to-day. For sale by all druggists.

CURING THE LIQUOR HABIT.

When a man is found drunk in the streets of Prizrend, Albania, he is tied to a kind of triangle upon a donkey's back and paraded through the streets with a boy beating a drum in front of the procession. The innkeeper, too, who gave the man the drink, is fined, and the money goes to the pasha. The drunkard is sentenced, too, to seven days at hard labor.

A USEFUL INVENTION.

One of the latest inventions along the lines of gas and gasoline engines is a harvester engine. This consists of a 2½ h.p. air cooled engine which operates the machinery of the binder, and relieves the horses of so much work. This outfit will doubtless be a very familiar object on the Western plains in the near future. (It is manufactured by the Gilson Manufacturing Co., Port Washington, Wis., and Guelph, Canada.)

The church that does not fit for life is not fit to live.

"WHY BE SO THIN?"

Thinness is Embarrassing, Unhealthy and Not Natural—Formula Now Used Which Adds From One to Three Pounds a Week.

Every one ought to have some extra flesh on the bony structure of the body, both for the sake of health and self-esteem.

Most thin people are sensitive to the harsh, unfeeling criticisms which are constantly being hurled at them by the more fortunate well-figured persons.

Every one pities a thin, bony horse, but horses don't know it—while thin people are both pitied and ridiculed. It ought not to be so, but it is.

A well rounded figure, be it man or woman, excites admiration; not only for the figure but for the bright eyes, pink cheeks, red lips, and vigorous carriage which accompany a well-nourished body.

Strength, health, beauty and sound flesh abound, if the blood and nerves get enough nourishment out of the food eaten.

This prescription aids nature; helps absorption, digestion and assimilation; helps distribute the blood and nerve elements which make sound flesh. Get the ingredients and make it at home, and see how very fast you gain in weight.

In a half pint bottle, obtain three ounces of essence of pepsin, three ounces syrup of rhuibarb. Then add one ounce compound essence cardiol, shake and let stand two hours; then add one ounce tincture cadomene compound, (not cardamom). Shake well and take a teaspoonful before meals and one after meals. Also drink plenty of water between meals and when retiring. Weigh yourself before beginning.

GREAT IS THE LAW.

"And now, my son," said the bank manager, "on this, the threshold of your business life, I desire to impress one thought on you. Honesty, ever and always, is the policy that is best."

"Yes, father," said the young man.

"And, by the way," appended the greybeard. "I would urge you to read up a little common law. It will amaze you to find how many things you can do in a business way and still be honest."

BE READY TO CURE HORSE AILMENTS.

Because a farmer has to work with his horses and have their services nearly every day in the year, it is absolutely necessary that he be posted on their common ailments and know how to treat their injuries.

It is not out of place to suggest that it is wise to have such a thoroughly good and reliable horse remedy as Kendall's Spavin Cure constantly on hand.

Kendall's Spavin Cure is now and for a long series of years has been a standard horse remedy. It can hardly be too strongly recommended.

In this connection, we want to commend to our readers an excellent little book called "A Treatise on the Horse and His Diseases."

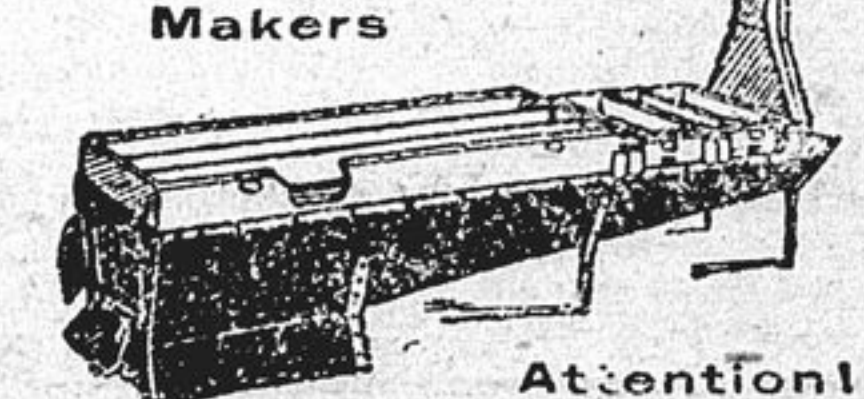
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Our nation will be the home of righteousness only as righteousness is practically taught in its homes.

The church locks itself up as dark as a sepulchre all the week and condemns youth for seeking light and joy.

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