THE MYSTERY CLEARED UP;

OR, THE HERITAGE OF MADAME YALTA.

CHAPTER III.—(Cont'd)

"He must be there," is admirable.

"Railing is not answering. If he is not here you know where he is, for you cannot deny that he came here."

"I do deny it on the contrary. I deny it absolutely."

"You deny it, I affirm it, and I wish to know what you have done with M. de Carnoel."

For a few moments the colonel did not reply, and when he did, it was in a serious and injured tone.

"Sir," he said slowly, "I should be justified in cutting short such an interview as this, but I have friendly relations with M. Dorgeres, and I content myself with reminding you of the very singular nature of this summons which you have addressed to me in my own house. Assuredly you do not hope that I shall submit to you, and do not pretend to constrain me to answer you?"

"No, I shall take other means to attain my end. If necessary, I shall have recourse to the commissary of police."

"This passes all bounds," said M. Borisoff. "I have listened patiently to absurd questionings. I cannot tolerate threats, and beg you to leave my house."

"Is it your last word?" asked Maxime, red with anger.

"Yes, sir, and I should have spoken it sooner, for this conversation has lasted too long."

"Very well. I know what remains for me to do, and have nothing more to say. You cannot tolerate threats; I cannot tolerate offensive language. You have spoken of my questions as absurd. To-morrow I shall send you my seconds."

"I am ready for them," replied the colonel, turning his back on Maxime, who went out furious.

The calm which M. Borisoff had maintained during their interview was on the surface, and when Vacil. saw his master again he discerned that a storm was brewing.

"Do you know what this scoundrel has said to me? He has summoned me to render up M. de Carnoel. He affirms that he was seen to enter here a month ago—in a carriage. He is, you see, well informed."

"It must have been that child—and yet no—since he has lost his memory. If he had told it immediately, M. Dorgeres would not have waited so long to set these proceedings on foot."

"It matters little how he got his information. He has challenged me and threatened me with the commissary of police. I scoff at his challenge and his threats. However, we must take the subject into consideration. And first I cannot release the Carnoel, neither can I keep him here longer. I don't intend to run any risk of being brought before their tribunals. M. de Carnoel will leave here to-morrow evening. Let the carriage be ready at nightfall. Be sure and telegraph to our agents to have the relays ready as far as Strasburg."

"Your excellency, it shall be done."

"Now I am going to make a last attempt to induce him to capitulate. Go and announce to him my visit."

Vacili bowed and went out.

His master was decidedly in an ill-humor, for he walked up and down with long strides, gesticulating and even doubling his fist at his invisible enemies.

"Cursed be the day when I came to Paris to watch over the intrigues of a few undiscoverable knaves! In Russia one has at least power, and is not afraid to arrest suspected creatures. If I do not succeed in my mission, the great chief will say I am a blockhead. I should like to see him here in my place. Come! this Carnoel shall pay for the others," concluded M. Borisoff as he pushed open with violence the door of a gallery leading to the library in which Robert was confined.

Robert de Carnoel was not expecting a visit from his jailer — Robert de Carnoel had ceased to expect or to hope.

The first days of his captivity had been passed in fearful agony. He had frequent interviews with the colonel, who amused himself by torturing him with accounts of the project of marriage formed by M. Dorgeres, and the progress which Vignory was making in the heart of Mlle. Alice.

The apparition of the first night was not renewed on the night following. Robert passed several hours aselessly before the window panes. The child did not reappear on the wall. But that was no reason for despairing. If the brave boy proposed to deliver him either by force or strategem, he must take time for the execution of so difficult an enterprise.

A week passed, then two, and then three, and there was no sign of Georget. Soon the colonel also ceased to visit him, abandoning him to the care and vigilance of his subalterns. And Robert, left to his reflections, confined in complete isolation, little by little came to believe that there remained to him not a single chance of safety. Abandoned by all, he had accepted his destiny, and had arrived at that stern resignation that is born of despair. He spoke no more, and forced himself to think no more.

It will easily be believed that in this frame of mind he received with indifference the announcement of the colonel's visit.

The intendant, Vacili, who brought it, received no reply, and when M. Borisoff entered M. de Carnoel did not deign to rise and receive him.

"It is a long time since I have seen you," said the Russian, taking no notice of the prisoner's attitude. "I have given you time to reflect on the proposition I made, and which I do not withdraw. I gave you a month for consideration, and this month will expire to-morrow. I come to know if you have decided to speak?"

"I have nothing to say to you."

"I must remind you that if you consent to name your accomplice you will be free that very instant, and that I will undertake to reinstate you in the eyes of M. Dorgeres."

"It is very tempting, but I repeat that I am innocent, consequently that I have no accomplice, and that I shall not buy my liberty at the price of a lying confession."

"I know what restrains you. You believe Mlle. Dorgeres to be irrecoverably lost to you. I am about to put you in possession of the facts—to tell you how matters stand."

"Spare yourself the trouble; you will obtain nothing from me."

"No matter, it is well you should know all. I told you of the project of M. Dorgeres to give his daughter to his cashier, whom he had just made his partner. Now the marriage is decided. Your friend Vignory has been accepted by Mlle Alice. To tell the truth, I did not think she would decide so quickly. It was your prolonged absence which led to this result. Had you listened to me it would have been in your power to reappear and cut short your rival's matrimonial campaign; to-day it would be more difficult. Early in February Mlle. Dorgeres will become Madame Vignory."

"Why, then, fatigue me with your solicitations? Were I free to-morrow the marriage would take place none the less. I should not try to hinder it."

"You would be wrong. There is still time to do so. Mlle. Dorgeres has consented against herself. She has grown weary of the war, when after days of waiting you did not appear to confound your calumniators. It would be easy to explain your silence. You might say that you were ignorant you had been accused. It would be plausible, since the theft was known only to three or four persons. You might add that you had just heard these reports; you might have learned them from some one who was interested in you—this groom, for instance, who was in the waiting-room when the theft was discovered, an urchin named, I believe, Goerges or Goerget."

At this name Robert could not suppress a slight movement, which did not escape the quick eyes of the colonel.

"I mention this child because he took an interest in you," he resumed. "It seems he saw you when you were brought here by my steward, and came to inquire for you."

"If he knew I was your prisoner" said Robert, not without an effort, "he would not have kept it a secret, and some one would have been found to deliver me from your power."

"It is quite probable, but on that day he had a fall, from the effects of which he is and will remain an idiot."

This time Robert turned pale. He understood now why Georget had not reappeared.

"I tell you this," resumed the colonel, "that you may not build on the hope of being succored by this gamin. And that reminds me that I made a mistake in advising you to say you were informed by him of the remarks of which you have been the subject. But you might designate another, M. Maxime Dorgeres, for instance. He also is interested in your behalf."

"I scarcely know him," said M. de Carnoel, impatiently. "Listen to me, and when you have heard me through, I have not another word to say. You are convinced, are you not, that I have loved, that I still love Mlle. Dorgeres?"

"I am sure of it."

"And the offers you have made me are sincere? You are prepared, if I accept your conditions, to restore my liberty, to support my cause with M. Dorgeres; you will even go so far as to declare that you have discovered the real culprit"

"I have promised you that I am ready to do it," said M. Borisoff, quickly, satisfied that he was gaining the desired end.

"And you think that, given this new situation, M. Dorgeres, to repair his wrongs toward me, would feel it his duty to accord me the hand of his daughter; that Mlle. Dorgeres, who has not ceased to love me, would be happy to become my wife; that my revival would remember that he had been my friend and would not seek to dispute with me the heart of Alice? You think, in short, that it rests with me to pass from the depths of misery to the extreme of happiness"

"For this dream to become reality, you have only to name your accomplice."

"Do you think I should hesitate if I had one?" asked Robert, in a voice which vibrated. "You have, then, never loved, since you suppose that a man could sacrifice his love to some sentiment of keeping faith with conspirators. Had I stolen your casket for the purpose of delivering up your secret papers to the revolutionists of your country, I would go myself and recover it from them, if it was necessary, in order to marry the woman I loved. I would brave their vengeance and risk a thousand deaths sooner than refuse the happiness you propose to me. You see, then, that I know nothing, and that you will gain nothing by tormenting me further. Do with me as you please. You may kill me. You will extract nothing more from me."

The colonel knit his brows and bit his mustache. For the first time since he had secured the person of M. de Carnoel he asked himself if he had not made a false move in arresting him.

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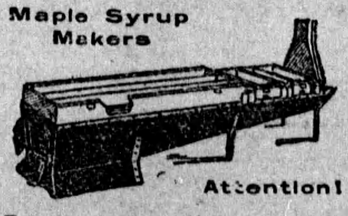

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CHAPTER IV.

Is there any one whose curiosity has not at times been aroused by some woman who had passed him? She is young, she is pretty, she is alone, and she walks with a hurrying step. She has an object, and she sees only this object. Is her walk to end in a romantic denouement, or simply to conduct her to her dressmaker? This is the question that puzzles the curious who follow her with their eyes. Before the problem can be solved, she is already far off. She has disappeared without leaving any more trace of herself than a bird in its passage through the air.

The old Parisian recognizes quickly enough the English or American girl who goes out without a chaperon for the pleasure of going out, of tossing her blonde hair in the wind, and laughing in the face of those whom she observes to mistake her for a seeker after adventure.

But the morning after Maxime Dorgeres' attack upon Col. Borisoff, it was unquestionably a French girl who, toward twelve o'clock, passed up the Avenue de Friedland, and a French girl young and pretty. A thick veil was drawn over her face, and she evidently did not wish to be recognized. At times she turned as if to see if she was not followed, and appeared uncertain of her route, for she stopped frequently to look at the houses and cross-streets. Evidently she sought for some indication which she did not care to ask of passers-by.

At length she observed an errand porter whom she decided to approach.

"Could you tell me where to find the house of a lady named the Countess Yalta?" she asked, in a scarcely audible voice.

"The Countess—Yalta? Ah, yes, the Russian princess who rides horseback dressed like a man? You are there, mademoiselle. There is a little door on the avenue fifty steps from here, but if you're not a friend of the house it's no use to ring; they wouldn't open to you. The great entrance is on Rue Beaujon, there—to the right. There is no mistaking it; it's gilded from top to bottom."

(To be continued.)

MISFORTUNE FOR THE BLOODLESS.

Misfortune for the bloodless—that should be printed in all the public places. You must have blood to have strong lungs to enable you to withstand all the dust and microbes of summer and the piercing winds and cold of winter. Consumption is, properly speaking, lack of blood; the natural result of anaemia. To prevent consumption rich blood is necessary. The best way to protect the organs is to circulate this rich blood through the lungs. Many have been saved by Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, because these Pills are a remarkable blood builder; not indirectly but directly—with each dose. They have cured thousands of cases of anaemia; green sickness; general debility and all other troubles arising out of poor blood.

HARVEST IN BABYLONIA

THE DAY WHEN ALL DEBTS WERE PAID.

In Babylonia the Food Problem Dominated all the Affairs of Life.

In the wonderful restoration of the ancient past which has resulted from the work of the explorer in the East nothing is more astonishing than the knowledge we have gained of the social life, manners and customs of the ancient inhabitants of Egypt, Babylonia and other Eastern centres of civilization.

In this respect the discoveries in Babylonia have been far more enlightening than any others, for in that land education was more general, extending to the lower grades of the community, and the literary tendency of the people leading them to have a written record for any event supplies us with a mass of details of the affairs of daily life far more vivid than in the case of any other people of antiquity.

Babylonia was the garden of the ancient East, as later tradition made it the site of the "Garden of Eden," and the ancient Sumerian population was the earliest organized community of agriculturists of whom we have record, says W. St. Chad Boscawen in the London Globe.

THE NATURE OF THE SOIL,

a deep alluvial, made it a land of the richest kind for the agriculturist, and nature needed but little assistance at the hand of man to bring forth her richest and best to supply his wants.

Although not the indigenous home of wheat, that being undoubtedly the slopes of the mountain of Luristan and the plain of Elam, where settlements of pre-historic harvesters have been found, it soon became the cornfield par excellence of western Asia, and in later times the granary of the Persian empire.

The early Sumerian settlers brought with them from the home land on the east of the Tigris the first elements of agriculture and soon the plains of Lower Chaldea became covered with corn fields. One of the oldest inscriptions we possess, that of Manishtu-su, King of Kish, which must date back to about B. C. 4000 if not earlier, is a purely agricultural record and shows that the principles of agriculture were already developed and systematized. The value of land was estimated on corn valuation, and the rights of landlord and the tenant were clearly defined. Moreover, the ancient records show that the calendar of those early inhabitants of Chaldea was agricultural and started from the autumnal equinox—the period of the "greater harvest."

In remote prehistoric times man had been the pensioner of Nature, dependent on the supplies she granted him, but now man by his invention of agricultural implements had

CONQUERED NATURE

and by his assistance rendered her far more lavish in according him supplies for his wants. The extreme fertility of the Chaldean plain soon made it the corn producing centre of the whole of western Asia, and as food was the equivalent of money it soon became the predominant partner in the world of commerce.

As a result of the old primitive barter system payments in kind ruled instead of cash payments and corn became money. Surplus supplies of corn or other food stuffs became income or capital and could minister to the luxury of the successful agriculturist. With the rise of the village community and later the city kingdom this increase of wealth became a source of revenue on which the heads of the community could draw for communal wants, and in this manner there grew up the first and greatest system of revenue ever found in ancient Oriental lands.

Ancient Babylonia possessed one feature in which it closely resembled our own country in the Middle Ages, the bulk of the property was in religious hands. That is, the various districts into which the land was divided were ezch the fief of the province god. The tables from Tel-lo show that all that district was the fief of the god Ningir-su; of Nippur the fief of Entil, or the older "Bel"; of Sippara,

THE SUN GOD,

and all the revenues were collected by the temple officials and paid into the temple treasury and classed as "the wealth or property of the god."

There were many villages and small towns in the fief of the province gods, and their revenues were collected by resident collectors and either remitted to the head city or stored in the local storehouse, and a very careful account of them sent to headquarters. All the dues were collected at one time, on "the day of harvest." When the harvest time came it was indeed a time of business pressure, the culmination of the year, the great day of reckoning. The deeds which have been recovered from the treasures of the Babylonian temples amply prove this.

Everything became due on the day of harvest. Thus a loam tablet from Nippur says: "Five and a half shekels, which X borrowed from the Sun-god to the Sun-god he shall pay back with the interest on the day of harvest." All small tradesmen were paid at harvest, and among them the obliging publican, who had given credit for beer during the previous months to his customers. All wages were paid at harvest time.

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BURGLARS ROBBED HOUSE.

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How often headings like this are seen in the daily and weekly papers throughout the country, stories of burglars having raided houses either at nights or during the absence of the occupants and having secured large sums of money which were being kept in the house.

The average person wonders how it is that people are so foolish as to keep large sums of money or valuables lying around the house subject to raids of this sort. When there are surplus funds on hand most people deposit them in the nearest Bank or else some Bank that offers special facilities to Savings Accounts, such as the Traders Bank of Canada.

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