CLOSE QUARTERS;

OR, THE HOUSE IN THE RUE BARBETTE

CHAPTER XV.—(Cont'd)

She thought the sail would never climb up in time, but as it began to yield to the steady pull of the men it mounted more and more rapidly, and at last, feeling the influence of a gentle breeze blowing off the land, it shook out its cumbrous folds and the number stood clearly revealed in huge white letters on the dark brown canvas.

At first, in her eagerness, she could hardly discern it, save a big "M" and an "R."

"There!" cried Eugenie, bubbling over with excitement. "There it is! 'M.R. 107,' Marseilles, No. 107, you know. Why, isn't that Jacques le Bon's boat?" she demanded from her companion.

"Yes, it is," said Marie; "and there is Jacques himself standing by the tiller."

Edith's eyes were now becoming accustomed to the night and the dancing water.

"Where are the others?" she said. "I cannot see them. There is no one standing on the deck but the sailors."

"Oh, they have gone below, I expect," said the practical Marie. "They will be in the way of the sails, you know. There is not much room for people who don't work on the deck of a small ship like that. Besides, they don't want to be seen. If a customs officer or a harbor official were to notice the boat now he would think that Le Bon was going out fishing for the night, but he would be sure to wonder what was happening if he caught sight of a woman on board. Funny, isn't it," she rattled on, "that Jacques should be called 'LeBon,' for he is the worst man in Marseilles! They say that his ugly grin when he draws a knife would frighten anybody!"

CHAPTER XVI.

When one o'clock came and Edith had not arrived, the three men waiting in the hotel made no further effort to conceal their anxiety. The impetuous Fairholme was eager to commence an immediate search of Marseilles, but Brett steadily adhered to his resolution not to stir from their sitting-room until either Miss Talbot came back in person or it became certain that she was detained by some other influence than her own unfettered volition.

With this view Talbot could not help concurring, so Fairholme had to content himself by smoking many cigarettes and walking uneasily about the room. Sit down he could not, whilst any casual ring at the hotel door found him leaning over the balustrade of the inner court and listening intently for the first words of the new arrival.

But the Englishmen were not the only persons in the hotel that night whose composure was disturbed. Their extraordinary behavior caused uneasiness to the manager and those members of his staff who remained on duty. The facts disclosed by the hall-porter were certainly remarkable. Only one member of the party had behaved in a normal manner. Sir Hubert Fitz-James, soon after his arrival, went quietly to bed, but the hall-porter's report as to the conduct of the others was passing strange.

One of them, to his surprise, had rung up the Prefecture of Police in Paris on the Telephone. The others were standing at the hotel door, gazing quietly enough at the passers-by, when suddenly about midnight much excitement rose amongst them. They conversed eagerly in their own tongue for a few moments, and the lady had rushed off down the street by herself, whilst her two companions ran with equal precipitancy to join the third in the sitting-room they had engaged, and there they were still seated in moody expectancy, apparently watching for some dramatic event to happen.

It was time that all good people were in bed. But it has hopeless to approach such lunatics with questions, for they were English, and no descent Frenchman could possibly hope to understand their actions or motives. It was satisfactorily that hey could speak French well; therefore the manager counselled the hall-porter to exhibit patience and prudence. Moreover, millords upstairs would be sure to recompense him for an enforced vigil by a liberal pourboire.

At last, when even the Cannebiere was empty, and when the latest cafe had closed its doors and the final tramcar had wearily jingled its way up the hill towards a distant suburb, the electric bell jangled a noisy summons to the front door. It produced the hall-porter and Fairholme with remarkable celerity.

The Frenchman cautiously opened the door and saw outside a muffled up female who eagerly demanded admittance. He knew by her accent that she was not a Marseillaise, but the shawl that covered her head and shoulders showed that she belonged to the working classes.

"Whom do you wish to see at this hour?" he gruffly demanded.

"I live here," said Edith. "I came here to-night with my brother from Paris. Please let me in at once."

In her excitement and breathlessness—for she had hurried at top speed from the harbor—Edith forgot that the homely garment she adopted as a disguise effectually cloaked her from the recognition of the hall-porter as from all others.

Moreover, her French accent was too good. It deceived the man even more thoroughly than did the shawl.

"Oh, really now," he said, "this is for laughter! A woman like you staying at the hotel! Be off, or I will call a gendarme."

In his amazement at her demand he had not heard Fairholme's rapid approach behind him He was now swung unceremoniously out of the way and the earl jumped forward to seize Edith in his arms.

"My darling girl!" he cried, "where have you been! We almost gave you up for lost. Where is your hat? Where did you get that shawl?" And all the time he was hugging her so fiercely that it was absolutely impossible for her to say a single word. At length she disengaged herself.

At that instant Brett's voice was heard upon the stairs. He wanted the telephone again.

Edith had rapidly detailed her adventures to her astonished auditors, and Brett seemed to resolve on some plan of action with the lightning rapidity peculiar to him.

Owing to the late hour, he got through to Paris without much difficulty, and then he returned to the sitting-room, where Edith was rehearsing in greater detail all that had happened since she left them at the hotel door. Brett explained to his companions the motives of his second telephonic message.

"I am convinced," he said," "that Gros Jean is in communication with his daughter. For this reason I did not wish the police to put in an appearance at the Cafe Noir until to-morrow night, or rather to-night, for we have long entered upon another day. I wished to have a reasonable time for quiet inquiry at Marseilles before mademoiselle could be apprised of our presence here. Miss Talbot's remarkable discovery has, however, wholly changed my plans. Mlle. Beaucaire and her lover have set off for some unknown destination, and the best chance we have of discovering it is to secure the immediate arrest of her father Possibly, being taken by surprise at this hour of the morning some document may be found on him which will reveal his daughter's destination. It occurs to me that she half expected him to arrive by a late train. Again, when the fishing smack puts into port, the girl will probably adopt some method of communication with him, and that communication must come into our hands, not into his. So I have telephoned the police officials in Paris to raid the Cabaret Noir forthwith, and it is possible that they may report developments within the next two or three hours."

"Is there no chance of your discovering the whereabouts of that fishing smack?" said Fairholme.

"In what way?" demanded Brett.

"Well, this is a big port, you know, and there are always tugs knocking about with steam up, on the off-chance of their services being required. Isn't it possible to charter a steamboat and set off after the smack?"

"I do not think so," said Brett. "I imagine it would be wasted effort. By this time the Belles Soeurs is well out to sea. She will certainly not show any lights, and I personally feel that although there is, perhaps, a thousand to one chance we might fall in with her, it will be far better for our purpose to remain quietly here and await developments in Paris." Brett shook his head dubiously.

"There is even a possibility that the Belles Soeurs will never be seen again, and that her number will long remain vacant on the shipping register of Marseilles. However, we shall see."

"Then, Mr. Brett," put in Edith quietly, with a tired smile, "I suppose we may go to bed?"

"Most certainly, Miss Talbot. You have earned your rest more than any of us to-night," he answered.

He held up his hand to wish her good-night, but she demanded with some surprise, "What are you going to do? Surely you want some sleep"

"I will remain here," he said. "I have bribed the hall-porter to keep awake, and I may be wanted on the telephone at any moment."

Left to himself, Brett again interviewed the hall-porter and returned to the sitting-room, where he disposed himself for a nap on the sofa. Like all men who possess the faculty of concentrated thought, he also cultivated the power of dismissing a perplexing problem from his mind until it became necessary to consider it afresh in the light of further knowledge.

Within five minutes he was sound asleep.

At length he woke with a start. He was stiff with cold, for the fire had gone out, and the tiny gas jet he had left burning was not sufficient to warm the room. He sprang to his feet and looked at his watch. It was half-past six.

"Surely," he cried, "there must have been a message from Paris long before this!"

He ran downstairs, encountering on his way some of the hotel servants, who even thus early had commenced work, for your industrious Frenchmen is no laggard in the morning. Going to the hall-porter's office he found that functionary snoring peacefully. The poor fellow was evidently tired out, and twenty telephone bells might have jangled in his ears without waking him.

So, for the third time, Brett rang up the exchange to get in touch with Paris. As he had anticipated, he quickly learnt that the Prefecture had endeavored to get through to him about 4.30 a.m., but the operators were unable to obtain any answer.

"I can hardly blame the man," said he to himself, "for I was just as tired as he."

The information he received from the Prefecture was startling enough. In accordance with his instructions, a number of detectives had raided the Cabaret Noir soon after three o'clock. They found the place in possession of a waiter and couple of female servants. Gros Jean had quitted the house the previous evening, and, most astounding fact of all, with him were three Turks.

Neither the waiter nor the domestics could give any information whatever concerning the hidden room. They knew of its existence, but none of them had ever seen it, and the place was generally regarded as a sort of cellar for the reception of lumber.

The police forced a padlock which guarded its trap-door, and found to their surprise that the place was much more spacious than they anticipated. It really contained two apartments, one of which was so firmly secured that it had hitherto resisted all their efforts to open it. The other was a sort of bed-sitting room, and it had recently been occupied. From various indications they came to the conclusion that its latest tenants were Hussein-ul-Mulk and his confederates.

Judging from the facts that these gentry had quietly left the cafe in Gros Jean's company about half-past seven the previous evening, they were not in confinement against their will. In fact, the police theory was that this secret chamber proved a safe retreat for any person who desired complete seclusion other than that provided by the atuhorities.

"It is assumed," said the officer who communicated this bewildering information to Brett, "that the locked room contains a quantity of stolen goods. The police remain in charge of the cafe, and when the necessary workmen have been obtained this morning the door will be forced. We will at once let you know the result of our further investigations."

(To be continued.)

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GRASS BAD FOR TREES.

Stunts Them and Arrests All Healthy Growth.

At the Woburn experimental fruit farm a long inquiry has been conducted into the effect of grass on trees, and the experiments which have been carried out form the substance of the thirteenth report of the farm, which has just been issued, says the London Daily Mail.

It has been shown that the general result of grassing the ground, either by sowing seed or replacing the turf after the trees have been planted, is the arrestation of all healthy growth and the absolute stunting of the tree.

A light and unhealthy character imparted to the leaves is one of the first noticeable results of the action of grass upon trees. With trees that are feeling the full effect of grass the fruits are found to be small and ill developed.

The variations in soil temperature are less when the ground is grassed, and this alone would be favorable to the growth of trees; but this good influence is outweighed by the deleterious effects.

Shiloh's Cure
QUICKLY STOPS COUGHS, CURES COLDS, HEALS THE THROAT AND LUNGS. 25 CENTS

ALMANAC STARTED IN 1686.

The oldest almanac in existence is the "Almanach National," which has been issued by the French Government since 1686, says the London Chronicle. Its name has been changed a good many times during its career of 225 years. Originally the "Almanach Royal," it became "National" in 1793, "Imperial" in 1805, and reverted to its original name nine years later. Since then the title has been altered four times. Like most publications of this sort the "Almanach National" has grown bulky with advancing years. The first issue contained forty-eight pages, as compared with 1,580 pages in th ecurrent issue.

BUSY ALL THE TIME.

Little Howard came in the other day crying and rubbing several bumps, caused by a series of butts administered by a pet sheep.

"Well, Howard," said his sympathetic auntie, "what did you do when the sheep knocked you down?"

"I didn't do anything. I was getting up all the time."

WELL DESCRIBED.

A little girl who had been to the dentist to have a tooth extracted, thus described her experience: "The man grabbed hold with a pair of tongs and just before it killed me the tooth comed out."

THE DEMAND Is increasing enormously Can we tell you the Reason Why?
"A Trial Package will bring Enlightenment"
"SALADA"
CEYLON TEAS "ARE DELICIOUS TEAS"
BLACK, MIXED OR NATURAL GREEN
SEALED PACKAGES ONLY REFUSE SUBSTITUTES 61

DRUG HABIT GROWING.

Becoming a Fashionable Indulgence In London Society.

Alarmists assert we are living in times of peril, but, according to medical testimony, there is more insidious danger lurking in society which has nothing at all to do with the unrest in the labor world, or the wild doctrines of Socialists. The peril lies in the growing habit of drug-taking, now fast becoming a fashionable indulgence among women belonging to the "Upper Ten" in London, England.

Nowadays a drug becomes the vogue in much the same way as a new style of dressing the hair. The exhilarating qualities of various poisons are openly discussed, and recommendations to use this or that narcotic are passed on with as much confidence as a doctor's prescription.

Morphia retains the favorite place with women of the smart set, who are expert users of the hypodermic syringe. Young girls of the day are in constant danger of acquiring the vicious habit. Mothers buoy up the flagging energies of their daughters at the fag-end of the season with some seductive drug. Quite recently a maid gave information to a young husband which led him to discover that his wife and a coterie of her friends visited each other with remarkable regularity for the purpose of indulging in morphia.

Such are the ravages that the drug craze is making in homes far removed from the pressure of poverty that Parliament will be asked to amend the Act governing the sale of poisons with a view to stamping out the dangerous mania by rendering it next to impossible for any one save a medical man to obtain drugs. Almost every week a death occurs in some well-known family from an overdose of veronal or sulphonal, taken to procure sleep or steady the nerves. Yet there are no restrictions on the sale of these poisons at the drug stores.

A FUTURE FINANCIER.

A very nice young man was calling on his sister. To make things easy, he gave him a beautiful new penny, saying: "Save each penny, and soon you will have a dollar."

"I'll soon have a dollar!" replied the boy, with great eagerness.

The young man smiled good-naturedly, dug into his pocket, saying:

"Well, just how much more do you need?"

"Only ninety-nine cents."

He soon had a dollar.

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Laboratory of Provincial Government Analyst.
MONTREAL, 22nd February, 1909.
I HEREBY CERTIFY that I have drawn by my own hand ten samples of the St. Lawrence Sugar Refining Co's EXTRA STANDARD GRANULATED SUGAR, indiscriminately taken from four lots of about 150 barrels each and six lots of about 450 bags each. I have analyzed same and find them uniformly to contain 99-99/100 to 100 per cent of pure cane sugar, with no impurities whatever.
(Signed) MILTON L. HERSEY, M. Sc. L.L.D.
Provincial Government Analyst.
The St. Lawrence Sugar Refining Co. Limited
MONTREAL. 38

Children Often Need a laxative—but you cannot be too careful what you give them. Harsh purgatives injure the bowels and pave the way for life-long troubles. The new evacuant in
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does the work most effectively without irritating the bowels or causing any discomfort. The children like them for they taste like candy. One of the most popular of the NA-DRU-CO preparations. 25c. a box. If your druggist has not yet stocked them, send 25c. and we will mail them. 20
National Drug and Chemical Company of Canada, Limited - - Montreal.

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Whether they represent actual cash outlay, or only the time of yourself and your help, repairs are *waste* just the same. When you make an improvement—no matter how small its cost may be—let it be *permanent*. Then it is a real investment, something on which you can realize in *cash* should you decide to sell your property; and something that will pay you constant dividends in convenience, sightliness and comfort as long as the farm remains your own.

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