The Phantom of the Opera

BY GASTON LEROUX

CHAPTER XI.—(Cont'd.)

"And you went back, Christine," groaned Raoul.

"Yes, dear, and I must tell you that it was not his frightful threats when setting me free that helped me to keep my word, but the harrowing sob which he gave on the threshold of the tomb. . . . That sob attached me to the unfortunate man more than I myself suspected when saying good-bye to him. Poor Erik! Poor Erik!"

"Christine," said Raoul, rising, "you tell me that you love me; but you had recovered your liberty hardly a few hours before you returned to Erik! Remember the masked ball."

"Yes; and do you remember those hours which I passed with you, Raoul . . . to the great danger of both of us?"

"I doubted your love for me, during those hours."

"Do you doubt it still, Raoul? . . . Then know that each of my visits to Erik increased my horror of him; for each of those visits, instead of calming him, as I hoped, made him mad with love! . . . And I am so frightened, so frightened! . . . ."

"You are frightened . . but do you love me? If Erik were good-looking, would you love me, Christine?"

She rose in her turn, put her two trembling arms round the young man's neck and said:

"Oh, my betrothed of a day, if I did not love you, I would not give you my lips! Take them, for the first time and the last."

He kissed her lips; but the night that surrounded them was rent asunder, they fled as at the approach of a storm and their eyes, filled with dread of Erik, showed them, before they disappeared, high up above them, an immense night-bird that stared at them with its blazing eyes and seemed to cling to the string of Apollo's lyre.

CHAPTER XII.

A MASTER-STROKE OF THE TRAP-DOOR LOVER.

Raoul and Christine ran, eager to escape from the roof and the blazing eyes that showed only in the dark; and they did not stop before they came to the eighth floor on the way down.

There was no performance at the Opera that night and the passages were empty. Suddenly, a queer-looking form stood before them and blocked the road:

"No, not this way!"

And the form pointed to another passage by which they were to reach the wings. Raoul wanted to stop and ask for an explanation. But the form, which wore a sort of long frock-coat and a pointed cap, said:

"Quick! Go away quickly!"

Christine was already dragging Raoul, compelling him to start running again.

"But who is he?" Who is that man?" he asked.

Christine replied: "It's the Persian."

"What's he doing here?"

"Nobody knows. He is always in the Opera."

"You are making me run away, for the first time in my life. If we really saw Erik, what I ought to have done was to nail him to Apollo's lyre, just as we nail the owls to the walls of our Breton farms; and there would have been no more question of him."

"My dear Raoul, you would first have had to climb up to Apollo's lyre: that is no easy matter."

"The blazing eyes were there!"

They came to Christine's dressing-room.

"Why do you think that you are safer in this room than on the stage?" asked Raoul. "You heard him through the walls here, therefore he can certainly hear us."

"No. He gave me his word not to be behind the walls of my dressing-room again and I believe Erik's word. This room and my bedroom on the lake are for me, exclusively, and not to be approached by him."

"How can you have gone from this room into that dark passage, Christine? Suppose we try to repeat your movements; shall we?

"It is dangerous, dear, for the glass might carry me off again; and, instead of running away, I should be obliged to go to the end of the secret passage to the lake and there call Erik."

"Would he hear you?"

"Erik will hear me wherever I call him. He told me so. He is a very curious genius. You must not think, Raoul, that he is simply a man who amuses himself by living underground. He does things that no other man could do; he knows things which nobody in the world knows."

"Take care, Christine, you are making a ghost of him again!"

"No, he is not a ghost; he is a man of Heaven and earth, that is all."

"A man of Heaven and earth . . . that is all! A nice way to speak of him! . . . And you are still resolved to run away from him?"

"Yes, to-morrow."

"To-morrow you will have no resolve left!"

"Then, Raoul, you must run away with me in spite of myself; is that understood?"

"I shall be here at twelve to-morrow night; I shall keep my promise whatever happens. You say that, after listening to the performance, he is to wait for you in the dining-room on the lake?"

Suddenly Christine changed color. A mortal pallor overspread her features.

"Oh heavens!" she cried. "Erik! Erik! Have pity on me!"

"Hold your tongue!" said Raoul. "You told me he could not hear you!"

But the singer's attitude became more and more inexplicable. She wrung her fingers, repeating, with a distraught air:

"Oh, Heaven! Oh, Heaven!"

"But what is it? What is it?" Raoul implored.

"The ring . . . the gold ring he gave me."

"Oh, so Erik gave you that ring!"

"You know he did, Raoul! But what you don't know is that, when he gave it to me, he said, 'I give you back your liberty, Christine, on condition that this ring is always on your finger. As long as you keep it, you will be protected against all danger and Erik will remain your friend. But woe to you if you ever part with it, for Erik will have his revenge!' . . . My dear, my dear, the ring is gone! . . . Woe to us both!"

They looked for the ring, but could not find it. Christine refused to be pacified.

"It was while I gave you that kiss, up above, under Apollo's lyre," she said. "The ring must have slipped from my finger and dropped into the street! We can never find it. And what misfortunes are in store for us now! Oh, to run away!"

"Let us run away at once," Raoul insisted, once more.

She hesitated. He thought that she was going to say yes. . . . Then her bright pupils became dimmed and she said:

"No! To-morrow!"

And she left him hurriedly, still wringing and rubbing her fingers, as though she hoped to bring the ring back like that.

Raoul went home, greatly perturbed at all that he had heard.

Raoul devoted the whole day to his preparations for the flight. The horses, the carriage, the coachman, the provisions, the luggage, the money required for the journey, the road to be taken (he had resolved not to go by train, so as to throw the ghost off the scent): all this had to be settled and provided for; and it occupied him until nine o'clock at night.

They were giving Faust, as it happened, before a splendid house. The Faubourg was magnificently represented; and the paragraph in that morning's Epoque had already produced its effect, for all eyes were turned to the box, in which Count Philippe sat alone, apparently in a very indifferent and careless frame of mind. The feminine element in the brilliant audience seemed curiously puzzled; and the viscount's absence gave rise to any amount of whispering behind the fans.

The regular frequenters of the Opera, who pretended to know the truth about the viscount's love story, exchanged significant smiles at certain passages in Margarita's part; and they made a show of turning and looking at Philippe de Chagny's box when Christine sang:

"I wish I could but know who was he
That addressed me,
If he was noble, or, at least, what his name is."

The count sat with his chin on his hand and seemed to pay no attention to these manifestations. He kept his eyes fixed on the stage; but his thoughts appeared to be far away.

Christine lost her self-assurance more and more. She trembled. She felt on the verge of a breakdown. . . . Carolus Fonta wondered if she was ill, if she could keep the stage until the end of the Garden Act.

Just then, Carlotta made her entrance in a box facing the stage, a sensational entrance. Poor Christine raised her eyes upon this fresh subject of excitement. She recognized her rival She thought she saw a sneer on her lips. That saved her. She forgot everything, in order to triumph once more.

From that moment the prima donna sang with all her heart and soul. She tried to surpass all that she had done till then; and she succeeded. In the last act when she began the invocation to the angels, she made all the members of the audience feel as though they too had wings.

In the centre of the amphitheatre a man stood up and remained standing, facing the singer. It was Raoul.

And Christine, her arms outstretched, her throat filled with music, the glory of her hair falling over her bare shoulders, uttered the divine cry:

"My spirit longs with thee to rest!"

It was at that moment that the stage was suddenly plunged in darkness. It happened so quickly that the spectators hardly had time to utter a sound of stupefaction, for the gas at once lit up the stage again. But Christine Daae was no longer there!

What had become of her? What was that miracle? All exchanged glances without understanding, and the excitement at once reached its height. Nor was the tension any less great on the stage itself. Men rushed from the wings to the spot where Christine had been singing that very instant. The performance was interrupted amid the greatest disorder.

Where had Christine gone? What witchcraft had snatched her away before the eyes of thousands of enthusiastic onlookers and from the arms of Carolus Fonta himself? It was as though the angels had really carried her up "to rest."

Raoul, still standing up in the amphitheatre, had uttered a cry. Count Philippe had sprung to his feet in his box. People looked at the stage, at the count, at Raoul, and wondered if this curious event was connected in any way with the paragraph in that morning's paper. But Raoul hurriedly left his seat, the count disappeared from his box and, while the curtain was lowered, the subscribers rushed to the door that led behind the scenes. The rest of the audience waited amid an indescribable hubbub.

At last, the curtain rose slowly and Carolus Fonta stepped to the conductor's desk and, in a sad and serious voice, said:

"Ladies and gentlemen, an unprecedented event has taken place and thrown us into a state of the greatest alarm. Our sister-artist, Christine Daae, has disappeared before our eyes and nobody can tell us how!"

CHAPTER XIII.

CHRISTINE! CHRISTINE!

Raoul's first thought, after Christine Daae's fantastic disappearance, was to accuse Erik. He no longer doubted the almost supernatural powers of the Angel of Music, in this domain of the Opera in which he had set up his empire. And Raoul rushed on the stage, in a mad fit of love and despair.

"Christine! Christine!" he moaned, calling to her as he felt that she must be calling to him from the depths of that dark pit to which the monster had carried her. "Christine! Christine!"

And he seemed to hear the girl's screams through the frail boards that separated him from her. He bent forward, he listened, . . . he wandered over the stage like a madman. Ah, to descend, to descend into that pit of darkness every entrance to which was closed to him, . . . for the stairs that led below the stage were forbidden to one and to all that night!

"Christine! Christine! . . ."

People pushed him aside, laughing. They made fun of him. They thought the poor lover's brain was gone!

By what mad road, through what passages of mystery and darkness known to him alone had Erik dragged that pure-souled child to the awful haunt, with the Louis-Phillipe room, opening out on the lake?

(To be continued.)

Swiss Immigration.

About a year ago, a few men interested in Canada's colonization problems, formed the "Swiss Settlement Society," with the purpose in view of establishing on farms of their own, Swiss Immigrant Farm Help already in Canada. The Society is working in co-operation with the migration and colonization experiment by Switzerland and during the past year has added to its membership a large number of prominent Canadians.

The funds necessary to get the Society established have been raised by voluntary contributions, the most of it being furnished by members and friends of the Society, outside of the country. As the Swiss has always been looked upon as a particularly desirable immigrant in all British countries the existence of the Society should prove a good thing for Canada. Future success will depend, to a considerable extent, on the measure of support and co-operation which this Society receives here and it is encouraging to learn that the government and transportation companies are realizing the possibilities of the organization.

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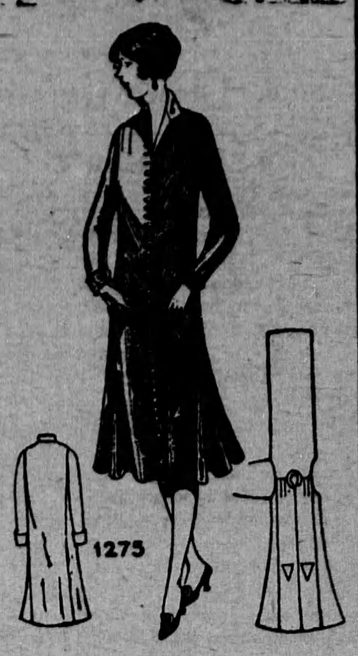

PARIS ENDORSES LOW PLACED FLARE.

The princess silhouette, flaring at the hem-line and fitted almost tightly to form the bodice, is emphasized in this daytime dress which has chosen black satin for fabric. The front closes from trim collar to hem, with a row of bone buttons, the only contrasting touch of color being in the collar, front facing, patch pockets, and cuffs. There are two tucks at the shoulders and the flare is achieved at the sides by a gore flaring at the lower edge. No. 1275 is in sizes 16, 18 and 20 years, or (34, 36 and 38 inches bust only). Size 18 years (36 bust) requires 4⅛ yards 36-inch, or 2⅝ yards 54-inch material. Price 20 cents.

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Against the cold, wet days my fire gleams bright,
A beacon leading on to joys of home,
To books I love, rare volumes of delight,
More to my heart than some rich guarded tome

To sit and read there in the firelight glow
Some simple verse long of myself a part,
And dream and think—this is indeed to know
A happiness that warms the restless heart.

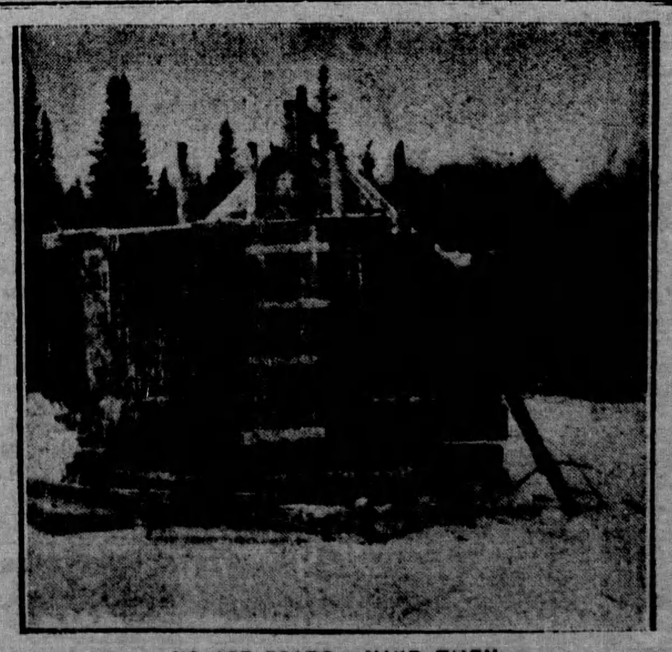
In all the rush and strain of life today,
When most the world seeks joys much money buys,
To value true real happiness, I pray,
And those dear joys of heart and home most prized.

—George Elliston.

Night.

Mere ghosts
Dim water lilies float like stars,
While skystars, as they pause and peer at them,
Silently wonder why they do not
Twinkle.

—Frances S. Larkin.



NO ICE ROADS: MAKE THEM

With very little snow to date this year in the woods of Northern Saskatchewan, lumber companies are building ice roads. The tank shown above holds 104 barrels of water and sprays on a 12-foot road.

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Amsterdam, a City of the Waters.

Amsterdam, no less than Venice, is a city of the waters. Giesebrecht III. founded it some seven hundred years ago by building the "dam of the Amstel," from which the city takes its name, at the spot where that river joins the Ij, a broad arm of the Zuider Zee that is now the port of Amsterdam; and even to-day its great buildings stand upon piles driven deep into the marsh beneath the city. Several times during the centuries the citizens have built a canal to run from the Ij beside the city ramparts to join the Ij again on the other side. But always the city has expanded beyond the canal until in time they have built another one parallel to the last, so that now there are several rings of waterways in the city, with shady trees and dignified old houses looking down upon them, and other canals running outward from the centre to join them.

A chain of huge islands has been built out into the Ij to carry the railway station and the docks; three ship canals have been cut to join it with the North Sea and the Rhine; and through the centre of the city runs the Broad Amstel. Upon it, all day long, passes the endless traffic of the city.

Here you see gayly painted sailing barges from all parts of Holland and all the varied shapes and rigs that that nurse of sailing craft has produced, with their unique curved gaffs and tapering pennants; huge modern Rhine-schigs, iron barges fifty yards long with steering wheels six feet across and a diminutive tug overshadowed by the huge bows; tugs with strings of lighters miraculously negotiating the bridge arches; single lighters laboriously quanted along; smart motor launches; racing skiffs.

Amsterdam has fine squares and broad streets, but the city and its commerce are still founded upon the water; on the canals and the Amstel, where all day long the quaysides are busy with the unloading of many cargoes and the air is thick with the beat of engine, and upon the Ij, where the little river steamers lie to load their queer mixture of passengers and cargo, and the great liners start upon their journeys.

David.

There on the hills,
While the bright stars shone down,
Do you suppose he dreamed
Of Saul's great court?
Of foolish pomp,
Of bitter, lonely days,
Of kingly duties,
Exile, trust betrayed?

In the still watches
Of the Eastern night,
David, alone upon those distant hills,
Lifted his heart in praise.
His voice in song
Until the throbbing notes
Of his crude harp
Floated out gently
On the silent night—
"Try me, oh God,
And see that I am true.
Dark though the hours may be
I will lift up mine eyes
Unto the hills—
Thy everlasting hills,
And find my Light."

Thus David sang
Throughout the long night-watch.

Into the court of Saul
The shepherd-lad
Serenely walked,
Knowing that always,
Out upon the hills,
The ancient, everlasting hills,
He could be silent
And commune with God.

—Eleanor G. R. Young.

Valuable Collection of Pearls.

Queen Margherita left a collection of pearls to her son, the Italian King, said to be the second most valuable in the world. Twenty years ago they were appraised at $45,000,000.

The colection consists of thirty-two ropes with a total length of 220¼ yards. King Umberto, during his married life, gave her a rope every year, and the Queen herself bought many more.

The Maharajah Clapurtele, an Indian potentate, has a slightly larger collection. The pearls of Queen Victoria, of England, have been divided into three parts, and the Russian imperial pearls dispersed, so that the collection of Queen Margherita is the finest in Europe.

The Duke of Genoa, her favorite brother, inherits many beautiful stones. To Queen Elena, the late Queen Mother left her largest diadem and her emeralds. The present Queen already has the finest collection of these gems owned by any royalty. Each of the King's four daughters also receives a magnificent diadem.

Ruskin Was Surprised.

John Ruskin was wont to attack all and sundry with a savage merriment which even his best friends at times resented. Once he wrote a friend hoping that a fierce criticism written by him of his friend's picture would make no difference to their friendship. To which the friend had the wit to reply:

"Dear Ruskin—Next time I meet you I shall knock you down, but I hope it will make no difference to our friendship."

Minard's Liniment relieves headache.

Canny Scot.

A Scotsman was about to start a round of golf and was looking for a caddy. At length he picked out one who seemed to have the qualities he required, and he asked him, "Are ye guid at findin' balls?"

"Yes," answered the boy.

"Then find one, an' we'll begin," commanded the Scot.

Synthetic Gasoline.

Synthetic gasoline is being invented in nearly every civilized country in the world. The largest contribution is a new fuel invented by a Norwegian civil engineer. It is known as "Norsk Kraft Olie." The process under which it is made has been patented.

Christian Science Lecture by Radio

A Lecture by Salem A. Hart, Jr., C.S., of Cleveland, Ohio, a member of the Board of Lectureship, of The Mother Church, The First Church of Christ Scientist, in Boston, Mass., will be radiocast from the Parkdale Theatre, Toronto, on Sunday afternoon, Jan. 31st, at 3.15 p.m., by Station CKCL, 357 meters wave length. You are cordially invited to "listen in."

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