

# BY ORDER OF THE LEAGUE

BY FRED. M. WHITE.

IV.

Five years have passed away, bringing changes and startling revolutions—years, to others, fraught with misery and regret; years, to others, which have been pregnant with fame and honour; but to the suffering patient world, only another step toward eternity. Five years later, and the night in the small German town where the murderer and his lives are lost on the stage of a die. The Kuraaal at Homburg sparkling with the glitter of ten thousand lights. Men of all nations were gathered there, drawn together by the strongest words which bind human destiny—the power of gold. No type of face was wanting; no passion, no emotion that the human visage is capable of, but all its being there: rage, despair, misery, exultation—the whole gamut of man's passions and triumphs. Women were there too. The bluest-blooded aristocrat in the *Amanach de Gotha* did not disdain to rub elbows with the last fancy of the Comedie Francaise; my lord, cold, indifferent, and smiling, sat side by side with the reckless plunger who would have risked his honour, had that commodity remained to him, for the gold to pace remained the colour. On the long green tables, the glittering coins fell with a clink sweeter than the clink of the most perfect in the universe, where the rich and poor alike are welcomed, with one great destiny—to lose or to gain. There were no loud lamentations there; such vulgar exhibitions were out of place, though the croupier could be disguised under the deepening mask, for a tremor of the eyelid, a flash of the eye, a convulsive movement of the fingers, betray poor human nature. As the game proceeded with the monotonous cry of the croupier, it was awful to watch the interest of the faces, how they deepened in interest as the game was being forward till at length "Rouge perd et couleur gagne" came from the level voice again.

The croupier raked in the glittering stacks of gold, silently, swiftly, but with such emotion as a child would gather cow-ries, and threw the winning on each stake calmly, knowing full well that in the light of time it must return. The piles were raked up, and then arose a murmur, a confusion of tongues, reminding the spectators of what the bewilderment at Babel must have been, a clamor which died away to silence at the entralling "Faites votre jeu."

How the hands clawed at the sparkling treasure; eager, trembling avarice in every finger-tip; from the long, lean, yellow claw of the old withered gamblers, to the plump little hand of the bride, who is trying her fortune with silver, fearful lest, driven by despair, some less fortunate player should lay felonious fingers upon the piled-up treasure.

Standing behind the all-absorbed group was a young man with pale, almost ghostly features, and a heavy dark moustache. From his attitude and smile, it was hard to say how fortune had served him, for his face was void of any emotion. He held one piece of gold in his hand, placed it on a colour, waited, and lost. A trifling movement of his lips, pressed tightly together under the dark moustache—that was all. Then for a moment he hesitated, pondered, and suddenly, as if to settle the matter quickly, he detached a coin from his watch-chain and leaned forward again. Under him, seated at the table, was a woman wearing steadily. A pile of gold was before her; she was evidently in the luckiest vein. The man, with all a gambler's superstition, placed the coin in her hand. "Stake for me," he whispered; "you have the luck."

Mechanically, she took the proffered coin, and turned it in her hand; then suddenly a wave of crimson, succeeded by a deadly whiteness, came across her face. She held the coin, then put it carefully aside, and stalked another in its place. Then, apparently forgetting her emotion in the all-absorbing interest of the game, she looked at the table. "Rouge gagne, et couleur perd," came the chant of the croupier. The stakes were raked in, and the money lost. Under his breath, the man uttered a fervent exclamation, slightly shrugged his shoulders, and turned to watch the game again. From that moment the woman lost; her piece dwindled away to one coin beyond the piece of metal tendered her to stake, but still she played on the man behind watching her play intently. A little varying luck, at one moment a handful of napoleons, at another reduced to one, the game proceeded. At length the last but one was gone, save the piece tendered to her by the man behind the chair; that she never parted with. As she saw there, words came to her ears vaguely—the voice of the man behind her, and every time he spoke she shivered, as if a cold breath were passing through her heart. A temporary run of luck came to her aid, and so she sat, listening and playing.

The new comer was another man, evidently an Italian, fine, strong, with an open face and dark passionate eyes. He touched the man upon the shoulder lightly, speaking in excellent English.

There were four actors there, playing, had they but known it, a ghastly tragedy. The two men were players; the listening woman was another; and across the table, behind the spectators, stood a girl. She had a dark southern face of great beauty—a face cleanly chiselled, and lighted by a pair of wondrous black eyes—eyes bent upon the two men and the woman, playing with the keenest interest. She shrank back a little as the new-comer entered, and her breath came a little quicker; but there she stayed, watching and waiting for some opportunity. Her look bodied ill for some one. Meanwhile, the unconscious actors fixed their attention on the game. The last arrival touched the other man upon the elbow again, a little roughly this time.

"You have been playing again, Hector?" he said.

"I have been playing my friend—yes. It is not in my nature to be in such a place without. What would you have me do, Luigi? I am dying of ennui from this inaction—kicking up my heels here waiting for orders."

"I should have thought you could have found something better to occupy your time," the man addressing Luigi returned. "Our work is too stern, too holy, to be shared with such frivolity as this. Gold, gold, with no thoughts of anything but this mad-daring scramble!"

"My dear Luigi, pray control yourself. Are you not aware that this sort of thing has been done to death? Do not, as you love me, descend to the level of the descriptive journalist, who comes over here to coin his superlative condemnatory adjectives into money—to lose at this very interesting game. John Bull holds up his hands in horror as he reads the description in his *Telegraph*, and then he comes to try his luck himself. I, Hector le Gautier, have seen a bishop here."

"How fond you are of the sound of your own voice," Luigi Salvarini returned.

"Come outside; I have something to say to you."

"Something connected with the League, I suppose," Le Gautier yawned. "If it is not yourself I was talking to, I should say, confusion to the League."

"How rash you are!" Salvarini returned in a low tone, accompanied by an admiring glance at his companion. "Consider what one word spoken lightly might mean to you. The attendants here, the croupier even, might be a Number in the League."

"Very likely," Le Gautier replied carelessly; "but it is not probable that, if I should whisper the magic words in his ear, he would give me credit for a few napoleons. I am in no mood for business to-night, Luigi; and if you are the good fellow I take you for, you will lend me."

"One Brother must always aid another according to his means, says the decree. But, alas! I have nothing—I came to you with the intention—"

"Oh, did you?" Le Gautier asked sardonically. "Then, in that case, I must look elsewhere; a few francs is all my available capital."

"Hector," the Italian exclaimed suddenly, in a hoarse whisper, "where is the—?" He did not finish his sentence, but pointed to the watch-chain the other was idly twirling in his fingers.

Le Gautier smiled sardonically. "It is gone," he said lightly—"gone to swell the bloated coffers of the bank. Fortune, alas! had no favor even for that mystic coin. Sacred as it should have been, I am its proud possessor no more."

"You are mad, utterly mad!" Salvarini exclaimed. "If it were but known—if it has fallen into the hands of the bank, or a croupier happens to have a Number, think of what it means to you! The coin would be forwarded to the Central Council; the signs would be called in; yours missing—"

"And one of these admirable German daggers would make acquaintance with my estimable person, with no consolation but the fact of knowing what a handsome corpse I shall make. Bah! A man can only die once, and so long as they do not make me the posthumous hero of a horrible tragedy, I do not care. It is not so very serious, my Luigi."

"It is serious; you know it is," Luigi retorted. "No Brother of the League would have had the sublime audacity, the reckless courage—"

"L'audace, l'audace, toujours l'audace," Le Gautier returned. "I sigh for new temptations; the sight of the gaming-table is to me what the smell of battle afar off is to the war-horse. I came here intending to risk a louis; I have lost everything. There is nothing like courage at the tables; and as it had a spice of danger in it, I risked—"

"Your life! You do not seem to comprehend the danger."

"But, my dear friend, it is exactly that spice of danger that gives the thing its nameless charm. Come, you are hipped, out of sorts. You see the duties of the Order in every action; you see the uplifting of the avenging dagger in every shadow that trembles on the wall. Be a man!"

"I am all the more disturbed," Salvarini observed with moody, uneasy face, "that the orders have come. That is the principal reason I am here to look for you. We are translated to London."

"That is good news, at any rate," Le Gautier exclaimed briskly. "I have been literally dying to get back there. By the bright eyes of Enid—What is that?"

Above the clamour of tongues and the rattle of the gold pieces, a low laugh was heard distinctly close to the speaker's elbow. He turned sharply round; but there was no one within a few feet of them. Apparently, it had not disturbed the enthralled players, though the croupier swept his cold eye around to discover the author of this unseemly mirth.

"Strange!" Le Gautier observed. "I seem to have heard that laugh before, though I cannot remember where."

"And so have I," Salvarini whispered hoarsely—"only once, and I hope that I may never hear it again. It is horrible!"

Le Gautier looked at his companion, amazed to see the agitation pictured on his face. It was white and drawn, as if with some inward pain. Salvarini wiped his damp brow as he met the other's piercing gaze, and tried to still the trembling of his limbs.

"A passing fancy," he explained—"a fancy which called up a remembrance of my boyhood, the recollection of a vengeance as yet unpaid.—But I am idling; let us get outside. The orders have come, as I tell you, for London. We are to meet the Head Centre at the old address."

"And how did the orders come?" Le Gautier asked.

"The old mysterious way," was the impatient reply; "secrecy and darkness; no trust in any one, however worthy he may have proved—the old suspicion, which drags us down, and holds our hands even in the act of striking. I found them on my table when I got in, and you are to get to London, and there await orders. Our instructions bear the crossed dagger, indicating extreme secrecy and a mission of great danger."

In spite of his *sans froid*, Le Gautier could not repress a slight start; and a smile of covert sarcasm, pity almost, rose to his lips as he looked in his companion's eager, enthusiastic face; the same sort of pity the sharper feels for his unconscious victim when he has him within the toils. Not that the younger man noticed this; his eyes were full of some far-away project, something noble, by their expression.

"The old story of the monkey and the chestnuts," Le Gautier observed with his most sinister smile; "the puppets run the risk, and the Head Centre get the glory. If we fall, it is in freedom's name. That is sufficient epitaph for us poor, silly, fluttering moths."

"But the glory of it," Salvarini cried— "think of that!"

"The glory, yes—the glory of a felon's grave! The glory lies in the uncertainty. What do we gain, you and I, by the removal of a crowned head? When the last tyrant fell at our leader's dicta, how much did we benefit by the blow? He was not a bad man; for a king, he was just."

"You are in a bitter mood, to-night, Hector," Salvarini answered. "What will you say when I tell you the appointment has come with your nomination as a Deputy, with a seat at the Council of the Crimson Nine?"

"My appointment at last? You are joking, Luigi. Surely they had need of better men than I. What of La Fontaine?"

"Dead," Salvarini responded grimly. "Treachery was suspected, and it was necessary to remove him.—But what I tell you is true; you are ordered to be present at the next Council at Warsaw, two months hence, when you will give up your badge as an Avenger, and take the premier order."

"And I have staked it to-night on the hazard of a die!" Le Gautier exclaimed, pallid even beyond his usual deadly whiteness. "Fool, fool that I was! How can I prevent it becoming known? I am undone!"

"You do not know the worst," Salvarini replied. "Come closer, and let me whisper in your ears; even the walls carry such tidings. The Supreme Director is here!"

Le Gautier turned faint and sick as he looked furtively round the room, with its long mirrors and barbaric splendour.

"Suppose you lend me yours," he suggested. "You will not want it now. What a mad fool I have been! I wonder if there is any way of recovering it? For I must have it, come what will. With a penalty of—"

"Death!"

The word, abruptly, sternly uttered, was followed by the same low mocking laugh they had heard before. They looked around in alarm, and not the trace of any one could be seen. Standing in the recess of a window they looked out; but no sign of the mysterious warning, so strangely given.

"Let us get away from this," Le Gautier groaned. "I am stifled! Come outside into the open air. My nerves must be unstrung to-night."

They walked out through the high folding-doors, and disappeared in the darkness. As they left, the woman who had been playing rose from her seat and followed them. Apparently, she was too late, for they had vanished; and with a sigh, she abandoned her evident intention, turning into Kuraaal gardens and throwing herself into a seat. Directly she quitted the saloon, the woman with the dark eyes followed, and tracked the other to the quiet retreat. For some time she stood behind the shadow of a tree, watching her. It was a brilliant moonlight night—clear, calm, and peaceful. Without there, the lighted windows of the gambling saloon could be seen; and ever and anon the murmur of the croupier, the scrape of the rakes, and the subdued clink of the gold might be heard. But the figure on the seat did not heed these things; she was looking at a coin in her hand, making out as she best could the devices that it bore, strange and puzzling to her.

It was merely a gold coin, in fine a moire of Portugal; and upon the reverse side, the figure had been rubbed down, and an emblem engraved in its place. There was a figure of Liberty gazing at a rising sun, her foot upon a prostrate dead body, and underneath the words "I strike." Over the rising sun, in tiny letters, was the device, "In Freedom's name;" and at the top, two letters in a monogram. The seated figure noted these things, but, from the expression on her face, they represented nothing to her. Behind the shadow of the tree, the watcher crept closer and closer, trying in vain to get a glimpse of the golden coin. As the seated figure bent over it, tears began to gather in her eyes, overflowing at last, and the passion of sorrow seemed to rise, till her frame was shaken with sobs she did not strive to master. The woman looking on stepped out from her shelter and crossed the open grass to the other's side. Her face, on the contrary, was eager, almost hopeful, as she bent forward and touched the weeper on the shoulder. She looked up, surprise mastering her grief for a brief moment.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

## DOMINION AND GENERAL NEWS.

Brantford now has a society for the suppression of vice.

Mr. William O'Brien has postponed his visit to Canada.

Two thousand chainmakers in Staffordshire have struck for higher wages.

London city bakers have raised the price of bread to 6 cents the two-pound loaf.

The Canadian Pacific railway has constructed a fish ladder at Morris, N. W. T.

June 22 is officially set apart as the day for observing the Royal Jubilee in Canada.

The Ghilzais have defeated the Amerc's troops and killed a hundred of them near Khelet.

Mr. W. E. Bennett, of Toronto, has been appointed to the position of Assistant Post-office Inspector.

The total of the Russian debt is £471,474,000, and the interest for the current year is over £25,000,000.

Seventy-five years ago this summer the first steamer, the General Smythe, appeared on the River St. John, N. S.

Startling rumours are current of the discovery of Anachists' plots to destroy the Opera house and numerous factories in Peshawar.

During the past year 5,518 persons were placed on trial in the Dominion for various offences, and of this number 3,797 were convicted.

William Duchesnay, an acrobat, intends walking on a tight rope over Montmorency Falls during the time of the Queen's jubilee at Quebec.

A Bill providing a new system for encouraging the construction of railroads in Manitoba has been introduced in the Manitoba Legislature.

The total cost to Canada of her share in the late Colonial Exhibition was \$120,857, of which sum \$8,500 went in wages and \$14,000 in freight.

It is reported that one of a litter of pigs, recently born at Long Lake Hotel, N. W. T., has a duck's bill instead of the ordinary nose of its kind.

Two men employed on the new building of the Ontario Lumber Company, at Midland, were seriously injured the other day by a falling scaffold.

A strange man was found dead in bed at

Cookville, on Monday morning last. An empty bottle of Lindenberg's hair oil revealed the fact that he had committed suicide.

Ven. Archbishop Pinkham, bishop designate of Saskatchewan, has received from an anonymous friend \$1500, to be divided between the dioceses of Saskatchewan and Alberta.

The cable, 38 miles in length, connecting the mainland with the Island of Anticosti, has parted. It will be impossible to repair it for some time owing to the quantity of ice in the straits.

The Minister of Agriculture has decided to establish experimental farms in the North-West, with a view of testing the capabilities of the soil in various districts for certain products.

In the Recorder's Court at Montreal eleven storekeepers, charged with exposing objectionable advertisements in their windows, were each sentenced to eight days' imprisonment, without the option of a fine.

W. A. Stinson, a large cattleman, and two of his employes have been murdered by Comanche Indians in Green county, Texas. A large portion of the tribe have taken the warpath, and a general outbreak is expected.

One day last week some young blackguards, belonging to Belleville, forced a reformed drunkard to drink liquor. His old appetite overpowered him, he was arrested, and died very soon after recovering from his debauch.

Furious cyclones and hailstorms swept over a large part of Western and South-Western Missouri, South-Eastern Kansas and Northern Arkansas on Thursday night of last week, causing great loss of life and destruction of property. Several towns were entirely demolished.

At the annual meeting of the Council of Queen's University, the proposal to rise a Jubilee endowment fund of \$250,000 was sanctioned. It is understood that a citizen of Kingston will give \$10,000 toward the fund, and an additional \$50,000 will be raised in Kingston.

A pension system in connection with the North-West mounted police will likely be adopted this season. A detachment of 100 men of the force, under Supt. Steele, will likely be sent to patrol the Kootenay district in British Columbia during the coming summer.

Thirty miles of Father Labelle's colonization railway will be built this year. The projected line starts at St. Jerome on the line of the Canadian Pacific, and will run in a north-westerly direction as far as the Desert, where it will strike the Gatineau Valley Railway. The ultimate terminus will be near Lake Nipissing or at Temiscamingue.

Dr. W. Cox Allen, superintendent of customs and inspector for ranches for the North-West, states that ranching prospects for this year are exceptionally good, the over crowded state of the cattle districts in Montana, Dakota and other States necessarily causing the southern cattlemen to look to Alberta and other new fields. The mortality in these States has been unprecedentedly large while in the North-West Territories it has not exceeded in native cattle 5 per cent, and in imported not 10 per cent. The farmers have ploughed a larger area of land this spring than ever before, and their hopes of good crops are very sanguine.

## The Kaiser's Fortune Twice Told.

It appears that the Emperor as had his fortune told twice. The first time was in 1863. He was strolling incognito in a wood near Bader, accompanied by his faithful Bismarck and other friends. Suddenly they came across an old gypsy, who begged to be allowed to tell their fortunes. Several of the party having tried their luck, his Majesty consented to do likewise. The gypsy took his hand, and after minute study, said, "I see a great crown, bloodshed, war, laurels and a life of 96 years." The second time was in 1884. The Emperor had forgotten all about the gypsy's prophecy, when a niece of Count Czecheny, the Austrian ambassador, arrived in Berlin and created a great sensation not only by her beauty but also by her reputed skill in palmistry. She was present at court and his Majesty in a playful spirit took advantage of the occasion to consult her. She had no sooner scrutinized his hand than she exclaimed, "I see a life of 96 years."

## Small Boy—

"I picked up a dollar in the road to-day, pa." Fond Father—"And you restored it to the owner, of course?" Small Boy—"Yes, sir." Father—"That's a good, honest boy." Boy—"Conscience-stricken." Well, pa, you see, I couldn't very well help it. The man had me by the ear."

## A Trial by Jury.

That great American jury, the people, have rendered a unanimous verdict in favour of Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Purgative Pellets, the standard remedy for bowel and stomach disorders, biliousness, sick headache, dizziness, constipation and sluggish liver.

## Look on the bright side of things.

Walking advertisements for Dr. Sage's Catarrh Remedy are the thousands it has cured.

The Nashville *Union* gives each subscriber an accidental insurance policy.

Come to the bridal chamber, Death! Come to the mother, when she feels. For the first time, her first-born's breath, And thou art terrible!

## The untimely death which annually carries off thousands of human beings in the prime of youth, is indeed terrible.

The first approach of consumption is insidious, and the sufferer himself is the most unconscious of its approach. One of the most alarming symptoms of this dread disease is, in fact, the insidious hope, which lurks in the heart of the victim, preventing him from taking timely steps to arrest the malady. That it can be arrested in its earlier stages is beyond question, as there are hundreds of well-authenticated cases where Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery has effected a complete cure.

## If you are not wiser and better at the end of a day, that day is lost.

People who are subject to bad breath, foul coated tongue, or any disorder of the stomach, can be relieved by using Dr. Carson's Stomach Bitters, the old and tried remedy. Ask your Druggist.

"Orlando, I didn't see you with Miss Brown at the concert last night." "No, Percy; I'm not calling on her any more. I can't until she retracts what she said last week." "Ah! I wish she said 'Yes!'" "Well, she said I needn't call any more."

**Who are Weak, Nervous and Exhausted;** who feel themselves being dragged down by the many cares of life, who are unable to do their duty, and who are suffering from the effects of over-work, and in advanced life feel the consequences of youthful excess, send for and read M. V. LUBON'S Treatise on Diseases of Men. The book will be sent sealed to any address on receipt of two 5c stamps. Address M. V. LUBON, 47 Wellington St. East, Toronto, Ont.

Low Walker says he has never seen a Turkish drunk man.

**Catarth, Catarrh, Deafness and Hay Fever.**

Sufferers are not generally aware that these diseases are contagious, or that they are due to the presence of living parasites in the lining membrane of the nose and Eustachian tubes. Microscopic research, however, has proved this to be a fact, and the result is that a simple remedy has been formulated whereby catarrh, catarrh deafness and hay fever are cured in from one to three simple applications made at home. A pamphlet explaining this new treatment is sent free on receipt of stamp by A. H. Dixon & Son, 308 King Street West Toronto Canada.

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