

When the Poliu Took the Trail to Find Revenge

How a French Soldier of Lille Refused to Let the Armistice Foil His Plan to Make a German General Pay in Full for the Torture of His Daughter.

By MORDAUNT HALL.

PART II.

The following day Francois, grateful for the sympathy of the Belgian, whose name he learned was Le Brun, asked the old man if he would accompany him to the house in the Rue Royale, as he still entertained hopes of getting a clew there.

But the Belgian informed Francois that he had other business which might take him out of town for the day. The Belgian, however, did not leave the hotel, and at luncheon Francois returned with an aged woman and her daughter, whom he had encountered in the course of his search for information. They lived opposite No. 65 Rue Royale, but said they were so afraid of the German rule that they hardly dared look out of the windows on the front of the house. Monsieur Le Brun in the melior light of the corridor encountered the trio, being late for his evening meal.

"I feel no need of dinner," he wheezed, "but think I had better partake of a trifle."

The indefatigable Francois went out on his search the following day and again returned with the old lady and her daughter. As he entered the hotel he saw Monsieur Le Brun and invited him to join his party at luncheon, but the Belgian had at first no desire for lunch, he said, because he had slept badly the previous night. However, he changed his mind, and in the course of the talk over the meal he was so vindictive in his desire to have the Germans torn to pieces that Francois said:

"You have every reason to be vengeful. It gives me great pleasure to have a man so contented to me when I am on this errand. And I will announce now that my efforts have been partly rewarded, for I actually believe I have a clew. The Boche whom I seek was not shot, but is now believed to be living in a castle near Cologne. I shall proceed there when I have further information."

"There is every reason to suppose that Germany would be the place to harbor such a fiend," said the Belgian, "even though they may pretend to change of heart."

The Belgian was punctiliously polite when the two women left, and he congratulated Francois on his ability as a detective and hoped that he would continue to see the Frenchman until he left for Germany.

"However," said the Belgian, "as I said before, I should advise you to restrain yourself. Remember that you may suffer yourself in killing this German. It would be better to see him locked up for life."

"One can never be certain how long they would keep him in prison," observed Francois. "No, my good friend, I prefer the knife."

In the course of the next few days Francois spent a good deal of his time with Le Brun and one gray day he announced that in a corner of a room in the house in the Rue Royale the occupants now much interested in his search, had discovered a whip, evidently used by the Germans in the said Francois, bits of tin on the four lashes, the metal being stained with blood.

"Seen afterwards, when Le Brun said he was going to take a siesta, Francois went to his room and contemplated himself by swinging the murderous whip in the air. It awakened Le Brun, who Francois struck a picture on the wall, a painting of a pretty scene in Brussels.

"Hoo Dieu!" said Le Brun, rushing into Francois' room in a disheveled state. "How you startled me. It seemed like the air raved over again!" His eyes fell on the large picture of Jeanette which Francois had propped up against the looking glass, and he made a small dressing table.

"It's nothing to the startling I am going to give that Boche," asserted

the Frenchman. "I have had more information to-day in the short time I was out, and I feel exhilarated with a passion for revenge. Moreover, there is a chance that she lives—that she lives! Do you hear, Le Brun?"

"You are fortunate," said the Belgian. "My daughter, I know, is dead."

"Poor fellow, yer. But I must not be too joyful. She may not be where I am told she is, and even so she may be."

"She may be what?" asked the older man.

"Never mind; we shall wait and see what the bon Dieu gives us," cried Francois. "Sometimes I believe that they will tell things they do not come to pass. I am holding so much in my hand now that it feels as if it were burst. If I had the German officer here now I believe that I should restrain myself until I knew for certain, judging by my own eyes, that my girl was alive. Then, as I proved, I should tear him to pieces. But wait, I will then I go to the Boche to make him howl and then to see his eyes c'ose in death from a vengeful father's hand."

Le Brun retired to his room, and Francois, utterly thankful for the news he said he possessed, fell down on his knees beside his bed and offered up thanks to le bon Dieu.

"Give me courage to—"

At dawn Francois hurried away from the hostelry whispering a few words to the clerk. It was a long ride to an asylum, where a long-haired German had permitted the insane to be kept, preferring them not to be about the city. Francois passed through the gates, saying that he wanted to see a girl who had been there perhaps three or four years. He was frantic with excitement. His hands shook and his finger nails dug into his palms, as one after another of the poor sense-bereft women met his eyes. His heart sank as he saw no sign of his daughter, until eventually he learned that some of the women who had shown an improved condition were employed as domestics in the insane hospital. In one section of the grounds Francois, when he had almost given up hope of his prayers, and the jopal being answered, noticed a lithe young woman watering the flower beds.

"She is only happy when she is—"

But Francois had flown in her direction, and when he faced her there was no look of recognition. Suddenly her whole countenance changed. It was the needed shock, and the girl dropped the watering can and shrieked, "Faites! Without waiting for formalities, beyond saying that the woman was his daughter, Francois hastened away from the place to the Gare du Nord, where he saw the transport officer and obtained the necessary passes for Paris. He realized that, Jeanette must not see any spot which held horror for her or that would remind her of the ten years of years. He left her with a soldier in the depot.

Then he hastened to the hotel, paid his bill and board and went to toss his belongings into the two suitcases. It was fifteen minutes before he returned, perspiring despite the temperature.

"Just a word, monsieur," said the clerk. "Monsieur Le Brun was asking for you."

"I have just seen him," said Francois, "and—said good-bye."

That afternoon when secret agents of the Belgian Government broke into the room occupied by Monsieur Le Brun, having good reason to suspect him of being a German officer in disguise who could not return to his own land because of his intolerable brutality to his troops, they found a limp body on the bed. He had been flogged to death with that metal tipped lash, the blood having splattered on the ceiling and the walls, and one of his fingers was the opal ring.

In a neat but hurried hand was a note which read:

"She fought you and went mad for the time being. You are a game swine who sold me the opal in Paris, where you cleverly outwitted me as a shopkeeper. I thought I, too, recognized you when I saw you in this hotel and never really believed your story until I saw your daughter. My friends with whom you broke bread had seen you entering the Rue Royale house and it was le bon Dieu who caused me to bring them and they recognized you. My stories were all to deceive you, but I owe to the opal's change of luck encountering you at the outset of my search. You may never read this note, but others will."

"Apparently another Boche who reaped his deserts," said one of the Secret Police.

"I like shake hands with the wielder of that whip," declared the second. "No, he'll never read the note."

(The End.)

COLONEL BECOMES CONSTABLE.

Everybody has heard of the Englishman who went into the war a private soldier and came out a Brigadier-General. A case even more remarkable, however, is reported from Cardiff, Wales, and has created something more than local stir—though Cardiff itself appears to have taken the matter with entire calmness.

Before the war Arthur Ritchings was a police constable in the town. He enlisted in the army in 1914 and served in the ranks in that first critical year and the two years following. In November, 1917, he was promoted second Lieutenant on the field, by February, 1918, he was a Captain, a little later he was a Major, and the end of the war found him a Lieutenant Colonel. In that time he had been six times wounded, he had won the decoration of Chevalier of the Legion of Honor, the Croix de Guerre with palms, and the Military Cross, having been mentioned three times in despatches and having proved himself a gallant soldier and able officer.

Not long ago Lieut. Col. Ritchings left the army—the war being fought and won—and quietly resumed his place as a common policeman pointing a baton in Cardiff. The Chairman of the Municipal Bench made a point of saying he was glad to see him back, and even went as far as to congratulate Constable Ritchings publicly on his military record. In fact, it seems there was a sort of ceremony welcome.

So the Lieutenant Colonel with four years of active military service to his credit and field rank, won at the front, displaying the ability to command 3,000 and odd men, modestly undertook to take charge, once more of casual drunks and disorderlies in that busy mining town.

Somebody wrote an indignant letter to a London paper about it, otherwise the incident would have passed off as unnoted, at least as not more than ordinarily noticeable. As a consequence the Watch Committee of Cardiff, equivalent to our Police Commissioner, took the ex-Lieutenant Colonel off his beat, and gave him the job of training the police awkward squad of recruits in the proper bearing and behavior of a constable. The Lord Mayor when pressed for information whether there was any intention of appointing the distinguished officer to a higher and more responsible position on the force went to the night say to all the members of the Watch Committee were sympathetic with this idea, and that he had no doubt that when the opportunity occurred Colonel or Constable Ritchings would be given a chance such as he deserved.

It was also said in authoritative quarters (to quote the British press account) that Lieut. Col. Ritchings himself "recognized, as every right-thinking man would, that he had a moral obligation to return to the Cardiff police force for the reason that the antipathy had been contributing during his absence to the support of his dependents at home."

The Whale's Complicated Breathing Apparatus.

An eminent naturalist says, concerning the breathing apparatus of the whale: "The windpipe does not communicate with the mouth; a hole is, as it were, bored right through the back of the head. Engineers would do the whale a favor by making a hole to copy the action of the valve of the whale's blow hole; a more perfect piece of structure it is impossible to imagine. Day and night, asleep or awake, the whale works his breathing apparatus in such a manner that not a drop of water ever gets down into the lungs. Again, the whale must of necessity stay a much longer period under water than seals; this alone might possibly drown it, inasmuch as the lungs cannot have access to fresh air. We find that this difficulty has been anticipated and obviated by a peculiar reservoir in the venous system, which reservoir is situated at the back of the lungs."

Light.

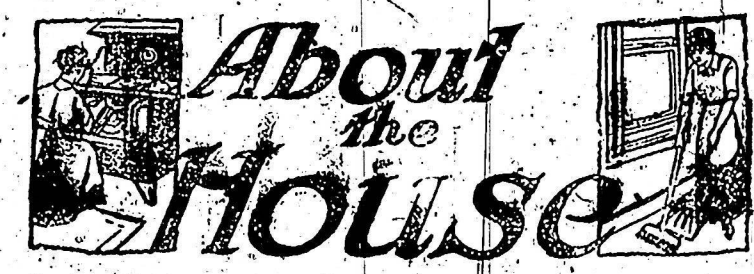
An enthusiastic admirer came rushing up to Arnold Bennett, the English author, at a reception in Chicago recently. "O Mr. Bennett," she cried, "I am so delighted to meet you! You have been a wonderful help to me!"

"Indeed? In what way, might I ask?"

"Oh, that last book of yours! It has taught me to concentrate."

"To concentrate? Well, what, that's nice! Now tell me, what are you concentrating on?"

"Oh, on lots and lots of things!"



About the House

Drying Fruits and Vegetables.

It has been estimated by reliable authorities that from one-fourth to one-half of all perishable crops raised in this country, before the war were allowed to go to waste. Through attention to modern methods of preservation (drying, canning, storing and salting) the percentage of foods formerly allowed to go to waste has been greatly reduced.

Of the four methods of preservation—drying, canning, storing and salting—widely recommended for use during the past few seasons, the first is worthy of special consideration. The system of drying, or dehydration, is especially applicable to those crops which can not be stored satisfactorily, as well as those which are difficult to can, particularly on a small scale. There are two methods or systems of drying suited to the handling of surplus produce from the average farm.

The first of these systems includes the operation of the majority of cook-stove drying contrivances, the most satisfactory of which is a set of cloth or screen-bottom trays arranged horizontally over the kitchen range. The second system comprises the operation of fan-equipped commercial driers, or dehydrators, which may be had in sizes adapted for farm use. Driers of this type usually consist of a horizontal or a slightly inclined tunnel or cabinet fitted with a steam coil or a hot-air furnace at one end and a large exhaust fan at the other. Trays containing prepared produce are placed in the cabinet or chamber through which is drawn a current of heated air. As the heated air becomes moistured, it is removed and replaced by the fan, thus reducing the time ordinarily required for drying by about one-half.

Not all kinds of products can be dried satisfactorily. In fact, little or no attempt should be made to dry those crops which keep well in ordinary storage, unless through drying the crop can be marketed to better advantage. In all cases an attempt should be made to secure a first-class product from each kind of produce handled. This means that only produce of good quality should be used. Cull fruits or vegetables give a cull product—that is, one of inferior quality. All produce should be thoroughly and carefully prepared.

Temperature best suited for drying varies between 110 deg. and 170 deg. F. In the commercial drying plants, produce is ordinarily entered at the end of the drier where the temperature is lowest; preferably 110 deg. to 130 deg. F. Trays entered here are shifted, gradually toward a higher temperature (toward the steam coils) as drying progresses, and the produce is finished off and removed at a temperature of 150 deg. to 170 deg. F.

In the drying of produce over the kitchen range, an attempt should be made to duplicate this temperature. This can ordinarily be accomplished by lowering the trays nearer to the top of the stove as drying progresses.

Apples—Apples dry best when peeled, cored and sliced on hand-power or belt-driven machines, because the slices are of uniform thickness, and such slices dry best; where hand-power or belt-driven machine is not available, special effort must be made to secure uniform slices, preferably three-sixteenths of an inch in thickness. After slicing, the prepared fruits should be placed in a four per cent. salt solution for fifteen minutes. Then rinse, spread one-half inch thick on trays and dry as quickly as possible at a temperature of 110 deg. to 160 deg. F.

Beans—Beans for drying should be young, tender, and uniform in size. After being washed and snipped, they should be cut crosswise into one-half inch lengths, or run through a rotary slicer, blanched for three minutes in boiling water, cold-dipped and dried in layers one inch deep at a temperature of 120 deg. to 170 deg. F.

Carrots—Carrots should be washed, peeled, or scraped free of outer skin, cut into three-sixteenth inch slices, or

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At Parting. Let this good-bye of our—last goodbye— He still and splendid like a forest tree; Or like the hands of Silence holding blue and burning corners of the sea. Let there be one deep look with our eyes, Built of the wonderment of these past years; Too vast a thing of beauty to be lost in quivering lips and burning of tears.

Back to the chaos of the world, we go. Shining with one sweet secret no one knows; Crutches of dreams to help us on our path, From snow to tender petaling of the rose. So in our places we lift high our hands, That none may find within our calm, clear eyes. The secret that two travelers have returned, And cast away their key to Paradise.—Archibald Sullivan.

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