The Phantom of the Opera

BY GASTON LEROUX

CHAPTER IV.—(Cont'd.)

The hours passed slowly. It was about half-past eleven when he distinctly heard some one moving, with a light, stealthy step, in the room next to him. Then Christine had not gone to bed! Without troubling for a reason, Raoul dressed, taking care not to make a sound, and waited. Waited for what? How could he tell? But his heart thumped in his chest when he heard Christine's door turn slowly on its hinges. Where could she be going, at this hour, when every one was fast asleep at Perros? Softly opening the door, he saw Christine's white form in the moonlight, slipping along the passage. She went down the stairs and he leaned over the baluster above her. Suddenly he heard two voices in rapid conversation. He caught one sentence: "Don't lose the key."

It was the landlady's voice. The door facing the sea was opened and locked again. Then all was still.

Raoul ran back to his room and threw back the window. Christine's white form stood on the deserted quay.

The first floor of the Setting Sun was at no great height and a tree growing against the wall held out its branches to Raoul's impatient arms and enabled him to climb down unknown to the landlady. Her amazement, therefore, was all the greater when, the next morning, the young man was brought back to her half frozen, more dead than alive, and when she learned that he had been found stretched at full length on the steps of the high altar of the little church. She ran at once to tell Christine, who hurried down and, with the help of the landlady, did her best to revive him. He soon opened his eyes and was not long in recovering when he saw his friend's charming face leaning over him.

A few weeks later, when the tragedy at the Opera compelled the intervention of the public prosecutor, M. Mifroid, the commissary of police, examined the Vicomte de Chagny touching the events of the night at Perros. I quote the questions and answers:

Q. "Did Mlle. Daae not see you come down from your room by the curious road which you selected?"

R. "No, monsieur, no, although, when walking behind her, I took no pains to deaden the sound of my footsteps. In fact, I was anxious that she should turn round and see me. I realized that I had no excuse for following her and that this way of spying on her was unworthy of me. But she seemed not to hear me and acted exactly as though I were not there. She quietly left the quay and then suddenly walked quickly up the road. The church clock had struck a quarter to twelve and I thought that this must have made her hurry, for she began almost to run and continued hastening until she came to the church."

"Mlle. Daae's curious action in going out at that hour had worried me at first; but, as soon as I saw her go to the churchyard, I thought that she meant to fulfill some pious duty on her father's grave and I considered this so natural that I recovered all my calmness. I was only surprised that she had not heard me walking behind her, for my footsteps were quite audible on the hard snow. But she must have been taken up with her intentions and I resolved not to disturb her. She knelt down by her father's grave, made the sign of the cross and began to pray. At that moment, it struck midnight. At the last stroke, I saw Mlle. Daae lift her eyes to the sky and stretch out her arms as though in ecstasy. I was wondering what the reason could be, when I myself raised my head and everything within me seemed drawn toward the invisible, which was playing the most perfect music! Christine and I knew that music; we had heard it as children. But it had never been executed with such divine art, even by M. Daae. I remembered all that Christine had told me of the Angel of Music. The air was The Resurrection of Lazarus, which old M. Daae used to play to us in his hours of melancholy and of faith. If Christine's Angel had existed, he could not have played better, that night, on the late musician's violin. When the music stopped, I seemed to hear a noise from the skulls in the heap of bones; it was as though they were chuckling and I could not help shuddering."

Q. "Then what happened that you were found in the morning lying half-dead on the steps of the high altar?"

R. "First a skull rolled to my feet . . . then another . . . then another. . . . It was as if I were the mark of that ghastly game of bowls. And I had an idea that false step must have destroyed the balance of the structure behind which our musician was concealed. This surmise seemed to be confirmed when I saw a shadow suddenly glide along the sacristy wall. I ran up. The shadow had already pushed open the door and entered the church. But I was quicker than the shadow and caught hold of a corner of its cloak. At that moment, we were just in front of the high altar; and the moonbeams fell straight upon us through the stained-glass windows of the apse. As I did not let go of the cloak, the shadow turned round; and I saw a terrible death's head, which darted a look at me from a pair of scorching eyes. I felt as if I were face to face with Satan; and, in the presence of this unearthly apparition, my heart gave way, my courage failed me . . . and I remembered nothing more until I recovered consciousness at the Setting Sun."

CHAPTER VI.

FAUST AND WHAT FOLLOWED.

On the Saturday morning, on reaching their office, the joint managers found a letter from O. G. worded in these terms:

"My Dear Managers:

"So it is to be war between us?

"If you still care for peace, here is my ultimatum. It consists of the four following conditions:

"1. You must give me back my private box; and I wish it to be at my free disposal from henceforward.

"2. The part of Margarita shall be sung this evening by Christine Daae. Never mind about Carlotta; she will be ill.

"3. I absolutely insist upon the good and loyal services of Mme. Giry, my box-keeper, whom you will reinstate in her functions herewith.

"4. Let me know by a letter handed to Mme. Giry, who will see that it reaches me, that you accept, as your predecessors did, the conditions in my memorandum-book relating to my monthly allowance. I will inform you later how you are to pay it to me.

"If you refuse, you will give Faust, to-night in a house with a curse upon it.

"Take my advice and be warned in time. O. G."

"Look here, I'm getting sick of him, sick of him!" Shouted Richard, bringing his fists down on his office-table.

Just then, Mercier, the acting-manager, entered.

"Lachenel would like to see one of you gentlemen," he said. "He says that his business is urgent and he seems quite upset."

"And what does he do?"

"He has the chief management of the stable."

"Is there a stable at the Opera? Upon my word, I didn't know. Where is it?"

"In the cellars, on the Rotunda side. it's a very important department; we have twelve horses."

"Twelve horses! And what for, in Heaven's name?"

"Why, we want trained horses for the processions in the Juive, the Profeta and so on; horses 'used to the boards.' It is the grooms' business to teach them."

"He can come in."

M. Lachenel came in, carrying a riding-whip, with which he struck his right boot in an irritable manner.

"Good morning, M. Lachenel," said Richard, somewhat impressed. "To what do we owe the honor of your visit?"

"Mr. Manager, I have come to ask you to get rid of the whole stable."

"What, you want to get rid of our horses?"

"I am not talking of the horses, but of the stablemen."

"How many stablemen have you, M. Lachenel?"

"Six."

"Six stablemen! That's at least two too many."

"These are 'places,'" Mercier interposed, "created and forced upon us by the under-secrtary for fine arts. They are filled by protegees of the government and, if I may venture to . . ."

"I don't care a hang for the government!" roared Richard. "We don't need more than four stablemen for twelve horses."

"Eleven," said the head riding-master, correcting him.

"Twelve," repeated Richard.

"I did have twelve, but I have only eleven since Cesar was stolen."

And M. Lachenel gave himself a great smack on the boot with his whip.

"Has Cesar been stolen?" cried the acting-manager. "Cesar, the white horse in the Profeta? How?"

"I don't know. Nobody knows. That's why I have come to ask you to sack the whole stable."

"What do your stablemen say?"

"All sorts of nonsense. Some of them accuse the supers. Others pretend that it's the acting-manager's doorkeeper . . ."

"My doorkeeper? I'll answer for him as I would for myself!" protested Mercier.

"But, after all, M. Lachenel," cried Richard, "you must have some idea."

"Yes, I have," M. Lachenel declared. "I have an idea and I'll tell you what it is. There's no doubt about it in my mind." He walked up to the two managers and whispered, "It's the ghost who did the trick!"

Richard gave a jump.

"What, you too! You too!"

"What do you mean, I too? Isn't it natural, after what I saw?"

"What did you see?"

"I saw, as clearly as I now see you, a black shadow riding a white horse that was as like Cesar as two peas!"

"And did you run after them?"

"I did and I shouted, but they were too fast for me and disappeared in the darkness of the underground gallery."

M. Richard rose. "That will do, M. Lachenel. You can go. . . . We will lodge a complaint against the ghost."

"And sack my stable?"

"Oh, of course! Good morning."

M. Lachenel bowed and withdrew. Richard foamed at the mouth.

"Settle that idiot's account at once, please."

"He is a friend of the government representative's!" Mercier ventured to say.

"And he takes his vermouth at Tortoni's with Lagrene, Scholl and Pertuiset, the lion-hunter," added Moncharmin. "We shall have the whole press against us! He'll tell the story of the ghost; and everybody will be laughing at our expense! We may as well be dead as ridiculous!"

"All right, say no more about it."

At that moment the door opened. It must have been deserted by its usual Cerberus, for Mme. Giry entered without ceremony, holding a letter in her hand, and said hurriedly:

"I beg your pardon, excuse me, gentlemen, but I had a letter this morning from the Opera ghost. He told me to come to you, that you had something to . . ."

She did not complete the sentence. She saw Firmin Richard's face; and it was a terrible sight. He said nothing, he could not speak. But suddenly he acted. First, his left arm seized upon the quaint person of Mme. Giry and made her describe so unexpected a semicircle that she uttered a despairing cry. Next, his right foot imprinted its sole on the black taffeta of a skirt which certainly had never before undergone a similar outrage in a similar place. The thing happened so quickly htat Mme. Giry, when in the passage, was still quite bewildered and seemed not to understand. But, suddenly, she understood; and the Opera rang with her indignant yells, her violent protests and threats.

About the same time, Carlotta, who had a small house of her own in the Rue du Faubourg St.-Honore, rang for her maid, which brought her letters to her bed. Among them was an anonymous missive, written in red ink, in a hesitating, clumsy hand, which read:

"If you appear to-night, you must be prepared for a great misfortune at the moment when you open your mouth to sing . . . a misfortune worse than death."

The letter took away Carlotta's appetite for breakfast. She pushed back her chocolate, sat up in bed and thought hard. It was not the first letter of the kind which she had received, but she never had one couched in such threatening terms.

She thought herself, at that time, the victim of a thousand jealous attempts and went about saying that she had a secret enemy who had sworn to ruin her. She pretended that a wicked plot was being hatched against her, a cabal which would come to a head one of those days; but she added that she was not the woman to be intimidated.

(To be continued.)

The Next Thing.

"I can do but one thing at a time," declared one of the most distinguished members of a recent surgical congress. The unsuccessful headmaster of an unsuccessful school once said in a faculty meeting: "No teacher is good for anything who cannot do several things at once." His own career was that of a scatterbrain, and he failed because he did not define certain objectives and go after then in the spirit of Lord Northcliffe's terse counsel: "Concentrate."

A famous steelmaster, like any one of several noted statesmen, has developed to a high degree the faculty of giving himself to the task before him or the preson in front of him as though for that teeming moment no other occupation, no other individual, existed. Said an Ambassador with a heavy charge to keep: "My desk is clear because I cannot work in any other way. I must take up one matter at a time and finish it. My secretaries have instructions to carry nothing over till the morrow that can possibly be done to-day."

There lies the secret. Procrastination deserves the blame for thievery of our time that the old adage affixes to it. In Hardy's cosmic drama, "The Dynasts," much is made of the coming of the first flake of a snowstorm that buried alive so many of Napoleon's soldiers. That first flake was a trifle. But when many flakes piled up they made an overwhelming drift. That is the way with letters. We decide we will defer answering our correspondence till a more convenient season. Soon the amount of it becomes a formidable burden. Had we taken hold of the missives as they came they wouldn't have bothered us much and they would not seem a monumental affliction now. It is thus with every claim of personal, industrial, social or civic obligation. We cannot afford to let our various preoccupations, whatever they may be, gain volume and momentum.

Machine Made Matches.

Not until 1840 were matches successfully manufactured by machinery.

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A Prayer.

Lord, not for light in darkness do we pray,
Not that the veil be lifted from our eyes,
Not that the slow ascension of our day
Be otherwise.

Not for a fuller knowledge of the end,
Whereto we travel, bruised yet unafraid,
Not that the little healing that we lend
Shall be repaid.

Not these, O Lord. For these Thou has revealed,
We know the golden season when to reap
The heavy-fruited treasures of the field,
The hour to sleep.

We know the paths wherein our feet should press,
Across our harts are written Thy decrees,
Yet now, O Lord, be merciful to bless
With more than these.

Grant us the will to fashion as we feel,
Grant us the strength to labor as we know,
Grant us the purpose, ribbed and edged with steel,
To strike the blow.

Knowledge we ask not—knowledge Thou hast lent,
But, Lord, the will—there lies our bitter need,
Give us to build above the deep intent,
The deed, the deed.

—John Drinkwater.

Should Do it Here, Too.

Immediately after the war the British Forestry Commission drafted a scheme of reforestation which was about half completed with the recent planting of the two hundred millionth tree. The scheme, spread over a period of ten years, provides for the planting of 450,000,000 trees on 250,000 acres, and already entire new forests of 20,000 to 25,000 acres have been created for the future. Twenty years from now these forests will have changed a large part of the landscape of Great Britain.

If this is done in a country which is mainly industrial, what ought Canada to do? Our forests are one of our most valuable resources. Millions of trees are cut every year, and for every tree deliberately felled, two are consumed by fire. The ratio of replacement is comparatively small. We are taking away without putting back; we are spending capital without creating an adejuate reserve fund.

Two New Wireless Stations Are Opened.

The opening of the wireless station at Aklavik, in the delta of the Mackenzie river, on October 7, was announced by the North West Territories and Yukon Branch of the Department of the Interior. The opening of this station, which is the most northerly in Canada, together with that at Fort Smith which began operations on September 5, marks the completion of the system designed to bring the Mackenzie valley, the Yukon, and the Western Arctic coast into daily touch with civilization. The order of the stations from north to south is Aklavik, Dawson, Mayo, Simpson, Fort Smith, and Edmonton.

The Eskimo town of Aklavig is about fifty miles from the Arctic ocean and 150 miles from Herschiel island. In the past it has taken many months to receive a reply to a letter written to far northern points, whereas since the opening of the Aklivak station return messages have been received in Ottawa within a few hours. The extension of the system to include the stations of Aklavik and Fort Smith will be a great convenience to the people of the country and of immense assistance in administration and development. It is the intention to establish a substation at Herschel island to operate during the period of open navigation. Herschel is a port of entry for ships coming by way of Bering strait and Alaska, and wireless communication will be of great assistance to the officials in the collection of customs duties and in other administrative work.

He—"The last time I kissed you, you gave me a smack on the jaw."

She—"Well, here's your chance to get even. Give me a smack on the cheek."

Looking at An Old Book.

What learning and art entered into its production! With what hopes, or perchance misgivings, its author or its editor entrusted his manuscript to the printer! We who live in an age which seems to have adopted for its slogan, "Do it electrically," that is to say, rapidly, may well pause for a moment and think upon the places and the peoples who three or four hundred years ago, produced those books which all the world today so greatly admires. Paris was indeed a town, but it was only a town in 1539; and that huge agglomeration which now is London was then merely a half dozen villages, connected together by rough roads, impassable in winter, dusty in summer, and always dangerous. What facilities had the printers of those days? From our point of view none. Yet they designed and cast beautiful types which are still a delight to the eye, and set them with taste, and printed from them to rude presses in jet black ink upon paper which yet remains as sound as when it first came from the mill. Verily those old printers were artists and craftsmen. Such thoughts as these always break in upon me when I look upon a fine old book.—A. Edward Newton, in "The Greatest Book in the World."

Ancient Fortress in France.

A Roman fortress built about 275 A.D. as a defense against the advance of barbarians has been unearthed at Dijon, France.

Nowadays a man is never sure of the right of way. In Hamilton last week a woman ran into an ambulance, breaking the leg of a man who had already been seriously injured in a previous automobile accident.

Every road-hog has his way.

Poor Mary.

Our Mary in the churchyard lies,
Beneath green trees and sunny skies;
Her Ford refused to climb a pole—
That's why she's now in such a hole.

The auto horn has now taken the place of the parlor door bell when he calls on her.

How to Live to be a Hundred.

When you turn a corner, slow down. Blow your horn. Don't make Gabriel blow his for you.

But, after all, "asleep at the switch" at its worst was not so bad as drunk at the wheel.

One small jack can lift a car, but it takes a lot of jack to keep it up.

My Bonny jumped out, and he left me,
My Bonny lies under the car.
Won't somebody phone to the garage,
'Cause it's lonesome up here where I are!

The thing needed at grade crossings is a life-like statue of a speed cop.

Terrific Responsibility.

Wife—"Horace, darling, drive carefully, won't you? Remember, we have Fido with us."

"Well, sir," said old Ragson Tatters, "I'm more impressed that ever by the selfishness of folks with cars."

"Are, eh?" returned Windy Wolf. "What d'ye want me to do about it?"

"Nothing in the world. I was just telling you, that is all. But a spell ago I saw a Ford go past entirely empty except for seven grown folks in it and three or four children.

It's a long way between rolls and coffee and Rolls-Royce.

TELEPHONES IN CANADA

The most striking trait of Canadian life to new arrivals form Europe is the manner in which the Dominion, which they have considered as a very new and therefore raw and crude country, has brought into general, everyday usage the most modern and up-to-date conveniences and amenities which invention has given to the world. The resident of Canada, for instance, does not appreciate his country's prominent position in regard to the use of the telephone until he visits Europe, where the inconvenience and irritating loss of time arising from the lack of this means of communication drives it strikingly home. The approach of the semi-centennial of the invention of the telephone makes it an appropriate time to briefly survey Canada's achievement in this connection and fix the position of the Dominion among other countries in this connection.

In 1921 the Canadian census showed a population of 8,788,483, and at the end of 1924 there were over 1,009,203 telephones in operation throughout the Dominion. This works out at eleven telephones per 100 of population, or eleven per cent,, and in respect to this development Canada takes second place only to the United States, where the figure is 13.7 per cent., among the countries of the world. Furthermore, the gross earnings per telephone are lower in Canada than in any other country of which there is record. The gross earnings per telephone for the fiscal year 1923 in the Netherlands were $61.17; in Great Britain $58.18; in the United States $48.49; and in Canada $43.14.

Phones General on Farms.

This development is by no means confined to the older, more developed and established sections of the country, but, on the contrary, is more pronounced in the newer Western territory. For some time, for instance, the city of Calgary in Alberta has led the entire world in regard to the number of telephones per capita of population, with, at the present time, one telephone to every four and a fraction residents. Practically the same situation is to be found throughout the other cities of Western Canada.

And the telephone in Canada is not by any means confined to urban centres, but enters most intimately into the life of the farm, both in a business and social sense. It is interesting to note that in the Province of Manitoba, where the population is described as rural to the extent of about 60 per cent., there is a telephone to every eight residents, and that in the Province of Saskatchewan there are two rural telephone subscribers to every urban subscriber, a situation which is equalled by only four states of the Union.

This is a very gratifying state of affairs and eloquent of Canada's marked progress in all directions along the most modern lines. The telephone has come to enter most intimately into every phase of Canadian life and more especially the agricultural. The line of telephone poles follows rapidly in the wake of agricultural settlement and the farmer given adequate touch with that world from which he is apart yet with which he transacts business. The extension of the phone throughout the remoter farming settlements of Canada is a situation of which the poorly supplied European can form no conception.

Pipes Cause Forest Fires.

The cigarette has been blamed for much, and the "good old dudeen" has had many a eulogy; but experiments carried on in California by members of the Forest Service, United States Department of Agriculture, dealing with the possible causes of what are termed "smoker fires" bid fair to turn the tables upon the highly praised briar, clay or cob, and to find it the guiltiest member of the smoker's trinity.

In typical national forest surroundings, such as are frequented all summer long by tourist and camper, 200 experiments were recently made of the relative importance of cigar, cigarette, pipe heel, and lighted match as a cause of forest fires.

With the aid of a motor-driven fan, breezes and even gales of various intensities were imitated to accelerate the forest fires produced on a minute scale. Forest litter, bark, rotten wood, pine needles—all the ordinary forest fuels—were exposed to ignition.

The results showed fairly conclusively that the smouldering tobacco from pipes would start fires, in almost every instance, whenever it fell on well air-dried material, and with very slight aid from the wind.

In this respect, pipe heels far outdid either cigar or cigarette, and in these tests was outdone only by the lighted match, which maintained a 110 per cent. record as a fire starter. The inference is that the pipe smoker can no longer be considered free from suspicion, as he has been in some instances, but should be subject to the same restrictions as the user of the "tailor-made" cigarette and the cigar. The foresters point out, however, that it is the degree of thoughtfulness and care that the smoker exercises in disposing of his matches, snipes, butts and pipe heels, rather than what he smokes, that concerns them most.

Why is it easy to break into an old man's house? Because his locks are few and his gait is broken.

HOW AND WHEN TO ... AND ORNAMENTAL...

While the pruning of any tree or shrub may be conducted at any season of the year, the dormant season, especially in the case of trees, is generally accepted as the most desirable time. At that season of the year one is better able to determine the shape of the tree and to space the branches properly.

Object of Pruning—The operator should, before commencing to prune, have a clear conception in mind as to exactly what his objective is. If pruning a shade tree or an ornamental shrub, his sole aim is symmetry of form, and pruning then becomes largely a matter of taste and good judgment. If pruning a fruit tree the object is mainly to encourage or promote fruit-bearing surface, and shape or form is secondary, except in a very young tree, when the object is largely to train it to a certain shape.

Fruit Trees—It is sufficient to remember that heavy pruning or cutting back will delay the fruiting age of a young tree, but this practice may be necessary in an old tree to encourage the production of a large amount of new wood. A tree must produce a certain amount of new wood each season to replace some of the older growth which is continually dying or going out of fruiting. In old trees, unless pruned frequently, the old wood going out may exceed the new coming in. This may be corrected by judicious pruning. The pruning in such a tree should take the form of cutting back not only the growth of the terminal or outside branches, but also of the laterals and smaller branches. This cutting back should not be heavy or excessive at any one time. A certain amount of thinning out may also be necessary. This is to allow light to get at the lower portion of the tree. Trees that are never thinned out, frequently die at the bottom and get bushy or thick in the top. This cuts down bearing surface and may eventually lead to long barren branches with a little fruit at the top only.

Trees in General—In the pruning of both shade and fruit trees there are a few principles that should be borne in mind. In making a cut do not leave a stub of the branch, but cut back to either a bud or to a lateral, making the cut on the slant so that it has an opportunity to heal over.

Try to avoid the formation of very sharp crotches or angles by removing these when possible and encouraging the development of branches which join at right angles or nearly so.

Always permit the main branch to retain the lead; sometimes a lateral will grow as rapidly as the leader and if permitted to keep up to it, will result in a very weakened crotch and branch. Suppress the lateral by keeping it cut back.

Large wounds (over an inch and a half in diameter) should be painted to prevent weathering. For this purpose a mixture of white lead and oil, without the addition of turpentine, is recommended.

Ventilating Apple Storage Houses.

Temperature control is the most important factor in the storage of apples, the ripening processes being greatly retarded by temperatures slight'y above the freezing point of the fruit. Most varieties of apples freeze at about 28 degrees, and can be stored to best advantage at about 30 to 32 degrees Fahrenheit.

Maintenance of the proper amount of moisture in the air in the storage house is also necessary in order to ensure that the apples come out of storage in prime eating condition. If the air is too dry, shrivelling is likely to be excessive. On the other hand, too high a humidity favors the growth of those organisms which bring about decay. Good results are secured when the air is carrying from 80 to 85 per cent. of the moisture which it can hold.

It has been suggested that ventilation is necessary to carry away the carbon dioxide formed by the respiration of apples in storage. Recent experiments have shown that it is only when exceptionally high concentrations of carbon dioxide are encountered, as sometimes occurs in the holds of ships, that injury to the fruit results. Low concentrations of carbon dioxide actually retard the life processes and prolong the storage life of the apple. Ventilation does, however, help to carry away those gasses which, if allowed to remain in contact with the skin of certain varieties of apples, bring about the disease known as apple scald.

The importance of ventilation in common or air-cooled storage houses is due largely to its influence on temperature. In this type of house the cooling of the fruit is brought about by the passage of outside air through the storage chambers. In order that storing in the common air-cooled house be effective, it is necessary that large volumes of cool air be circulated rapidly through the storage chambers. Even with expert management the best that can be expected from this type of storage, during October and November, is a temperature approximating the mean of the out-door temperatures. Nevertheless, where proper provision has been made for ventilation and where the ventilators are carefully and faithfully operated, the temperature can be maintained low enough to materially retard the ripening of the fruit.