

The Chauffeur and the Jewels

Copyright, 1906, by J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY.
All rights reserved.

By
Edith Morgan Willett

CHAPTER IV.

Three days after Mrs. Waring and her party left Havre, an artist boarded the Liverpool express just as it was leaving Birmingham, barely in time to be locked up in his carriage by the rushing guard.

The two other people in possession of the first-class compartment—two young sports with their bulging caddy bags, their suit cases, and their Gazette—looked up the entire seat. The artist settled himself modestly in a corner opposite, and pulling his cap well over his face and long, curly brown hair, opened his Daily Telegraph. Having read the editorials from end to end, he glanced leisurely over the political news, and finally, doubling the paper, took in the various paragraphs of current interest with attention and, one in particular, with some amusement.

This was dubbed, "Special from The Paris Herald," and contained these headlines:

"Remarkable Burglary at Havre."
"American Woman Robbed by Her Chauffeur."

And then below:
"Mrs. Richard Waring, of New York and Washington, who has been traveling on the Continent with a party of friends, was the unfortunate loser on Wednesday of some unusually fine diamonds, valued at 250,000 francs.

"The gems must have been stolen from her trunk while at the Hotel Maritime. The suspected thief is her chauffeur, one Ludovic Sarto, lately in the employ of His Highness the Prince del Pino. Sarto has been running Mrs. Waring's motor for the past two months.

"The burglary was not discovered until this morning, when the party was leaving Calais, but the authorities of the place were immediately informed of the affair and are on the lookout for the thief. A reward of 5,000 francs is offered for his apprehension."

Having read this paragraph twice over very carefully, the artist folded the paper, crammed it into his pocket, and leaned back in his seat, giving himself up to a fit of hard thinking which lasted till the train rumbled into the Liverpool station just five minutes late.

It was while the artist was hunting up a cab that he first noticed the man in the brown overcoat—a tall, thin, stoop-shouldered person, who favored him with a brief, interrogative stare, then disappeared into the ticket office.

A minute after, a four-wheeler containing a painter and his paraphernalia bowled swiftly away in the direction of the Metropole Hotel. From time to time its passenger looked out through the little window at the back with a keen, inquiring glance. Finally passing out of a broad avenue, the trap crossed a square at right angles and turned a sharp corner.

"Stop," said the man inside suddenly. Dismounting, bag in hand, he looked furtively to right and left. Ahead of him stretched a long, narrow street given over apparently to lodging houses and a few unpretentious shops. Pulling out a sovereign, "Cabby," he said, speaking with a strong foreign accent, "behold your fare—and something, as you see, beyond. Make your best time to the Metropole and leave there my belongings. I get out at this place."

Then, crossing the street as the cab rattled off, the artist plunged into a stationer's opposite.

He was standing at the counter a little later, reflectively choosing a note book, when the sound of wheels outside made him start and look out expectantly, but there was nothing unusual in sight—only a station cab, containing a commonplace looking man in a brown overcoat, passing by the shop at a quick trot.

Paying for his purchase and shouldering his bag, the artist walked briskly up the street. Turning on his course, he soon took to side alleys and short cuts, walking with the assured gait of one who knows his town thoroughly, until the gray stone facade of the Hotel Adelphi came into view.

Entering the lobby, "Can you tell me," he asked the clerk suavely, "if His Excellency the Prince del Pino is not staying here?"

The young man consulted a slip of paper. "Leaves by Majestic this afternoon. Suite 21, second floor. Take a lift." The words came out automatically without the slightest punctuation.

Following the direction, the caller found himself at length standing outside of a closed door upstairs.

After a little the door was opened in answer to his ring and a head thrust out.

"His Highness begs to be excused," announced a guttural voice, without any preliminaries.

But the artist stepped forward and, seizing the cautious one by the hand, held it very firmly.

"Alceste," he said in French, "do you not recognize me, my friend? It is Sarto."

The other gave a start. "Come in, come in, without doubt," he said in a low voice, "and close the door behind you."

It was an imposing anteroom in which Sarto now found himself, with doors opening out at the two ends, and six long windows communicating with a balcony commanding the street.

While the visitor looked about him, his companion slipped to the portiere opposite and drew the draperies more closely. Turning he came back rapidly, a trim-

looking fellow of middle height, the typical French valet, with a shaven, smooth-shaven face.

"And so it is Ludovic Sarto?" he said incredulously, approaching the pseudo artist. "I should never have known you," as he surveyed the professional get-up with a slight smile.

"I see, I had better ask no questions! Eh bien, my friend, here you are safe at least, only"—struck by a sudden thought he asked a few words in a whisper—"have you ever had the scarlet fever?"

The chauffeur nodded his head. "A slight case, when I was a boy," he assented briefly; and then, with some concern "Not the prince?"

The other acquiesced. "The devil, say rather!" he ejaculated feelingly. "Such temper, such abuse, for the past week; and now this high fever—M. le docteur is in there now." He glanced at the opposite door. "One cannot tell yet positively what may be the outcome. As for our journey this afternoon, where are we to go—what we are to do?"

He shrugged his shoulders, spread out his hands, rolled his eyes, and glanced upward, all in one brief, pantomimic moment.

"But how about you, mon chou?"

The chauffeur pushed back his long artistic locks, which now showed unmistakable signs of belonging to a wig.

"As you suggest," he said, "it is wiser sometimes to ask no questions about the past. For the present"—with a whimsical lift of his eyebrows—"Scotland Yard is after me. I have been followed all the way from Southampton. That is the reason I am here."

He paused, his eyes inscrutably on the valet; but Alceste avoided the gaze.

"You come at a bad time, then," he objected, with sudden fretfulness. "The prince ill—myself with a hundred demands upon me—one must see, under these circumstances—"

"Ah!" broke in the chauffeur. Looking down, he studied the points of his boots and appeared to meditate a moment, then, shaking off his abstraction, "Come, then," he said lightly, "no more of my affairs. We will discuss thine for the nonce. Sit down; let us talk."

Placing himself leisurely in a chair, he eyed the valet with a faint smile that hardened and broadened.

"Ah, Alceste! But the sight of thee recalls many things! Dost thou remember those two weeks at Toulouse?" His gaze rested reminiscently on the ceiling. "And that accident to the gens d'arme? It was an unhappy mistake of thine," he laughed jarringly.

But Alceste did not laugh.

"Un peu plus bas," he expostulated, his eyes on the closed door opposite.

Sarto crossed his legs with deliberation. "Aha!" he laughed unbecomingly. "There was also that affair in Spain. Ma foi! How amusing!" He raised his voice with apparent unconsciousness. "The prince—has he heard of these little incidental diversions? Eh, Alceste?"

Alceste made no immediate reply. His eyes were still glued on the door, his usually dull skin turned the spent, unhealthy hue of a wax candle.

After a pause, "Is not this a bad time for such banal reminiscences?" he asked, meekly enough now. "I am all eagerness to do what you wish in this difficulty. It is but a question of expedients. Chut!"

He broke off abruptly, listening, for from the next room came the sound of voices, and then footfalls.

"M. le docteur!" ejaculated Alceste. "Already!"

He moved swiftly toward the door. Then, over his shoulder, "Look you! Through that door opposite! Make haste; I will be with you directly." His tone was almost beseeching.

Rising with a careless shrug, the other stepped into the next room. Having closed the door, he stood listening to the sound of approaching feet.

The next instant a voice became audible, the hoarse, wheezy voice of a very fat man. Standing close by the intervening wall, Sarto could hear every word.

"Yes," the doctor was saying, "there is considerable fever, but we can't be sure what the trouble is for twenty-four hours at any rate. If it wasn't that Liverpool had been so full of scarlet fever lately I should say positively—" He broke off abruptly. "Well, keep him quiet and do what I told you."

"Mais, monsieur," the valet's voice rose in voluble remonstrance, "all arrangements mek for Son Altesse departure today. Look you! The very trunks full—er-owded. Eef all dese peoples suspect the truth, dere will be great tr-ouble—big fuss!"

The doctor was evidently in a hurry, for the chauffeur could hear the struggle with his overcoat.

"Suspect," he grunted. "Why should they suspect? Can't you keep things quiet a little longer? I tell you seriously the prince can't be moved for twenty-four hours without danger. Just tell Mr. Burlington that, with my compliments, I'll drop in later and have a word with him."

There was a shuffle of departing feet and the door closed.

Stepping over to the window which gave on the street, the chauffeur glanced out, hoping for a glimpse of the great man getting into his brougham, but there was no sign of either.

Instead, a hansom had just driven up

to the side entrance and, as Sarto watched it, some one jumped out and passed rapidly into the hotel—a tall, thin man in a familiar looking brown overcoat. With a muttered exclamation the chauffeur turned away and stood perfectly still, staring ahead of him with the dilated, startled look in his eyes of a hunted animal. Listening with sickening expectancy, he made out the creak of the ascending lift outside, the sound of feet along the hall, and a loud knock.

After a moment's silence, it was repeated, and the flip-flap of Alceste's slippers came hastening from an inner room to answer it.

The door was opened, and a quiet voice was heard—to the listener's strained senses—most unpleasantly distinct and near.

"These the prince's rooms?" it asked suavely. "The clerk tells me that a friend of mine was directed up here a half-hour ago—an artist—tall, dark man. I've called for him! Just ask him to step out, please!"

There was a pause, while Ludovic held himself stiffly at bay, wondering what would come next; everything hung on the valet's next words.

"Oul, monsieur," came the guttural response at last. "The gentlemen that you describe called here, il-y-a vingt minutes, but—as Son Altesse could not see them—he leave directly."

"Indeed?" The tone sounded incredulous. "That is very extraordinary! The clerk tells me he didn't see him go out. How do you account for that?"

"I do not know, sir, me!" Alceste's reply was glibness itself. "I shut de door on hem. Son Altesse, he so much occupy, and myself no less."

The detective took the obvious inference. "Well," he remarked, after a pause, "if you're sure he's not here, I won't detain you any longer. Much obliged. Good morning!" And footsteps retreated down the hall.

The situation was apparently saved, but the astute chauffeur realized thoroughly that the Adelphi was no longer a possibility for him. Some other hiding place must be found, something must be done—and at once.

The next half hour he spent tramping up and down his rather circumscribed quarters and edgelling his brains for a solution of the problem that confronted him, so absorbed in his thoughts that he almost forgot to wonder what had become of Alceste.

At last, however, the valet made his appearance, his colorless face more chafy than ever.

"Ah!" he ejaculated savagely for the moment more interested in his own dilemma than in the chauffeur's woes. "Could anything be worse? Some servant has spread abroad the report that Son Altesse has the scarlet fever, and the hotel is infete, fou! Every one in a panic! M. le Proprietaire declares that if the prince does not carry out his intention and leave to-day, every one in the house will leave; his season will be ruined! Miserable canaille!" He wrinkled his forehead. "If one could but arrest their suspicions, keeps things quiet for twenty-four hours longer, when everything will be decided."

Sarto seemed deep in thought. "The staterooms are taken?"

"But yes, taken and paid for—the best on the ship. Ah! Mille tonnerres! Sacre! And the very trunks on board?"

"So much the better," said the chauffeur suddenly.

Alceste stared at him.

"I mean it!" the other repeated. "Let them go, even if they have to cross the ocean to save appearances!"

He was standing before a mirror, staring at himself critically, eagerly.

"Yes"—to himself—"it could be managed with a little ingenuity." Then, turning to the valet, "Calmes toi, Alceste!" he said soothingly. "You have helped me and I shall now extricate you. This moment even, a blessed idea has come to me by which all can be managed. The affair is concluded! Between us both we can accomplish everything. His Excellency can remain here in secret until the crisis of his illness is passed, and yet at the same time—the Proprietaire, the hotel, all the city if necessary, shall see the Prince del Pino sail for America!"

(To be continued.)

Tame and Wild Game Mixed.

School Teacher—And now that we have finished discussing the lion and the tiger, who can tell me about the lynx?

A painful pause. Finally a small hand is hesitatingly elevated.

Teacher—Well, Tommy, can you describe the lynx?

Tommy—No'm.

Teacher—Then why did you raise your hand?

Tommy—I thought Willie Wuggles could tell.

Teacher—And what made you think Willie could describe the lynx?

Tommy—'Cause his brother's a candle.

Absence of Mind.

Browning—So your engagement with the rich widow is broken off, eh? What was the trouble?

Greening—Oh, one of my famous bad breaks, as usual. In an unguarded moment I asked her if I was the only man she had ever loved.

Restaurant Repartee.

"Waiter, what kind of a steak was that you served me with just now?" demanded the dissatisfied guest.

"Well done," responded the waiter, with a low bow.

"I'm! Do you mean me or the steak?"

Of the 387 recorded ministers of the Society of Friends in Great Britain 153 are women



Feet of the Horse.

The usefulness of a horse depends largely upon the quality of his feet. If they are sound and well taken care of he is able to travel and work well, but if they are defective and neglected his usefulness is impaired and he can not be depended on in any emergency, as he is liable, when his services are most needed, to become partially if not wholly disabled, resulting in serious loss to his owner. But few horses are born with perfect feet, yet the defects by careful treatment are often entirely cured; also many horses with sound hoofs are practically ruined by the ignorance or carelessness of blacksmiths.

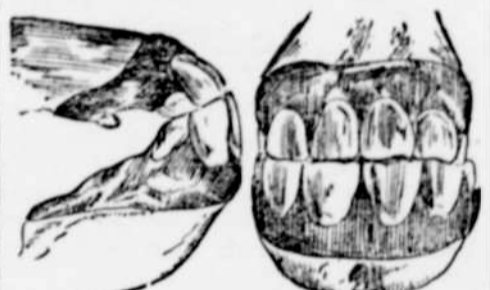
The proper shoeing of horses and the general care of their feet is a matter that should receive the strict attention of every farmer, and yet, as a rule, it is woefully neglected. The farmer should have knowledge of the natural formation of a horse's foot, so as to be able to determine whether the animal is being properly shod or not, and while that is being done he should never go away and leave the smith to slight the work to get through with it or butcher its feet if he does not understand his business.

While no definite rules for shoeing horses can be given, some general principles are acknowledged by all competent horseshoers, namely, the heel should never be cut except to remove a ragged point. The same is true of the frog, which is an elastic cushion, intended to reduce the impact of a sudden shock to the foot. The butteris is an instrument that may do an immense amount of damage in the hands of an incapable operator. Much mischief is done by it every day.

When the toe is too long and projects beyond the hoof, it causes stumbling and it should be shortened. A hot iron should never be applied to the foot to ascertain its evenness, as many blacksmiths do merely to save time, when they know it is not right. A seared surface between the hoof and the shoe makes the contact less perfect and the shoe necessarily less rigid than it ought to be.

The outside of the hoof should not be rasped more than is necessary to clinch the nails, as this thins the crust and reduces the strength of the bearing surface of the foot. Weakening and decay are sometimes the result of this practice. Oil applied to the hoofs occasionally during dry weather is beneficial.

To Tell a Horse's Age.



At four years old each jaw shows four permanent teeth, whose tables are worn to the same level. The dividers are worn upon both of their borders. Looked at from the side, the corner teeth are quite small.



At four and a half years the nippers show wear on both edges. The corner teeth and the hook or canine teeth are in evidence.

An Agricultural Pest.

So great have been the ravages caused by the dodder—a leafless, twining, parasitic plant—that a decree has been issued by the French President prohibiting its importation into the country. It is a veritable agricultural scourge, attacking and destroying hops, vines, clover, peas, tomatoes and many other kinds of agricultural produce. Once having found its way into any district, it is most difficult to get rid of, and constitutes a permanent source of anxiety to the farmer. Cutting down, burning and poison have all been tried with unsatisfactory results.

Unprofitable Experimenting.

In the entire realm of scientific investigation there is nothing more interesting and marvelous than the growth and development of plants from the beginning or the germination of the seed to the reproduction of the germ.

Each species of plant has its distinctive character and life habits and only flourishes where natural conditions are favorable to its growth. To attain any degree of perfection, the soil and climate combined must be such as the plants require, although a moderate degree of success may be attained when either of these factors are not exactly suited to its growth, but where both are deficient in any considerable degree the plant can not be successfully grown, except by artificial means whereby the necessary natural conditions are created. If the chemical composition of the soil is favorable, and climatic conditions unfavorable, the latter can be created artificially—such as protection from cold and excessive heat and lack of moisture—and, likewise, if the soil is deficient in the chemical elements which the plant requires, they can be added to, but in either case the process is laborious and expensive and the results unsatisfactory. All plants are indigenous to certain kinds of soil, and all soils are especially adapted to the growth of certain kinds of plants, and nature can not be improved upon in any way, nor can her deficiencies be successfully remedied by artificial means. In order, therefore, to be successful in his business, the farmer must "keep close to nature and mark well her ways." He must raise only such crops as are best adapted to the soil of his farm, in accordance with his experience, and wholly refrain from extensive experiments with such as are of doubtful utility.

Keeps Chickens at Home.

An Iowa man has designed an anti-flying chicken-wing attachment having in view to prevent the annoyance and damages incident to chickens scratching in your neighbor's garden. The device is attached to the chicken's wing. It is made of parallel pieces of wire bent into the form of an elbow, with a hook at the bend.



STOPS FLYING.

To apply the attachment to a chicken's wing it is slipped over the wing, and by placing the parallel sides toward each other the hook can be snapped in position and retained by the resiliency of the wire. The hook will be on the inner corner of the wing and will prevent the device from slipping off. The chicken will thus be prevented from spreading the wing as required to fly and thereby unable to get over a fence into the neighbor's garden.

Leather Shoes for Horses.

In some districts of Australia horses are shod with leather, instead of iron, says Harper's Bazar. This plan is employed only in regions where the ground is permanently covered with grass, or fine sand, and gives the feet better support. In a country such as Australia, where a horseman may experience great difficulty, at a critical moment in finding a horseshoe, such an innovation is a useful novelty. With extra shoes, whose weight is a trifle, and which can be fitted without trouble, it is practicable to travel without fear of the horse losing its shoe and being injured. Though the latter shoe is more expensive than the iron shoe, the higher price is repaid by the superior advantages.

Houses of Corn Cobs.

In some parts of Europe corn cobs are used for building purposes. The cobs are collected and taken to a factory, where heavy compresses crush and mold them into blocks of various sizes, just as bricks are variously molded. These blocks are then bound with wire so as to make them hold together. They are then soaked in tar to make them water-tight, and are ready for use after this treatment. Of course, they are much lighter than bricks, are always dry, and make good houses. This is but one of the very many ways in which Europe shows a greater economy than America does. There is little over there which goes to waste. Even the refuse and garbage of Paris is made to serve a purpose by being burned and converted into power.

The Care of Sheep.

If the pasture is poor the sheep can be kept in good flesh by feeding a little grain.

Corn, oats and oatmeal is a good mixture fed with such foods as rape, roots, ensilage and turnips.

Have you thought out any way you can make your wife's work any easier this year? Of course, you have arranged to make your own as light as possible.

Overfeeding or sudden changes from poor to very rich food, combined with want of exercise, if not actual causes, will contribute to the development of the loss of wool among ewes.

An English shepherd being asked what he attributed his unequalled success in the show ring to, replied: "To two things—always having my entries trained to walk in the halter, and to always being polite to the judge, no matter what position he placed the exhibit in."