

The Contrabandist: OR One Life's Secret!

A
TRUE
STORY
OF
THE
SOUTH
OF
FRANCE

CHAPTER VIII.—(Continued.)

The next day Roba came yesterday, going away from here, when I was coming before. Do you know who it was?"

"You mean, I think, Gaspard, my cousin. But hush—here he comes."

And at that moment the individual designated entered the cottage door. He made a civil obeisance to Roba and the young man, and, according to Roba's request, in a low tone, to speak with him alone.

The two retired, as before, to the garden. There a somewhat lengthy conference was held, during which time Roba and Gaspard were conversing together in low tones, and Gaspard's name was not infrequently mentioned in the course of their dialogue. The young man seemed to be somewhat interested in him, and asked several questions concerning him, by which he gathered the knowledge that Gaspard had some time very deeply offended both Roba and her father; but he also heard of his having come the previous day to make apologies for so doing.

And, meanwhile, Hugh ended the colloquy between himself and Gaspard in the garden, when they prepared to re-enter the house. The countenance of the former was gloomier and darker than ever.

"Captain," said the man, "I don't remember having seen that person in the kitchen before. I suppose you won't think it impertinent if I ask you who he is?"

"He is to become the husband of Roba," returned Hugh. "His name is Roba Maroon." And he glanced closely at the countenance of his companion to detect some signal of his feelings at this announcement. But all was undisturbed there.

"So Roba is to be married?" said Gaspard. "Well, he will make her an excellent husband, I hope; and I wish her much happiness, with all my heart. I suppose, monsieur, you have not forgotten the time when I wished so earnestly to marry Roba myself, have you? But," he continued, "I am going to be married to another young girl, at some distance from here, shortly."

And the lie was believed. They went in, and Gaspard remained a short time longer, affecting an air of the most perfect friendliness towards Roba.

And when he took his departure, to return to the village, Roba accompanied him. They went along the road talking together of one thing and another in a careless way, speaking on a great many subjects, and dwelling on none long, till they came to a little grove, past which the road ran, about half way between the cottage and the village.

"A pleasant place yonder," observed Roba, nodding his head towards it. "Yes—yes, pleasant enough," responded Gaspard; "but I dare say there are pleasant places."

"Just so, my friend," rejoined the young man; "you are right. And those that have more agreeable associations, as well. For instance, if a man had been shot there by an unseen enemy, the place wouldn't be quite so attractive as many another."

He glanced casually at the face of his companion as he said it; but beneath the careless tone and manner was a meaning, and in that glance he read, like lightning, the expression of Gaspard's face. It was one of sudden, startled uneasiness. The man looked quickly up at him, without answer. The effect was satisfactory. Roba went on:

"I had a master formerly, who was, one day, wounded in the manner which I have described, and in that very wood which we have passed."

"And he told you about it?" said Gaspard, watching Roba closely.

"You are right. He told me about it." "Did he guess who fired at him?" "I suppose so. Though he kept it to himself. He said he meant to punish the rogue when he could catch him."

"Who was your master, if I may ask?" "The Comte d'Artois. You may have heard of him possibly. But I must bid you adieu, my friend; for here I am at the farm."

"Adieu," returned Gaspard; and he continued his route, muttering, "I have you now, my master! You think I am cowed—do you? Ah! wait—until I wait for you! Ah! wait—until I wait for you! You are taking a great deal of trouble to win my pretty cousin; but I shall have her yet! Only time—the time, and then let it from you. The time of my vengeance, the sweeter it will be!"

It was sunset again, and our pretty heroine, Roba Lamonte, was returning from the Chateau Montauban, whither she had gone early in the afternoon to see Mademoiselle Montauban, who, she was told by her father, wished to speak with her on a matter of importance. With a light and happy heart, Roba had gone to meet the lady, and three or four hours afterwards, was returning home, with tears in her eyes, and a step very different from that usual with her. Walking slowly along, wrapped in sorrowful meditation, she was suddenly aroused by the voice of Roba pronouncing her name. He was just going down to the cottage.

"Why, what is it, my Roba?" she asked, tenderly. "You are weeping! Why is this?"

"O, Roba, my father is going away!" he said and answered.

"Going away? Ah, how sorry I am for you, dear child! But how soon is he going, and where will he go to?"

"I do not know. He did not tell me; Mademoiselle Helen told me, and she knew nothing further than what I have just said to you. But I am afraid it will be very soon." And the tears chased each other over her fair cheeks.

"Why did he not acquaint you with this fact, Roba?"

"You know, Roba, that I could not get you?"

"I will not go to-night, I think, dear Roba. You will have a great deal to say to your father, and you will be better alone. To-morrow I will come. You will know then, I dare say, on what day he is going, and can tell me. I should like to hear."

He bent down and kissed her face so that the glow of the pendant lamp above them fell upon it. "But you do not speak, cousin. And yet I know you welcome me."

"Indeed, I welcome you, Louis, most warmly. But you are pale—you have been ill."

"I have been ill—yes; but not long or seriously; and as soon as I recovered, I came."

He pressed her hand in his with kindly affection, as he released her. She turned and entered the saloon. Her father stood by the hearth, and the guests were grouped about it, chatting together, as she came in. She was greeted with unanimous exclamations of pleasure, and drawn into their circle. There were inquiries on all sides concerning her late indisposition, and infinite rejoicings at the arrival of Louis. In the midst of the conversation Louis re-entered.

"My dear uncle, I cannot express the pleasure it gives me to find myself here once more," he said, "and particularly in the midst of such excellent company."

In a little while the evening repast was spread and they gathered about the board, a congenial party enough, as it went; afterward they retired, by the invitation of the marquise, to the library, where they passed the remainder of the evening. Roba and Francis Egerton, who, of late, had occasionally sung together, were prevailed upon by the marquise and his guests to do so now. Both had fine voices and excellent taste, and their united melody poured forth in one sweet, harmonious strain, that could not fail to please. Louis, standing behind the seat of Mademoiselle Montauban, regarded Roba and her companion with a quiet but closely observant glance.

"Is not Roba a little nightingale?" softly whispered Helen, looking up at him. "A sweeter one never sang. By-the-by, my dear cousin, when did she come here?"

"Something more than a month ago. She is prettier than ever; do you not think so?"

"Decidedly. Francis seems tacitly to agree with us, too. It appears to me. Is he not very attentive to her? And yet, what does not look quite happy to-night. What ails him, I wonder?"

(To be continued.)

SUCTION OF A FAST TRAIN.

Cautious People Will Avoid the Waka.

There is hardly any person, young or old, who does not like to see a fast railroad train go by. There is a fascination in the rush and roar, the engine represents so much real strength, and it is all such a triumph of man's skill that it never fails to evoke wonder and admiration. Yet there is danger in a moving train, and everyone should know enough to keep at a respectful distance while admiring this marvel.

The theory that a moving train carries along with it an envelope of air is very interesting, says an engineer. "I first had my attention attracted to the subject by a curious incident that happened several years ago at a crossing near Birmingham, Ala., where trains pass twice a day at a speed of about forty miles an hour. The tracks are seven feet apart, and there would seem to be ample room to stand between them in safety between two trains. One day a terrier dog belonging to a section boss was asleep in the middle space, and woke up just as the train closed in from each side. There was a barrel on the ground near by, and the dog in his fright jumped on top of it. That probably brought him into one of the rushing envelopes of air. At any rate, he was whirled off his feet and thrown clear to the roof of the opposite car, where he was subsequently found, jammed against a ventilator chimney, with no injury except a broken leg. How in the world he ever made such a journey and escaped alive is a mystery, unless his fall was deadened by a cushion of air."

"Apocryphal of atmospheric pressure, it is a well-known fact that there is a 'vortex space,' or 'zone of suction,' directly behind any rapidly moving train, and its presence accounts for a grotesque happening that took place some time ago on the Southern Pacific. While the California-bound express was going through Western Arizona at a clipping gait a passenger who was on the verge of lunacy rushed out to the rear platform, climbed on a rail and jumped off. He was wearing a very long linen duster, and a muscular tourist who happened to be on the platform at the time grabbed it by the tails as it sailed by and yelled for help. When some of the others ran to his assistance they found the lunatic stretched straight out in the air behind the platform, safely anchored by his duster, which had turned inside out and caught him at the shoulders. The muscular gentleman was hanging on for dear life, but had it not been for the fact that the would-be suicide was virtually sustained and carried along by the suction of the vortex something would certainly have given way. They reeled the man in like a kite, and he promised to be good. We have very little knowledge at present of the atmospheric conditions that surround a moving train. A fuller knowledge of them may lead to the solution of some baffling problems in traction."

Art in the Proper Direction.

Agent—Don't you want an enlarged photograph of yourself?

Stout Gentleman—Enlarged? What for?

Agent—That's so. But—say—let us make you one three sizes smaller.

A Dilemma.

Mrs. Von Blumer—I don't know what we shall do about that cook.

Von Blumer—What's the matter now? She threatens to stay.—Life.

face was suggestive of something pleasant. She came on tiptoe to the bedside. "O, I am awake, Jessie," said Helen; "but I have slept a great while."

"Yes, mademoiselle—a long time; but I hope your headache has quite left you now; for monsieur is coming, your cousin, mademoiselle, Monsieur d'Artois."

"Jessie, is he here?" asked Helen, quietly, as she rose.

"Yes, mademoiselle, he has just come." She entered her dressing room, and hastened to bathe her face and head and rearrange her hair. But she trembled from head to foot. She descended the stairs just in time to meet Louis himself. He was, but paler and thinner than usual. He came forward with an exclamation of pleasure.

"Helen, my dear cousin," he cried, warmly embracing her.

Her cheek burnt—her heart beat rapidly, as he pressed his lips to hers. She could not speak at first.

"My own fair Helen, and so lovely as ever—yes, a million times lovelier!" he said, smiling, as he gently turned her face so that the glow of the pendant lamp above them fell upon it. "But you do not speak, cousin. And yet I know you welcome me."

"Indeed, I welcome you, Louis, most warmly. But you are pale—you have been ill."

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LET US ALL LAUGH.

JOKES FROM THE PENS OF VARIOUS HUMORISTS.

Pleasant Incidents Occurring the World Over—Sayings That Are Cheerful to Old or Young—Funny Selections That You Will Enjoy.

Miss Ascum—Did you really attend her wedding?

Miss Wrywell—Oh, yes, indeed! And I enjoyed myself immensely.

Miss Ascum—Did you, really?

Miss Wrywell—Her gown didn't fit her at all, and I heard several people say she looked a perfect fright.

Her Only Comment.

"Nevertheless, my dear," said the masculine portion of the combine, "there are a number of men in the world who are my mental inferiors."

"John," rejoined the wife of his bosom as she looked him square in the eye, "you were always a confirmed cynic."

Prepared.

He—if I should kiss you, what would you do?

She—I never meet a contingency till it happens.

He—But if it should happen?

She—I'd meet it face to face.

Sure to Pop.

"Where are you going, Jason?" queried the citizen of Kentucky.

"Goin' down to Matilda Lee's to pop the question," replied the lank youth.

"But you have your gun?"

"Yes; if I find Bruce Bradley's ahead of me I'll pop him."

Pa's Wisdom.

Little Willie—What are dividends, pa?

Pa—Dividends, my son, are what the stockholders get after the directors appropriate their share.

True Love.

The Count—So you really believe that Lord Poorman's marriage with the American heiress was the result of a love match.

The Duke—Of course it was. At first he insisted on half a million, but finally agreed to accept four hundred and ninety-five thousand.

Realistic Story.

"Have you reviewed that new book entitled 'The Editor's Purse'?" asked the critic of the other half.

"I merely glanced at it," replied the masculine end of the sketch. "There's nothing in it."

Useful Insects.

The old colored parson gazed at the swarming mosquitoes with a sigh.

"Yes," he mused, "dem dink mosquitos am smatthen den I is. Dey kin keep de congregation awake en I can't."

Well Managed.

Bees—What makes you so subdued and queer?

Tom—I guess you'd be subdued, too, if you had a mother and father, four sisters, two grandmothers and two grandfathers to boss you.

Feminine Charity.

Edith—I wonder if Dolly Swift is really as bad as she is painted?

Mayme—I don't see how she can be. She certainly does paint dreadfully."

Uninterrupted Chicago Blues.

"What of my future?" asked the fair maid.

"You will never know what grief or sorrow is," answered the fortune teller.

"And—will I marry?" queried the fair one, anxiously.

"Sure," replied the visionary prophetess. "Four times."

Friendly Suggestion.

Biggs—You proud of my family tree, Diggs? You ought to whitewash it. Diggs—Whitewash it! What for?

Biggs—To keep the insects off.

Her Test.

Little Edie—Do you love me very much, mamma?

Mamma (a widow)—Yes, my darling.

Edie—Then why don't you marry the man at the candy store?

Marital Amenities.

"Hateful thing!" she cried in the midst of their spat. "I was a silly goose when I married you."

"Perhaps so," replied the great brute; "at any rate, you were no chicken."—Philadelphia Press.

Land of Bliss.

She—What is your idea of Utopia?

He—it is probably a place where all the inhabitants are engaged but never marry.

Not Superstitious.

Miles—Mrs. Catechin has just been divorced from her fifth husband.

Giles—Is that so?

Miles—Yes; and, strange to say, each time she was led to the altar on a Friday.

Giles—Well, I suppose she will keep it up until she has acquired her thirtieth victory, just to see if that will break her run of good luck.

Undoubtedly.

"Who," asked the originator of fool questions, "according to your notion, is the most popular woman in the United States?"

"The blonde lady whose face adorns the \$20 gold piece," replied the old bachelor.

Usual Finish.

Evalyn—And did he pine away and die after you refused to marry him?

Imogene—No; the ungrateful wretch married miserably well.

Hopless Case.

Tomdix—Have you learned to make the repairs on your automobile?

Bojox—No; and I'm afraid I never shall.

Tomdix—Why not?

Bojox—I haven't a bit of mechanical genius. Honestly, I don't believe I could invent a washing machine.

They Surely Will.

Young Microbe—And so we are parasites, and are killing the man we are in?

Old Microbe—That's the case, exactly.

"And you say he has summoned the doctors?"

"Yes."

"What will the doctors do?"

"Can't tell yet, but I am sure of one thing: they will call us hard names."

Quite Another Matter.

"Before I give you my answer," said the bluff-haired summer girl, "I would like to know if you are in a position to keep me in the style to which I have always been accustomed?"

"If the styles don't change too often I am," replied the wise youth. "Otherwise the odds are in favor of my going broke."

Indestructible.

"This is the first bread I ever made," remarked the young wife.

"Well," rejoined the optimistic husband, "there's nothing like starting with a solid foundation."

Delicate Thrust.

Miss Olde—Harry said he'd like us to be married in a balloon. He's fond of freak marriages.

Miss Rose—But why go to the trouble of going up in a balloon?

True to Her Sex.

Guessing somewhere near the weight of a pound of sugar, rice, coffee, tea, etc., is not very difficult to the grocer who has had years of experience in putting up these commodities, but he would be apt to find fault with the new clerk who spent his valuable time in practicing to see how close he could guess to the weights of the different commodities. Yet if the clerk was able to guess weights with accuracy valuable time would be saved in doing up packages for the trade. Here is a scoop which will make it unnecessary to guess, however, as it will automatically gauge the quantity and discharge any surplus over the amount required. In the picture the handle portion of the scoop has been cut away to expose the working mechanism by which the scale feature is operated. The commodity is shoved up in the reservoir at the top, just as would be done with an ordinary scoop. The reservoir being suspended by a spring supported vertical bar, the weight is immediately indicated by its depression and the corresponding movement of the hand on the dial in the face of the handle. By setting the spring-pressed pawl in one of the notches on the front supporting bar of the scoop the weight is transferred to the rear bars, which slide on the reservoir and open a gate through which the commodity flows until the required quantity only remains. As the weight is gradually reduced by the outflow of the coffee, rice or other goods, the scoop rises and the gate closes automatically.

William Maxwell, of Pittsburg, is the patentee.

Program in the Fine Arts.

Fond Mother—What does Henry say in his letter, paw?

Fond Father—He sees that if he had my whiskers on his head he could get onto the football team this fall.

A True Portrait.

The widow was taking her first look at the bust of her beloved husband. The clay was still damp. "Pray examine it well, madam," said the sculptor. "If there is anything wrong I can alter it."

The widow looked at it with a mixture of sorrow and satisfaction.

"It is just like him," she said, "a perfect portrait—his large nose, the sign of goodness." Here she burst into tears. "He was so good! Make the nose a little larger!"

We suppose that when a woman lifts her hair and takes out her teeth, the contractors call it "removing the false matrimonial trust to monopolize."

QUEER STORIES

Maine's seacoast in a straight line is 225 miles, while following the inlets and bays it is 2,486 miles. Between Kittery Point and Quoddy head there are fifty-four lighthouses.

A Lewiston (Me.) woman sat up for her husband till one o'clock the other night, intending to discuss with him the sinfulness of his going on. Finally she gave it up and went up stairs only to find him in bed and fast asleep there for many hours. He hadn't been out at all.

Most of us are born with about the same mental capacity. The size of the brain does not differ very widely among men. In most men the brain, including the network of the nervous system, weighs between three and four pounds; and instance after instance is recorded of men of splendid mentality whose brains were under the average weight.

Thirty years ago there were twenty-nine street railroads in Massachusetts, to-day, or rather, two years ago, for the 1901 report is the latest at hand—there were 119 companies. This number has increased since that time. The capital invested for the two periods contrasted was \$7,308,850 and \$90,611,150. In the earlier year they transported 43,867,086 passengers. In the later 438,535,935. There was 204 miles of rail in 1871, 2,300 in 1901.

It is now known that smallpox germs are communicated through the air as well as by contact. The smallpox hospital boats anchored in the Thames have produced a regular epidemic in Essex, yet the shore is nearly half a mile away and there has been no communication. In districts over which the wind has blown from the hospital boats twelve per cent of the inhabitants have been attacked, while in the other direction the cases have been less than one per cent.

The stroller through the markets of San Francisco will find the Western representative of the New York week-end—a huge creature ranging from eighty to one hundred pounds—and will be told that a similar fish is caught in the Gulf of California weighing two hundred pounds. In the Italian quarter of this city will be seen the octopus, or devil-fish, hung up for sale; a terrible array of arms or tentacles; not the little creature a foot or two across, common in the East, but a veritable monster with a radial spread of perhaps twelve or fourteen feet. Along the upper coast these animals have been found with a radial spread of twenty-five feet—well named the spider of the sea. Along the coast will be seen a bass which often tips the scales at five hundred pounds; and at Monterey has been taken a mackerel weighing nine hundred pounds—suggestive that even fishes grow large in Western waters.

AUTOMATIC WEIGHING SCOOP.

Guessing somewhere near the weight of a pound of sugar, rice, coffee, tea, etc., is not very difficult to the grocer who has had years of experience in putting up these