

# The Roupell Mystery

By Austyn Granville

## CHAPTER XXII.—(Continued.)

She set herself more firmly yet. The delicate fingers clinched convulsively upon the arm of the chair.

"Do not ask me, monsieur. My duty is plain. If you will not spare us, I will be with him to the bitter end."

"You cannot mend matters," persisted the detective, "by staying here. My men surround the house. The cordon is complete. For the last time I ask you, will you leave this place?"

"And I answer you for the last time, I will not go."

"Nevertheless, I will do what I can for you," said M. Lazare. "It would be something to you to save your own name, would it not?"

She glanced through the portiere giving ingress to the salon beyond, where Jules Chabot was just visible as he sat at the end of the long card table. His face was deadly pale. He whispered from time to time with Goldstein, the broker. Her face flushed for an instant.

"What do you mean?" she ejaculated. "I am armed, madame. Take this pistol. He shall at least have a chance to save your honor."

"My honor," exclaimed the unhappy lady, receding in horror from the proffered weapon. "Put up your pistol. If I used it at all it would be to avenge myself on his captors. Oh! my son, my son!"

They had stepped unconsciously to the door of the conservatory. The detective turned and took her hand. His expressive face was aglow with some profound emotion.

"You have proved yourself worthy," he said. "The courage and devotion you have displayed in your hour of trial have given you a right to your reward."

"What do you mean, monsieur?"

"Come here," he said, suddenly, "come with me. I will tell you something you never knew. Something that has come to me as from the dead, to tell you that your instincts have erred, and you have been made the play of cruel, designing people."

He drew her hand within his arm and led her to the conservatory. They sat down upon the same seat where he had conversed with the Vicomtesse de Vallar.

"We shall not be interrupted here. I will tell you a story if you care to listen to it."

"Go on, monsieur," she murmured.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

"The story," began the detective, "is of a young lady, a countrywoman of yours. It was years ago that this thing happened. She was quite handsome, very young, very romantic and foolish. When she was eighteen years of age she met an American. He also was young, handsome, but dissolute and entirely unworthy of her love."

Mme. Colbert-Remplin inclined her head almost imperceptibly. She was listening to the history of her own life. How had this man brought to light the secrets of the past which had, years ago, as she believed, been hidden by the lapse of time."

"Yielding to the American's importunities, this young lady contracted with him a secret marriage. The result of their union was a child—a boy. The marriage was concealed successfully from the young woman's parents. By the connivance of a friend and a pretended visit to the country, its consequences were also kept secret. Shortly after the birth of her child the young woman returned to Paris, where she attracted the attention of a very rich banker, who, ignorant of her past history, sought to make her his wife. It was more than probable that the lady would not have yielded to the temptation which was thrust before her but for two things, first, the discovery that her husband was a worthless, faithless fellow, second, the importunities of her parents, who at that time sustained some financial reverses. It appears that the banker held her father's obligations for an enormous amount. A condition of the marriage was that her parent should be released. A divorce was secretly secured from the first husband."

"Yes, it was to save my father," murmured Mme. Colbert-Remplin.

He went on:

"There was a little boy, as I have said, the fruit of this unhappy young woman's union with the American. This child was given out to a nurse to take care of. She was the wife of a laudish, industrious peasant, and of a peasant family herself, but she was beautiful for all that, as some of those women are. The American fell in love with her. He was called away to the United States and was absent three years. In his absence something had happened."

"What had happened?" murmured the woman beside him.

"The child entrusted to the woman's care had died. On the American's return to France, she presented her own child in its place. Her husband was dead. There was no one to contradict her."

A great sigh went up from the heart of Mme. Colbert-Remplin.

"Oh!" she cried, "can this be true? My son is dead. How have you learned this?"

"Madame La Seur, who has blackmailed you systematically, two days ago met with a fatal accident. Unable to see you, she sent you in her last moments a full confession of the imposition she had so long practiced upon you and implored your forgiveness. This was taken by her messenger to the gate where you usually received her, and was promptly seized by one of my men. Here is the confession, from which you will learn that Philip Graham, whom you firmly believed to be your own son, is in reality the son of the peasant woman, who was the nurse of your own child, and whom Henry Graham married."

"But the extraordinary resemblance! Ah! I see it all now. Henry Graham was his father! It was easy to deceive both him and me."

"Exactly, and others have been equally deceived. Though Madame La Seur, and not yourself, was the mother of the boy, yet Henry Graham was his father. His facial characteristics and peculiarities are wonderfully reproduced in the person of his son. There is but little remaining

to be told. For yourself, you have nothing to fear. This secret is known to me alone. I promise you it shall be kept inviolate. But in case the ties of long habit or old association of ideas should soften you toward this man, whom, up to a few minutes ago, you believed to be your own son, let me tell you one thing. Even you will then admit that the course of justice should be no longer stayed."

"What do you mean? I am aware that if recaptured he is liable to be returned to prison. Is there aught else?"

The detective leaned forward and laid his finger on her arm.

"Did you ever hear of the Roupell murder at the Chateau Villeneuve?"

"To be sure I did; all Paris was ringing with it."

"A defenseless woman, honored, respected, beloved, was ruthlessly murdered in her own home."

"Yes."

The murderer of Madame Roupell was Philip La Seur, alias Philip Graham."

He left her and went hurriedly to the door of the conservatory and passed thence into the outer salon. Jules Chabot came toward him smiling.

"We have been looking for you, Monsieur Lazare. De Vallar is playing in great luck to-night. You're not going to keep out of the way. He is anxious for his revenge."

"He shall have it," responded M. Lazare, quickly, "but I wish you would find Monsieur Colbert-Remplin and send him to look after his wife. She has fainted in the conservatory."

And then he passed on into the inner salon.

"Ah, here you are!" cried the Vicomte de Vallar. "You have come to give me my revenge, I hope."

"To any amount," replied the Swiss, and passing through the fashionable throng which surrounded the players, he seated himself at the card table.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

It was past three o'clock. The cordon of men in plain clothes which completely surrounded the house of the Vicomte de Vallar began to grow impatient. The first streaks of dawn were already visible in the east.

A few of the guests, among them the Colbert-Remplins, had left some time before. But the majority lingered in the inner salon watching with breathless interest the progress of a game the like of which none of them had ever before witnessed.

But four men remained at the table, for the stakes had been increased enormously. Those four were Herr Goldstein, Jules Chabot, the Vicomte de Vallar and the Swiss millionaire. The faces of the combatants, for they were nothing else, afforded an interesting study. The countenance of each painfully reflected the intense anxiety of that moment.

Two hundred and twenty-five thousand francs lay on the table. No one would yield and there was a call for yet another increase. Herr Goldstein, with a sigh, folded his cards before him with his enormous, trembling hands.

"I avail myself of the privilege," he said, "and withdraw."

Jules Chabot, who acted as banker, then handed the broker thirty thousand francs. It was half of his original stake; the other half of which lay on the table.

"This brings our pool down pretty low," said the vicomte. "I raise it another twenty-five thousand francs."

The other two players then each placed twenty-five thousand francs in the pool. The spectators could not but notice the excessive excitement of Jules Chabot. His hands also trembled nervously. He held good cards, but if the betting continued he must inevitably drop out.

"I think it is my turn to call," he said at last. "I have my choice; I challenge you, Monsieur Lazare."

He put down his cards and spread them out before him, the vicomte, according to the rules of the game, turning his head so that he could not see what cards either of his adversaries held.

When he again turned to the table Jules Chabot had left it and M. Lazare was sitting calmly awaiting him, with a huge heap of notes and gold at his side.

It was Jules Chabot's share of the pool, which by right of his superior hand had passed into M. Lazare's possession. The vicomte was at last just exactly what he had at that moment. He knew the kind of a hand he held was so good there were but two other combinations which could beat it. Was it possible that the man opposite him held such a combination? Or was he simply trying to frighten him into sharing the heavy stakes?

A moment's reflection decided him on his course. He had left nearly one hundred and fifty thousand francs as yet unplayed. He would bet every sou of this; perhaps M. Lazare would be unable to cover his bets, and according to the rules of the game he was compelled to do so or cease playing, for the game was what was known as an unlimited one. He looked at his opponent sternly in the eye. He thought he discerned signs of weakening.

"Do you wish to divide, monsieur?"

"Certainly not!" came the quiet answer. "I am prepared to back my hand. It's your bet."

"I bet fifty thousand francs."

"I raise you one hundred thousand francs," and he placed that sum also on the table.

This seemed to stagger the Frenchman. It was the last money the detective had, but the other did not know it. M. D'Auburon's friend was indeed a millionaire. The Frenchman arose from the table.

"Monsieur will excuse me for a moment," he said. "I do but go to an inner room to get some more money."

He shortly reappeared, making his way through the dense and excited throng around the table, with a huge bundle of notes in his hand. They were different from any which lay on the table; they were of the currency of the second empire. The detective's eye glistened as he looked at them and his heart beat quickly, as drawing forth one hundred thousand francs from the bundle, the Frenchman covered his last bet. Then he added, as if desperately:

"And I raise it one hundred thousand francs more."

"I cannot meet it, monsieur," confessed the Swiss, "unless you accept my I. O. U."

"No, it must be cash. That is only fair. I am sorry monsieur has run beyond his bank. It is the rule of the game."

The Frenchman had his opponent fairly outbet. But the temptation to make more was strong upon him. The Swiss had already scribbled an I. O. U. for fifty thousand francs and pushed it toward him.

The Frenchman was about to play, and had raised his hand for that purpose when his eye caught the queer three-cornered piece of paper in front of him.

"I can't take I. O. U.'s," he said. "I must have absolute security."

Then they saw the Swiss take from the pocket of his vest a small locket and pass it over to the Frenchman.

"Isn't that good for something, monsieur?"

With his face grown suddenly an ashen gray the vicomte leaned over the table and almost whispered, as he clutched the locket in his shaking fingers:

"Where did you get this?"

The detective leaned forward and picked up one of the notes from the vicomte's bundle.

"From the place where you found this. Is it enough, or shall I show you something else?"

"What do you mean? Don't speak out here before everybody. Come with me."

The two players arose from the table and, passing out into the conservatory, left the money lying on the table, and a group of astonished guests looking blankly at it.

"They have both been crazy to bid like this," said one; "they have doubtless gone to make some arrangement together."

They waited for a minute—for five minutes. Still the players did not return. They were in the conservatory still, hidden from the eyes of the men. If the wondering group at the card table had been there, this is what they would have seen and heard:

They would have heard the vicomte imploring vainly for one chance; have seen him offering all he had to the Swiss if he would go back, and give him one opportunity to escape—would give him a bare ten minutes' start.

"It is more than I can do," replied the Swiss. "My men surround this house. You cannot possibly get away. Such mercy as I may, I give you. It is better than the guillotine."

He handed the vicomte his pistol, and, turning, walked toward the door of the conservatory. Only once he looked back to see the vicomte standing unsteadily by the fountain, a horrible expression upon his face.

He looked around at the Swiss beseechingly, but finding nothing there which might bid him hope, said despairingly:

"Good-by; I thank you even for this."

The Swiss walked on and reached the door of the conservatory. He leaned against the lintel of the door and waited. People were beginning to come and look for the players. The outer salon was already crowded.

Suddenly a pistol shot rang out and echoed through the whole floor of the house. The well-dressed, excited crowd rushed toward the conservatory.

The Swiss gentleman met them in the doorway. There was something in his face that stopped them irresistibly, on the very threshold.

"I wouldn't come in, if I were you. The vicomte de Vallar has shot himself. He was the murderer of Madame Roupell, the old lady who lived at Villeneuve," he went on to explain.

"Oh, Monsieur Lazare!"

"I am not Monsieur Lazare; I am Alfred Cassagne, the detective."

Then they looked upon him and wondered why they had not divined it from the first, for it was a face well known in the shop windows of Paris.

"You had better all go home," he suggested, and they went slowly away, all but one passing safely through the cordon of police.

As Herr Goldstein came out with the rest D'Auburon placed his hand upon his shoulder.

"I want you," he said. "Another detective?"

"Yes, another detective."

They took him away unresistingly, and Cassagne and D'Auburon went into the conservatory together. There across the conservatory together, prone on the floor, lay the marble fountain, with the blood oozing slowly from a small wound in his forehead and tingling with red the green leaves of the water lilies, lay the body of Philip Graham.

Nearly a year had passed away since the death of Philip Graham. The Chateau Villeneuve, from its long period of gloom and mourning, awoke one day with bells pealing joyously from its towers, its parks and woodlands smiling beneath the radiance of the summer sun.

From an early hour old Pierre had been awake, bustling hither and thither. He expected visitors, and long before their arrival, everything was in readiness for their reception.

The train from Paris was in at last, a merry group met on the platform, and its members took carriages for the chateau. The first one was occupied by Dr. and Mrs. Paul Mason. The second by Mr. and Mrs. Van Lith. The third by the mayor of Villeneuve and M. Delorme, the justice of the peace. The fourth by M. D'Auburon and M. Victor Lablanche, for the latter was a magnanimous gentleman, and could forgive a victory when a rival had fairly earned it.

It was noon. Breakfast was quite ready. The finest and oldest wines in the cellars of Villeneuve had been brought up. The cooks were growing nervous. Still they did not sit down to the table.

At last from the windows of the great drawing room they saw another carriage approaching.

"You may serve breakfast," cried the doctor. "It is he."

A very dapper, contented looking mortal alighted from the carriage and ascended the steps of the chateau, a lady on his arm, a little girl holding his other hand.



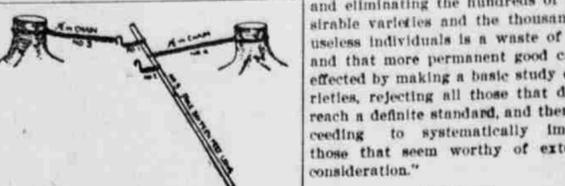
## AGRICULTURAL

### Improving Corn.

Realizing that the improvement of corn is a matter of concern to every agricultural practitioner, because of the wide adaptability and general cultivation of the cereal, the Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station has published in a bulletin of nearly 100 pages the results of experiments in that field. In a general introduction the bulletin says:

"Investigations show very clearly that the corn plant is quickly affected by the environment in which it is placed and yields readily to selection, so that the way for improvement is open to all who will make a systematic study of this important crop. The fact that corn crosses so easily has resulted in the development of numberless so-called varieties or strains, and it is manifestly impossible to effect permanent improvement in any of these without first understanding their individual peculiarities and the good and bad points possessed by each.

"Observation leads to the belief that the indiscriminate crossing of plants without first studying them carefully and eliminating the hundreds of undesirable varieties and the thousands of useless individuals is a waste of time, and that more permanent good can be effected by making a basic study of varieties, rejecting all those that do not reach a definite standard, and then proceeding to systematically improve those that seem worthy of extended consideration."



DEVICE FOR PULLING STUMPS.

long and 5 or 6 inches in diameter at the butt. To operate, put chain No. 4 on the biggest stump and have the other end fixed to the pole about 18 or 20 inches from the end. Take chain No. 1 and place it 6 inches nearer the end and chain No. 2 six inches on the other side. Now place chain No. 3 on the stump that is to be pulled and swing the pole as far as possible; attach the grab hook from No. 1 to No. 3 chain; swing the lever (pole) until No. 2 chain can be attached to No. 3. Keep swinging back and forth, changing hoops at every swing until stump is up. For heavier stumping a horse rig on a similar principle may be used, only the chain requires to be heavier and stronger. Make the hooks on No. 1 and 2 with just turn enough to hold on the link of No. 3.

### Protecting Fowls on Roosts.

Naturally the fowls catch cold more readily at night when on the roost than during the day, when they are moving around freely so that protection should always be given them if there is danger in this respect or if the nights are very cold and it is desired to keep all the heat possible among the birds. Place the roosts so that the backs will rest against the wall of the poultry house, then, on the roof of the building a few inches farther from the wall than the lower roost, erect a



PROTECTION FOR FOWLS.

frame to which a curtain can be attached made of any desired material, unbleached muslin, burlap and old carpet being good materials, so that when it is let down it will fall to the ground directly in front of the lower roost. By the use of a strap and a hook at either end a simple plan is had of fastening the curtain in place when it is not in use. The dotted line in the illustration shows where the curtain will fall when dropped and the entire plan is easily seen from the cut and can be readily worked out at small cost.

### Plowing Manure Under.

When coarse stable manure is plowed under and there is moisture enough in the soil and manure to cause its fermentation, it immediately begins to furnish food for crops. It does this all the better in early spring, as the manure under the furrow holds it up and admits warm air from above, which is just what is required to cause active fermentation. The release of ammonia as the manure ferments enriches all the soil above it, as the constant tendency to warm air is to rise. Hence there is good reason for applying manure as top dressing during the winter on land that is to be plowed or hoed for crops in the spring.

### Amount of Seed Required Per Acre.

The amount of seeds required to an acre is estimated as follows: Oats, 3 bushels; barley, 2 bushels; timothy, 6 quarts; tobacco, 2 ounces; bluegrass, 2 bushels; red clover, 8 quarts; redtop, 1 to 2 pecks; millet, one-quarter bushel; orchard grass, 2 quarts; white clover, 4 quarts; buckwheat, one-half bushel; corn, broadcast, 4 bushels; potatoes, 10 to 15 bushels; ruta-bagas, three-fourths bushel; mixed lawn grass, one-half bushel; corn, in hills, 4 to 8 quarts; corn, in drills, 2 to 3 bushels; rye, 1½ to 2 bushels; wheat, 1½ to 2 bushels.

### Deep Plowing.

The air penetrates as deep as we plow. The deeper we plow, the more plant food is prepared by the action of the air and more moisture is carried in the soil to withstand droughts. Deep fall plowing then is a great aid in breaking up the compounds of the soil, in preparing plant food, in storing moisture and in warming the soil for early planting.

## PACIFIC FISH INDUSTRY.

Twenty Thousand Pounds Sold Daily in Los Angeles Markets.

The fish industry, extending from Vancouver on the north to San Diego on the south, is one of great importance on the Pacific coast, says the Los Angeles Herald. Locally many thousands of dollars are invested in the business and the product of the sea finds quick sales in Los Angeles and neighboring cities.

Hallbut is regarded as the standard fish, ranging in weight from one to forty pounds and can be had the year round, except during the months of October, November and December.

Barracuda is next in popularity. This product is caught every month in the year from San Pedro to San Diego. Nets and troll lines are used for catching barracuda and when both methods are adopted the local market becomes glutted with the product. The average weight is five pounds.

Sea bass are caught from Santa Barbara to San Diego. This fish is one of the best products of the sea. Weight from four to fifty pounds.

The red snapper or rock cod is in active demand in the winter season. The fish is caught around Catalina or on "the banks" known to the fishermen. Weight one-half to ten pounds. Sardines are used for bait.

Bonita and yellowtail are fine table fish that are caught in nets and gill-nets. Bonita, four to eight pounds; yellowtail, six to thirty pounds. Albacore is an oily fish popular with epicures.

Rock bass is a choice fish caught in the kelp; weight one-half to six pounds. What is known as horse and American mackerel is in the market during the spring months. Mackerel run in schools; are caught with hook and line; weight one-half to three pounds.

The smelt season is from Sept. 1 to Jan. 1, selms being used most successfully. Surf fish, or suckers, croakers or kinfish and perch are among the sea fish. The sandbar is caught with hook and line along the coast; herring is caught at San Pedro, San Diego and Santa Barbara from January to March. Herring is fine bait for the professional fisherman.

The poupano is a delicious fish that retails at 40 cents to \$1 a pound. It is one of the choice articles of the menu cards in first-class restaurants. The prong is equally popular.

Codfish, sculpins and other fish are brought to the market.

Lobsters are in the market from Sept. 15 to April 1.

Tuna is a fish caught by sportsmen at Catalina. It is not marketable. The few fish are among the heavyweight delinquents of the deep at Catalina. Big fish always follow the catch of a 300 or 400-pound fish.

Turtles of heavy weight come from the Mexican waters.

Professional fishermen make money if they have good luck. Their losses are chiefly due to damage to nets and selms by sharks and seals.

## SLAVES IN MASSACHUSETTS.

### Early Church Discussion on Slavery.—Dandified Negro Water.

The colored "mammy," devoted, loyal and autoeratic, one thinks of as belonging to the South and the days before the war, but in the far-away time of slavery in New England she was known there also, says the Youth's Companion.

One such mammy, happy and beloved, but despotic, was Violet, the slave of the Rev. Moses Parsons of Byfield, but the real ruler of the household and his lively brood of boys. Her husband, Primus, belonged to their neighbor, Deacon Noyes.

The revolution was scarcely over, but even then in that quiet corner of Massachusetts the anti-slavery spirit was stirring and its first result was to precipitate a violent church quarrel. Deacon Colman had scruples against slavery and he expressed them with vigour and not always with entire respect for his slave-owning pastor. He was suspended; there were meetings, discussions, appeals and denunciations and only at the death of Mr. Parsons was he so far softened as to admit, while yet maintaining his principles, that he had urged them with "undue vehemence and asperity." He was then restored to the church and his office of deacon.

In the neighboring town of Newburyport were a number of slaves and freed slaves, concerning some of whom anecdotes have been handed down to the present day. One negro man, being barefoot in the fields, struck suddenly with his hoe at what he took to be a large toad in impudently close company with him. It was his own naked big toe, as he learned painfully when he had neatly sliced the top off with the blow.

Another colored man of much slighter station and more complete and elegant attire was a dandy waiter employed in the old Wolfe tavern. Nothing was especially fine pair of boots owned by one of the patrons, a local magnate, Ebenezer Moseley, he went to the shoe maker to order a pair of the same style. "Let 'em be Jes' like Squire Moseley's," he commanded, magnificently "only a quarter-dollar better!"

### Mysteries of Acent Will Probably Never be Solved.

The mysteries of acent will probably never be solved, and it is a matter of everyday observation that, while a trained shooting dog will pass a trained partridge, a terrier or a fox will find the nest.—London Times.

When a man does try to get ahead in this world by saving money, people say he is "right."