

# HERR STEINHARDT'S NEMESIS

BY J. MACLAREN COBBAN.

## CHAPTER XII.

I was so taken aback I could for the moment neither stir nor speak, while a new feeling, a feeling of shame, arose in me for appearing in that woman's presence as Steinhardt's representative. After her outburst of surprise she looked at the letter again, and at me. I rose, uncertain.

"Fraulein," I said, "I do not know what to say. I did not seek to come this journey myself; Herr Steinhardt asked me to undertake it. He thought, and I thought, too, that your advertisement, in which, of course, you could not use many words, signified that you were very ill and alone perhaps, and that you needed a—" (I did not quite know how to put it; I added hurriedly)—"a friendly hand."

"He did not think that I could wish to see him for his own sake,—I mean for the sake of his own peace?"

Her German was becoming too rapid for me to follow without an effort; I was not sure I understood her.

"He has business," I said, "which prevented him from coming himself."

"I suppose," said she, with some touch of bitterness, I thought, "he is still always very busy making more and more money in your rich England."

"It is now," I answered, "a lawsuit that keeps him in England."

"A lawsuit? A trial?" she exclaimed, with a strange anxiety. "Is he in danger?"

"Indeed, Fraulein, I do not know. The other party to the trial thinks himself in danger from Herr Steinhardt; he accuses Herr Steinhardt of using, and making much money by using, his patent for chemical dyes."

"I think," said she, simply, "you are not Emmanuel's friend."

To this I had nothing to say for a moment. I took refuge in an evasion.

"Herr Steinhardt," I said, "has sent me to act as his representative. But it appears there is nothing for me to do." (I was standing uncertain, but ready to go.) "What shall I say to him when I return?"

"I wonder," said she, more than half to herself, "if you are the person I have seen lately?"

I was startled; I stared in blank bewilderment. Was the woman a maniac? The pupils of her keen eyes seemed to rapidly dilate and contract, while she gazed into vacancy, and at the same time kept a referring glance on me.

"A man," she continued, "who goes about and about, and evidently causes Emmanuel great anxiety about something."

Conceive the sudden turmoil of thought and feeling, of imagination and hope into which I was thus thrown! The Laerix mystery was until then almost absent from my mind; I seemed to have left it in England, and though I certainly thought of it sometimes, it was as of something waiting in the distance for my return. Now here was I presented with an allusion of it—a vague and uncertain allusion, perhaps, but still unmistakably for me an allusion—here in an attic of an old house in Basel! What strange coincidence was this? Who was this woman that brought it before me again? I was afraid to speak or to stir, lest I should break or dispel that filmy something her fancy or her vision had got touch of.

"You are a pastor," she continued, looking at me with more natural eyes; "Emmanuel calls you 'Reverend Mr. Unwin.' It is surely, sir, a pastor's duty to bring repentance and forgiveness and peace to the hearts of men, and not pride, and fear, and condemnation!"

"You say very strange things, Fraulein," I answered; "I think—I hope I understand what you mean. Perhaps I deserve your rebuke. But are you sure you altogether know the terrible mystery?"

"Ach!" she cried. "There is then a mystery—and part of the burden of it is with me! Ach! mein Gott! mein Gott!"

"If you know"—I impulsively began, in ill-suppressed excitement.

"I do not know anything!" she cried suddenly interrupting me, and springing up and down the room, her fingers wildly playing with each other, or about her arms and her head. She stopped and looked at me, trembling in every limb and nerve. "You must go away, sir!"

I lingered uncertainly.

"Please go away, sir!" she urged. "I cannot bear more now. Come again tomorrow. It may be that my God has sent you to me!"

I withdrew without a word, somewhat awed by the emotion of the strange woman. As I closed the door I caught a glimpse of her with hands clasped and face raised, as if in entreaty or thankfulness.

After leaving the house I walked for a long time, without knowing whether I went, about the streets of Basel and along the Rhine bank.

In spite of my excitement I slept well that night. I spent the next day until evening wandering about the town, examining the windows of its sleepy shops, wondering at the contented, bi-lingual shopkeepers, and gazing at the glorious Swiss mountains which I was so near, yet which I must not think of visiting.

I was again at the old house with the watchful, but heavy eyes soon after five o'clock. Poor Fraulein Haas seemed to have passed both a sleepless night and a weary day. She was evidently ill at ease and anxious, and I pitied her.

"I fear, Fraulein," I said, "the thought of me and my presence gives you pain. What you may have to say to me I do not know, I am not able to guess, but it seems saying it will give you great pain."

"We must not care if we give ourselves pain to do right,—must we, Herr Pastor?" said she with a smile of singular sweetness.

"No," I answered, "but I would wish to lighten your pain, Fraulein, if I can."

"I thank you," she said; "it may be that you can. But first I must say this one thing:—Emmanuel Steinhardt of Basle was very much to me many years ago. He went away to England, and you will understand, Herr Pastor, I have never forgotten him. For the first time I knew he was in very great danger and anxiety about a year and a half ago. (I am almost started from my seat; that was the very time of Laerix's disappearance!) 'I learned it in a dream, indeed, dreams, which the Almighty God sends oftener and clearer to his chosen ones than to other persons.' (She was then a Pietist, if not a fanatic.) 'His danger and anxiety then, I suppose passed away, for soon I saw no more of them. But now for many weeks I see him and feel him more and more anxious than before, and I am made to feel there is always now another man near him making him anxious and afraid, and the other man seems to be you, I think, Herr Pastor.'"

I sat silently marvelling.

"I tell you all this plainly, Herr Pastor," she added, "because you are not one of those who laugh at dreams; for you know that the Sacred Scripture says that the great God reveals to those who are ready to see, many strange things in dreams and visions of the night."

"You have, indeed," I said, "seen strange things."

"Will you now," she continued, "be plain with me? Tell me, if you know, exactly what is the thing,—the serious matter,—he is anxious and afraid about."

"I can tell you, Fraulein," I said, "a very serious matter, about the discovery of which I suspect he is very anxious. A little more than a year and a half ago Herr Steinhardt's partner in business went to London from Lancashire, and it was thought he never returned, no trace of him could be found. So his fate remained altogether a mystery for a year, until I went to be cure in the village. Why the mystery should have been left so long, I cannot say, because it was no great cleverness in me that after that made it less of a mystery; perhaps the Almighty left it so long to give Emmanuel Steinhardt time to repent. Soon after I came to the village certain things made me suspect that Herr Steinhardt's partner did not stay in London, but came home and then disappeared. I now know, from evidence that I have got, that he did; but what became of him I cannot tell. I suspect that Herr Steinhardt put him out of the way, but I do not yet know that he did. I am sure, however, that the Divine Vengeance, which has thus far revealed it to me bit by bit, will yet make clear the whole horrible crime."

She heard me through in silence, gazing intently at me the while; but when I came to the end, she drew back and looked at me in anger and astonishment.

"But," said she, "who are you, Herr Pastor, to make yourself the minister of Divine Vengeance?"

I was dumb for a moment under this warm rebuke.

"I think, Fraulein," I said a length, "you mistake me. I do not put myself forward as the agent of Divine Vengeance. I first began to look into the mystery at the request of the missing man's orphan daughter, who longs to know what has become of her father; since then all I have learned concerning his fate has been revealed to me with little or no effort on my part."

"Ach! Mein Gott!" she exclaimed. "The poor man has left a daughter!"

"Yes," I replied; "and Herr Steinhardt, who is her guardian, uses her very cruelly. If it were not for that, I think I should let the whole matter rest, and take no more part at all in bringing the crime home to the guilty man. But so long as she is in danger I must do what I can,—I must let the Divine Power use me. God has sent me to you, Fraulein; if you then have had anything more revealed to you than I yet know, I beg you will tell it me."

"Ach, Herr Pastor!" she cried, "you know not what you ask! You ask me to condemn Emmanuel Steinhardt!—me to condemn him! Ach! Mein Gott! why hast thou laid this on me!" She clasped her hands in her lap, and looked fixedly before her.

"Fraulein, I ventured to urge, 'I only wish to hinder Steinhardt from going on his cruel, unscrupulous way.'"

"What you may wish, Herr Pastor," she said, with her look still fixed on vacancy, "will not matter very much. The great God, I know, is a God of justice as well as a God of mercy, and he will work his own will with both you and me! I have prayed for Emmanuel, as a mother might for her only son! Surely my God will hear me! If he only had time and warning to repent! Oh, was not that why I wished him to come!"

"What can I say, Fraulein, to lessen your pain?"

"You can say nothing, Herr Pastor. Leave me for tonight—leave me, if you please! I cannot speak to you more now!"

Here was such distress and emotion as could only be calmed by her being let alone—alone, or only with that Unseen Presence in whom she was doubtless wont to seek strength and peace. I therefore went away without another word, and accompanied for a time by the painful doubt whether it were well to pursue my inquiry, since it caused her such pain; whether there was not even something vindictive in following up evidence which would lead to the incrimination of even such a villain as Steinhardt.

But all doubt was dispelled by a letter I received next morning from Birley.

"Thou must come back, my lad, at once," he wrote. "I was mistaken in my notion that Manuel would bring you know who, back home. Frank came home the same day you left; and his father went off to London next morning. I managed to get to see Frank. He is in very low spirits, poor lad. His father has almost scared him into marrying the girl; but I don't quite think he can bring that about without asking me, at any rate. I shall not be at all surprised if he does ask me one of these days, for he has not yet come down near so hard of me—you know what I mean—as I expected. I fancy he wants to reserve the chance for a last big squeeze. But don't thou be afraid, lad; I'll stand by the lass and thee. Well, I prevailed on Frank to tell me the Blackpool address, though I had to promise much his father shouldn't get to know he had told me. I went straight away, and found her; and she was main glad to see me, poor thing. I told her what I had come for; and the end of it was she packed up her little traps, and came back with me—and here she is with me now. But I've not come to the den yet. 'Manuel has only gone to London for the week, I find. He will be home on Saturday; and then I expect he will want me to square up with him. So I say you had better come back at once.'"

Here, surely, was matter for the gravest anxiety and apprehension, though it did not appear what there was to fear exactly, except that Steinhardt might somehow reclaim Louise from Birley's charge, and again hide her away. But the fact is, my dread and suspicion of Steinhardt were such that I was prepared for his committing the greatest and vaguest enormities. It was now Friday morning, and there was only another day during which I could think of Louise as at rest in Birley's house. I could leave Basel that night by the mail train, and probably reach Timperley late on Saturday night. Greater speed could not be made. But was I, after all, going to leave without knowing what was that damning something concerning Steinhardt which Fraulein Haas's "dream, or dreams," might reveal or suggest? I must endeavor to win it from her.

I called that morning, but was told, as on the first occasion, she would not be home till five o'clock in the afternoon. I got everything ready at my hotel for a prompt departure, and called again soon after the hour named. "So you have come again," she said, wearily, when she saw me.

"Yes, Fraulein," I answered, "and I have come in haste."

"To urge me, I know. But why is it necessary? It is a terrible law that quick death should be brought upon one man because he brought quick death on another!—a terrible law. I am not sure it is God's law. Think you it is, Herr Pastor?"

"Fraulein!" I exclaimed, alarmed at her continued disposition to consider too curiously and abstractly, "I am sorry I cannot linger to discuss such things with you. I must travel back to England in a very few hours, on most anxious business, and I entreat you to resolve to tell me what you say has been revealed to you concerning this crime. I have said it already, Fraulein, and I say it again: what the great God may have in store for Herr Steinhardt for all his wickedness, I cannot judge, and I do not seek to put out my hand to force; I say I do not desire to bring punishment on him, I only wish to be able to make him withdraw his hand from the perpetration of more cruelty and oppression."

"Is he so wicked, then?" she cried in an accent of the keenest pain.

(To be continued)

Muskets Ten Feet Long.

Gen. F. C. Ainsworth, chief of the record and pension division of the army, is in receipt of several interesting relics from friends in the Philippines and China, comprising a collection of arms of different varieties, modern and archaic, used by the Chinese. In the collection are two jingals, which look a good deal like overgrown muskets. They are too heavy for soldiers to carry about the field, and are usually rested upon a parapet. One of these weapons is more than 10 feet long, with an iron barrel of one inch caliber. Both guns are in good working order, and Gen. Ainsworth has had them burnished and added to the ornaments of his office in the war department.

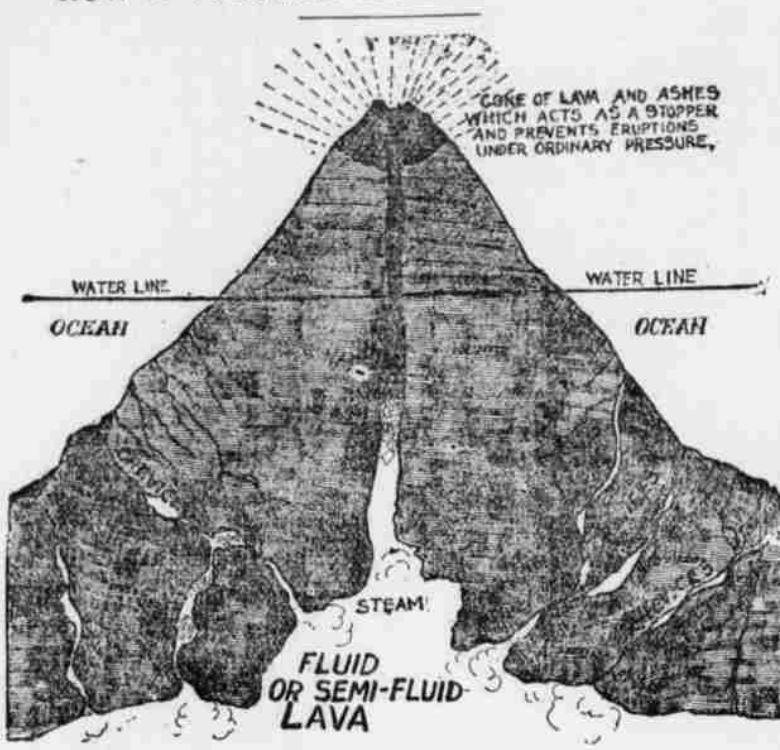
Making Artificial Diamonds.

The Chemiker Zeitung describes some experiments in the making of artificial diamonds. Carbon was heated in an atmosphere of inert gas in an iron flask raised to a high temperature by the electric arc. Bits the size of a pea were obtained having the hardness and crystalline form of a diamond. The crystals have a gray tint that makes them worthless for jewelry, but their use in drills seems promising. A French chemist has made minute diamonds by heating pure carbon under pressure.

Odd Idea in Jewelry.

One sees curious things in jewels these days, especially in the cheaper line. A girl on a street car the other day wore a brooch which looked exactly like a set of false teeth in brilliants.—New York Letter.

## HOW A VOLCANIC EXPLOSION IS CAUSED.



A study of the above picture, reproduced from the New York World, will show how the molten mass in the mountain's interior met the water, and how the steam generated thereby, following the line of least resistance, blew off the top of the volcano.

The calamity which has overtaken two islands of the Windward group in the Antilles will unquestionably lead to a fresh discussion of the causes of volcanic disturbance. As to the extent to which water operates there is some lack of harmony among volcanologists. Shaler, Milne and others hold that substance largely, if not entirely, responsible for the trouble. They point to the fact that many volcanoes are situated near the coast of continents or on islands, where leakage from the ocean may possibly occur. Russell, on the other hand, regards water not as the initial factor, but as an occasional, though important, reinforcement. He suspects that when the molten rock has risen to a considerable distance it encounters that fluid, perhaps in a succession of pockets, and that steam is then suddenly generated.

The explosive effects which ensue are of two kinds. By the expansion of the moisture which some of the lava contains the latter is reduced to a state of powder, and thus originate the enormous clouds of fine dust which are ejected. Shocks of greater or less violence are also produced. The less severe ones no doubt sound like the discharge of artillery and give rise to tremors in the immediate vicinity. In extreme cases enough force is developed to rend the walls of the volcano itself. Russell attributes the blowing up of Krakatoa to steam. The culminating episode of the Pelee eruption, though not resulting so disastrously to the mountain, would seem to be due to the same immediate cause. To this particular explosion, too, it seems safe to assign the upheaval which excited a tidal wave.

## PRENTIS CHOSE ST. PIERRE.

Why the American Representative Went to French Island.

The death of Thomas Prentis of Massachusetts, United States consul at St. Pierre, who with his wife and children perished in the Martinique catastrophe, recalls the story of how Mr. Prentis was dropped from the consular service a few years ago.

In Mr. Cleveland's second term Mr. Prentis was consul at Mauritius, where he had married Miss Louise Fry, the daughter of a wealthy English resident. According to the story, a Mr. Campbell, an American, who was entertained by Consul Prentis during a visit to Mauritius, spending some time as a guest of the Prentis family, asked President Cleveland, a close personal friend, to appoint him to Prentis' place. Mr. Campbell was then consul to one of the West Indian posts. Mr. Cle-



U. S. CONSUL PRENTIS AND FAMILY.

land was just going out of office, and, according to the current account, asked his successor, Mr. McKinley, to transfer Campbell to Mauritius. Mr. McKinley granted the request, but sent Mr. Prentis to Rouen, France, and later to a better post, Batavia, Java. On reaching Batavia with his family, Mr. Prentis found there a dispatch from the State Department saying there had been a misunderstanding, and that another man had previously been given the Batavia consulate. So Mr. Prentis and his family came back to the United States, and on reaching Washington was offered the choice of a number of places in the consular service. He chose St. Pierre, and his appointment was made out, dating from Oct. 10, 1900.

A grown son of the consul residing in Chicago is the only survivor of the Prentis family. The other children, all of whom lost their lives at St. Pierre, were two daughters and a son. Mr. Prentis served in a Vermont regiment in the Civil War. He had been in the consular service off and on for more than thirty years, having received his first appointment in December, 1871.

## Annie Laurie's Grave.

Public notice has been directed in England to the grave of Annie Laurie, and the fact that it has been sadly neglected and has remained all these years without a tombstone is attracting attention. The St. James Gazette remarks: "Many people are under the delusion that Annie Laurie was merely a figment of the poet's brain, but this was not so. She was the daughter of Sir Robert Laurie, and was born in Maxwellton House, which stands on the 'braes' immortalized in song. Maxwellton House is still full of memories of this winsome girl, and in the long drawing-room still hangs her portrait.

## Smoking as a Reward.

Smoking is permitted in the prisons of Belgium only as a reward for good behavior.

## TROUBLES OF A CONDUCTOR.

Mix-Up on a London Omnibus in the Matter of Making Change.

It was upon an omnibus that my own personal acquaintance with him began. I was sitting beside two ladies when the conductor came up to collect fares. One of them handed him a sixpence, telling him to take to Piccadilly Circus, which was twopenny.

"No," said the other lady to her friend, handing the man a shilling. "I owe you sixpence; you give me fourpence and I'll pay for the two."

The conductor took the shilling, punched two twopenny tickets, and then stood trying to think it out.

"That's right," said the lady who had spoken last, "give my friend fourpence." The conductor did so. "Now you give that fourpence to me." "The friend handed it to her. 'And you,' she concluded, to the conductor, 'give me eightpence. Then we shall be right.' The conductor doled out to her the eightpence, the sixpence he had taken from the first lady, with a penny and two halfpennies out of his own bag, distrustfully, and retired, muttering about his duties not including those of a lightning calculation.

"Now," said the elder lady to the younger, "I owe you a shilling."

I deemed the incident closed, when suddenly a florid gentleman on the opposite seat called out in stentorian tones:

"Hi! conductor, you've cheated those ladies out of a fourpence."

"Oo's cheated 'oo out o' fourpence?" replied the indignant conductor from the top of the steps. "It was a twopenny fare."

"Two twopennies don't make eightpence," retorted the florid gentleman, hotly. "How much did you give that fellow, my dear?" he asked, addressing the first of the young ladies.

"I gave him sixpence," replied the lady, examining her purse. "And then I gave you fourpence, you know," she added, addressing her companion.

"That's a dear two pen-oth," chimed a common-looking man on the seat behind.

"Oh, that's impossible, dear," returned the other, "because I owed you sixpence to begin with."

"But I did," persisted the first lady. "You gave me a shilling," said the conductor, who had returned, pointing an accusing forefinger at the elder of the ladies.

The elder lady nodded. "And I gave you sixpence and two pennies, didn't I?"

The lady admitted it.

"And I gave her," he pointed toward the younger lady, "fourpence, didn't I?"

"What I gave you, you know, my dear," remarked the younger lady.

"Blow me if it ain't me as 'as been cheated out of the fourpence," cried the conductor.

"But," said the florid gentleman, "the other lady gave you sixpence."

"Which I gave 'er," replied the conductor, again pointing the finger of accusation at the elder lady. "You can search my bag, if yer like. I ain't got a blooming sixpence on me."

By this time everybody had forgotten what they had done, and contradicted themselves and one another. The florid man took it upon himself to put everybody right, with the result that before Piccadilly Circus was reached three passengers threatened to report the conductor for unbecoming language. The conductor had called a policeman and had taken the names and addresses of the two ladies, intending to sue them for the fourpence (which they wanted to pay, but which the florid man would not allow them to do), the younger lady had become convinced that the elder lady had meant to cheat her and the elder lady was in tears.—From Jerome K. Jerome's "The Man Who Always Interferes."

Happy Johnny Burns.

They wuz a man in Sundry school last Sunday, said 'at he Wished we would all be good and grow like Moses used to be. But I don't care so much for that, as others mebbe does— I'd like to be like Johnny Burns, 'cause he wears gallus-uz.

My maw she never wants to let me play with Johnny, fer She says his folks is ignerunt and ain't the style fer her. And every time she scolds me when I do what Johnny does— I wish he wore my waist and I could have his gallus-uz.

My paw's almost the richest man they are in this here town, 'Cause we live in a big white house and Johnny he lives down Beside the railroad track—I wish 'at I lived where he does. 'Cause nearly all the boys down there are wearin' gallus-uz.

I wish my paw'd git poor some day, and then we'd haft to go And live down by the track and not be all stuck up, you know— Then mebbe 'law'd let me be dressed the way 'at Johnny wuz. And he'd be friendly with me, 'cause I'd have on gallus-uz.—Chicago Record-Herald.

Her Opinion.

"Some men," said Willie Washington, "act like perfect fools when they are in love."

"Yes," answered Miss Cayenne, "and a great many more do not wait even for that excuse."—Washington Star.

Not Enough.

Miss Passay—Mamma said she would call here to-day to buy the candles for my birthday cake. Did she? Grocer's Clerk—I guess not. She was here, but she only bought two dozen.—Philadelphia Press.

Some men are so worthless that it is a waste of time to talk about them.