

The Contrabandist; OR One Life's Secret!

A TRUE STORY OF THE SOUTH OF FRANCE

CHAPTER XII.—(Continued.)

The brigands were having a merry carousal after their return; and Gaspard, maddened by the cool, courageous defiance of his prisoner, and with reflecting on the loss of the prize he had thought so safe, joined recklessly in the insane riot. The leaping, dancing fire of fagots glowed redly in the center of the cavern, casting a ruddy light upon each of those dark, swarthy, unshorn countenances, grim and fierce, that clustered about it. Higher and higher leaped the flames, and more noisy grew the merriment of the brigands, till, finally, there came a lull in the wild tempest of mirth. One by one grew less clamorous, slowly drowsiness overcame them, and shortly every man lay stretched upon the heaps of skins that covered the cavern floor, in a torpor, even to Gaspard himself.

With cat-like caution, a light tread descended the rough-hewn steps; a dark form was visible by the red glow of the smoldering embers; slowly and carefully down from the mouth it came, pausing at each step, and Raimonde's eyes glanced from face to face of those sleepers. He had been watching ever since this noisy revel commenced, and now was the time come when, without guard or watcher, the way was left clear for him.

Stealing noiselessly in, he scattered upon the dying embers, from a small parcel in his hand, a fine powder that caused a light crackling sound as it fell among them, and almost immediately a cloud of thin white vapor arose, spreading and circling till it filled the entire cavern, and a curious odor, faint, yet overpowering, was perceptibly proceeding from it. Raimonde, holding a handkerchief to his face, waited some five or ten minutes, then, approaching the senseless form of Gaspard, dexterously removed from the leathern belt about his waist the ponderous keys that belonged to the cells.

"Safe enough now, monsieur le capitaine, I'll warrant!" he muttered, with a low chuckle. "You should be a little less careless. All people are not as honest as yourself!"

Swiftly and quietly he traversed the gallery leading to the cells and opened the first door. It chanced to be the one in which the count was confined. Louis heard the heavy key turning in the wards; he looked to see Gaspard. But it was a careful hand that unlocked the door, and silently into the cell stepped Raimonde.

"Hist! be quiet, monsieur le comte!" he whispered, as Louis, recognizing him, sprang to his feet, with a half-suppressed exclamation of surprise; "do not speak. I have come to give you your liberty!"

"My liberty, Raimonde! Where are the brigands? Where is Gaspard?"

"Sound asleep, monsieur; and I have some reason to believe they won't wake in a hurry. Here—I will take off these jewels of yours; I dare say you won't be sorry to be rid of them." And stooping down, he unlocked and knocked off the fetters of the count.

"Ten thousand thanks, Raimonde!" exclaimed Louis, warmly. "But how did you know we had been retaken?"

"I had returned to the cavern to get something which I had left here, monsieur, and was going away again, when we saw the men coming back with you and Jacques. You were in a swoon, I suppose, for it took two or three to carry you. We had some ado to get out of their way—Michel and I—without being seen. I watched, afterwards, while they were carousing around the fire, and stole in. They are quiet enough now. Come, monsieur; but stop a moment. I see you will need something more than what you wear now. I will come back in a moment."

He left the cell, and directly returned, carrying a bundle of garments very much like those Louis was accustomed to wear in his excursions about the country. The young man lost no time in assuming them, and then left the cell with his companion. How his heart leaped! What a thrill ran through him as he felt that he was once more at liberty!

Raimonde's next step was to liberate Jacques. The poor fellow was almost beside himself with joy, and only the absolute need of silence kept him from giving unbounded expression to his delight.

Stepping cautiously among the extended forms of the drugged slumberers, the three rapidly ascended to the entrance, sprang out upon the forest soil and sped rapidly and silently away in the early dawn. Cool and fresh the morning wind came to the brows of these men, so lately prisoners, and it was like the benediction of an angel. For some distance they pursued their way together, and then Raimonde paused.

"Now, monsieur le comte, I will leave you, as I wish to strike off to the right here. I should like to have Jacques go with me."

"Well—well; then I bid you adieu!" returned the count, warmly, grasping his hand; "and I trust we shall meet again, when I may offer you a more adequate reward for your services than you received last night. I thank you a thousand times, my friend!"

And they separated, Raimonde and Jacques taking a right-hand direction, and Louis keeping the path to the chateau.

Suddenly, as he advanced, some object upon the ground attracted his attention. Picking it up, he found it to be a little tiny slipper. It was one of hers! He had seen her wear it often. He gazed upon it for a moment with feelings of unutterable emotion, and then placed it in his breast.

"Poor little Rose!" he murmured tenderly; "where are you now?"

With the little relic safe in his breast, he pressed on. Soon he observed that the turf all about him appeared to have been trampled and crushed with many feet, whose impress it still bore. Everywhere as he went this appearance continued. Further on, he came upon a torch lying extinguished upon the ground. Anon he picked up a handkerchief, embroidered with a delicate cipher—Francis

Egerton's own. What could it mean? He reflected a moment. Yes—they had been seeking her—the people from the chateau—seeking for Rose, their lost darling. And this torch was evidently one which they had carried in their search by night. He was encouraged to think that they had found her.

"And now, Gaspard," he said, involuntarily speaking aloud—"now, if all your anticipated victims are safe from your toils, look to your own safety! for that den of yours shall be opened to the light, and its iniquitous secrets revealed. An hundred men shall gather this day and rout you from your fancied security!"

Even as he spoke he suddenly seemed to hear voices shouting, one to another, at a distance, though so faintly that he paused to find whether he were not deceived. No! faintly still, but sufficiently perceptible not to be mistaken, the echo of those voices came to his ear on the still, clear air of the morning, and the sound came from the direction in which he was going. He could scarcely doubt that they proceeded from parties in search of him.

But at that very moment, as he was hastening forward, he also heard sounds from the opposite direction—a confused mingling of men's voices, with harsh, discordant shouts, and the crashing and tearing of forest branches. Could it be that his captors had aroused from their torpid slumber, discovered his escape and were pursuing him? He paused to look back.

Even as his glance pierced the interstices of those leafy shadows behind he distinguished, at a considerable distance, the figures of men whom he could not



LOUIS PURSUED BY GASPARD.

mistake—those wild-looking forms which he had so lately beheld lying about the smoldering embers of the cavern fire. Three or four were in sight, but one was far before the others, and dashing forward with mad speed. It was Gaspard! with his unshorn hair streaming wildly about his face, and a long and glittering knife brandished in his hand.

With sudden and firm resolution, Louis turned, unarmed as he was, save with the stick which had served thus far to clear his path, and prepared to meet him.

With a louder yell of triumph at beholding his anticipated victim so near, the brigand rushed on.

"I have you, monsieur!" he cried, with a fiend's laugh—"I have you! Who will win Rose now?"

"Not you, villain!" answered Louis, sternly. And meeting the assassin, in his mad career he struck down, with his stick the uplifted knife that was ready to drink his heart's blood.

"Ah!" shouted Gaspard, raging and gnashing like a wild beast, as he snatched a pistol from his belt; "I will know—I will know who is to win! Come on, my men! Strike—stab—slay!" And, blind with rage, he dashed at his adversary.

What was to be the fate of Louis? There were four to one! But the other three, tearing forward to the assistance of their master, suddenly paused, and then hastily turned and fled. Neither Louis nor Gaspard, however, saw anything beyond each other; while the young count, with firm courage, grappled with the brigand chief, and wrenching the discharged weapon from his grasp, cast him at full length upon the turf.

And now all was at hand; for the Marquis de Montauban and Francis Egerton, followed by two or three of the villagers, dashed into the little glade, to the scene of combat. With exclamations of joy, Louis and his uncle threw themselves into each other's arms; while Francis Egerton waved his cap gaily in the air, and stepped lightly forward to greet Louis, calling, "Fond—found! my dear—dear fellow!" and he clasped the young man in a cordial and laughing embrace; but his handsome, deep-blue eyes sparkled with tears.

But their attention was attracted in another direction; for Gaspard had risen to his feet, and his cry of rage and despair rang through the forest. Deserted by his companions, who had fled on witnessing the numbers of the approaching party, and destitute of weapons, he turned and was bounding away, when a shot from one of the villagers struck him. With one horrible cry he sprang into the air and then fell heavily to the earth. There was a convulsive movement of the limbs, a contraction, a sudden spasm, and the form was stretched out in motionless silence. Gaspard was dead!

There was a time of silence, and then Francis clasped the hand of Louis and drew him gently away from the scene. "It is too horrible!" he uttered, with a shudder. "Come, dear Louis, to where a fairer sight awaits you; let us go and meet Rose, our sweet little blossom, who owes to you her safety!"

"She is safe, then!" said Louis, with animation; "ah, that repays me for all!"

"Ay—safe! We found her in the wood an hour or two since; and without waiting longer than to meet Helen, and assure her of her safety, the dear girl insisted on guiding us instantly in the direction of the cave in which she had been confined. We were proceeding thither, with the domestics and villagers, armed with any weapons at command, when we per-

ceived your form and that of your assailant. But see—yonder comes Rose on the arm of the Count de Clairville!"

It was indeed the beautiful Rose, pale, but smiling, who, advancing lightly in her white robes, over the forest turf, met Louis with a low cry of joy, and with fervent gladness returned his silent but eloquent embrace. Then she stood apart as the Count de Clairville, with unspeakable emotion, greeted the escaped captive.

The hands of people who had gathered to assist in the search for the young count were gay with rejoicing as they wended their triumphant way back to their homes; and at the gates of the chateau, the good marquis extended to them, one and all, a cordial invitation to a merry-making, during the following week, to celebrate the happy return of his lost children. And then, among that joyful family, there were fervent thanksgivings and explanations followed and recitals of past plot and peril; and not the least blessed of all was Helen Montauban, who rejoiced none might know how deeply, for it was as if life itself were restored to her with the restoration of her cousin.

Jacques, making his appearance next day at the chateau, was made a hero of; and vain would all have heaped favors and rewards upon him, but he would none of it. "He was going to Lyons, to seek master Hugh," he said, "and follow his fortunes." And that very day he departed. Rose was deeply affected when she heard of his resolution. She longed to see her father, and confide in him all the trouble she had so lately endured—all that had been on her mind concerning Robin; but, with further thought, she decided that it was better to retain her vexation and trouble within her own breast until she had confessed all to the marquis; for now she resolved to delay that confession no longer.

And so Jacques went, and Rose only gave him a thousand loving messages for her father, and bade him tell of her adventure, and her final safety, and of the death of the villain Gaspard. Nothing of all her sorrow did she desire her father to know yet. He must think of her only as happy and content.

The next day there was a gathering of stout and sturdy men from far and near, armed with serviceable weapons; and the forest was searched, and the robbers' cave discovered—a place never known till then by the dwellers in that region. But the brigands had fled—their chief no longer with them; and the cavern was empty—deserted. The robbers never returned to it. It is probable that the horde broke up, and the men went in various directions to gain an unlawful living elsewhere; but they never were heard of again. Raimonde went to Italy, and thenceforth was unheard from.

YOUNG INVENTORS.

Useful Discoveries Made by Children in Their Play.

Many cases are reported where mere children have made discoveries in their youthful diversions which have exerted a wonderful influence on important industries in their development. The children of a Dutch spectacle maker happened to be playing with some of their father's glasses in front of the shop door. Placing two of the glasses together they peeped through them and were exceedingly astonished to see the weathercock of a neighboring steeple brought, seemingly, within a short distance of their eyes. They were very naturally puzzled, and called their father to see the strange sight. He was no less surprised than the children had been. He conceived the idea that he might utilize this strange feature in the construction of a curious toy which would be productive of both wonder and amusement among his friends. He did so, and Galileo, hearing of this toy that was said to make distant things appear close at hand, saw at once what a help it would be to the study of the heavens. This was the first inception of his telescope.

When the poor Geneva mechanic Argand invented his burner, after securing an adequate and controllable flow of air to the interior, making what he termed a "double current" burner, long endeavored to devise some means by which the current supplied to the outer circumference of the flame could be strengthened and regulated, and his efforts might have been longer delayed had it not been for the thoughtless juvenile experiments of his little brother. One day, while Argand was busy in his workroom and sitting before the burning lamp, the boy was amusing himself by placing a bottomless glass flask over different articles. Suddenly he placed it over the flame of the lamp, which instantly shot up the long, circular neck of the flask with increased brilliancy. Argand was not the man to let such a suggestive occurrence escape him. Thus the idea of the lamp chimney was born, and in a short time perfected and patented.—Weekly Bonquet.

Greatest Book Thief of All.

Probably the most audacious and successful book thief that ever lived was Count Libri of Florence, who, emigrating to France, became in 1842, secretary of a government commission to examine and catalogue the books and manuscripts in the many communal libraries of the country. Availing himself of his opportunities, of the carelessness and ignorance of the custodians, and a consummate knowledge of the treasures unveiled to him, he quietly and leisurely despoiled the libraries of hundreds of their choicest manuscripts and most precious heirlooms, carefully obliterating afterward all signs that might lead to their identification.

How the collection thus acquired came into possession of the late Lord Ashburnham; by what means Libri's robberies were afterward discovered and traced back to him; together with the recent sale of the library at a stupendous increase of price, and the methods by which the French government finally recovered a portion of their long-lost treasures, form a most remarkable and romantic chapter in literary history.

JUDICIAL DECISIONS.



General statutory language providing indemnity to the next of kin of a person negligently killed is held, in *McMillan vs. Spider Lake S. & L. Co.* (Wis.), 60 L. R. A. 589, not to apply in favor of non-resident aliens in case deceased is instantly killed or dies without conscious pain.

Since the national bankruptcy law contains no provision for involuntary proceedings against persons engaged chiefly in the tillage of the soil, it is held, in *Old Town Bank vs. McCormick* (Md.), 60 L. R. A. 577, that it does not supersede the provision of the State law authorizing such proceedings.

A borrowing member of an insolvent building and loan association is held in *People's Building and Loan Association vs. McPhillamy* (Miss.), 59 L. R. A. 743, not to be entitled to be credited on his debt with the full amount of dues he has paid in on his stock, but it is held that his stock payments must share the losses and expenses of winding up, and the balance only be credited to the loan.

One purchasing a round-trip railroad ticket good only on the day of purchase is held, in *Illinois Central Railroad Company vs. Harris* (Miss.), 59 L. R. A. 742, to be entitled to recover damages in case he is ejected from the only train passing his station on the return trip on that day, for the reason that the ticket is not good on that train because the train is not scheduled to stop at that station.

The right to the custody and to decide upon the place of burial of the body of a deceased unmarried person is held, in *McEntee vs. Bonacum* (Neb.), 60 L. R. A. 440, to reside ordinarily in his next of kin; and it is held that the courts will not treat this right as having been waived or relinquished except upon clear and satisfactory evidence of conduct indicative of a free and voluntary intent and purpose to that end.

A contract between an attorney at law and one who is not such an attorney, by which the latter agrees to procure the employment of the former by third persons for the prosecution of suits in courts of record, and to assist in looking after and procuring witnesses whose testimony is to be used in the cases, in consideration of a share of the fees which the attorney shall receive, is held, in *Langdon vs. Conlin* (Neb.), 60 L. R. A. 429, to be against public policy and void.

In a civil action for assault and battery it is held, in *Berkner vs. Dannenberg* (Ga.), 60 L. R. A. 559, that opprobrious words and abusive language cannot be considered by the jury in justification of the assault, but only in mitigation of damages under a statute providing that on the trial of the indictment for assault defendant may give in evidence any opprobrious words or abusive language used by the person assaulted and the jury shall determine whether they amount to a justification.

The Water Used in Coffee.

"To boil water is the simplest thing in the world," said the steward at one of the local leading hotels, "but how to boil it is quite another thing. I believe we have the name of having the best coffee of any hotel in this city. Of course, we use good coffee, but let me tell you much of the praise is due to the fact that the water with which to make the coffee has been properly boiled. The secret in boiling water is just this: Always use fresh water and let the kettle be warm before the cold sparkling fluid is put into it. The fire should be quick, so that the water will boil at once, and the water should be removed from the fire the instant the boiling point is reached and poured upon the coffee or tea or whatever beverage is in demand immediately. So many people make the mistake of permitting the kettle to remain over the fire, where the water steams and simmers away, wasting the good water in vapor. Those who drink hot water before breakfast, as many do, should insist on the use of fresh water and having it served as soon as boiled. Doctors say, however, that to kill germs in suspicious water boiling should last about five minutes."

Those Stupid Critics.

First Actor—That critic, in his notice of your performance, said you mouthed your lines.

Second Actor—I suppose the idiot expected me to speak them with my hands or feet.—*Baltimore American.*

Known, or at Least Suspected.

"They say a man is known by his associates."

"Yes, or if he isn't known he is at least suspected by them."—*Kansas City Journal.*

Pay of School Teachers.

In the nineteen counties in Missouri the pay of public school teachers of both sexes is less than \$33 a month, and in forty-one counties the pay of woman teachers is below that figure.

Stepping on a banana skin has stepped many a good man on the downward path.

MARSHALL FIELD AND CO.'S WAREHOUSE MANAGER

Cured of Catarrh of Kidneys by Pe-ru-na.



HON. JOHN T. SHEAHAN, OF CHICAGO.

Hon. John T. Sheahan, who has been for seventeen years manager of Marshall Field & Co.'s wholesale warehouse, and is corporal 2d Regiment Infantry, I. N. G., writes the following letter from 3753 Indiana avenue, Flat Six, Chicago, Ill.:

Peruna Medicine Co., Columbus, Ohio.
Gentlemen—Last summer I caught a cold which seemed to settle in my kidneys and affected them badly. I tried a couple of kidney remedies largely advertised, but they did not help me any. One of my foremen told me of the great help he had received in using Peruna in a similar case, and I at once procured some.
"It was indeed a blessing to me, as I am on my feet a large part of the day, and trouble such as I had affected me seriously, but four bottles of Peruna cured me entirely and I would not be without it for three months salary."—JOHN T. SHEAHAN.

Mr. Jacob Fleig writes from 44 Sumner avenue, Brooklyn, N. Y.:

"I am now a new man at the age of seventy-five years, thanks to your wonderful remedy Peruna."—Jacob Fleig.

Catarrhal inflammation of the mucous lining of the kidneys, also called "Bright's disease," may be either acute or chronic. The acute form produces symptoms of such prominence that

the serious nature of the disease is at once suspected, but the chronic variety may come on so gradually and insidiously that its presence is not suspected until after it has fastened itself thoroughly upon its victims.
At the appearance of the first symptoms Peruna should be taken. This remedy strikes at once at the very root of the disease.
A book on catarrh sent free by The Peruna Medicine Co., Columbus, O.

French Army Mortality.

Official figures show that during the years 1888 to 1900 the mortality in the French army was more than double that in the German army.

For bronchial troubles try PISO'S Cure for Consumption. It is a good enough medicine. At druggists, price 25 cents.

Deceived.

"She seems to have no confidence in her husband."
"No; she says she caught him telling the truth the other day."—N. Y. Sun.

Mothers will find Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup the best remedy to use for their children the teething season.

Unfortunate Alliance.

Little Mary Whitney, who had just been punished by her father, came to her mother with a deeply-grieved expression upon her face and said:
"Mamma, I wish Ezra Whitney had never married into this family."

PISO'S CURE FOR
25 CENTS
BETTER WHERE ALL ELSE FAILS.
Best Cough Syrup, Tastes Good, Use in all cases. Sold by druggists.

ABOVE ALL OTHERS
TOWERS' FISH BRAND WATERPROOF OILED CLOTHING
THE HIGHEST STANDARD OF QUALITY FOR MORE THAN HALF A CENTURY.
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A Good Beginning

If the blood is in good condition at the beginning of the warm season, you are prepared to resist disease and are not apt to be troubled with boils, pimples, blackheads and blotches, or the itching and burning skin eruptions that make one's life a veritable torment and misery.

Now is the time to begin the work of cleansing and building up the blood and strengthening the weak places in your constitution. During the cold winter months we are compelled to live indoors and breathe the impure air of badly ventilated rooms and offices. We over-work and over-eat, and our systems become clogged with impurities and the blood a hot-bed of germs and humors of every kind, and warm weather is sure to bring a reaction, and the poisonous matter in the blood and system will break out in boils and pustules or scaly eruptions and red, disfiguring bumps and pimples. Make a good beginning this season by taking a course of S. S. S. in time; it will not only purify your blood and destroy the germs and poisons, but promote healthy action of the Liver and Kidneys and give you a good appetite at a time when you need it most.

S. S. S. improves the digestion and tones up the Stomach, and you are not continually haunted by the fear of indigestion every time you eat, or troubled with dizziness, nervousness and sleeplessness. There is no reason to dread the coming of warm weather if you have your system well fortified and the blood in a normal, healthy condition. It is the polluted, sluggish blood that invites disease germs, microbes and poisons of every kind and bring on a long train of spring and summer ailments, break down the constitution, and produce weakness, lassitude, and other debilitating disorders. Eczema, Acne, Nettle-rash, Poison Oak and Ivy, and other irritating skin troubles are sure to make their appearance unless the humors and poisons are antiodated and the thin, acid blood made rich and strong before the coming of warm weather.



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While living in Sherman, Tex., I became a victim of impure, watery blood. I ran down in appetite, energy and strength; was scarcely able to get about and had to stop off and rest occasionally. I took S. S. S. and began to improve at once, and after a thorough course became strong and well.

I think S. S. S. the best medicine I ever used as an appetizer and general tonic.
J. G. SCOTT,
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A course of S. S. S. now would be a safe precaution and a good beginning and enable you to pass in comfort through the hot, sultry months and escape the diseases common to spring and summer. S. S. S. is guaranteed purely vegetable and is recognized as the best blood purifier and the most invigorating and pleasant of all tonics. Write for our book on "The Blood and Its Diseases."

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