

The Castle Comedy

By THOMPSON BUCHANAN

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BROTHERS

(Continued.)

"What! What! My daughter—my little May—marry a Frenchman, a Johnny Crepaud, a frog eater! Yes—that is what the scoundrel asked me. I'll own up, Thornecliffe. I had decided to allow him to escape because—because he is such a gallant rascal, and—and—with a burst of family pride—after all, he is a Percy. You can't hurt the old stock, Thornecliffe, even with the weakening strain of the French blood. But marry May—my little May—take my only child over the water! Not that, Thornecliffe, not that. No one could ask that." The stern old voice trembled and broke.

A lump in his own throat, the soldier ventured to put his hand again, this time almost affectionately, on the shoulder of the older man.

"But why, old friend," he questioned gently, "merely because your cousin loves your daughter should you let the hangman's noose dangle over one branch of your family tree? Is that quite fair?"

The head of the house laughed aloud in sudden revulsion of feeling.

"I was mad, Thornecliffe—mad!" he cried. "The boy is a Percy. That was the reason. Do you think a Percy would give her up while he lives?"

Thornecliffe took a turn along the little passage and back again. It was the life of a brave man he wanted. The Frenchman must look out for his own love affairs, and besides his latent racial prejudice made the soldier feel that there was some justice in the father's words. Accordingly the pleader's next question was put carefully.

"Suppose—suppose, Sir Henry, Mistress May should marry Wilmerding? The Percys have two qualities—courage and honor. Your French cousin has proved that he possesses both. Marry her to Wilmerding, then."

"Tonight," murmured Sir Henry blankly, "I told him, Dubarre, Percy, that, but I did not mean it. Tonight."

"Tonight," insisted Thornecliffe, "it must be tonight. The soldiers you sent for should be here now. Besides I recognized Wellington's spy, Fournier, in one of your French visitors yesterday. Now I know why he was here. Marry her to Wilmerding tonight, for not until she is married will the French Percy leave England. She will be safe from him then—and—God help her!" muttered the soldier.

Sir Henry Percy drew a long breath of relief; then, with sudden feeling, gripped the soldier's hands impulsively.

"Thank you, Thornecliffe—thank you. You have kept me worthy of my name. I'll start for Sir Harvey Johnston's at once and drive over tonight with the bishop. You—ah—you," with a wise nod, "you arrange things. And—may the good God speed the boy!" he ended softly.

Within the waiting chamber the self-confessed spy stood laughing with cynical contempt at the girl he had won and the man he had conquered. Mistress Percy, the proud gentlewoman, overcome at the disclosure of her lover, sat still beside the table, her face buried in her arms. Once she had looked up, but the sight of the contemptuous, sneering face of the spy bitterly baiting Sir John Wilmerding quickly brought her head down again.

The gentleman in disguise the girl had loved. Her hero cousin of Napoleon's guard, risking his life gayly in a gallant adventure and offering it gladly for her, she had adored. But this spy, by his own statement—this sneak, who laughingly confessed to trailing her hero cousin for blood money and loud her cousin fighting for her because it might have cost him the price of "French Percy's" life—she shrank from him in horror. Now at the thought of his kisses, at his every speech, the proud girl writhed with shame and loathing. She felt sure of that now, for not even the reckless, desperate "French Percy" could have dared the risk she had heard this man boasting to take.

"I've fooled too long already with a country bumpkin over his pastoral love affairs. Call Captain Thornecliffe. He will identify Wellington's own hand. A nice thing it would be to report to the commander in chief that the assinine stupidity of a country militia officer allowed the most dangerous scout in the French army to slip through our fingers."

"By God," roared Wilmerding, snatching his pistol, "if it were not for the slight chance I'd kill you now!"

The spy laughed in his face. "And be hanged for it later. But I tell you the little chap of the pair here yesterday, the one with the gray eyes, was St. Croix. Now"—impudently—"call Thornecliffe."

Sir John walked over to the big door and knocked, and as he did so the spy stepped suddenly close to the table.

"Mistress Percy?"

A last unacknowledged hope shining in her eyes, she looked up.

"I'm sorry for the part I had to play with you."

A gasp, and the dark head sank again as the girl burst into shuddering sobs.

"Come, Hal, come. And you, too, Sir Henry. Come block this French trickster's game. The scoundrel claims now to be not St. Croix at all, but some spy—Fournier. See—see the pass he has forged or stolen." And Sir John Wilmerding, at the door, thrust the paper into the hands of the astonished Captain Thornecliffe.

Dumb from amazement, Sir Henry Percy followed Captain Thornecliffe into the room. At the sight of his daughter sobbing over the table the old baronet was about to cry out, but the soldier, with a quick, warning grasp, restrained him. Smiling and easy, the spy bowed to them.

"What's this? What do you mean? Who are you anyhow?" blurted Sir Henry.

The prisoner bowed jauntily a second time.

"As my pass reads—Jacques Fournier, Wellington's spy, at your service. Captain Thornecliffe should know that signature."

After one glance at the self-confessed Fournier the soldier had given all his attention to the pass. Now he looked up.

"It's genuine," he said. "There can be no doubt of that."

"And stolen, too, I wager," broke in Wilmerding angrily.

"This scarcely possible, Jack. I saw this pass written in Spain. I recognize it by a crossed out word."

"And this fellow is—" gasped Wilmerding.

"He must be Fournier."

For quite a minute no one moved. The spy looked straight into the eyes of Thornecliffe and Thornecliffe straight into the eyes of the spy. But what each saw in the other was for those two only. Then impulsively the Frenchman thrust out his hand:

"Monsieur—captain—"

Thornecliffe turned his back.

"I think," he said slowly, "your trail, Fournier, leads toward France. Sir Henry Percy, in accordance with that pass, will give you a horse. You may catch your man before he reaches the seacoast."

With the first sound of her father's voice Mistress May had sprung to her feet. The Percy pride, strong in all the line, leaped to her rescue. Throughout Thornecliffe's identification of the spy she stood straight, with head held high, facing her father, and, although now and then her hands at her sides moved nervously and at the end her mouth was trembling, yet the big black eyes throughout showed brave and firm.

"Dad," she began, and just at first the trembling mouth made the tones to shake over so slightly, though the look remained steadfast—"dad, you must be surprised to see me here. I want to confess something to you, dad. I came because I thought that man—that spy—my cousin from France. And—and—dad, I loved him. If he had been my cousin St. Croix, dad—and now her voice was proud and full—"nothing could have kept me from marrying him. But a Percy can't love a blood money spy, dad, and if you and John will forgive me I'll—"

"I'll marry John any time you say."

From Sir Henry there burst a great rushing sigh of relief.

"Then tomorrow it is, coz," he cried, gathering the sobbing girl in his arms.

"I'll bring the bishop over from Sir Harvey's tonight, and your old dad's the happiest man in England."

Without so much as a glance at the father and daughter or at the man who had won the girl he loved the spy turned and walked from the room, and as he passed Captain Thornecliffe he muttered, "Merci, monsieur, but I had rather you had not so paid that little debt."

CHAPTER XV.

CERTAINLY it is most frequent," objected the bishop.

The masked highwayman waved his big pistol with a careless, deprecating gesture that sent a cold shiver racing to the very gouty toes of the fat prelate in the coach.

"But, worshipful sir, when a priest is so hard to meet, what is a poor devil of an outlaw bent on matrimony to do? Jack Ketch can't tie that knot."

Sir Henry Percy, seated beside my lord bishop in the coach, gave an involuntary snort of laughter at the armed highwayman's apologetic speech. With the robber's first dash from the dark shadows of the overhanging elms beside the road Sir Henry had tried his pistols. The caps spluttered, but no balls came. "Powder wet!" exclaimed the baronet; then, realizing his helplessness, resigned himself to what must come.

When the postboys having been knocked from their horses, the highwayman in a hoarse voice demanded not money, but a simple exercise of the bishop's churchly office, the good baronet chuckled loud in his surprise and delight. Was not the bishop even then on his way to the castle to marry Mistress May Percy to Sir John Wilmerding. One extra ceremony thrown in on the side could not hurt. Rather it would be just a breath of air to the prelate in good trim for the big wedding to follow in the morning. The bishop knew the service by heart of

course, and it would take little time. Sir Henry had been a gay dog in day, and the present adventure pleased him mightily. So, supremely content at the promised successful outcome of his own little schemes, the squire urged the bishop to quickness.

"It can do no harm, and perhaps it may do good," he said.

"Come, come, sir!" And now the outlaw's tone bore sharp command. He put his horse beside the coach and, thrusting an arm through the window, brought the big pistol very close to the bishop's head.

"My lord, we are wasting time."

Then he who daily kept noblemen in his anteroom begging for some slight



Beneath the dark shade of the overhanging elms they were married.

service climbed out with haste to marry an unknown galloway bird to his wench on the country road at midnight. The postboys forgot their shaking fear at the sight.

"May I be witness, Sir Galloway? Cheated?" chuckled the now gay Sir Henry.

"Yes, if you swear to be a true one and always to uphold what you see here done," returned the highwayman in a hoarse, throaty voice.

"Upon my honor," replied the knight, laughing. "But the lady—show us the lady. What a story it will be for Thornecliffe and the others!"

A black shadow detached itself from the trunk of a tree, and a slender girl rode out. The clouds had thickened, completely cutting off the moon, so through the darkness the witnesses could just make out the indistinct outline of a slender, graceful figure. The bishop offered his hand, and she sprang lightly to the ground. Her lover was beside her. A postboy, grinning, now held the horses.

And so beneath the dark shade of the overhanging elms, under the eyes of the peeping stars, they were married. "John and Mary" the man in his hoarse voice gave their names, and at the strange coincidences Sir Henry Percy, the chief witness, almost forgot where he was. "John—Mary." How the names thrilled his old heart! To-morrow morning in the library at the Oaks he would hear the bishop call those names again, and he would answer. Yes, there was the sentence. "Who giveth this woman to this man?"

And, thinking of the morrow and what it meant to him, Sir Henry from the darkness called forth in his deep, earnest voice, "I do, with all my heart."

The slender bride gave a little sobbing cry of joy.

For the rest of the ceremony her answers were nods and indistinct murmurs through happy tears. It was the most solemn service of the bishop's life.

"And would you like a certificate?" he asked when John and Mary had pledged their troth.

"Certainly," replied the galloway bird groom.

By the dim light of the stars—for the highwayman in his first attack had smashed the carriage lamps—the certificate was made out and signed. Naught remained but to insert the full names of the contracting parties. The bishop held the goose quill poised expectantly. The old baronet was leaning forward in his interest.

"Put in," said the highwayman. "John Percy Latapie, vicomte de St. Croix, and May Percy, daughter of Sir Henry Percy, his wife."

Then, lighting the tapers that followed, the moon rushed out with sudden boldness from behind the clouds to show the father and daughter standing face to face.

"Dad, dear dad!" Her arms outstretched toward him, her eyes big and soft with love, the wayward girl made her tender appeal. "Forgive me, dad!"

Sir Henry Percy stood white, silent, too dazed for speech.

"I could not give him up when he offered his life for me, dad."

"May—my little girl—married to a Frenchman?" The old man murmured it slowly, incredulously to himself.

The girl dared a step nearer, her husband and the bishop looking on.

"Not a Frenchman, dad, but Cousin Jack Percy's grandson, a Percy straight and true," she whispered.

Her father seemed suddenly to come to himself. "How dared you? How knew you he was not Fournier?" he cried. "Is he St. Croix?"

"Fie! I believe you knew it all the time. Captain Thornecliffe told Ethel and she told me," she said. "A lieutenant of cavalry rode up after you had started for Sir Harvey's. He brought us the news that 'French

Percy' had been shot by his men on outpost yesterday morn at daybreak and in proof showed a ring, the St. Croix seal, taken from the clothes of the dead man. I recognized it as the one M. Dubarre had sometimes worn. See, here it is!" She held the ring toward her father. "I had to keep the horrid big seal in my mouth all during the wedding to change my voice," she ended softly.

"And you got away," questioned Sir Henry, still angry, but not knowing what to do.

She went on with the utmost meekness: "I had your pet hunter at the lodge gate, sir; a long cloak on the saddle, pistols and a dagger in the holsters—'French Percy' those? Cousin Jack Percy's grandson was waiting in our hut for me. And, dad, dad!"—she ended it with a tender rush—"we were so afraid we'd miss you and the bishop and after so much trouble I'd had spoiling your pistols too."

For the first time since the wedding St. Croix spoke.

"And had we missed you, Sir Henry, I should have been forced to go back of mine own accord to your gallows, for I would not leave her in England except as my wife, and Mistress May would not come unless I promised you should see us married and give consent."

Sir Henry whirled on him.

"And you call what I gave 'consent,' you impudent scoundrel!"

"The bishop heard you say, 'I do, with all my heart,'" broke in St. Croix accusingly.

"A trick!" roared Sir Henry—"a trick that no one but—"

"Jack Percy's grandson could have executed," finished May Percy for him. "Jack Percy's grandson—Jack Percy's grandson," he repeated musingly. For the first time the phrase seemed to take hold of him.

"And your son now, dad," whispered May Percy softly.

Her father glanced inquiringly toward the bishop.

"By the law of God and the church they are man and wife, Sir Henry."

With sudden impulsiveness May Latapie, countess St. Croix, threw herself into her father's arms.

"And, dad, you can't hang your own son," she cried. "And he is going to leave me with you until the war is over and he can come for me again with honor."

In the clear, revealing moonlight, over the bowed head of the girl in his arms, the chief of the Percys studied the new heir to the line.

"Jack Percy's grandson," he muttered at last in unwilling admiration. Then the two involuntarily looked at the one both loved. The struggling Percy pride died hard. At last Sir Henry opened his arms. "Take her, boy," he said briefly.

THE END.

What She Said.

Bride—Oh, John, darling, I'm so glad you've come home! Cook is setting something awful—smashing dishes and tearing around like a lunatic! Do go and soothe her.

Groom—Why, sweetheart, what upset her?

Bride—Nothing at all—except that I told her you said she was a fierce cook.

Judge.

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ALEXANDER POPE.

He Was Considered In His Day the Greatest of All Poets.

Few men of our day comprehend the commanding, intellectual position held by Pope during the latter period of his life and for a long period after his death. There has never been anything approaching it in the history of our own literature or of any literature. In the opinion of vast numbers he was not merely the greatest English poet of his time, but the greatest English poet of all time; not merely the greatest of English poets, but the greatest of all poets that ever existed. Even those who took the lowest estimate of his character—and of such there was no small number—entertained the highest admiration for his genius. They expressed themselves with an extravagance of praise which astounded the modern reader, too apt to go to the other extreme of unwarranted depreciation. They did not content themselves with according him mere greatness; to him belonged perfect greatness. It was assumed by his friends as a matter of course; it was conceded by the indifferent and even by those personally hostile. As one illustration of many, a poem appeared in 1733, entitled "An Epistle to the Little Satyr of Twickenham." It was full of the severest reflections upon Pope's character. It spoke of him as an object of universal scorn. It charged him with being under the influence of ill nature, spleen, envy, malice and avarice. Yet it admitted that not only in early youth did he surpass others, but that his powers had increased with advancing years.

Till to perfection you at last arriv'd Which none have e'er excell'd that ever liv'd.

This was no sentiment of a solitary individual. It was a widespread feeling at the time, and it did not die out suddenly. If anything, the belief increased in strength after Pope's death. We can get some idea of its force by the few verses summing up his character, which were immediately produced by the man against whom for a quarter of a century the poet had been directing the shafts of his satire. The year before Pope died Colley Cibber had been substituted in place of Theobald as the hero of "The Duncin."

He had every reason to feel and express the bitterest resentment against the author of the satire, so far as a nature almost absolutely free from rancor could entertain such a sentiment.—T. R. Lounsbury in Scribner's.

The Stag Hound's Scent.

Hounds with very fine noses are not and perhaps never have been too common. The hound that never loses the line, that threads his way through coverts, along roads and turns with the stag when the latter runs beside a hedge, is invaluable, and such hounds help greatly to the death of the stag.

There is another quality which is invaluable and rare—the faculty of discriminating not only the scent of the quarry from that of all others, but of distinguishing the scent of the hunted animal from that of others of the same kind. When we consider how fox-hounds in a well preserved country are allowed and perhaps sometimes even encouraged to change foxes it is remarkable that they should have retained any of this quality of their stag-hound ancestors. But the fact remains that of the drafts which make up our staghound kennels some few hounds in each do develop the faculty of holding to the line in spite of the many temptations to change, thus reverting to the qualities of their ancestors.

Against W. D. Combs.

To all whom it may concern: Take notice that on the 15th day of May, A. D. 1907, an application was filed by said Joseph Nurte in the circuit court of Lane county for initial registration of the title to the land above described. Now unless you appear on or before the 17th day of June, A. D. 1907, and show cause why such application should not be granted, the same will be taken as confessed and a decree will be entered according to the prayer of the application and you will be forever barred from disputing the same.

WILLIAM A. BEAN, Applicant's Attorneys.

Summons

In the Circuit Court of the State of Oregon for the County of Lane.

Flora Sutherland, Plaintiff,

vs.

Ray Sutherland, Defendant.

To Ray Sutherland, the above-named defendant:—

In the name of the state of Oregon you are hereby required to appear in the above-entitled court and cause and answer the complaint of the plaintiff within six weeks from the date of the first publication of this summons, and if you fail to so appear and answer said complaint, the plaintiff will apply to the court for the relief demanded in her complaint, to-wit: For a decree of said court dissolving the marriage contract now and heretofore existing between the plaintiff and defendant, and giving to the plaintiff the care, custody and control of the minor children of the plaintiff and defendant, Cleo Davis and Rosalie Davis, and for judgment against you for the plaintiff's costs and disbursements herein to be taxed. This summons is served upon you by publication in the Eugene Guard for a period of six (6) weeks by order of Hon. J. W. Hamilton, judge of the above entitled court, dated April 3d, 1907.

The first publication of this summons was made on the 6th day of April, 1907.

COSHOW & RICE, Attorneys for Plaintiff.

BIDS WANTED.

For Erection of the Eugene General Hospital.

Sealed proposals will be received by the board of directors, care of Dr. J. W. Harris, secretary, Eugene, Or., until 5 o'clock p. m. June 3 for the erection of a hospital building for the Eugene General Hospital Association, Eugene, Or. Plans and Specifications may be examined at the office of the architect, Jno. Hunzicker. A certified check for five per cent of amount of bid must accompany proposals, payable to Dr. J. W. Harris, secretary. Check to be forfeited to the Eugene General Hospital Association, Eugene, Or., if the successful bidder fails to execute contract, and furnish bond of 50 per cent of contract for the proper completion of said building according to plans and specifications. The directors reserve the right to reject any and all proposals.

DR. F. M. DAY, DR. GEO. WALL, DR. W. L. CHESHIRE, Building Committee.

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Registration of Land Title.

In the circuit court of the State of Oregon for the County of Lane.

In the matter of the application of Joseph Nurte to register the title to the land in the said application described, as follows:

Beginning at a point on the south line of the Prior P. E. Blair donation land claim number 39, in section 35, township 17, south, range 4 west, north 89 degrees 19 minutes west 87 1/2 feet from the southeast corner of said Blair donation identified by two sandstones and an iron bar driven in the ground, thence south 27 minutes west along present fence 257 1/2 feet to the north line of Jas. Huddleston donation land claim in said section 36, thence north 89 degrees 55 minutes west along said north line 531 feet to the line of the present fence if extended, thence north 9 degrees and 14 minutes east 262 feet to the south line of the said Blair donation land claim, thence along said line south 89 degrees 19 minutes east 529 feet to the place of beginning. All in lots 1 and 5 of section 35, township 17, south, range 4 west, in Lane county, Oregon.

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