

The Contrabandist; OR One Life's Secret!

A
TRUE
STORY
OF
THE
SOUTH
OF
FRANCE

CHAPTER XVII.

The party had established themselves at their hotel in Lyons, there to remain for some days, before proceeding to Paris. It was here that Rose had some hopes of meeting her father. She could not but be sad as she thought of him, and the difference between his fortune and hers; of his poverty, his loneliness; of his homeless wanderings. It contrasted so bitterly with her lot that she wept over the reflection.

So Rose waited, and from morning till night she listened and watched and promised herself that she should presently see him. But the first day went by, and the second, and the third; and still, though every possible attempt was made to find such a person, it was in vain. The marquis, or Louis, or both, were away from dawn till dark, seeking tidings of him, yet no satisfactory result followed. Rose did not despair, however. She always said to herself, "If he is here they will find him."

It was on the fourth day that, as Louis was passing along one of the principal streets, he suddenly observed approaching him in the crowd a figure that seemed familiar. Almost immediately he lost sight of it, and hastening forward, it again appeared in the distance. A nearer view caused him to utter an exclamation of satisfaction, and the next moment, he stood face to face with Jacques Leroux.

"Monsieur!" he exclaimed, with a broad glow of pleasure, astonishment and satisfaction lighting up his rough face, as he returned the frank and well-pleased greeting of the count—"monsieur, you in Lyons? Why, I thought—but no matter. I was thinking of you just now. We have not met since I saw you at the chateau, after that lucky escape of yours."

"No. Where have you been, my friend?" said Louis, clasping his hand warmly—"where have you been?"

"In Lyons, monsieur."

"In Lyons?"

"With Master Hugh."

"Is it possible? I wish to meet him. Rose is here in the city and desires greatly to see her father. And now, Jacques, perhaps this is an impertinent question; but I certainly ask it with the best of motives. Can you inform me what are the circumstances of Hugh? Is he in poverty?"

"No, monsieur. He lives in a quiet neighborhood, and in a comfortable though lonely home, at some distance from here. I am his only companion, and servant as well. He is not poor, and is quite content."

"Will you give him a message from me, Jacques?"

"Fifty, if you have so many of them, monsieur."

"Tell him, then, to come to me as soon as he can, to-day, if possible. Tell him that Rose wishes to see him. She is with the Marquis of Montauban and his daughter Helen."

"Very well, monsieur; I will tell him."

"And you are sure he will come, Jacques?"

"He will come, monsieur, I think you may be sure. He will be glad to hear that Mademoiselle Rose is near him."

"That is well. And now, Jacques, I have an offer to make you. You have done me, on more occasions than one, such services as I shall never forget. I should like to have you near me. If you are inclined to enter into my service, I will take you and pay you well; if not, I shall give you such a sum as may buy a handsome farm in the country or set you up in business in the city. Come, what do you say?"

"In the first place, monsieur, I am very much obliged to you for your kindness. But I must stick by Master Hugh; I have been with him for many a long year, and now he is knocked about, here and there, I do not like to leave him. I have got used to him, and he to me; and he isn't the sturdy fellow he was once; and you see he needs me about him. And then, it was not for pay that I helped you out of a close corner once or twice, monsieur, but because I liked you, and was not over-fond of Gasparde. I shall share the fortunes of Master Hugh till the end of the journey; sometimes I think it's not far off for him."

The poor fellow's voice grew husky and slightly trembled. Louis was affected, spite of himself.

"Well, then, Jacques," he said, "since you must stay with him, and will receive no compensation, perhaps I shall think of some other arrangement. Hereafter, I wish you would keep me advised of your whereabouts; I may want you occasionally. Will you do so?"

"If you desire it, monsieur—yes."

"Good!"

Hastening to the hotel, he ran quickly upstairs and entered the apartment where Rose and Helen were sitting. He immediately imparted to the former the intelligence he had received concerning her father. The young girl thanked him a thousand times.

"I shall see him to-day—I am so glad! How good you have been to take all this trouble for me!" she said, gratefully. "All this trouble!" exclaimed Louis, gaily, as he kissed her; "I know no trouble when I am trying to gratify you, my Rose. I am as happy as you are."

At that moment the marquis entered and heard the news which had preceded his arrival.

"It is worth coming to Lyons for—is it not, Rose, my darling?" said he.

But though all waited with impatience, Hugh Lamonte did not come that day.

The marquis and Louis wondered at the delay; and the bright eyes of Rose grew dim with watching. But the day passed and the evening went by, but he did not come.

"He will come to-morrow—do you not think so?" asked Rose, anxiously, as she looked up at Louis.

"Undoubtedly, my darling," answered Louis, with a smile of sanguine cheerfulness. "Something must absolutely prevent him, or he would be here to-day. You know he would hasten to seek you, Rose. But he will come to-morrow; and, at all events, I have his address. O, he will come, never fear!"

It was noon of the following day. All the morning Rose had been waiting, with the utmost impatience, for the appearance of Hugh; but, as yet he had failed to come. The countess and Helen were in their respective apartments. The marquis and Louis had gone out, after awaiting since early morning the arrival of the expected visitor, but had promised to return shortly. Rose sat alone, counting the moments and striving to find amusement in watching the scene without in the busy street. Every figure that passed she scanned eagerly; every face underwent the scrutiny of her anxious glance.

Suddenly she was attracted to one in particular—a figure and countenance and bearing, like yet unlike those of her father—a person who seemed to be seeking some place in this wilderness of structures, consulting, at the same time, a card which he held in his hand. How eagerly she bent forward! He crossed—looked up—met her glance. Yes—it was Hugh Lamonte! But how changed! He disappeared in the entrance beneath. She sprang to unclose the door of the apartment. A familiar step was just without; it paused, and as the door opened, Rose beheld him before her.

"My dear father!" she said, joyfully, as he clasped her silently in his arms.

"You are glad to see me, then, mignonne?"

"Glad?—ah, yes! I have waited till I was ready to cry, papa."

Holding him still by the hand, she led him in. Rose saw, now, though she would not seem to remark it, the reason of his altered appearance, which had at first prevented her from recognizing him. For now, instead of the coarse and humble garb ordinary with him, he was clothed in the attire of a gentleman, in garments of a fine yet plain material, suiting well with the undeniably noble and striking form and natural grace of the wearer. The profusion of hair, formerly roughening and disguising his features, had been partially removed, and the effect was no less agreeable than astonishing. No wonder that Rose had scarcely known him. You would not have guessed that this man had ever been wood in the forest, and a peasant laborer, in a peasant's hut. But Hugh, for reasons of his own, had chosen to cast off the character in which he had so long appeared, in this visit to Rose. Perhaps he had endeavored, by this change, to prevent Rose from being obliged to contrast, with feelings of pain, his apparent poverty with the luxury of her position. As it was, she wondered silently at the change, yet, much as she desired to inquire into his circumstances, a feeling of restraint, or delicacy, prevented her at first.

They sat there conversing for upward of an hour, during which she informed him of all that had lately taken place with regard to herself; of the discovery made touching the romance in which Louis and herself had been concerned, and of her approaching marriage with him. Hugh listened to her story, smiled at the romantic part of it, and was grave again.

"I knew, Rose," he said, "who Robin was."

"You knew, papa?"

"Yes. But I saw that the count was honorable and sincere in his affection for you, and permitted him to think his disguise safe. I would not have allowed you to marry a peasant, Rose."

"Father, why not?"

"You will know one day, my child."

She looked perplexed a moment; then glancing up into her father's face, said:

"You heard of my imprisonment in the cavern, father?"

"Yes, Jacques told me. Ah, my child, how happy I am that you escaped! What do we owe to the count and to our faithful Jacques?"

"What, indeed?" echoed Rose, warmly.

"But," she resumed, "Gasparde was killed, papa."

"I knew of that, also. The wretch will meet a just account."

"He said he was not my cousin. How was that, papa?"

"He told the truth. He was no relation of yours; only I had known him since he was an innocent, or, at least, an innocent-seeming boy, when you first saw him in your infancy, and then, you know, I bade you call each other cousin afterwards."

"But how wicked he was—a brigand chief! Ah, if we had known it, papa, how much more dreadful he would have seemed! We should never have dared to have him come into the cottage."

With abruptness Hugh turned the conversation. It touched himself and his affairs. Rose found that he was living in quiet retirement in the old city of Lyons.

"And I am not poor, Rose; do not let that trouble you, for I know you will think of it," he said. "I am not poor, I

have enough to support me to the end of my days in comfort and plenty.

"Oh, father, I am so glad!" she returned, her eyes filling with tears. "I am so glad! You do not know how bitter has been the thought, sometimes, that I was about to marry a wealthy and titled man, and leave you, perhaps, in poverty and want. I have a thousand times felt that I was committing a sin—that I would rather come back to you and share your lot, humble as it was, than wed in splendor and magnificence and leave you."

"Think no longer, then, of such things," said her father, gravely. "Take the happiness which is offered you, and in which I, also, shall be happy. I should be ill at ease, my child, if you were to descend to your former rude station again. Think of me always, Rose, as in good circumstances; do not compare your station and mine, and make yourself unhappy because I do not share the advantages you enjoy. I do not want them, Rose, I should spurn them!" He spoke excitedly, and then, pressing his hand to his brow, sighed deeply. Then he continued: "I believe you will be happy with the count, your future husband. How soon are you to be married?"

"In two or three months, papa," answered Rose, slightly blushing.

"Let me congratulate you now upon the approaching event, if that be the case; for I shall not see you again probably for some time."

"Ah, why is that, papa?" said the young girl, anxiously.

"I have business to which I must attend, and which will occupy me closely for some months."

"And you will not even come to my wedding?" Her tone was low and sorrowful.

"I may not, dear child. But I shall pray for your happiness. One day, I shall come to look upon the old place. Till then, my home is in Lyons. And now, I must bid you adieu!" And he rose.

"Dear father, why will you go so soon?" The marquis was disappointed at not seeing you; and Louis—

"I cannot stay, Rose; do not ask me. Believe me, it is best so. And now that I have seen you this once, it must content us both for a long time."

"I may come and see you, father."

"I think it better not; for I am very often away, and you might not find me. Now, my little Rose, adieu!"

He was gone; and Rose, despite his cheering words, wept sorrowfully.

The marquis was astonished, on his return, to find that Hugh had come and gone again. His deeds, so carefully prepared, were useless. He was vexed and disappointed. And Louis could not conceal his regret at not having met him.

The object of their stay in Lyons was accomplished, and now they prepared to proceed to Paris.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Helen Montauban looked forward to Paris. This journey, so long—this long delay, fretted her already tortured spirit. She had scarcely believed at first that she should need patience to support her in the carrying out of her dark resolution—she, the calm, firm, self-possessed and self-reliant! She had prepared herself for long waiting, for daily endurance, while awaiting the coming of a day which was to bring her full recompense for past agony. But even she had not sufficient strength of will to bear her through without a terrible struggle, to enable her to maintain her customary manner, to keep her from betraying the fierce and constant misery which she endured. For she was always with them, from morning till night; compelled to witness a happiness which had wrecked her own. All this was harder than she had imagined it would be, and it became a daily torture. She must meet her cousin Louis as she was wont, before the knowledge of her own fate—of a rival's triumph, was given her. Still, he called her his sweet cousin—his beautiful cousin Helen—and sat by her, talking of a thousand plans for the future—his future and that of Rose—and made her his confidant as of old, stinging her to the heart with his innocent, happy, unconscious words, and she must bear it. He talked to her of his beautiful bride-elect.

"You are her sister, dear Helen," he would say; "take care of her, cherish her for me, till the right is yielded up to me—till you give it up to me, cousin."

"Yes—yes; I will take care of her—I will take care of her!" answered Mademoiselle Montauban. Her countenance was concealed from Louis; he could not see how white she was; he did not mark the shudder that passed over her frame; he knew not that the small hand withdrawn from his affectionate clasp was firmly clenched and cold as marble. But a feeling of deadly sickness stole over her; her head whirled; the agony of that moment was awful.

And Rose, too—our fair, innocent, confiding Rose—daily and hourly was with her, constantly, not alone by her words and acts, but by her very presence itself, implanting in Helen Montauban's heart many a thorn that rankled deeply—sorely. But she preserved the old demeanor; she schooled herself to her part till it was perfect; and Rose never dreamed that the gentle kiss she gave was the kiss of a murderer—that the heart upon which her loving head was laid, in her girlish confidences, was even then filled with the blackest, bitterest hatred, which drove out every other emotion and that she was the object of that hatred.

(To be continued.)

Explained.

Johnny—Pa, doesn't a man sometimes speak so rapidly that the stenographer can't follow him, and say so many wonderful things that they are lost in admiration of his eloquence?

Pa—Yes, I have heard that something of the kind does happen now and then. But why do you ask, Johnny?

Johnny—I notice that when you make a speech the papers always say: "Mr. Breeze also spoke."—Boston Transcript.

HAPPENINGS HERE IN OREGON

SCHOOL FUNDS IN DEMAND.

Borrowers Turn to State When Market Begins to Tighten.

Salem—The indications of a slowly tightening money market are tending to increase the demands for loans from the state school funds. The state loan board last week approved applications for loans to the amount of \$69,315. Earlier in the month applications were approved to the amount of \$30,000, making a total of about \$100,000 put out in loans during November.

The demand for school fund loans may be accounted for by two circumstances. The state is lending at as low a rate of interest as can be secured anywhere, and in case of hard times the state will not be forced to call in its money. An applicant a few days ago wanted to borrow money from the school fund in order to transfer his loan. He then had money from a private capitalist at 6 per cent. In stating his reason for wanting to change the loan, he said he thought it possible that there might be a stringency in the money market within the next year or two and he was afraid his creditor might need the money. He knew that the state would not need the money and that his loan from the school fund could stand as long as the security remained good and the interest was kept paid up.

The rate of interest charged by the state is 6 per cent. The security required by the state is greater than that generally required by private capitalists, so that many find it inconvenient to borrow from the school fund. On November 1 the state had \$2,778,100 loaned out on mortgage security and \$63,600 on school bonds, or a total of \$2,841,700.

Every dollar of this is loaned on security that is perfectly safe. On the first of the month there was cash in the school fund to the amount of \$645,482.89. Since that time some loans have been paid and \$100,000 more has been loaned out.

GET TIMBER CHEAP.

Rich Tract Near Bend Goes to an East-Conservator.

Salem—One of the largest deeds ever executed by the state land board was issued a few days ago when 15,853 acres of land were conveyed by a single instrument to the A. J. Dwyer pine land company, of St. Paul, Minn. The land is in the Deschutes pine belt, southwest of Bend. The consideration of the transaction is \$19,817, or \$1.25 per acre.

The purchase was made in 1893, when the price of lien land was \$1.25 per acre. As the land was selected before any extensive buying had been done in that region, this is probably the best of the Deschutes pine lands, and was secured at an exceedingly low price; especially in view of the advance in the value of timber lands in the last five years.

In the original purchase 62 certificates of sale were issued to as many different persons, and all these were later assigned to the Dwyer company.

Premiums for Good Roads.

Salem—The Greater Salem commercial club has adopted a resolution providing a plan by which the city will stimulate the building of permanent highways leading into the city. There are five road districts adjacent to Salem. The club will raise a purse of \$2,000 and divide it into premiums of \$800, \$600, \$400 and \$200, to be awarded to the road districts according to the amount of money or labor volunteered by the residents of the districts for permanent road building. It is provided, however, that no premium shall be awarded for more than 40 per cent of the value of the amount volunteered.

Cordwood Will Be Scarce.

Salem—It is apparent that cordwood will be scarce and high priced again next season. For several weeks the state boards have been advertising for 8,000 cords of wood to be furnished to the state institutions next summer. The bids opened aggregated less than 4,000 cords, and the figures named were \$2.95 for second growth and \$3.50 for old growth, the latter price being on board the cars, making the price delivered \$3.75. The bids were asked this early in order that men might have plenty of time to fill contracts, but the bids were comparatively few.

Basswood Blossoms for Bees.

Oregon City—Hermann Anthony, of New Era, this county, is believed to have on his property the only basswood trees in the state. Mr. Anthony planted this variety for the benefit the trees are to his large apiary, which consists of more than 100 stands of bees. When in bloom the trees are invaluable for honey-making, while the wood is especially adapted for manufacturing boxes. This variety of trees is very general in Ohio, Pennsylvania, Illinois and many others of the central and eastern states.

SWAMP LAND CONTEST.

State Board Grants Application of Marsters and Associates.

Salem—The state land board has decided the contest over 7,000 acres of unsurveyed swamp land near upper Klamath lake, by awarding to Senator A. C. Marsters and associates all the land for which they have applied and upon which there is no contesting application, but all the other swamp land in the tract will be advertised for sale and sold to the highest bidder. This decision permits the Marsters people to purchase about 4,600 acres of swamp land at \$1 per acre, while the remaining 2,400 acres will be sold at auction. As the land is not surveyed the state has not acquired complete title and all purchasers will be required to waive all claim to recover the purchase price if the title should fail.

The board also made a rule to the effect that hereafter when application is made for the purchase of unsurveyed swamp land and there is no contest, the board will take its own means of ascertaining the value and the price at which it will be sold, but where there is a contest the land will be sold to the highest bidder.

The contestants in this case were J. D. Carr and others, of Klamath county.

CLACKAMAS POTATO CROP.

Successful Yields are Being Shipped to San Francisco.

Oregon City—The potato crop of Clackamas county was very generally a success this year, yields exceeding 200 bushels an acre having been reported. Particularly in the vicinity of New Era was the crop of tubers prolific.

George Brown, an extensive grower at that point, reports a yield of 700 bushels from 34 acres. Mr. Brown's crop consisted of Garnet Chili, the Peerless and Burbanks. Farmers receive 75 cents a sack and the product of this locality is shipped almost exclusively to San Francisco.

Frequent shipments of carload lots are being made from New Era, and it is estimated that from 15,000 to 17,000 sacks will be marketed this year from that point. As a rule the crop in this county is of good quality.

Plenty of Feed in John Day.

John Day—Joseph Oliver, for many years the leading dairyman of Grant county, says that the recent rains, warm and bountiful, have placed the stockmen on a basis of practical certainty as to having ample feed for their stock in the John Day valley. Mr. Oliver has always been inclined to take a hopeful view of the stock and feed supply situation, and vigorously denied the reported scarcity of hay. He now points to the fact that a large number of both sheep and cattle have been driven into the valley.

PARTLAND MARKETS.

Wheat—Walla Walla, 72c; bluestem, 77c; valley, 78c.

Barley—Feed, \$10 per ton; brewing, \$20@20.50; rolled, \$21.

Flour—Valley, \$3.75@3.85 per barrel; hard wheat straight, \$3.90@4.10; clears, \$3.55@3.75; hard wheat patents, \$4.20@4.50; Graham, \$3.75; whole wheat, \$4; rye wheat, \$4.75@5. Oats—No. 1 white, \$1.07@1.10; gray, \$1.05 per cental.

Millstuffs—Bran, \$19 per ton; middlings, \$23; shorts, \$20; chop, \$18; linseed, dairy food, \$19.

Hay—Timothy, \$15@16 per ton; clover, \$12; grain, \$12; chest, \$12.

Vegetables—Turnips, 65c per sack; carrots, 75c; beets, 90c; parsnips, 75c; cabbage, 1@1½c; tomatoes, \$1 @1.25 per crate; cauliflower, 75c@1 per dozen; celery, 40@50c; pumpkins, 1c per pound; onions, Yellow Danvers, 80c@1 per sack.

Honey—\$3@3.50 per case.

Potatoes—Oregon, choice and fancy, 60@65c per sack; common, 50c; sweet potatoes, sacks, 2c; boxes, 2½c. Fruits—Apples, 75c@82c per box; pears, \$1@1.50; cranberries, \$9@10.50 per barrel.

Butter—Fancy creamery, 30@32½c per pound; dairy, 20@22½c; store, 15@15½c.

Cheese—Full cream, twins, 14@15c; Young America, 15@16c.

Poultry—Chickens, mixed, 9c per pound; spring, 10c hens, 10c turkeys, live, 10@14c dressed, nominal ducks, \$6@7 per dozen; geese, 8c per pound.

Eggs—Oregon ranch, 35c; Eastern, 26@27½c.

Beef—Dressed, 5@6½c per pound.

Veal—Dressed, small, 8c; large, 5c per pound.

Mutton—Dressed, 5@6c; lambs, dressed, 6½c.

Pork—Dressed, 6@6½c.

Hops—1903 crop, 12@22c per pound, according to quality.

Tallow—Prime, per pound, 4@5c; No. 2 and grease, 2@3c.

Wool—Valley, 17@18c; Eastern Oregon, 12@15c; mohair, 35@37c.