

The Roupell Mystery

By Austyn Granville

CHAPTER XII.—(Continued.)

Time was precious with the detective. He thought of the prisoner then languishing in the dungeons of La Masas. He put both bills in his pocket, took up his hat and arose from the table.

"Then I am to understand that madame prefers to be cited to appear before the tribunal. I think your witness' fees and mileage will amount to about one-quarter of the sum I offer."

Either the threat or the sense of loss it implied brought Mme. Beausantin to her senses. The little body eyes dilated again, and she put her hand upon the door.

"Don't go; I will tell you everything. That is more like business," remarked Cassagne. "Now tell me all you know. You see I keep faith with you. Here are your hundred francs. The other hundred are yours when you have told your story."

"I don't know much," said Mme. Beausantin. "I know Monsieur Graham only as a customer. He was a pleasant, civil man, a little given to drink, I should judge. I should say nothing but his affection for his little son kept him from going to the dogs."

"His son? Was Monsieur Graham, then, married?"

"You don't know much about him, evidently. I know he had a son. It must have been his son. He was very like him."

"Do you think you would recognize Monsieur Graham's portrait, if you saw it?"

The detective drew out the locket and placed it before her. Mme. Beausantin took it in her hand, adjusted it to the light of the shop window, and examined it carefully.

"This is the portrait of a very young man. The man I knew was older than this. Where did you get it? Yes, it is the portrait of Monsieur Graham. I would know it by several things. He had a peculiar way of looking."

"What was that?"

"He looked downward, at a slight angle, habitually. He never looked one straight in the face. He also wore an eye glass, like the man in the picture."

The detective drew out the second note and balanced it dexterously between his fingers.

"Tell me where he lived, and this is yours also."

"He lived at No. 29 Rue de Santin. It is an apartment house. The same concierge is still there. He can tell you more than I can."

M. Cassagne handed the other note to Mme. Beausantin, took up his hat, and bidding the laundress good-day passed out into the street.

CHAPTER XIII.

The man in charge of the apartment house at No. 29 Rue de Santin was a short, dumpy man, of the name of Gughatoff. Though he spoke French fluently, even with the accent of a native, his high Tartar cheek bones, his oblique eyes, and guttural intonation when unduly excited, sufficiently attested his Russian origin.

In Gughatoff, the Russian, M. Cassagne found he had a far more difficult person to deal with than the little laundress, pliant by reason of her excessive greed. With Gughatoff, whose political opinions now constituted his whole life motive, mere gain was a secondary consideration. He devoted all his spare time, which was considerable, as his wife did most of the work, to the discussion of politics. He was one of those men of whom people say: "He would sooner talk politics than eat."

The Parisian detective now felt that while his progress so far had been satisfactory, the greatest caution on his part was necessary. He had seen the most likely cases raised by too hasty conduct. He did not suffer himself to be unduly elated by the extremely satisfactory outcome of his interview with Mme. Beausantin. He went about his work with the greatest deliberation. A man less a master of his difficult profession would have at once excited suspicion, which would have resulted in the Russian's closing his mouth forever. M. Cassagne avoided this fatal error by the very deliberation with which he went about his work. His first step was to find out the kind of man he had to deal with. In two days, he had possessed himself of all necessary information. On the third he continued to ingratiate himself with the janitor, in regard to whose antecedents and peculiarities he had been so careful to make himself acquainted.

On the fifth day the morning train bore the detective away from Blois, the richer for some very important information. He had shown the portrait in the locket to Gughatoff, and the concierge, like Mme. Beausantin, had declared it to be the portrait of the American Henry Graham. In addition he had actually persuaded Gughatoff that he had been all the time entertaining in Henry Graham a spy of the Russian government; that he, Cassagne, belonged to a friendly circle of French co-operative nihilists having its headquarters in Paris; that Graham had been at one time a member of the circle, and that he was about to betray his late comrades. Gughatoff, to whom a spy was as a red rag to a bull, had greedily swallowed this remarkable fairy tale of the detective's, especially when the latter had produced a skillfully prepared document in Russian which not only commended him to the offices of all good nihilists, but even gave a distinct account of the object of his mission and minutely

described his person for purposes of identification.

True, Cassagne was the author himself of this useful paper and had forwarded it two days previously to D'Auburon in Paris, where it had been translated into Russian before being returned to Blois. But happily the concierge was ignorant of this deceit, and the plan had therefore succeeded perfectly. Burning with hatred for the supposed spy, Gughatoff had told all he knew of his late guest, which was as follows:

Henry Graham had resided in Blois some six or seven years, during which time he had had correspondence with two persons only. Gughatoff knew this, because, latterly, Graham, for fear of creditors, had rarely left his apartments, and Gughatoff had mailed his letters for him.

The first of these persons was Mme. Roupell, thus again establishing beyond a doubt the identity of the Henry Graham of Blois with the dissolute brother of the late owner of the Chateau Villeneuve.

The surname of Henry Graham's second correspondent had escaped the memory of the concierge in the course of years. He was positive, however, that her first name had been Helene, and that she had resided at Belliers, a small village in the department of the Loire.

This second correspondent had also been a lady—a well-educated, refined lady, he should judge, for he had been in the habit of taking up M. Graham's mail, and the envelopes had been fine and delicately scented, and had borne a crest and monogram on the outside, such as were only used by persons of rank.

As the train rushed across the landscape, Cassagne relapsed into a meditative mood. The thought recurred to him, was this woman, after a lapse of so many years, yet alive, and would it be possible to find her? If Graham was the murderer, as he now believed, the person most likely to know of his present whereabouts would be this one—the woman who, in all probability, had been his wife. He fell to studying how old this boy could be now. He calculated he must be nearly thirty years of age. For old Gughatoff, the concierge, had given the child's age at about ten when Graham had left Blois, and a little more than twenty years had elapsed since that time. If he could find him, he perhaps might yet be in communication with his father.

When Henry Graham had left Blois he, too, had turned his steps in the direction of Belliers. For Gughatoff had forwarded several letters to him at that place. It was toward Belliers, therefore, that he, Cassagne, must hasten, there to pursue his investigations; but first of all he would go to Paris. He must find out what M. Lablanche had accomplished. He must also receive the report of his assistant, who meantime would not have been idle.

The first thing M. Cassagne did upon his arrival in Paris was to hail a cab. Jumping in, he bade the man drive to the apartment of his friend and assistant, D'Auburon, in the Rue de Provence. It was about noon when he ascended the staircase and rapped loudly on the door of the vestibule. D'Auburon came out himself to let him in, rubbing his eyes.

"I have been up pretty nearly all night," he said, yawning terribly. "Wait till I get a bath. Then we will have some breakfast."

"Confound the fellow," exclaimed the impatient Cassagne. "I never call on him but he is either in the bath or just about to take one. It is the one thing against his making a good detective. He is too fond of water."

A minute afterward D'Auburon appeared in a loose dressing gown and Turkish slippers, yawning two enormous Indian clubs in a manner that threatened destruction to the chandeliers and ornaments.

While he was thus engaged, Cassagne had arisen. He was walking restlessly up and down the room. The splashing of the water had given him a sudden fit of shivering. The sight of his friend yawning precious time on what he deemed a frivolous exercise, also irritated him. Suddenly his eye fell upon a card in the receiver on the center table. It was a very elegantly engraved piece of pasteboard, surmounted with a coronet embossed in gold. Its inscription read:

"The Vicomte de Vallar."

"Ah," exclaimed Cassagne, "that's the man to whom I procured your letter of introduction. You managed to get there?"

"Yes," replied D'Auburon, "and he called when I was out and left his card. A great financier he is. President of half a dozen big companies. He has made one fortune and has twenty more in the fire, all of which he manages to keep respectably heated."

"Never mind him for the present," interrupted Cassagne, impatiently. "Tell me of Chabot, above all. I want to know what the prefect of police has accomplished. How many men has he got on the case?"

"Four?"

"Who are they?"

"Vougeot, Remoul, Villeroy and Coustinet."

"None of them is up to much except Vougeot," mused M. Cassagne, to whom the detectives named were well known. "Vougeot is a pretty smart fellow. What is he doing?"

"He is shadowing Chabot. So far he has accomplished nothing."

"Now tell me what has happened. This man Chabot. Is monsieur le prefect still serious in his belief that he is in some way implicated in this crime?"

"Assuredly, but there is a more absurd phase to it than that. Whom do you think, in addition to Chabot, monsieur le prefect has placed under surveillance?"

"Oh, I can't tell. The man in the moon, perhaps."

"No, not so bad as that. But, determined to cover all points, I suppose, he has placed a watch upon the movements of the American, Dr. Paul Mason. That's not all. Poor, honest Pierre, the butler at the chateau, a man whom you yourself examined and said wouldn't hurt a fly, has also been included. It is positively shameful to permit such bunglers as Lablanche to squander the secret service funds in such fooleries. Another fellow, I understand, has been haunting the park at Villeneuve, and was nearly shot by one of the keepers, who took him for a poacher. They hunted him before the mayor down there, and the man had to tell his whole story to clear himself. The prefect was raving when he heard of it. He discharged him from the force."

"More bungling," remarked Cassagne. "Who was it?"

"Little Triffet."

"Hunt him up. Pay him well, and tell him to keep his mouth shut. He may know just enough of the prefect's plans to be a very useful man for us. Meantime, what have you found about this Monsieur Chabot?"

"He is an adventurer, one of the decayed gentleman class; belongs to a couple of clubs; has the entrée into some very good and also some very questionable society. He has become affiliated with the vicomte and his set only within the last year or two. They are in several schemes together. Lately he has been making some money."

"And the vicomte, you say, is an able financier?"

"Very, I should say. He floated the City and Suburban Messenger Company, and was shrewd enough to withdraw before it went under. He is, as I told you, president of the Mutual Credit Company, and a large operator on the Bourse. He appears to have been very successful. His wife, the vicomtesse, has doubtless been a powerful factor in the making of his fortunes. Ah, but she is charming. You should see her. It was her influence, doubtless, which secured the cooperation of Monsieur Colbert-Remplin, the banker of Rue Hauffmann, in that deal. He was a naughty old fellow and never would have entertained the business proposition of de Vallar if it hadn't been for the vicomtesse. She sat next to him at dinner. The next day the prospectus of the Montaigne Charcoal Company was issued, and the name of Colbert-Remplin was on the board of directors."

"Who told you all this?"

"Told me? Why, I was there myself. They put me in as well. Look, here I am in big type. See?"

"M. CHARLES D'AUBURON, 'Capitalist.'"

Cassagne's eye gleamed with delight. He felt proud of his pupil. He sat and listened while his pupil rattled on, thinking deeply, as was his wont. Presently he pulled out his watch.

"It is two o'clock," he said. "My train leaves at three-thirty, and I have a few matters to attend to before I start. If you have occasion to wire me you can find me at that address."

He wrote upon the back of a card: "Raspiste Goulet."

"Care Police Headquarters, 'Belliers, Dept. of Loire.'"

"That will be my name for the next two or three days; at any rate, as long as I may find it necessary to stay at Belliers. Don't telegraph unless my presence is absolutely necessary. I leave that to your discretion. Keep an eye on Monsieur Chabot, and procure a man at once to keep track of Dr. Paul Mason's movements. Totally unnecessary, you say? Not at all. He may be the deepest villain of them all, and have called me in merely to keep the other side from retaining my services, thinking that by such a step he could best secure the impossibility of my being put upon his own track."

Charles D'Auburon lost sight of the sublime egotism of his leader in his admiration of the manner in which he left no point uncovered. His movements in the case were to be compared to those of a skillful general, who, before the battle actually commences, disposes of his men to the utmost advantage. What in other men would have been vanity was in M. Cassagne simply an expression of confidence born of his self-reliant nature.

(To be continued.)

No Circus for Johnny.

Johnny—"Can I go to the circus, pa?"

Father—"No indeed, I wouldn't think of letting you see such a degrading exhibition."

Johnny—"Then won't you please take me to the menagerie? Teacher says we ought to see the animals."

Father—"What! Pay full price to see only half the show? I guess not."

After Twenty Years.

Mrs. Hardapple (at play)—"That dear leading lady looks the same as she did in the last act?"

Mr. Hardapple—"Yes, and twenty years are supposed to elapse between the last and this one."

Mrs. Hardapple—"No tell! And to think she didn't wash her face once in all that time."

He Was Immune.

"Aren't you going in bathing?" asked Miss Pepprey.

"No," replied Cholly. "You know, they say there's a huge shark lurking around the beach these days."

"Yes, but why should that alarm you? They say it's a man-eating shark, you know."—Philadelphia Press.



Storage of Corn.

The relation of a perfect stand to increased crop yields has been so effectually demonstrated that the best method of storing grain becomes a matter of vital interest to all corn growers. A test was made last year to determine what the effect of storing corn in a dry room, on racks in the barn, in the warming oven of a stove and in a corner where it would have on the germinating powers of the seed the following spring:

The per cent of germination was lowest with the

corn stored in the crib, as would naturally be expected, as the seed was exposed to the widely varying temperatures which prevailed during the winter season. The germination was practically the same with the samples stored in a dry room and on racks in a barn, though these methods of storing had but little advantage over the use of the warming oven. Considerable difference was witnessed, however, in the strength of the germinations from corn kept in the several ways indicated. The grain from the corn stored in the racks in the barn, followed quite closely by that stored in a dry room. The corn stored in the warming oven germinated fairly well in all except two instances. In one the germination was remarkably low, due either to a poor ear or to the fact that the corn may have been overheated at some time.—Exchange.

Convenient Hayrack.

Many basket hay racks are built in such a fashion in the rear that to climb into them presents an especially troublesome task to a man, more so after having lifted hay or pitched bundles all day. In the sketch presented of the

ered to the height of sack and is held in place by means of an iron rod which is fastened on the uprights about two feet from the bottom.

Agriculture's Amazing Growth.

How can any country be hard up whose farms in the last nine years have produced fifty-three thousand millions of dollars' worth of crops? No wonder that the report of the Secretary of Agriculture is full of thanksgiving flavor and that he is unaffected by causes for gloom that work on other men. The value of the farm products for 1907 is nearly seven and one-half billions of dollars; 10 per cent above that of 1903, when all records of crops were broken; 25 per cent over 1903, and 57 per cent over 1900.

More than 3,000,000 acres of land that used to be considered valueless, "the home of the cactus and the prairie dog," are now producing \$30,000,000 worth of crops every year; and these crops are directly due to Secretary Wilson, who imported the Mediterranean durum wheats at a first cost of \$10,000 and saw that they were planted there. Irrigation farming, due wholly to the department, will this year sell crops for not less than \$250,000,000, which is not contemptible, in view of the fact that the Department of Agriculture costs only about \$15,000,000 a year.

Yet the work of the department is by no means on such a scale as the natural resources of the country warrant and will one day make possible. Surveyors declare that not one-half the farms of the country—420,000,000 acres, to be exact—can be classed as improved land, and only one-third, or 290,000,000 acres, is fruitful. Many years will pass before all this ground is put under cultivation, but the time will come when it will be producing abundant crops and supporting hundreds of millions of human beings.—Chicago Journal.

Heavy Hay Tonnage.

"By methods that are perfectly practicable to you we at the college are getting fifty-four tons of hay from twelve acres. First we have our land well tilled," said Professor Gilbert, of the Maine station, in addressing a recent farmers' meeting. "Why is there so much rundown land, is it low in fertility? No, it has been lying in grass so long. There are lots of fertility, nitrogen, phosphoric acid and potash; what it needs is plowing up and rotation."

"Plow poor land in the fall, and by spring there will be air in it, harrow it well in the spring, pulverize it by harrowing it over and over again. Then seed with oats and grass, and the next year you will have a good crop of grass and clover the next year. A good rotation of potatoes on sod land, using commercial fertilizer; the next year cover with stable dressing, then oats and grass with no fertilizer; the next year, grass and clover, with top-dressing of fertilizer. Our mixture of grass seed to the acre is eleven pounds timothy, six redtop, four red clover and four alsike."

"For the top-dressing 350 pounds to the acre of a fertilizer carrying 3 per cent nitrogen, 7 per cent phosphoric acid, 6 per cent potash. The grass should be cut while in bloom." After explaining why it should be done, he continued, "After the first crop is cut, 150 pounds of the same fertilizer to the acre should be applied."

Professor John H. Smith, the Entomologist of the New Jersey Experiment Station, in a bulletin on the cabbage and onion maggots, just issued, refers to the necessity of a quick-acting fertilizer in conjunction with planting at the right time, and replenishes the following formula, recommended in earlier reports: Nitrate of soda, 700 pounds; acid phosphate, 1,000 pounds; muriate of potash, 300 pounds. This, he said, in the case of radishes, can be applied as a top dressing along the rows, before they are planted, or just after they are up, at the rate of 500 pounds per acre. Similar applications can be made on turnips or onions. I believe that a fertilizer compounded after this formula, or the application of the three ingredients separately, at a proportionate rate, would in most cases be followed by good results. The combination has about 5 per cent nitrogen in its most available form, 7 per cent phosphoric acid, and 7½ per cent potash. A ton of it would cost in the neighborhood of \$32 to \$35.

Proper Fruit Packing.

A great many farmers and fruit growers seem to ignore the conditions attending the journey which their wares must take before they reach the hands and eyes of the consumers. The methods of transportation, customs of the trade, the markets' fashions as regards style, size and form of package, all must be well understood, for they are as important as the growing of the crop.

Early Made Bag Holder.

I describe a handy sack holder, useful on a farm. It has two upright pieces of 2x2 and a two-inch plank two feet long which the upright pieces are fastened to. About four or five inches from the top bore two holes 2 x 2 inches apart and 3/4 inch apart through these holes a long bolt. Take a piece of plank or board and cut it to fit between the two uprights and place the bolt through his board so it will work easily. Cut this board in a half circle to fit the sack. Drive nails through this board around this half circle to fasten sack a. This board can be raised or low-

SAK HOLDER.

The government of Spain has just started in to foster its agricultural industry by sending touring lecturers over the country.

Blood Humors

Commonly cause pimples, boils, hives, eczema or salt rheum, or some other form of eruption; but sometimes they exist in the system, indicated by feelings of weakness, languor, loss of appetite, or general debility, without causing any breaking out.

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It is stated that at least 20,000 square miles in Liberia are covered with dense rubber-tree forests.

One to Follow.

"I'll give you a good two-foot rule if you want it," said the painter.

"Hand it over," rejoined the carpenter.

"Don't wear tight shoes," said the painter, with a large, open-face grin.

The Artist's Brush.

"Mr. De Jones said I was a perfect picture," said the first dear girl.

"Yes," rejoined dear girl No. 2. "He asked me if your maid wasn't a professional painter."

What is said to be the largest telegraph circuit in the world is that between London and Teheran, the capital of Persia. It is 4,000 miles long and is divided into twelve sections.

Within the last four years France has recorded 20,000 suicides, while in Italy the number has been only 8,000.

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