

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 Mazas. 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 heady 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 knew 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 ruined 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 or 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, swinging 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 wasting 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 Vallier."

"Ah," exclaimed Cassagne, "that's the man to whom I procured you the 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 irons 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 Couinet."

"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 hauled 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 Trifflet."

"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 entree 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 haughty old fellow and never would have entertained the business proposition of de Vallier 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: "Baptiste Goulet, 'Care Police Headquarters, 'Belliers, Dep't 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 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—"Do tell! And to think she didn't wash her face once in all that time."

He Was Immense.

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

"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.



As usual, the innocent bystander is one of the worst parts of a bank run.—New York Mail.

The diabolical craze may not last long. There was a ping-pong spasm once.—Philadelphia Ledger.

Now, then, get down to business and pick out your candidate for President.—Philadelphia Press.

The average man whose wife is a good cook doesn't care how freakish her hats look.—Washington Post.

The Westinghouse concerns might have used some of their own airbrakes to advantage.—Philadelphia Press.

The cost of funerals has gone up. Another increase in the "cost of living"—for the survivors.—New York World.

We're making financial history, but the prophets are not agreed as to the final chapter.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

It looks as if that reduction in the wholesale price of meat would be a long time getting to the consumer.—Philadelphia Press.

If Saturn is getting tired of its rings, perhaps King Edward might utilize one to set his \$750,000 diamond in.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

More elasticity of the currency and less elasticity of the financial conscience are desiderata of equal importance.—New York Sun.

An Indiana woman went to jail rather than pay a fine of 1 cent. That sounds like economy carried to excess.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

In New Jersey seven physicians have been elected Mayors. Those cities must have been sick of the way things were going.—Philadelphia Press.

A panic may be "a blessing in disguise," but most of us would prefer to have our blessings put on a more cheerful front.—Washington Post.

Ocean freight rates are to be increased at an early date, but it is hoped that all that foreign gold will get in first.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

The great drawback about a peanut diet is that after you get used to it you won't enjoy peanuts at the circus and ball games.—Washington Post.

The great majority of American citizens only know that there are new \$10 coins in circulation because they read 't in the papers.—Washington Post.

Regardless of panics and politics, the chorus girl continues her conquering march through princes, belted earls and mere millionaires.—New York Mail.

The Kaiser is said to have left \$10,000 in tips at Windsor Castle. What a welcome visitor he would be here at the present moment!—New York Sun.

Jerome K. Jerome says he is back in this country for some new jokes. He is likely to soon find out that the cost of living here is not one.—Washington Post.

Now if the motto on dimes were the subject under discussion, it would be something that all of us could talk about more intelligently.—New York Mail.

It seems that the per capita circulation in 1893 was \$23.23, while now it is \$33.23. We hope none of the hoarders is alarmed over that 23.—New York Tribune.

Brokers' wives, owing to the tightness of things monetary, have resolved to play bridge only sixteen hours a day instead of twenty, as heretofore.—New York Mail.

There is nothing whatever in business or financial conditions in this country to cause uneasiness to any man who is engaged in an honest business.—Washington Post.

There will be a further drop in the prices of provisions and meats," says an Armour manager. "Further?" Has anyone noticed the previous drop?—New York World.

At the Weather Bureau these days they are enjoying a delightful new game, known as "Earthquake, earthquake, who's got the earthquake?"—Washington Herald.

A seat on the New York Stock Exchange has dropped to the insignificant sum of \$53,000. Doubtless, standing room is down as low as \$38,326.17.—Washington Herald.

Japan is buying great quantities of American-made steel rails. Let her alone! A rattling good railroad problem will give her all the war she wants at home.—Atlanta Constitution.

A Pennsylvania judge announces that applicants for divorce must prepay costs. Why not be forehanded and insert a divorce codicil in the marriage certificate?—Philadelphia Press.

That Massachusetts case, in which a man got a divorce from his wife because she went through his pockets every night, was probably raised before the money stringency came on.—Philadelphia Press.

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For over sixty years doctors have endorsed Ayer's Cherry Pectoral for coughs, colds, weak lungs, bronchitis, consumption. You can trust a medicine the best doctors approve. Then trust this the next time you have a hard cough.

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Ayer's Pills keep the bowels regular. All vegetable and gently laxative.

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Prince Louis Napoleon is a general in the Russian army. This is not a reminder of Moscow, 1812.

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Fluid Extract Dandelion, one-half ounce; Compound Kargon, one ounce; Compound Syrup Sarsaparilla, three ounces. Shake well in a bottle and take in teaspoonful doses after each meal and again at bedtime.

A well known authority, when asked regarding this prescription, stated that the ingredients are all harmless, and can be obtained at a small cost from any good prescription pharmacy, or the mixture would be put up if asked to do so. He further stated that while this prescription is often prescribed in rheumatic afflictions with splendid results, he could see no reason why it would not be a splendid remedy for kidney and urinary troubles and backache, as it has a peculiar action upon the kidney structure, cleansing these most important organs and helping them to sift and filter from the blood the foul acids and waste matter which cause sickness and suffering. Those who suffer can make no mistake in giving it a trial.

In France for the privilege of wearing men's trousers the government charges women a tax of about \$10.

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