

Secret of the Plundered Safe

By EMILE GABORIAU

CHAPTER X.

Rosal shook Prosper's hand, closed the door after him and hurried up the street, leaving Prosper standing motionless and overcome by disappointment. He was aroused from his gloomy reverie by hearing the red-whiskered man say, in a bantering tone:

"So these are your friends?"

"Yes," said Prosper, with bitterness. "You heard him offer me half of his fortune?"

"That was very stingy on his part; why did he not offer the whole? Offers cost nothing, although I have no doubt that this sweet youth would cheerfully give ten thousand francs to put the ocean between you and him."

"For what reason?"

"Who knows? Perhaps for the same reason that he has not set foot in his uncle's house for a month."

"But that is the truth, monsieur, I am sure of it."

"Naturally," said M. Verduret, with a provoking smile. "But," he continued, with a serious air, "we have devoted enough time to this Adonia. Now, be good enough to change your dress, and we will go and call on M. Fauvel. It is necessary; so come on. You must have confidence, put on a brave face."

Prosper had hardly passed into his bedroom when the bell rang again. M. Verduret opened the door. It was the porter, who handed him a thick letter, and said:

"This letter was left this morning for M. Bertomy. I was so hurried when he came that I forgot to hand it to him. It is a very odd-looking letter, is it not, master?"

It was, indeed, a most peculiar missive. The address was not written, but formed of printed letters, carefully cut from a book, and pasted on the envelope. M. Verduret went into the next room and closed the door behind him.

"Here is a letter for you," said M. Verduret.

Prosper at once tore open the envelope. Some bank notes dropped out; he counted them; there were ten. His face turned purple. The letter, like the address, was composed of printed words cut out and pasted on a sheet of paper. It was short but explicit:

"My Dear Prosper—A friend, who knows the horror of your situation, sends this. There is one heart, be assured, that shares your sufferings. Go away; leave France; you are young; the future is before you. Go, and may this money bring you happiness!"

"Everybody wishes me to go away," cried Prosper; "then there must be a conspiracy against me."

"Now," said M. Verduret, "we must take advantage of this evidence, gained by the imprudence of our enemies, without delay. We will begin with the porter."

He opened the door and called out. The porter entered, looking very much surprised at the authority exercised over his lodger by this stranger.

"Who gave you this letter?" said M. Verduret.

"A messenger, who said he was paid for bringing it. He is the errand runner who stands at the corner of the Rue Pigalle."

"Go and bring him here."

After the porter had gone M. Verduret read the letter over several times, scanning the sentences and weighing every word.

"Evidently this letter was composed by a woman," he finally said. "Never would one man doing another a service, and sending him money, use the word 'happiness.' Now let us see if we can discover whence the printed words were taken to compose this letter."

He approached the window and began to study the pasted words with all the scrupulous attention which an antiquarian would devote to an old palm-leaf.

"Small type," said he, "very slender and clear; the paper is thin and glossy. I have it!" he cried; "now I have it. These words are all cut from a prayer-book. We will look, at least, and then we shall be certain."

He moistened one of the words pasted on the paper with his tongue, and when it was sufficiently softened he detached it with a pin. On the other side of this word was printed a devout Latin word, Deus.

"Ah, ha," he said, with a little laugh of satisfaction. "I knew it. But what has become of the mutilated prayer book? Can it have been burned? No, because a heavy bound book is not easily burned. It is thrown in some corner."

M. Verduret was interrupted by the porter, who returned with the messenger.

"Ah, here you are," he said, encouragingly. Then he showed the envelope of the letter and said:

"Do you remember bringing this letter here this morning?"

"Perfectly, monsieur. I took particular notice of the directions; we don't often see anything like it."

"Who told you to bring it, a gentleman or a lady?"

"Neither, monsieur; it was a porter. I have never seen him before."

"Very well; I will give you ten francs a day if you will walk about the streets and look for the porter who brought this letter. Every evening at eight o'clock come to the Archangel, on the Quay Saint Michel, give me a report of your search and receive your pay. Ask for M. Verduret. If you find the man I will give you fifty francs. Don't lose a minute. Start off!"

"Monsieur," said Prosper, when the porter had left the room, "do you still think you see a woman's hand in this affair?"

"More than ever, and a pious woman, too, who has two prayer books, since she could cut up one to write to you. Are you ready to go to M. Fauvel's? Yes! Come on, then; we have certainly earned our breakfast to-day."

CHAPTER XI.

The visit to M. Fauvel was very stiff and formal. Only a few words were exchanged between the banker and M. Verduret, who was introduced as a relative of Prosper, and then the two left the office.

"I hope you are satisfied, monsieur," Prosper said, in a gloomy tone, when

they reached the street, "you exacted this painful step, and I could only acquiesce. Have I gained anything by adding this humiliation to the others which I have suffered?"

"You have not, but I have," replied M. Verduret. "I could find no way of gaining access to M. Fauvel, save through you; and now I have found out what I wanted to know. I am convinced that M. Fauvel had nothing to do with the robbery."

Prosper and his companion had stopped to talk more at their ease near the corner of the Rue Lafayette. M. Verduret seemed to be anxious, and was constantly looking around as if he expected some one. He soon uttered an exclamation of satisfaction. At the other end of the vacant space he saw Cavallion, who was bareheaded and running. He was so excited that he did not even stop to shake hands with Prosper, but darted up to M. Verduret and said:

"They have gone, monsieur. They went about a quarter of an hour ago." "Then we have not an instant to lose," and he handed Cavallion a note he had written some hours before at Prosper's house.

"Here, send him this, and then return at once to your desk; you might be misled. It was very rash in you to come out without your hat."

Cavallion ran off as quickly as he had come. Prosper was stupefied.

"What!" he exclaimed. "You know Cavallion?"

"So it seems," answered M. Verduret, with a smile; "but we have no time to talk; come on, hurry!" And he set the example by striding rapidly toward the Rue Lafayette. He suddenly stopped before a door bearing the number 21.

"We are going in here," he said to Prosper; "come."

They went up the steps, and stopped on the second floor, before a door over which was a large sign, "Fashionable Dressmaker." A handsome bellhop hung on the wall, but M. Verduret did not touch it. He tapped with the knuckles in a peculiar way, and the door instantly opened as if some one had been watching for his signal on the other side.

The door was opened by a neatly dressed woman of about forty. She quietly ushered M. Verduret and Prosper into a neat dining room with several doors opening into it. M. Verduret asked, in a low tone, pointing to one of the doors:

"In there?"

"No," said the woman, in the same tone, "over there, in the little parlor."

M. Verduret opened the door pointed out, and pushed Prosper into the little parlor, whispering as he did so:

"Go in, and keep your presence of mind."

But this injunction was useless. The instant he cast his eyes around the room into which he had so unceremoniously been pushed without any warning, Prosper exclaimed, in a startled voice:

"Madelaine!"

It was indeed M. Fauvel's niece, looking more beautiful than ever. Standing in the middle of the room, near a table covered with silks and satins, she was arranging a skirt of red velvet embroidered in gold. At sight of Prosper all the blood rushed to her face, and her beautiful eyes half closed, as if she were about to faint. She recovered from her momentary weakness, and the soft expression of her eyes changed to one of haughty resentment. In an offended tone she said:

"You promised me upon your honor, monsieur, that you would never again seek my presence. Is this the way you keep your word?"

"I did promise, mademoiselle, but so many things have happened since that terrible day that I think I am excusable in forgetting, for one hour, an oath torn from me in a moment of blind weakness. It is to chance, at least to another will than my own, that I am indebted for the happiness of once more finding myself near you. Alas! the instant I saw your heart bounded with joy, I did not think—no, I could not think—that you would prove more pitiless than strangers have been, and cast me off when I am so miserable and heart-broken."

"You know me well enough, Prosper, to be sure that no blow can strike you without reaching me at the same time. You suffer, I suffer with you; I pity you as a sister would pity a beloved brother."

"A sister!" said Prosper, bitterly. "Yes, that was the word you used the day you banished me from your presence. A sister! Then why during three years did you delude me with vain hopes? Was I a brother to you the day when, at the foot of the altar, we swore to love each other forever, and you fastened around my neck a holy relic, and said, 'Wear this always for my sake, never part from it, and it will bring you good fortune!'"

Madelaine attempted to interrupt him by a supplicating gesture; he would not heed it, but continued, with increased bitterness:

"One month after that happy day—a year ago—you gave me back my promise, told me to consider myself free from my engagement, and never to come near you again. If I could have discovered in what way I have offended you! But no, you refused to explain. You told me that an invincible obstacle had arisen between us and I believed you, fool that I was! The obstacle was your own heart, Madelaine. I have always worn the medal, but it has not brought me happiness or good fortune."

CHAPTER XII.

As white and motionless as a statue, Madelaine stood with bowed head before the storm of passionate reproach.

"Prosper, my brother, my friend, if you only knew—"

"I know but one thing, Madelaine, and that is that you no longer love me, and that I love you more madly than ever. Oh, Madelaine, heaven only knows how I love you!"

He was silent. He hoped for an answer. None came. But suddenly the silence was broken by a stifled sob. It was Madelaine's maid, who, seated in a corner, was weeping bitterly. He turned in surprise, and looked at the weeping woman; this neatly dressed waiting-maid was Nina Gypsy.

Prosper was so startled that he became perfectly dumb. He stood there with aghast lips, and a chilly sensation creeping through his veins. Meanwhile Madelaine had succeeded in recovering her usual calmness. Slowly and almost unconsciously she had put on her bonnet and shawl, lying on the sofa. Then she approached Prosper and said:

"I wish to tell you that I have forgotten nothing. But, oh! let not this knowledge give you any hope, the future is blank for us; but if you love me you will live. You will not, I know, add to my already heavy burden of sorrow, the agony of mourning your death. For my sake live; live the life of a good man, and perhaps the day will come when I can justify myself in your eyes. And now, oh, my brother, oh, my only friend, adieu! adieu!"

She pressed a kiss upon his brow, and rushed from the room, followed by Nina Gypsy. Prosper was alone. He seemed to be awaking from a troubled dream. He tried to think over what had just happened, and asked himself if he were losing his mind, or whether he had really spoken to Madelaine, and seen Gypsy? He was obliged to attribute all this to the mysterious power of the strange man whom he had seen for the first time that very morning, and who had entered the little parlor.

"I thank you for your past services, monsieur," said Prosper to him, "and decline them for the future, as I have no honor and my life it was because I hoped that Madelaine would be restored to me. I have been convinced to-day that all is at an end between us; retire from the struggle, and care not what becomes of me now."

Prosper was so decided that M. Verduret seemed alarmed.

"You must be mad," he finally said.

"No, unfortunately I am not. Madelaine has ceased to love me, and of what importance is anything else?"

"Do you suspect nothing? You did not see what was hidden beneath her girdle? Perhaps it was not a delicate thing to do, but as long as the object is good we need not look too closely at the means. I listened, and I am glad that I did, because now I can say to you, 'Take courage, Prosper; Madelaine loves you; she has never ceased to love you.'"

Like a man who, feeling himself at the point of death, puts faith in the doctor's promises, Prosper saw a ray of hope in M. Verduret's positive assertions.

"Oh," he murmured, suddenly calmed, "if I could only believe—"

"Believe me, I am not mistaken. Ah, you have not guessed, as I did, the sufferings of this generous girl, struggling between her love and what she believes to be her duty. Did not your heart bound at her words of farewell? She is not free. In recalling her promise to you she obeyed a superior, irresistible will. She sacrificed herself, for whom? We shall soon know, and the secret of her self-sacrifice will reveal to us the secret of the plot of which you are the victim."

(To be continued.)

ORTHOGRAPHY IS FAULTY.

Old-Fashioned Spelling Bees Would Be a Good Thing.

There is much complaint that the rising generation can't spell, says the Albany Argus. True, there was complaint that some of the forefathers could not spell. George Washington, Andrew Jackson and other men eminent in our history conducted a spell-as-you-please. Ancient men of letters were poor spellers, in many instances. Still, the average has gone downhill, it appears. Perhaps the memory of the tingling cheeks, and the ready birch in the teacher's hand, which accompanied a "spell-down," makes us children of an older growth think that we learned to spell better than do these youngsters, nowadays. Usually, with the old methods, it did not pay to miss the same word twice.

"Why is it," the question used to go, "that all the bad spellers become sign painters?" Is it because of the strict union rules, nowadays, that the bad spellers have deserted sign painting and overflowed into the other occupations? Have modern methods of teaching overlooked the desirability of teaching the boys and girls spelling and the three Rs, in order to cram their little heads with ornamental accomplishments?

There has been a widespread belief that the restoration of the old-fashioned spelling-bees, "spell up and spell down," would be a good thing. The Brooklyn Eagle thinks so to such an extent that it has offered prizes, on condition that the public school principals will let their pupils take part in a series of spelling matches. But without success. The principals do not take kindly to the notice. The Eagle says:

"The nub of the matter is just this: The public school children cannot spell. The principals of the high schools know that they cannot spell, as does everybody else who has occasion to receive letters from them. If a series of competitions were held this month to those on the inside might be revealed to the great body of parents and taxpayers. Then there might arise such a hue and cry for common sense and the fundamentals of education as would annoy the authorities who now make out our scientific and philosophical course of study, which slight spelling for general information about everybody from Confucius and Buddha down to Admiral Togo. If the school should once begin to make time enough for fundamentals, of which spelling is easily first, there is no telling how many fads and frills would have to be cut out to find the time for essentials."

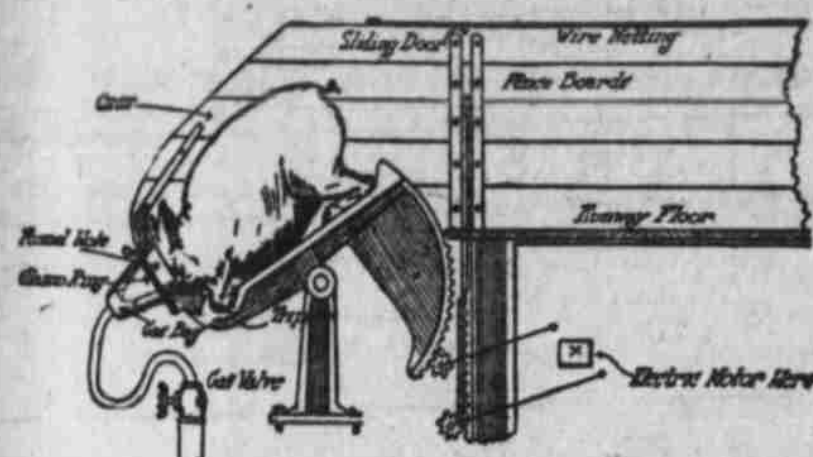
Righting a Wrong.

"New," snapped the marble-hearted female, "I ain't got nothin' cooked fer enny low-down tramp."

"Youse hev got de wrong dope sheet, ma'am," replied the hungry hobo. "I'm tramp, all right, all right, but I ain't no low-down one. I'm at de head uv me professhun. See?"

A clean and cheerful house makes a happy home.

TO KILL HOGS HUMANELY.



A CHICAGO INVENTOR PLANS TO GIVE HOGS NITROUS OXIDE GAS

JAPAN'S GREATEST GENERAL.

Oyama Was Trained to War from His Childhood Days.

Field Marshal Oyama, commander-in-chief of the Japanese forces which confronted Kuropatkin around Mukden, was born in 1841, a samurai or noble of the Kagoshima clan. From his earliest infancy he was brought up as a soldier. At 4 years of age he was separated from his mother and began to learn the lessons of hardihood. He was never allowed to wince for pain or complain of hunger. He was compelled to go barefoot in the snow in the winter to toughen him. In wintry winds he wore but the thinnest clothes to keep his skin from being tender. His days were spent in the practice of arms and physical exercise; his nights in studying bushido, or old Japanese code of honor, which taught the samurai that life was nothing as compared with the glory of his daimio or leader. Little Oyama was of sturdy stuff and could stand the training which killed many who are devoted to it.

At the age of 10 he had killed a bear unaided, and the same year took part in his first battle with the retainers of a rival daimio. Young Oyama at this time was passionately devoted to his cousin, the great Saigo, the head of the Satsuma clan. After the period of the Civil War in the '60's, when the new regime was firmly established, the

Oyama which first repels, then fascinates. It was the same with Robespierre, the same with Talleyrand. The play of the brain was needed to wipe out the ghastliness and gloom. His skin seemed to be drawn by the fires of suffering. Smallpox had left it one mass of fiery pits. I thought of the Connelville country and the square miles of coke ovens—inverted. Other scars intermingled—steel and frost, perhaps—and from the serried countenance shone the restless black eyes, piercing but crooked.

"His voice is deep and gentle, and his speech is studded with unexpected bursts of humor or intensity. The facility is western, as opposed to the stereotyped nothing which are continually upon the lips of the Japanese. Certain noblemen say that Oyama is the most brilliant conversationalist in Japan. He speaks English well, but French much better. Back of the gentle voice and the reaction of fascination which comes after a few moments in the presence of this great soldier of the Orient there is something resistless, mysterious. You feel the iron force of the man, a force inexorable, Napoleonic. If Japanese are about, you are caught in crossfire of their passionate adoration and his serene power."

An Unnecessary Distinction.

The two expressions "by and by" and "by the bye" are really derived from the same original word, and the

WHERE IS SUBMARINE?

Japan May Be Using an American Boat that Went to Holland.

As far as Uncle Sam knows, a torpedo boat, made in this country, may have been sold to Japan within the last two months. The boat, which is of the submarine type, is known as the Protector, and was built at Elizabeth, N. J., by the Lake Submarine Torpedo Boat Company. R. C. Wilde, of Meridian, Conn., a stockholder of the concern, who is at Newell's Hotel, said last night that the boat had been sold, and, to the best of his knowledge, it likely now is part of the Japanese navy.

The sale was made two months ago, he said, to a private person, and the transfer was made on the high seas. The price was about \$300,000. The boat was taken apart for transportation, and it easily could have been landed in Japan without the interference of Russia.

"I know that the Protector has been sold," said Mr. Wilde, "and that it was bought for use in the Eastern seas. The stockholders of the company have not been acquainted with the name of the purchaser, if they ever will be. We have been given to understand that our interests have been looked after in the sale, and that the fewer questions asked the better. I attend the stockholders' meetings only by proxy. The company is a regularly chartered corporation, with Simon Lake, the inventor, as president. Ex-Governor Voorhees is a director."

"This sale, I understand, was effected by President Lake. A person acting for a government opened negotiations over three months ago. The greatest secrecy was maintained concerning the deal."

It is said that when the Protector was first taken apart, or "knocked down," the company endeavored to create the impression that it was going to Holland for tests. At first this was discredited. No one in connection with the company made the voyage with the boat, and this gave rise to the suspicion that Japan was the third party. Mr. Wilde would not deny that such is the case, although he would not admit that Japan bought outright—Pittsburg Dispatch.

HERO OF REAR GUARD IN RUSSIAN RETREAT NORTH FROM LIAO-YANG.

General Meyendorff was in command of the Russian troops which fought back the pursuing Japanese on the retreat of Kuropatkin's army from Liao-yang to Mukden. It was the dogged



FIELD MARSHAL OYAMA.

young Oyama was sent to France as military attaché to study the organization of modern armies, and had the opportunity of observing modern warfare during the Franco-German conflict of 1870. He remained abroad three years, and on his return home was appointed a general in the Imperial army.

At the outbreak of the Satsuma rebellion, headed by his cousin Saigo, and in which his own brother took a leading part, Oyama found himself in a painful dilemma; his loyalty to the central government and to the person of the Emperor triumphed, however, and he took the field against his clansmen, and as commander of the "flying brigade," fought bravely and successfully until Saigo's fall.

During the ensuing ten years of reconstruction and the military strengthening of the country Oyama was the right-hand man of Marquis Yamagata. During the war with China he was commander-in-chief of the second Manchurian army. In 1898 he was made a marshal and the following year became chief of the general staff. He is the only one of the older generals who is active in the present war, the health of Yamagata not permitting him to take an active part in the great struggle with Russia.

A vivid pen picture of the commander-in-chief of the armies of Japan in Manchuria is given by an American correspondent who was presented to him. He says:

"The first impression was that of repulsion. Oyama is short, squat and long-armed. His huge head seems to rest upon heavy shoulders, without a connecting medium, and this peculiarity is intensified as the Marquis turns his body as well as his head when he wishes to look at an object behind or at his side. The physical peculiarities, however, are nothing. It is the face of

words "by" and "bye" have the same general sense. But the spelling "bye" has long been used in the second of these phrases, without any real reason for the change. We should not speak of a bye-law or a bye-path, and yet many are careful to write "by the bye" and "by and by." In "good-bye" there might be some reason for keeping the final "e," since it stands for the word "ye" in the shortened form of "God be with ye," but where so much has been dropped the "e" is hardly worth keeping, especially as the old meaning is seldom recalled.—St. Nicholas.

Her Reward.

"The brute," exclaimed the bride of a year.

"Have a cup of tea, dear," said her fondest friend, "and tell me all about it. What has he been doing now?"

"You know I told you he has been encouraging me in learning to cook; has praised my nice little entrees, takes me to the theater as an occasional reward, and all that."

"No good ground for a separation in that, I imagine," said the dearest friend, with slight sarcasm.

"Your sympathy is worse than your tea," retorted the bride, who was obviously out of sorts. "But I am going to tell you, anyway. Not long ago he promised me a surprise if I would turn out a nice dinner, cooked all by myself, from soup to coffee. Last night I did so. Everything pleased him."

"My pet," he remarked, "I believe I promised you a surprise on an occasion like this."

"Yes, darling," I answered. "Oh, do tell me what it is?"

"I shall discharge the cook at the end of the month," he added.

A woman would rather people thought she was taller-made than self-made.



GENERAL MEYENDORFF.

resistance that he offered to every attempt of the Japanese to attack the fleeing Russians that enabled Kuropatkin to escape north with his main army. Meyendorff gallantly fought the enemy in his orderly backward march almost to the walls of Mukden, while the artillery and baggage trains, 12,000 wounded men and the main army escaped in safety.

An Unbeaten Race.

"I have never allowed Lou Dillon to be beaten by another horse when in training. She has never yet been passed by a horse in a race. She feels that she can beat anything in this world, and such confidence is necessary for the best results. It is not a question of nerve or spirit. But when it comes to a supreme test, like the one at Readville or at Memphis last year—a heart-breaking trial—I want her to feel that she is supreme, and that nothing can beat her. In that race against Major Delmar at Memphis last October, which Dillon won in such splendid style, at the quarter Delmar was right at my shoulder. Dillon was dashing along with that tremendous stride and with perfect ease. Delmar was making his supreme effort. I heard him grunt. He knew he was beaten; he was heartbroken, and then and there he gave up the race."—C. K. G. Billings, in County Life in America.

The City of Santiago.

Santiago is a very fine city, situated among hills, with views of the distant snow-clad mountains. The streets are broad, and many of them are lined with trees and running water. There are also some handsome pleasure grounds, and one of the finest zoological gardens in the world. In the evening the band plays in the principal plaza, and all the elite turn out after supper dressed in their "war paint," and walk around or sit on chairs, chatting and listening to the music. There are a great many fine public buildings, houses and churches, that add to the importance and beauty of the city. Few finer places could be found to reside in were it not for its unfortunate liability, like all South American countries, to periodical revolutions.