

TWENTY-ONE.

The heart is young, the step is light, The voice is sweet, the eye is bright, Hope sings a song of pure delight At twenty-one.



THE CHEVALIER D'AUZAC. [Copyright, 1897, by Longmans, Green & Co.]

SYNOPSIS.

Chapter I—D'Auzac, commanding outpost where scene is laid, tells the story. De Gomeron has been appointed by Gen. de Rone to examine into a charge made against him. Nicholas, a sergeant, brings in two prisoners, a man and a woman, who are from the king's camp at Le Fere, D'Auzac, angered by insulting manner of De Gomeron toward the woman, strikes him. A duel follows, and during the commotion the prisoners escape. De Rone happens on the disorderly scene, and d'Auzac, upon giving his parole not to attempt escape, hears this remarkable sentence: "To-morrow you must die on the field. Win or lose, if I catch you at the close of the day, I will hang you as high as Haman."

Chapter II—D'Auzac next morning takes his place as usual on de Rone's staff. In the course of his ride over the field he saves the life of Nicholas, the sergeant, who, a victim of De Gomeron's malice, is found in imminent danger of almost instant death. Chapter III—After the battle in which King Henry utterly routs de Rone's forces, d'Auzac, lying severely wounded, sees the forms of a man and woman moving under cover of the night among the dead and wounded. They find a golden collar and de Leyva's corpse and Iabette stabs Maugnot (her partner) to gain possession of the prize. After this hideous scene Henry with a retinue, among whom is the fair prisoner who had escaped from the hand of De Gomeron, rides over the field.

Chapter IV—D'Auzac in the hospital of friend Genevieve discovers his unknown friend is the heiress of Bidache. She visits him daily, and when he is well enough is taken to her Normandy chateau. Here he learns from Maitre Pain, the madame's chaplain, that the king is about to force upon the woman a very distasteful marriage with M. d'Ayen. With Jacques, his steward, d'Auzac leaves for the avowed purpose of preventing their marriage.

Chapter V—D'Auzac's horse casts a shoe. This causes a delay at village of Ezy, where he comes upon Nicholas, his old sergeant, who says De Gomeron is in the neighborhood with the king's commission, and that he (Nicholas) has evidence of treason brewing among de Gomeron and certain associates against the king.

Chapter VI—By Nicholas, d'Auzac goes by night to where De Gomeron is stationed. Standing beside a broken pane they hear something of the outline of a plot against the king. Burning with revenge, Nicholas fires through the window at De Gomeron, but misses his mark.

Chapter VII—The two men fly for their lives, and think themselves almost beyond pursuit when they come suddenly face to face with Biron, one of the traitors to the king, whom d'Auzac cuts down, and with De Gomeron, who makes short work of Nicholas, d'Auzac escapes.

Chapter VIII—He comes to Rouvres where Jacques, by previous arrangement, had prepared to have him received; from there he goes direct to Paris.

Chapter IX—D'Auzac takes up lodgings in Paris, and lays what he knows of the treachery in the army and among the nobles before Sully, master general of the ordinance, who advises him to keep himself as much confined as possible.

Chapter X—Calling on de Belin, a friend living in Paris, the chevalier secures from him a servant, named Ravallac (whom de Belin had won from d'Ayen), and who temporarily takes the place of Jacques. He learns marriage of d'Ayen and Madame de la Bidache is to take place in a fortnight. De Belin is to be d'Ayen's sponsor.

Chapter XI—Maitre Pain appears in Paris in attendance upon Madame de la Bidache, comes to see d'Auzac and outlines to him a plan for the madame's escape into Switzerland. D'Auzac crosses the river, meets d'Ayen, who throws him his glove, which almost forces him into a duel on the spot. He is obliged to retreat to himself of such a disturbance on the street, he flees, eluding the guards only by plunging into the river and swimming to his own side.

Chapter XII—D'Auzac has his suspicions aroused concerning his new servant, Ravallac. Later he witnesses a meeting of the servant and De Gomeron. D'Auzac thereupon returns him to his former service under de Belin.

CHAPTER XII.—CONTINUED. I determined, therefore, to go up to my room and await de Belin's coming, and on my opening the door of my sitting-room saw, to my surprise, a man apparently dozing in my armchair. The noise of my entrance awoke him. He jumped up, and I recognized my friend. "Belin! what good wind has blown you here? But how did you come in? There is no one in the house."

"There was when I came in, my friend. Do you know"—and he looked me in the face—"you have made a mess of things?" "You know already! Belin, I have just been to see you about it. The whole affair was forced on me."

tester you hear no more of the little affair of last night. But I must be going. Meet me at the Rue de Bourbonnais at one exactly, and I will take you to the Louvre, and now good-by!" He rose and gave me his hand. "But surely there is no need for you to go now? Dine with me at my ordinary; I have much to tell you."

"Tap! tap! tap! It was Dame Annette's little knock at my door, and I knew it was something of import that had brought her to my room. "One moment, Belin!" and, opening the door, I saw Mme. Pantin standing there in breathless agitation. "What is it, madame? Come in and speak freely; there is only my friend, Comte de Belin, here."

"It is nothing, monsieur," she said loudly, and then dropping her voice to a whisper: "Ravallac was out last night. Pantin was deceived. I have come up to tell you so at once; he rid of him. I am asked to tell you this by a friend."

"A hundred thanks! I have parted with him, and he will not trouble us more. But who is this friend who takes so great an interest in me?" "You have company, monsieur," she answered with a bobbing curtsy; "I will not intrude any longer." And without another word she turned and went away.

CHAPTER XIII. THE LOUVRE.

It wanted full ten minutes to the hour when I rode through the gates of the Hotel de Belin, and a moment or so after was with my friend. He was standing in the great hall as I entered, in the midst of a small, but brilliantly dressed group of cavaliers. On my being announced, however, he came forward to meet me with outstretched arms.

"Fardieu!" he exclaimed, stepping back a half pace after our greeting, "so you have dropped the Huguenot? We poor devils will have but a bad time of it if you turn courtier."

"Is that likely?" I asked, a little bitterly, and then, in a low tone, "have you made Ravallac safe?" "He has made himself safe," he whispered; "he is gone."

"Gone!" "Yes—vanished. It is perhaps best so. We will discuss him later," and raising his voice, "come, let me present you to my friends," and he led me to his companions, who, gathered in a little knot near the huge fireplace, stood surveying me with a well-bred curiosity.

"Gentlemen, permit me to introduce my old comrade, the Chevalier d'Auzac—the Duc de Bellegarde, whom we all call M. le Grand, the Viscomte de Vitry, the Seigneur de Valry, and the Chevalier d'Aubusson, who, like you, d'Auzac, is new to the court."

"And who is delighted to meet with an old acquaintance, and trusts that M. de Praelux is in as good a way." "As the company from Paradise—eh, chevalier?" I put in.

"Fairly hit," exclaimed the lieutenant, and then he must needs tell the story of our little adventure, at which there was much laughter, and it was easy to see that the marshal and Zamet had no friends in the Rue de Bourbonnais.

"Come, gentlemen," said de Belin, "if we delay longer we shall miss the cinque-pace—one health round and let us start."

As he spoke a number of long-necked glasses filled with the wine of champagne were brought to us. Holding his glass high above his head, de Belin called out: "Gentlemen—the king."

The toast was drunk with a cheer in which my voice alone was still, but I joined with the others in shivering my glass in fragments on the white marble of the floor, and then, a gay, laughing crowd, we took horse for the Louvre.

As we approached the sight before us was gay beyond description. All the good commons of Paris had thronged to see the court reopen, and to catch a glimpse and perhaps a wave of the hand from the king whom they now loved with their whole hearts. They came all in their gayest, and as the cheerful crowd swayed backward and forward beyond the long line of guards that kept the entrance to the palace free, it was for all the world like a bank of flowers stirred by the wind.

Absorbed as I was in my own troubles, I could not restrain a feeling of pride that rose within me at the scene. Down through that roaring crowd, that cheered them again and again as they passed, it was as if all the old historic names of France had gathered to do honor to the day. And I felt, too, as I looked at the endless sea of heads, that this was no longer a France, at murderous war with itself, but a united and powerful nation, that was being led onward to its destiny by the strong hand of a man who had quenched a fratricidal struggle, and for the moment I forgot how small he could be who was yet so great.

The throng was so thick that for a time we were unable to gain a passage, and were compelled to go at a walking pace, and Belin, reining in his fretting beast, exclaimed: "Faith, 'tis the largest gathering I have ever seen."

"All France is here to-day," said de Valry. "There go d'Ossat and his eminence, fresh from the quirinal." By this time I had collected myself in some degree, and began to try and rapidly rehearse in my mind what I should say when I came face to face with the king; but I am not ashamed to confess that at each attempt I found myself getting more and more hopelessly confused, and, finally dropping the effort, determined to let the occasion find its own words. At last we were on the stairway, and in twenty minutes had entered the great hall which Henry had built himself, and which was known as the Galerie d'Apollon. Except for the vacant space around the still empty throne, the full length of its seventy yards was almost as much crowded as the hall below; but here the music was

much louder, though the laughter and talk was not less merry and incessant. There was not, of course, nearly so much movement, and the people were more or less gathered in little knots or groups, though there were many gay butterflies flitting from one of these to the other.

"Keep by me," said de Belin, and almost as he spoke we came face to face with Travannes, de Gie and de Cosse-Brissac, all dressed in the extreme of fashion. Belin saluted coldly, but my heart warmed toward my old comrades in arms, and I stretched out my hand. This de Gie took limply, but Travannes and de Cosse-Brissac contented themselves with bows of the politest ceremony. The Vicomte de Gie was, however, effusive in speech if chilly in manner. "It is not every one who could tear a hole in the edict as you have done, d'Auzac," he said, and then added with a smile, "but who made your cloak? 'Tis a trifle longer than we wear it here."

"It is short enough for me to see the king in," I answered, a little crisply. "The king!" exclaimed both Travannes and Brissac, a marked interest in their tones.

"My dear fellow," said de Gie, interrupting my reply, "I knew you would fall on your feet—see here," and, stepping right up to me, he threw open my cloak slightly with a turn of his wrist, "wear it so, d'Auzac; it shows your cross of St. Denis now," then, dropping his voice, "friend or foe—are you for the marshal or the master general?"

"I am here for a short time," I replied. "I have come to see the king. I neither understand nor care about your intrigues."

"I understand perfectly, monsieur," he said, falling back, a half smile on his lips, and bowing to each other we passed on in different ways, they down and I up the hall to join de Belin, who had gone a few paces ahead.

"The king is still in his cabinet," he said, pointing to a closed door, before which a sentry stood on guard. "I go in at once. When I come out let it be the signal for you to join me. I will then present you, and mind, speak freely."

"I mean to," I answered, and with a nod he passed up through the press. I leaned against the pillar near which I was standing, and surveyed the crowd. Madame was nowhere there, or else I had missed her. Perhaps it was better so, for did I see her I might be unnerved, and here Bellegarde joined me. "Do you see her?" he asked.

"See whom?" I answered, with a start and an eager look around. "La belle Henriette. See, there she stands! A little court around her, with the brightest eyes and the sharpest tongue in France. I wager a hundred pistoles she will rule us all some day."

As events showed, Bellegarde was right, though that concerns not this story. "Ah! There is Pimental—one moment, chevalier," and he left me to join the king.



HE WAS PRESSING THE TIPS OF HER FINGERS TO HIS LIPS.

his friend. I was again alone, and resigned myself to patience, when a voice seemed to whisper over my shoulder: "If M. le Chevalier will kindly survey the other side of the room, perhaps he will be equally interested."

I turned round sharply. There was no one whom I could recognize as the person who had addressed me. On the other hand, however, I blessed him in my heart, for not ten feet away was madame, radiant and beautiful, with Belin by her side, and M. d'Ayen, with his arm in a silken sling, bowing before her. He was pressing the tips of her fingers to his lips when our eyes met, and, drawing away her hand, she made a half-movement toward me. I was by her side in a moment, and, as we shook hands, she said, with a smile: "So we have met again, chevalier! In the Louvre, above all places," this with a slight rising of color.

"I thought I had missed you. I was looking for you everywhere, and had given you up. Of course, I knew you were in Paris."

"But the Rue Varenne was too distant a land to journey to? Come," she added, as I began to protest, "give me your arm and take me there," she indicated the upper end of the room; "the crush is not so great there—it is frightful here. M. d'Ayen will, I know, excuse me." Here d'Ayen, who stood glaring at me, and biting the red feathers in his hat which he held in his hand, interposed: "I was in hopes that madame would give me the pleasure," he began—

"Another day, perhaps, baron," I cut in, rudely enough. "I trust," I added, in a kinder tone, "that your arm does not incommode you."

"It will heal soon," he said, in a thick voice, and turned away abruptly. "He is very angry," madame said, following him with her eyes. "That will heal, too, I hope—this way is easiest, I think," and I moved onward with my charge, still, however, keeping an eye on the door of the cabinet.

And now, as we made our way slowly toward the upper end of the room, I began to get tongue-tied, and madame,

too, said nothing. Finally I blurted out: "I am to see the king in a few minutes." "She looked down and half-whispered: "God give you success."

"Amen!" I echoed to her prayer. And then in a way that people have when their hearts are full of grave things, we began to talk of matters light as air.

"The king is late to-day," madame said, glancing at the still closed door of the cabinet near which a curious crowd had gathered; "perhaps the cinque-pace will get me off," she ran on, "M. de Guiche told me that the king was to open it with Mlle. d'Entragues. Do you not see her there? That lovely black-eyed girl, talking to half a dozen people at once."

"Is she so very beautiful?" "What a question to ask! I do not see a woman in the room to compare with her."

"To my mind her profile is too hard." "Indeed!" Madame's face with its soft though clear outlines was half turned from me as she spoke. "I suppose then you do not care for her—a man never thinks with a woman in the matter of beauty. But I did think you would admire mademoiselle."

"Why should I, even supposing she was beautiful? To my mind there are two kinds of beauty." And here I was interrupted by the sound of cheering from the Petite Galerie, and the sudden hush that fell on the room. As we moved down to see for whom the crush was parting on either side, we discovered that it was the marshal himself, and close at his heels was Lafin, with his sinister smile, and a dozen gentlemen, amongst whom I observed the grim figure of Adam de Gomeron. Madame saw the free lance too, and then turned her eyes to mine. She read the unspoken question in my look, her eyes met mine, and through her half-parted lips a low whisper came to me: "Never—never!"

"They are coming straight toward us," I said. "We will stand here and let them pass," and, with her fingers still resting on my arm, we moved a pace or so aside. As Biron came up there was almost a shout of welcome, and he bowed to the right and left of him, as though he were the king himself.

"It almost seems as if I shall not have my interview," I said to madame, a minute or so later when the commotion caused by Coiffier had ceased. "When were you to go in?" she asked. "As soon as ever M. de Belin came out to summon me."

"Then there he is," and as she spoke I saw the door open and Belin looked out. "Go," she said, and then our eyes met and I stepped up to the cabinet. [TO BE CONTINUED.]

The Canalman. A canalman, unless there happens to be a member of his family who can help him, hires a man called "the hand." The men who run the boats come from various positions in life to become canalmen. Some have been farmers, who own farms along or near the canal, and not a few have been born and lived all their lives on a canalboat. Perhaps one of the most unusual cases is that of a well-educated man, who was formerly a Methodist minister, but is now, and has been for several years, living with his family on one of these boats, and driving mules for a living.

The majority, however, are rough and ignorant, and the proverbial swearing is to be heard in its most repulsive forms. One notices frequently a lame or crippled man in charge of a boat, since this is one of the few positions in which a maimed person is able to earn a livelihood. A canalman's family, if he has one, lives with him on the boat during the open season, and the rest of the year some live on little plots of ground, often too small to be called farms, or perhaps they may live in one of the larger towns near by.—Ethel Belle Appel, in Godey's Magazine.

Unreasonable. A clergyman was in his library one day preparing his Sabbath discourse. He paused frequently to review what he had written, and would often erase a word or sentence and substitute another, and his five-year-old son, who was watching him, asked: "Papa, does God tell you what to preach?" "Certainly, my son," was the reply. "Then why do you scratch it out?" queried the little observer.—Troy Times.

Precautionary. Rev. Shinbone—"We will now take up our collection for de benefit ob de widens an' orphans ob de congregation; and as Brudder Erastus passes down de aisle wif his han's tied behind him, yo' will kindly drap yo' money in de basket what is tied to his chest."—Boston Herald.

How She Knew. May—Rather a morose sort of man, isn't he? Madge—Yes; but his heart's in the right place. "How do you know that?" "He told me last night that I was in sole possession of it."—Puck.

Great Thing Indeed. "That luminous point is a splendid invention! What do they use it for?" "We paint the baby, so we can give him a drink in the night without lighting the gas."—Tit-Bits.

A Scarce Article. "Bridget, I told you five times to have muffins for breakfast. Haven't you any intellect?" "No, mum, there's none in the house."—Brooklyn Life.

Impediments to Thrift. If a man gets a dollar ready to put away for a rainy day he meets two people selling tickets to amateur shows when on his way to the bank to deposit it.—Acheson Globe.

The Reason. He—Why were they married in such haste? She—Each suspected the other of a desire to back out.—N. Y. World.

THE WHITE MAN'S BURDEN.

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Take up the White Man's burden— Send forth the best ye breed— Go, bind your sons to exile To serve your captives' need; To wait in heavy harness, On fluttered folk and wild— Your new-caught sullen peoples Half devil and half child.

Take up the White Man's burden— In patience to abide, To veil the threat of terror And check the show of pride; By open speech and simple, An hundred times made plain, To seek another's profit And work another's gain.

Take up the White Man's burden— The savage wars of peace— Fill full the mouth of Famine, And bid the sickness cease; And when your goal is nearest (The end for others sought) Watch sloth and heaten folly Bring all your hopes to naught.

Take up the White Man's burden— No ignoble rule of Kings, But toil of serf and sower— The tale of common things. The ports ye shall not enter, The roads ye shall not tread, Go, make them with your living And mark them with your dead.

Take up the White Man's burden— And reap his old reward— The blame of those ye better— The hate of those ye guard— The cry of hosts ye humor (Ah, slowly!) toward the light: "Why brought ye us from bondage, Our loved Egyptian night?"

Take up the White Man's burden— Ye dare not stoop to less— Nor call too loud on Freedom To cloak your weariness. By all ye will or whisper, By all ye leave or do, The silent, sullen peoples Shall weigh your God and you.

Take up the White Man's burden Have done with childish days— The lightly proffered laurel, The easy ungrudging praise; Comes now to search your manhood Through all the thankless years, Cold, edged with dear-bought wisdom, The judgment of your peers.

—Rudyard Kipling.

SOCIAL TACT.

A Noted Frenchman Who Was an Adept at Smoothing Things Over.

Mons. Challemeil-Lacour, a distinguished member of the French academy who died lately, was noted for his tact and readiness in social emergencies. Both were severely tried upon one occasion. M. Challemeil-Lacour was sent as ambassador from France to the Swiss confederation. He called in due form on his arrival upon the president. The servant who opened the door said that his excellency was in the cellar bottling wine, but that the visitor could come in and wait. The ambassador hung up his overcoat in the hall and went into the parlor. Presently the Swiss ruler bustled in.

"An ugly job, monsieur!" drying his hands; "an ugly job! But I always bottle my own wine. Pardon my coat also. It is a poor fit," glancing down. "It is my son's, to tell the truth. I hurried it on without looking at it."

The interview being over, he went home shivering. He sent a messenger the next day for his "coat, which he had hung up in the hall."

Of all the qualities once essential to a sovereign the one most useful now is tact. Queen Margherita of Italy, who belongs to a house trained to kinglycraft for more than a thousand years, is said to be wonderfully skillful in dealing with social difficulties. An incident which occurred at one of her drawing-rooms illustrates her readiness and delicacy.

The persons who are to be presented at the Roman court are arranged in a large semicircle in the throne room. The queen enters and passes around the line, attended by a chamberlain, who names each person, adding usually a word or two to give the queen some idea of their claim to notice. She asks a question or makes a remark to each and passes on.

On this occasion there was in line a young man from South America whose embarrassment showed itself in pale cheeks and terrified glances as the queen drew nearer. At last she reached him, and stopped. He heard his name, saw her smile. There was a roaring in his ears; his knees shook. Every eye was bent upon him with amused interest, his terror was so perceptible.

"From Brazil?" she asked. "And what town in Brazil is your home, signor?" "I—your majesty—I don't know!" he gasped.

The whole circle smiled; but the queen's face was as calm as marble. "You mean that our beautiful Italy already has made you forget your home? Ah, signor, you are a skillful courtier! You flatter us too much!" and playfully shaking her fan at him, she passed on, leaving him wondering how he came to make so brilliant a response, while the crowd also looked at him, respectfully bewildered, also.—Youth's Companion.

EGOTISTICAL.

"The trouble with him," said the young man who had been trying to fittingly describe an acquaintance, "is that when he dipped into the sea of knowledge he thought he brought up so much that the blamed thing went dry."—Chicago Post.

In the lower German Spreewald there is a famous market for women's hair, supplied almost entirely by peasant girls, especially those between the ages of 12 and 13. The industry is carried on chiefly by old women, who secure orders from wealthy patrons, and with a sample of the sort desired, set out among the Spreewald peasants and tempt the girls to give them what they seek. The reason for the selection of girls of the age mentioned is that they are young enough to have, perhaps, a second or even a third "crop" of hair to reward other journeys into the region.

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