



CONTINUOUS PERFORMANCE.

Comes a patter, patter, patter on the stairs, and then a clatter. And it really doesn't matter, in the room just next to mine, That I'm very busy reading; at the door two eyes are peering;

And it's quite upsetting, very; while her gleeful laugh and merry Wakes the echoes—I am scary and I give a jump and whoop;

From when in the early morning, beauty taps and slumber scorning, Comes a voice of baby warning, saying: "Papa, I'm am woke,"

Till the wide blue eyes are sleepy, and the laughing voice is cheery, And the active tyke is creasy, life's a never-ending joke;

CHAPTER VI.—CONTINUED. We ate crackers and cheese while the landlord was telling of the west roads and the probable location of the British.

"Some one et the window," he whispered. Then he ran to the door and drew the bolt. "Ain' much idee who 't is," he added, peering out of the window.

"Turn 'er on," said D'ri, quickly, "an' let me hev that air hose."

The landlord ran up a ladder. D'ri stuck the hose out of the window. The stream shot away with a loud hiss.

"Plenty o' water?" D'ri whispered. "Rivers uv it," said the landlord. "Tank 's connected with the reservoir. o' the lead-works on the hill up there.

"Turn 'er on," said D'ri, quickly, "an' let me hev that air hose."

The landlord ran up a ladder. D'ri stuck the hose out of the window. The stream shot away with a loud hiss.

"Mek fer yer hosses," he hissed. We were below-stairs and out of the door in a jiffy. Two men fled before us at the stable, scrambled over the fence, and went tumbling downhill.

"Guess their ammunition 's a leetle wet," said D'ri, with a shout that turned into laughter as we left the British behind us.

Crossing a small river at daylight,

we took the bed of it, making our way slowly for half a mile or so into the woods. There we built a fire, and gave the horses half the feed in our saddle-bags, and ate our mess on a flat rock.

"Never hed no sech joemightyful time es that afore," said D'ri, as he sat down, laughing, and shook his head. "Jerushy Jane! Did n't we come down that air hill! Luk slidin' on a greased pole."

"Comin' so luk the devil they did n't dast git 'n er way," said Thurst. "We wus all rippin' th' air 'ith them air joemightyful sabers, tew," D'ri went on. "Hed a purty middlin' sharp edge on us. Stuck out luk a haystack right 'n' left."

He began bringing wood as he sang the chorus of his favorite ballad:—

Li tooral I ooral I ooral I, etc.

Thurst knew a trail that crossed the river nearby and met the Caraway Pike a few miles beyond. Having eaten, I wrote a dispatch to be taken back by Thurst as soon as we reached the pike. Past 10 o'clock we turned into a rough road, where the three of us went one way and Thurst another.

I rode slowly, for the horses were nearly fagged. I gave them an hour's rest when we put up for dinner. Then we pushed on, coming in sight of the Chateau Le Ray at sundown. A splendid place it was, the castle of gray stone fronting a fair stretch of wooded lawn, cut by a brook that went splashing over rocks near by, and sent its velvet voice through the wood and field.

"Welcome, gentlemen! It is the Capt. Bell!" said he, with a marked accent, as he came to me, his hand extended. "You come from Monsieur the Gen. Brown, do you not?"

"I do," said I, handing him my message.

He broke the seal and read it carefully.

"I am glad to see you—ver' glad to see you!" said he, laying his hands upon my shoulders and giving me a little shake.

The two servants went away with D'ri and Seth and the horses. "Come, captain," said my host, as he led the way. "You are in good time for dinner."

We entered a great triangular hall, lighted by side windows above the door, and candelabra of shining brass that hung from its high ceiling. There were sliding doors of polished wood on each side of it. A great stairway filled the point of the triangle. I was shown to my room, which was as big as a ball-room; it seemed to me, and grandly furnished; no castle of my dreams had been quite so fine.

The kind of life I saw in this grand home was not wholly new to me, for both my mother and my father had known good living in their youth, and I had heard much of it. I should have been glad of my new uniform; but after I had had my bath and put on the new shirt and collar the valet had brought me, I stood before the long pier-glass and saw no poor figure of a man.

The great dining-hall of the count was lighted with many candles when we came in to dinner. It had a big fireplace, where logs were blazing, for the night had turned cool, and a long table with a big epergne of wrought silver, filled with roses, in its center. A great silken rug lay under the table, on a polished floor, and the walls were hung with tapestry. I sat beside the count, and opposite me was the daughter of the Sieur Louis Francois de Saint-Michel, king's forerunner under Louis XVI. There, the handsome daughter of the count, sat facing him at the farther end of the table, and beside her was the young Marquis de Gonvello. M. Pidgeon, the celebrated French astronomer, Moss Kent, brother of the since famous chancellor, the Sieur Michel, and the Baroness de Ferre, with her two wards, the Misses Louise and Louison de Lambert, were also at dinner. These young ladies were the most remarkable of the company; their beauty was so brilliant, so fascinating, it kindled a great fire in me the moment I saw them. They said little, but seemed to have much interest in all the talk of the table. I looked at them more than was polite, I am sure, but they looked at me quite as often. They had big, beautiful brown eyes, and dark hair fastened high with jeweled pins, and profiles like those of the fair ladies of Sir Peter Lely, so finely were they cut. One had a form a bit fuller and stronger than the other's, but they were both as tall and trim as a young beech, with lips cherry-red and cheeks where one could see faintly the glow of their young blood. Their gowns were cut low, showing the graceful lines of neck and shoulder and full bosom. I had seen pretty girls, many of them, but few high-bred, beautiful young women. The moment I saw these two some new and mighty force came into me. There were wine and wit a plenty at the count's table, and other things that were also new to me, and for which I retained perhaps too great a fondness.

The count asked me to tell of our journey, and I told the story with all the spirit I could put into my words. I am happy to say it did seem to hit the mark, for I was no sooner done with our adventure than the ladies began to clap their hands, and the Misses de Lambert had much delight in their faces when the baroness retold my story in French.

"Dinner over, the count invited me to the smoking-room, where, in a corner by ourselves, I had some talk with him. He told me of his father—that he had been a friend of Franklin, that he had given a ship and a cargo of gunpowder to our navy in '76. Like others I had met under his roof, the count had seen the coming of the Reign of Terror in France, and had fled with his great fortune. He had invested much of it there in the wild country. He loved America, and had given freely to equip the army for war. He was, therefore, a man of much influence in the campaign of the north, and no doubt those in authority there were instructed, while the war was on, to take special care of his property.

"And will you please tell me," I said at length, "who are the Misses de Lambert?"

"Daughters of a friend in Paris," said the count. "He is a great physician. He wishes not for them to marry until they are 21. Mon Dieu! it was a matter of some difficulty. They were beautiful."

"Very beautiful!" I echoed. "They are admired," he went on. "The young men they began to make trouble. My friend he sent them here, with the baroness, to study—to finish their education. It is healthy, it is quiet, and—well, there are no young gentlemen. They go to bed early; they are up at daylight; they have the horse! they have boats; they amuse themselves ver' much. But they are impatient; they long for Paris—the salon, the theater, the opera. They are like prisoners; they cannot make themselves contented. The baroness she has her villa on a lake back in the woods, and, mon ame! it is beautiful there—so still, so cool,

clapping his hands.

"Eh, bien," said the other, with a sigh. "I suppose it is very nice. I do not dare to think of it."

"Nice! It is heaven, Louise! And to see a man like that and not be permitted to—speak to him! Think of it! A young and handsome man—the first I have seen for a year! Honestly I could poison the colonel."

"My dear sister, you are very terrible," said one of them, and then the shutter came to, and I heard no more.

A full moon lighted the darkness. A little lake gleamed like silver between the tree-tops. Worn out with hard travel, I fell into bed shortly, and lay a long time thinking of those young ladies, of the past, of to-morrow and its perils, and of the farther future. A new life had begun for me.

CHAPTER VII. The sun was lifting above the tree-tops when the count's valet called me that morning at the Chateau Le Ray. Robins were calling under my windows, and the groves rang with tournaments of happy song. Of that dinner-party only the count was at breakfast with me. We ate hurriedly, and when we had risen the horses were at the door. As to my own, a tall chestnut thoroughbred that Mr. Parish had brought over from England, I never saw him in finer fettle. I started Seth by Caraway Pike for Ogdenburg with the count's message.

Mine host laid hold of my elbow and gave it a good shake as I left him, with D'ri, taking a trail that led north by west in the deep woods. They had stuffed our saddle-bags with a plenty for man and horse.

I could not be done thinking of the young ladies. It put my heart in a flutter when I looked back at the castle from the wood's edge and saw one of them waving her handkerchief in a window. I lifted my hat, and put my spurs to the flank with such a pang in me that I dared not look back again. Save for that one thing, I never felt better. The trail was smooth, and we galloped along in silence for a mile or so. Then it narrowed to a stony path, where one had enough to do with slow going to take care of his head, there were so many boughs in the way.

"Jerushy Jane!" exclaimed D'ri, as he slowed down. "That air 's a gran' place. Never hed my karkiss in no sech bed as they gin me las' night—softer 'n wind, an' hed springs on like them new wagins ye see over 'n Vermont. Jerushy! Dreamed I was flyin'."

I had been thinking of what to do if we met the enemy and were hard pressed. We discussed it freely, and made up our minds that if there came any great peril of capture we would separate, each to take his own way out of the difficulty.

We halted by a small brook at midday, feeding the horses and ourselves out of the saddle-bags.

"Ain't jest eggzac'y used 't this kind uv a sickle," said D'ri, as he felt the edge of his saber, "but I 'll be dumed if it don't seem ef I 'd orter be ruther dang'rous with that air 'n my hand."

When Carmen Sylva, the poet-queen of Roumania, was the little princess of Wied in her father's castle on the Rhine, she used to sigh because she was a princess; and she has herself told how she longed to be a village child like those that she saw every day.

Since she could not get out to play with them, she invented plays of her own, and in these plays, the trees of the big castle park were her playmates. Every day she performed whole fairy plays, in which one tree was the wicked giant, another the fairy prince, and so on.

It was natural that this course of life should fan the enthusiasm of the child for story-telling; and in her eleventh year she had begun to write poetry, while her fourteenth birthday saw her busy over a drama.

By the time she was 20 she had written enough poetry, plays and stories, including several novels, to make books that would fill a long shelf; but she showed these to nobody, and it was not until Prince Karl, of Roumania, took her to that land to be his queen that she began to publish any of her work.

A lady who gave particularly dull parties, on one occasion invited two young officers stationed in the neighborhood. Only one attended, the other being on duty.

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HE BROKE THE SEAL AND READ IT CAREFULLY.

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"Now, some patent medicine man ought to get up a 'Regulator for Chills and Fever,'" suggested the deep thinker.

"What do you mean? An acute cure?" "Well, no; I mean a regulator that'll make the chills come on warm days, and the fever on cold days."—Cleveland Leader.

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When you are bilious and have headache, back-ache and bad taste in the mouth, send to your druggist for the best cure for biliousness—Cery King, the tonic-laxative. It only costs 25 cents to get well.

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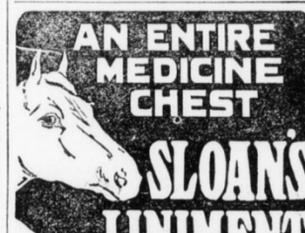


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