



# The Avenging Hand

By Guy de Maupassant.

They formed a circle around Judge Bernuttier, who was giving his opinion of a mysterious affair that had happened at Saint-Cloud. For a month this inexplicable crime had been the talk of Paris.

M. Bernuttier, the dominant figure of the group, standing with his back to the fireplace, talked about it, discussed the various opinions, but came to no definite conclusions about the matter.

Many women had risen and come nearer, remaining standing, with eyes fixed upon the smooth-shaven face of the magistrate. They shivered and vibrated, through their curious fear, which tortured them like a hunger.

One of them, paler than the others, after a silence, said:

"It is frightful. It touches the supernatural. We shall never know anything about it."

The magistrate turned toward her, saying:

"It is probable, madame, that we never shall know anything about it; but for the word 'supernatural,' when you come to use that, it has no place here. We are in the presence of a crime skillfully conceived, very skillfully executed, and so well enveloped in mystery that we can not separate the baffling circumstances which surround it. Still, once in my life, I had to follow an affair which seemed truly to be mixed up with something very unusual. However, it was necessary to give it up, as there was no means of explaining it."

Many of the ladies called out at the same time, so quickly that their voices sounded as one:

"Oh! tell us about it."

M. Bernuttier smiled gravely, as judges should, and replied:

"You must not suppose, for an instant, that I, at least, believed there was anything supernatural in the adventure. I believe only in normal causes. And, if in place of using the word 'supernatural' to express what we can not comprehend, we should simply use the word 'inexplicable,' it would be much better. In any case, the surrounding circumstances in the affair I will relate to you have affected me much.

### The Vendetta.

"I was Judge of Instruction at Ajaccio, a little town lying on the border of a beautiful gulf that was surrounded on all sides by high mountains."

"Yes," echoed the listeners.

"What I particularly had to look after there was the affairs of the vendetta. Some of them were remarkable; as dramatic as possible, ferocious and heroic. We found there the most wonderful subjects of vengeance that one could dream of, hatred a century old, appeased for a moment, but never extinguished, abominable plots, assassinations becoming massacres and almost glorious battles. For two years I heard of nothing but the price of blood, of the terribly prejudiced Corsican who is bound to avenge all injury upon the person of him who is the cause of it, or upon his nearest descendants. I saw old men and infants, relatives, with their throats cut, and my head was full of these stories.

"One day we learned that an Englishman had rented for some years a little villa at the end of the Gulf. He had brought with him a French servant.

"Soon everybody was occupied with this singular person, who lived alone in his house, only going out to hunt and fish. He spoke to no one, never came to the town, and every morning practiced shooting with a pistol, and a rifle for an hour or two. He was reputed a dead shot.

"Some legends about him were abroad; that he was a high personage from his own country for political reasons; and that he was concealing himself after having committed a frightful crime. Some particularly horrible details were even recited.

"In my capacity of judge, I wished to get some information about this man. But it was impossible to learn anything. He called himself Sir John Rowell.

"I contented myself with watching him closely; although, in reality,

there seemed nothing to suspect regarding him.

"I waited long for an occasion to meet him. It finally came in the form of a partridge which I shot and killed before the very nose of the Englishman. My dog brought it to me; but immediately taking it I went and begged Sir John Rowell to accept the dead bird, excusing myself for intrusion.

"He was a tall, powerful man, with red hair and red beard, very large, sort of placid, polite Hercules. He had none of the so-called British haughtiness, and heartily thanked me in French for the delicacy. At the end of a month we had chatted together five or six times.

"Finally, one evening, as I was passing by his door, I perceived him astride a chair in the garden, smoking his pipe. I saluted him and he asked me to have a glass of beer. I joined him.

"He received me with the fastidious courtesy of the English. With great precaution in the form of a lively interest, I put some questions to him about his life and his projects. He responded without embarrassment, told me that he had traveled much, in Africa, in the Indies, and in America. He added, laughing:

"I have had many adventures; oh! yes!

### A Great Hunter.

"I began to talk about hunting, and he gave me many curious details of hunting the hippopotamus, the tiger, the elephant, and even of hunting the gorilla.

"I said: 'All these animals are very formidable.'

"He laughed: 'Oh, no! The worst animal is man.' Then he began to laugh, with the hearty laugh of a big contented Englishman. He continued: 'I have often hunted man.'

"He spoke of weapons and asked me to go into his house to see his guns of various makes and kinds.

"His drawing-room was hung in black silk embroidered with gold. There were great yellow flowers running over the somber stuff, shining like fire.

"It is Japanese cloth," he said.

"But in the middle of a large panel, a strange thing attracted my eye. Upon a square of red velvet, a black object was attached. I approached and found it was a hand, the hand of a man. Not a skeleton hand, white and characteristic, but a black, dried hand, with yellow joints and the muscles bare, and on them traces of old blood, of blood that seemed like a scale, over the bones sharply cut off at about the middle of the fore-arm, as with a blow of a cutlass. About the wrist was an enormous iron chain, riveted, soldered to this unclean member, attaching it to the wall by a ring sufficiently strong to hold an elephant.

"I asked: 'What is that?'

"The Englishman responded tranquilly:

"It belonged to my worst enemy. It came from America. It was broken with a sabre, cut off with a sharp stone, and dried in the sun for eight days. Oh, very good for me, that was!

"I touched the human relic, which must have belonged to a colossus. The fingers were immoderately long and attached by enormous tendons that held the straps of skin in place. This dried hand was frightful to see, making one think, naturally, of the vengeance of a savage.

"I said: 'This man must have been very strong.'

"With gentleness the Englishman answered:

"Oh! yes; but I was stronger than he. I put this chain on him to hold him."

"I thought he spoke in jest and replied:

"The chain is useless now that the hand cannot escape."

"Sir John Rowell replied gravely: 'It always wishes to escape. The chain is necessary.'

"With a rapid questioning glance, I asked myself: 'Is he mad, or is that an unpleasant joke?'

"But the face remained impenetrable, tranquil, and friendly. I spoke of

money, and he is more careful of the jars. Through methods as inexorable as the laws of nature nothing ever goes to waste in the Rockefeller household.

From morning till night the daily routine is one of studied economy in its every phase, bordering on parsimony. Like his father young Rockefeller is a hard worker, and he has the same immovability in purpose and aim.

"Bob" Evans' Japanese Servant.

Admiral "Bob" Evans, in a recent conversation with a group of officers, threw a great white light upon one of the methods, at least, by which the Japanese have attained that splendid adaptability to European and American ways.

"When I commanded the New York some years ago," he said, "I had a Jap servant with whom I was especially well pleased. He was prompt, remarkably quick to learn, and took such a deep interest in everything, that sometimes, to amuse myself, I devoted not a little attention to explaining things that he appeared not to understand. A good waiter, too, he was. Well, finally he disappeared.

"Some time later, when on the European station, I made a call on a Jap battleship lying in the harbor of Marseilles. The captain met us at the gangway and escorted us to his cabin. As we were seated, he suddenly turned, threw off his hat, and whipped a napkin over his arm.

"The captain would drink?" he said, in a tone I remembered.

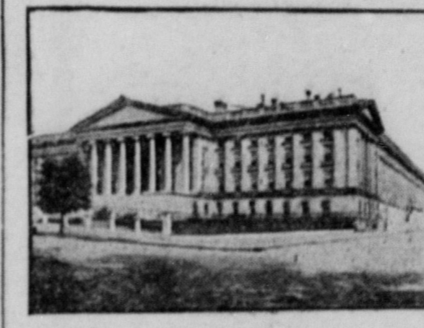
"Kato!" I cried, jumping to my feet.

"The same, he said, bowing. 'Captain Kato of the Mikado's navy.'

### RESTORING THE TREASURY.

Government Strong Box Will Reassemble Building in Time of Andrew Jackson.

While a number of the Government departments have been having a general washing of their "dirty linen," the United States Treasury building is having its outer walls cleaned by a new system invented by a Marylander, James F. Bruce. Several weeks ago Mr. Bruce explained to the officials a method which he had discovered of cleaning granite and sandstone which gave results much better than accomplished by either brushes or sand blasts. He showed them what could be done with a small granite block. Dipping a large brush into a bucket of murky looking liquid he covered the stone's surface, after which, by the aid of a jet of water from a garden hose,



THE U. S. TREASURY BUILDING.

he washed the mysterious liquid off, leaving the stone as bright and clean as when it came from the quarry.

The process looked so easy and the results so surprising that the department authorities told him to go ahead and clean the foundations of the structure, paying him therefor at the rate of \$5 a day for his labor. After the foundation cleaning is accomplished, Mr. Bruce is to be given a contract to clean the entire building for \$2,000.

### A Secret Discovery.

What the process adopted by him is, Mr. Bruce, of course, is not willing to reveal, and it appears that in order to be protected by letters patent he would have to give the authorities at the Patent Office the formula which he proposed to patent. This, when granted would be published, so that unscrupulous persons could go ahead and manufacture their own cleaning compounds.

Since the cleaning under this process the Treasury building has presented a marvelous transformation. The huge granite blocks which form the foundation of the building on all four sides, are as free from smoke or other discolorations as they were when first quarried. Flaws wrought by time, and the mortar in the seams stand out conspicuously. The foundation stones, lamp and fence posts, and the lower bases of the Ionic columns are dazzling white, while the uncleaned columns are a dull brown.

### Example of Splendid Architecture.

The Treasury is regarded by persons who are good judges of architectural

beauty as the finest type of classic architecture, except the White House, and this is the verdict of many foreign architects who visit the Nation's capital. Around the outside of the building are sixty-six Ionic columns, each thirty-five feet long and three feet in diameter, many of which are monoliths or single stones. About three years ago these columns were cleaned by the sand blast method, but the results were not at all satisfactory. Before cleaning, the Treasury was one of the darkest, grimest buildings in the country. Its particular kind of stone appearing to catch and retain all the particles of soot and smoke in the air. Withal it has to many eyes always retained a grand, if somewhat gloomy appearance, embodying great strength and solidity, a fit repository of the world's greatest financial institution.

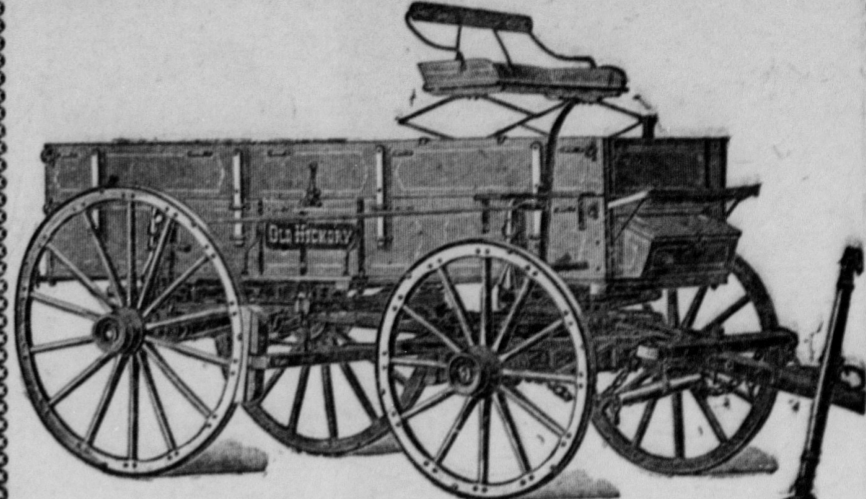
### Good, Useful, Old Age.

The pessimists to the contrary notwithstanding, there is a man in Lincoln, Nebraska, who feels himself still to be a useful member of his community. Although ninety-two years of age, he is to-day serving actively as city treasurer. He puts in a full day's work six days of each week and acts as spry as a youth of fifty. He will not use a cane, and only seldom needs the aid of glasses. Another man, who has just died in Forest, Ohio, at the age of eighty-five years, leaves the proud record of never having owed anybody an account. That triumph suffices, whether or not he accumulated a fortune, to stamp him as a financial genius.

In this connection it is interesting to know that Donald G. Mitchell, whom a world of readers love to call "Ik Marvel," recently celebrated his eighty-third birthday at his farm home, Edgewood, New Haven, Connecticut. He was a young man in point of calendar years so long ago that it is no shock to the multitudes who know him as the bachelor who indulged in perverts to be told that the birthday party was attended by his numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

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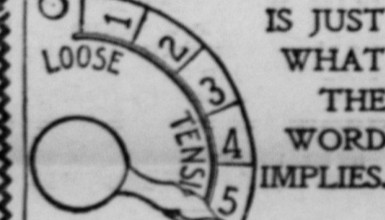
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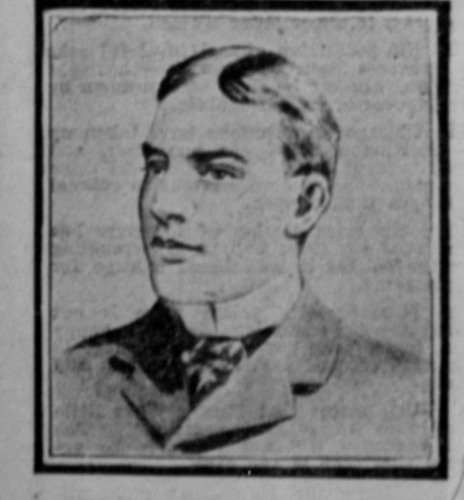
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### JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, JR.

The World's Coming Billionaire Knows Well the Value of the Dollar.

This man, in his 30th year, is heir to the vastest fortune the world has ever seen. His health has never been good, being a sufferer from a stomach trouble, no doubt inherited from his



JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, JR.

father, the Standard Oil magnate, who though 66 years of age, has a more ruddy complexion and really more vigor than the son. The young man has recently returned from a half year's health seeking stay in Europe, but was little benefited. Like many another rich man, he has particular

### A Large Bible Class.

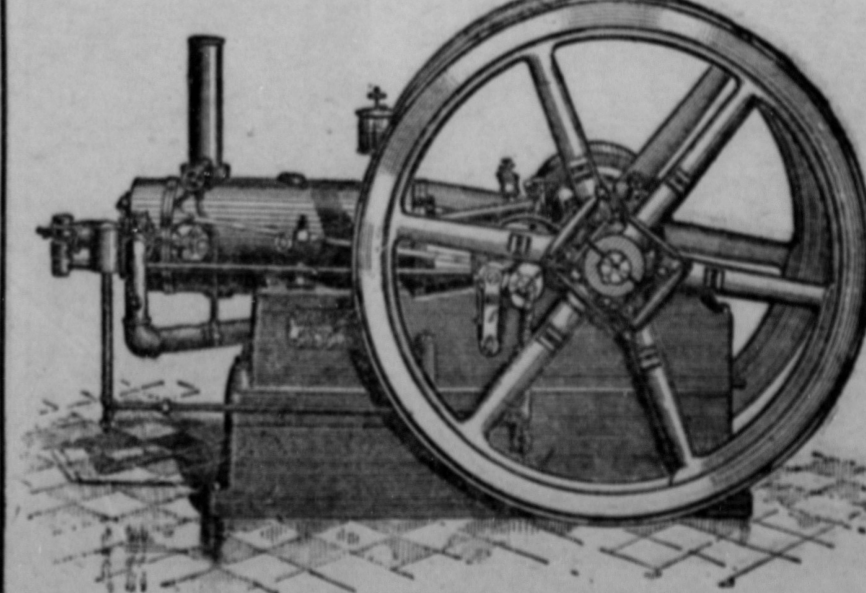
Mr. Rockefeller's Bible Class has a membership of over 300 persons, but his connection with those constituting it ends in the church. It is said that he is a keen observer of men and knows whether they come to his class for spiritual comfort or to "get next" to him and it has now come to be well recognized that the Rockefeller class is not an institution for the dissemination of Wall Street tips nor an employment agency for the Standard Oil Company. If he has given other than spiritual help to his pupils it is not publicly known. He is a ready talker and maker of epigrams and said in a late address that character, friends, health and success are the four things to strive for in life.

### Is Expected to Take His Father's Place.

With the gradual and systematic withdrawal from business participation in his various business enterprises, the father has endeavored to seclude himself from the public eye, and coincidental with this subsidence is the greater projection of his son and namesake—the world's prospective billionaire. The son has been taught the value of pennies than many a man is of the dol-

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