

The Home Reading Circle

AT THE HOUSE OF THE SCARLET WITCH.

By MAX PEMBERTON.

[Copyright, 1897, by Max Pemberton.]

SYNOPSIS.

The Abbe Morelet, cure of the village of Yvette, while on a journey to Paris with his valet and groom, meets with a stranger who tells him the wood of St. Cloud. First, three masked horsemen approach him, addressing the priest as the lord bishop of Blois, despite his protest, warn him of the witches that haunt the wood. A little farther he finds himself in the midst of a strange company—a band of devils, dwarfs and other hideous creatures, all dressed in scarlet, with a scarlet witch at their head. The Abbe's servants take flight. The Abbe, thinking they are a lot of masqueraders, makes bold to address them. In reply they repeat every word he says, calling him the lord bishop of Blois. They say that he is in a room entirely draped in scarlet, and seated at a table laden with a rich feast, surrounded by the company that he met in the wood. Now, the Abbe is hungry. His mission in Paris to place his hand, Corinne de Montesson, in a convent. He has heard that she is the friend of all the nobles who live in Paris, but she has the favor of the king, and he can do nothing with her on this account. The king is away now, and will return on the morrow, and he hopes to get Corinne within the convent walls before he can appeal to the king. In spite of his haste, however, he determines to appease his hunger at this rich spread; but every morsel turns to bread crumbs in his mouth, and all the sparkling wine proves to be water.

PART IV.

He spoke loudly; nor did he look for an answer, being quite assured by this time that he was dreaming, or, if he were not, that he had become the victim of the strangest jinx ever played in France. And he was very surprised, when a voice behind him greeted him with the first word he had heard uttered in the dark-house. The voice was hardly raised before all the suppers leaped to their feet and stood in an attitude of respectful attention. "And what is the trouble of the Lord Bishop of Blois?" asked the speaker, as he advanced to the Abbe's chair. He was a man slightly above the medium height, and he wore a dress of white velvet upon which a lace-work of the whitest diamonds glittered. The Abbe observed that he was somewhat advanced in years, and that his features were clear-cut and singularly handsome. He was attended, now, by two pages who wore black hose of purple and purple cloaks above them; while an officer in the blue uniform of the Corsican legion stood at his heels as though expecting some command. "Ho, ho!" thought the Abbe as he watched the stranger, "here there is the rogue who has played this jinx upon me. I will find a word for him at any rate." And so he spoke aloud.

"Sir," said he, "no you may be, I do not wish to know; but if this be your house, permit me to tell you that I have been the victim of great liberty." The stranger feigned astonishment. "What?" cried he, "have you not supposed well, 'Seigneur'?" "Sir," answered the Abbe, "I beseech you that you will not call me 'Seigneur' for to such a title I have no claim. As for your supper—I would not offer it to a dog."

"But surely," cried the other, looking very much surprised, "that is turbot which you eat, my friend—and do you not hold a cup of the wine of Burgundy in your hand?" "Monsieur," said the Abbe, with hungry dignity, "whoever has told you that has lied. There is nothing but water here." "Oh, indeed!" cried the newcomer, "pray permit me to put it to my nose. 'Seigneur'—you say that it is water—St. Louis! I would like to have a cellar full of such water as that." He tasted the draught as he spoke and smacked his lips over it as though it had been a delicious nectar. The Abbe, staggered at the action, was silent for some moments; but after a pause he took up in his hands, and did that which was a rare thing for him to do—he lost his temper. "My son," he asked, "you declare that to be the wine of Burgundy?" "Most certainly," replied the stranger, "most admirable wine."

"Then I pray you drink it," exclaimed the Abbe—and at the invitation he threw the contents of his goblet into the newcomer's face. It was a deserved retort, perhaps; but the miserable cure had foreseen that which was to follow, would have cut off his right hand rather than allow his temper to carry him so far. Scarcely was the thing done when a cry of horror burst from the company about the table. Fifty hands were raised as if to strike the cowering priest. Threats, execrations, remonstrances, were hurled at him until his head

No. 10

Homeopathic Cure for

DYSPEPSIA

Indigestion, Weak Stomach.

- No. 10 Corrects the Digestion.
- No. 10 tones up the Stomach.
- No. 10 makes the appetite keen.
- No. 10 prevents distress after eating.
- No. 10 relieves smoker's heart-burn.
- No. 10 steadies the Nerves.
- No. 10 removes liver spots.
- No. 10 gently assists Nature.
- No. 10 promotes health.
- No. 10 is only equalled in merit by

"77" FOR GRIP

All druggists, or sent for 25c., 50c., or \$1. MEDICAL BOOK—Dr. Humphrey's Homeopathic Manual of all Diseases mailed free. Humphreys' Med. Co., Cor. William and Duane, New York.

HOW TO FIND OUT.

Fill a bottle or common glass with urine and let it stand twenty-four hours; a sediment or settling indicates an unhealthy condition of the kidneys. When urine scalds in passing it, or bad effects following use of liquor, wine or beer, and overcomes that unpleasant necessity of being compelled to get up many times during the night to urinate, the mild and the extraordinary effect of Swamp Root is soon realized. It stands the highest for its wonderful cures of the most distressing cases. If you need a medicine you should have the best. Sold by druggists, price fifty cents and one dollar. You may have a sample bottle and pamphlet both sent free by mail. Mention the Scranton Tribune and send your address to Dr. Kilmer & Co., 107 N. Third St., Philadelphia, Pa. The proprietors of this paper guarantee the genuineness of this offer.

WHAT TO DO.

There is comfort in the knowledge so often expressed, that Dr. Kilmer's Swamp-Root, the great kidney remedy, fulfills every wish in relieving pain in the back, kidneys, liver, bladder and every part of the urinary passages. It corrects inability to hold urine, and scalding in passing it, or bad effects following use of liquor, wine or beer, and overcomes that unpleasant necessity of being compelled to get up many times during the night to urinate. The mild and the extraordinary effect of Swamp Root is soon realized. It stands the highest for its wonderful cures of the most distressing cases. If you need a medicine you should have the best. Sold by druggists, price fifty cents and one dollar. You may have a sample bottle and pamphlet both sent free by mail. Mention the Scranton Tribune and send your address to Dr. Kilmer & Co., 107 N. Third St., Philadelphia, Pa. The proprietors of this paper guarantee the genuineness of this offer.

PART V.

The idea that Corinne de Montesson would ever succumb to such a fate seemed to amuse the masqueraders very much. They greeted her words with extravagant enthusiasm. All love sick men were shown to him, and he was set mockingly upon a pile before him—turned toward her eyes full of sheepish affection and exclaimed: "St. John, Corinne, if you go to the sun at Charenton, you will take half Paris with you." "We shall have to build a city there," cried another.

"Such a place of worship never will have been seen," said a third. "I go man-in-waiting," lisped a pretty boy who was busy with a dish of venison.

"And the king, what does he go for?" asked a demon whose head was tucked away under his chair. "Yes," cried Corinne, joyfully, "the king, where he is? Come forth, sir, and let us see you."

"Sacre bleu," answered a voice from the further end of the table, "the king is very well, thank you, Mademoiselle, but he will be the better when he has eaten this pastry."

Could the Abbe have seen the king at that moment, his fears would have vanished like the wind. Truth to tell, his Majesty looked exceedingly unkingly, as he was, astride a small chair and holding a very large pastry between his knees. But the wretched priest in the bedroom above knew of none of these things. While the masqueraders below were at the zenith of their merriment, the miserable Abbe was at the nadir of his misfortune, and every turn he took brought a fresh exclamation to his lips.

"Oh!" he would moan, "a year in the Bastille at the least—that I should have left my home for this! A year in the Bastille, where they put you in cages so that your bones are bent, or in ditches where the floors are deep in slime! Heaven be merciful to me—I have thrown wine in the king's face! Fool that I was! His dress should have taught me better manners. And now they will punish me—oh! miserable day, unhappy hour—what would I not give to be in my bed at Yvette again!"

He, good man, had lived so noble a life that fear had not in all his years been an enemy to him. But now he feared exceedingly—feared so that for a long while he started at every whisper of the wind or creak of board; feared until he forgot that he was hungry and had not supped. By and by, however, one of his restless legs tingled and he rose from his seat, and there he beheld the little table with the flowers and the wax lights and the flagon of wine and the well-dressed carter.

"Bah!" he exclaimed, angrily, "the wine is but colored water, the capon is made of bread; they shall not befool me a second time."

He thought it a cruel jest, and vowed he would be the victim of it, and so he began to pace the room again; but his steps carried him, despite his resolution, straight into the cabinet for the second time, and at the third time of his coming he hung round the door, and he valued that he found a card which he took from the flagon and ventured to take it.

"Oh!" cried he, filling the goblet to the brim, "can it be true—upon my word, this is very like the wine of Burgundy—Saint John! I have never tasted a better imitation."

There was almost a smile upon the Abbe's face now; and he began with eager hands to help himself to the capon. A minute later he had seated himself at the little table, and was busy with a groning place. Only when his meal was done did a haunting memory of his night's work come back to him—and at that he winced and winced, and the bread turned bitter. He looked at the great carved bed and told himself that sleep was not for such as he. He heard a bell without strike the hour of midnight, and the new-come day seemed to be the herald of his new fortunes. Once or twice he went to the door of his prison-chamber and listened, but could discern no sound, neither of voices nor of steps.

"Heaven be good to me!" cried he, beginning to pace his room again. "I could only lay this night in my bed at Yvette."

He sighed at the hopelessness of the desire; but to his intense amazement, his sigh was echoed from the opposite side of the room. And he was very much surprised when, upon turning round, he beheld, standing there by a picture let into the panel of the wainscoting, two of the masked men who had met him on the road earlier in the evening. Indeed, the Abbe rubbed his eyes to make sure that it was not a dream; and it was not until the taller of the two spoke that he believed altogether in the reality of that which he saw.

"My Lord Bishop," said the stranger, "we have kept our promise and you see us again. Is it gladly?" "Gladly," cried the Abbe, "gladly, indeed, O, heaven knows! You have heard of my misfortunes?" The masked man raised his hand.

"Hush!" he said. "A word may cost you your life. We know all and have come to save you. Follow me, 'Seigneur, and say nothing, whatever you may see or hear."

With this he laid his hand upon a button in the picture and the panel slid back noiselessly, showing a narrow aperture, through which the two men passed, and then the dazed Abbe. The aperture thus disclosed gave access to a narrow flight of stairs, at the foot of which was a little door, opening at

the back of the pavilion, directly upon the park of St. Cloud. Before the prisoner had realized anything of that which was being done, he found himself out upon the soft grass with the bride rein of a horse in his left hand and a groom at his right hand ready to assist him to mount. The two men, in their turn, went to horses waiting for them, and all leaping into the saddles, the leader said promptly: "Seigneur, mount, I beg of you. We ride to Blois for your life."

"To Blois?" gasped the Abbe. But the groom had helped him into the saddle now, and the man having, with a lusty snap upon the quarters, sent the horse off to join the others, the Abbe found himself, for good or ill, galloping wildly toward the Park toward the road for Sevres. So absorbed was he in doubt and wonder that he failed to observe the young girl who rode up to his guides as they left the pavilion—though she was masked as the others were. Indeed, those with him never drew rein nor spoke a single word until all speed was made by St. Cloud and its woods lay far behind them. Then for the first time they permitted their foaming steeds to go at the walk and the fresh wind of the morning to breathe upon their heated faces.

The place was the summit of a hill some five miles from the town of Rambouillet. Below them a valley stretched pleasantly, and in the far distance the spire of the church at Yvette stood up like a reed against the cloudless sky. "My lord," said the leader of the strangers, halting suddenly at the spot, "sonder is your home. As for us, our work is done. We have but to give you this paper and to bid you make your way to Blois with all speed. But now that you will obey faithfully the king's wish that you shall not leave your new diocese for the space of one year."

"My diocese, the king's wish?" exclaimed the Abbe, whose face was bathed with perspiration and whose limbs were so sore that he could scarcely sit upon his horse. "Certainly," answered the masked knight, pressing the paper into the king's hands, "read that and all will be known to you."

The Abbe read the paper, then he raised his hands in an attitude of humble thankfulness. "Merciful heaven be praised!" cried he, "they have saved my life. The king of Blois, the unworthy—the simple priest—the humble cure of Yvette. Surely the king has forgiven me then, Gentlemen. I thank you for my heart for this night's work. Never shall your services be forgotten. Tell your names, I beg of you, that I may remember them in my prayers."

The first of the three men removed his mask. "Seigneur," said he, "they call me Benoit the swindler."

"Seigneur," cried the second, unmasking in his turn, "I am the Comte de Guibert—the oldest friend of your ward, Mademoiselle Corinne de Montesson."

It was the moment for the young girl to show herself. She stepped forward and her pretty face upon the astonished Abbe, she said: "And I, 'Seigneur, am Corinne herself."

The Abbe sat as one dumbfounded. Tears swelled up in his eyes. Gratitude choked his words. "Corinne," he said, "Oh, it is to you that I owe my pardon and my fortune then. God bless you a thousand times and never let you forget me!"

"Return to your home and carry an old man's blessing with you." The Bishop of Blois was wont to tell, even in his old age, how that at St. Cloud he had once thrown a glass of wine in the king's face. But the knowing ones shook their heads.

"Bah," said they among themselves, "it was one of pretty Corinne's jests. The only king our great Bishop ever met was Lekaik, the actor from the opera."

"What is it?" he asked. "Tom Paine's 'Age of Reason.'" "Yes; it's a good book; but mighty expensive."

"Why, I don't think so." "I have a copy, and what do you think it cost me?" "I don't know, I'm sure." "The governorship of Illinois."

To Cure a Cold in One Day. Take laxative Bromo Quinine Tablets. All druggists refund the money if it fails to cure. 25 cents.

NEUROUS TROUBLES all kinds cured with ANIMAL EXTRACTS. Free book tells how. Washington Chemical Co., Washington, D. C.

Hamlet, Insanity, and Suicide.

Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: A reverend gentleman who recently lectured in this city upon "Hamlet," took three-to me—somehow extraordinary views of Hamlet's character; first, that he had no thought of suicide; second, that he was not insane; and, third, that he was a highly moral character. Now, I think he will be remembered that this takes place before he has seen his father's ghost, or knows of his murder. The lines begin as follows:

O, that this too, too solid flesh would melt, Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew, Or that the Everlasting had not set This canon 'gainst self-slaughter!

Here is the first expression of a desire to kill himself, were self-murder not forbidden by the Almighty. Then the well-known and immortal soliloquy, "To be, or not to be," what does this mean, if not a contemplation of suicide? Hamlet views it from every point of it is necessary to quote the lines, they are so familiar, and finally come to the conclusion that nothing cut cowardice prevents many of us from leaving this life in our own way, and at our own sweet will.

Secondly, that Hamlet was not insane. Now, the question, "Was Hamlet insane, or did he feign insanity?" has been mooted for years, some taking one view, some the other. The real answer is, both: Hamlet was insane, and also feigned a greater degree of insanity than he was possessed with. Hamlet was what the alienists of the present day call a reasoning melancholic—a well-known and quite common mild form of insanity, characterized by a distaste for and disgust with life. "O, how weary, flat, stale and unprofitable seem to me all the uses of this world," etc. Hamlet describes his own mental state perfectly in the lines beginning "I have of late—both wherefore I know not—lost all my mirth; foregone all customs of society," etc. The world seems to him "an unweeded garden; things rank and gross in nature possess it merely." The "brave, o'er-hanging firmament, fretted with golden fire" is hateful to him but "a foul and pestilent congregation of vapors," and he says "Man delights not me, nor woman either." What is this but melancholia? And all melancholics are more or less suicidal.

As to his intention to feign insanity, he makes this clearly known to his bosom friend, Horatio, when he tells him that he may "see fit to put an antic disposition on." And it will also be remembered that Polonius is disappointed by the king to "see from him why he puts on this confusion." As a matter of fact, his feigning insanity was an unwise move, and all but wrecked his purpose, as it caused him to be sent to England by his uncle, the king.

This brings me to the third statement, that Hamlet was a highly moral character. However, he did not scruple to rob the sleeping bodies of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern of the king's papers, to destroy them, and to replace them with a forgery of his own, which he stamped with the king's seal from his signet ring, and which doomed the two courtiers to death upon their arrival in England. I need not pursue this branch of the subject further.

Respectfully,
Mortimer Livingston,
Scranton, Pa., May 28.

CASTORIA

For Infants and Children.

THE CASTORIA COMPANY
107 N. THIRD ST. PHILADELPHIA, PA.

ON THE LINE OF THE CANADIAN PACIFIC RY

are located the finest fishing and hunting grounds in the world. Descriptive books on application. Tickets to all points in Maine, Canada and Maritime Provinces, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Canadian and United States Northwest, Vancouver, Seattle, Tacoma, Portland, Ore., San Francisco.

First-Class Sleeping and Dining Cars attached to all trains. Tourist class fully fitted with bedding, curtains and specially adapted to wants of families. Rates always less than via other lines. For further information, time tables, etc., apply to nearest agent.

E. V. SKINNER, G. E. A., 253 Broadway, New York.

W. J. DAVIS, ARCADE BUILDING, 213 Wyoming Avenue.

WOLF & WENZEL, 240 Adams Ave. Opp. Court House. PRACTICAL TINNERS and PLUMBERS. Sole Agents for Richardson-Boyanov's Furnaces and Ranges.

THE SCRANTON BEDDING CO. SEE THE RIVETS. (TRADE MARK.)

Our Mattresses with Patent Lifters are a Good Thing. The Lifters Cost Nothing. They are as good as can be made. All our mattresses have these Lifters attached. Your dealer has them. If not, we have.

THE LEADING AND LARGEST MILLINERY STORE.

Gerson's Gerson's

413 Lackawanna Avenue.

Every Day in the Week Is Bargain Day Here

You can come any day in the week and get the same bargains you would get on any special day. Our regular prices are much lower than other stores' bargain prices. We're the busiest store in this city. There must be some reason for it. Here are a few:

One hundred and fifty dozen UNTRIMMED HATS. In all the new and popular shapes. French Clips, Fine Milan Straws, Fine Lace Straws and Neapolitan and Hair Braids. None ever sold for less than \$1.00 and \$1.50 each. Take your choice here at 25c each.

One hundred dozen sprays IMPORTED FLOWERS. Large, full bunches in all the newest styles. Flowers that were never sold under \$1.00 before. You can take your choice at 25c a bunch.

One hundred dozen sprays RIBBONS. An importer's entire stock of finest silk Ribbons in Fancy Stripes, Fancy Stripes and Brocade Ribbons, worth \$20 a yard. Your choice here at 25c a yard.

Trimmed Hats at Half Other Stores' Prices. GERSON'S, JULIUS TRAUGOTT, Proprietor. 413 LACKAWANNA AVENUE.

The Public Knows a Good Thing When It Sees It...

That is why the circulation of The Tribune is constantly increasing, and why we are able to state the following facts:

- FACT 1—The Tribune is delivered to more homes and business places than any other Scranton newspaper.
- FACT 2—The Tribune is, without doubt, the best advertising medium in Northeastern Pennsylvania.
- FACT 3—The Tribune prints more news and contains more exclusive features than any of its competitors.
- FACT 4—The Tribune consists of 10 pages daily, except Saturday, upon which day a magnificent 16 page paper is issued.
- FACT 5—The Tribune contains no boiler plate or "patent" matter. Every line is carefully selected and well edited.
- FACT 6—The Tribune has, since its birth, constantly set the pace in the journalistic race in this section and today has outdistanced all competitors. The Tribune leads, the others try to follow.
- FACT 7—The Tribune is the best newspaper in the state, outside of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. It costs but 50 cents a month, delivered every morning before breakfast. Subscribe now and get the best.

MOOSIC POWDER CO.

ROOFS AND 2, COM'LN B'LDG, SCRANTON, PA. MINING AND BLASTING POWDER. MADE AT MOOSIC AND HUNTSVILLE, PA. LAFLEW & RAND POWDER CO'S. ORANGE GUN POWDER. Electric Batteries, Electric Exploders, for blasting, Safety Fuses and Repanno Chemical Co.'s HIGH EXPLOSIVES.

WOLF & WENZEL, 240 Adams Ave. Opp. Court House. PRACTICAL TINNERS and PLUMBERS. Sole Agents for Richardson-Boyanov's Furnaces and Ranges.

STRICTLY HIGH GRADE TAILORING. This means that from the buttons to the linings, the suits we make are perfect in fit, finish and fabric. They are high in grade but not in price. Our plan is to fit perfectly or make another suit.

E. V. SKINNER, G. E. A., 253 Broadway, New York.

THE SCRANTON BEDDING CO.

SEE THE RIVETS. (TRADE MARK.) Our Mattresses with Patent Lifters are a Good Thing. The Lifters Cost Nothing. They are as good as can be made. All our mattresses have these Lifters attached. Your dealer has them. If not, we have.

Our Mattresses with Patent Lifters are a Good Thing. The Lifters Cost Nothing. They are as good as can be made. All our mattresses have these Lifters attached. Your dealer has them. If not, we have.

Our Mattresses with Patent Lifters are a Good Thing. The Lifters Cost Nothing. They are as good as can be made. All our mattresses have these Lifters attached. Your dealer has them. If not, we have.

Our Mattresses with Patent Lifters are a Good Thing. The Lifters Cost Nothing. They are as good as can be made. All our mattresses have these Lifters attached. Your dealer has them. If not, we have.

Our Mattresses with Patent Lifters are a Good Thing. The Lifters Cost Nothing. They are as good as can be made. All our mattresses have these Lifters attached. Your dealer has them. If not, we have.