

Under the Red Robe

By STANLEY J. WEYMAN

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CHAPTER X THE ARREST.

So it had come! And come in such a fashion that I saw no way of escape. The sergeant was between us and I could not strike him. And I found no words. A score of times I had thought with shrinking how I should reveal my secret to mademoiselle, what I should say and how she would take it. But in my mind it had always been a voluntary act, this disclosure. It had been always I who had unmasked myself, and she who listened—alone; and in this voluntariness and this privacy there had been something which seemed to take from the shame of anticipation. But here—here was no voluntary act on my own part, no privacy, nothing but shame. I stood mute, convicted, speechless—like the thing I was.

Yet if anything could have braced me, it was mademoiselle's voice, when she answered him. "Go on, Monsieur," she said, with the perfect calmness of scorn. "You will have done the sooner."

"You do not believe me?" he replied. "Then, I say, look at him! Look at him! If ever shame—"

"Monsieur," she said abruptly—she did not look at me. "I am ashamed myself!"

"Why, his very name is not his own!" the lieutenant rejoined. "He is no Barthe at all. He is Barthe the gambler, the duellist, the bully—"

Again she interrupted him. "I know it," she said coldly. "I know it all. And if you have nothing more to tell me, go, Monsieur. Go!" she continued, in a tone of infinite scorn. "Enough that you have earned my contempt as well as my abhorrence!"

He looked for a moment taken aback. Then, "Ay, but I have more!" he cried, his voice stubbornly triumphant. "I forgot that you would think little of that! I forgot that a swordsman has always the ladies' hearts. But I have more. Do you know, that he is in the cardinal's pay? Do you know that he is here on the same errand which brings us here—to arrest M. de Cocheffort? Do you know that while we go about the business openly and in soldier fashion, it is his part to worm himself into your confidence, to sneak into madam's intimacy, to listen at your door, to follow your footsteps, to hang on your lips, to track you—track you until you betray yourselves and the man? Do you know this, and that all his sympathy is a lie, Mademoiselle? His help, so much bait to catch the secret? His aim, blood-money—blood-money? Why, morbleu!" the lieutenant continued, pointing his finger at me, and so carried away by passion, so lifted out of himself by wrath and indignation, that in spite of myself I shrank before him—"you talk, lady, of contempt and abhorrence in the same breath with me! But what have you for him? What have you for him, the spy, the informer, the hired traitor? And if you doubt, if you want evidence, look at him. Only look at him, I say!"

"MY GOD!" horror in my eyes crept into hers and she shuddered and stepped back.

"What is it? What is it?" she whispered, clasping her hands. And with all the color gone from her cheeks she peered trembling into the corners and towards the door. "There is no one here, there are no one—listening!"

I forced myself to speak though I shook all over, like a man in an ague. "No Mademoiselle, there is no one here," I muttered. And then I let my head fall on my breast and I stood before her, the statue of despair. Had she felt a grain of suspicion, a grain of doubt, my bearing must have opened her eyes. But her mind was cast in so noble a mould, that having once thought of me and been converted, she could feel no doubt again. It was her nature to trust all in all. So, a little recovered from her fright, she stood looking at me in great wonder; and at last she had a thought.

"You are not well?" she said suddenly. "It is your old wound, Monsieur."

"Yes, Mademoiselle," I muttered faintly. "It is my old wound."

"I will call Clon!" she cried impatiently. "I will call Clon! He is here, Ah! poor Clon! He is gone. But here is Louis. I will call him, and he will get you something."

She was gone from the room before I could stop her; and I was left leaning against the table, possessor at last of the great secret which I had come so far to win. Possessor of that secret and able in a moment to open the door, and go out into the night, and make use of it—and yet the most unhappy of all men. The sweat stood on my brow; my eyes wandered round the room; I even turned towards the door, with some mad thought of flight—flight from her, from the house, from everything. And God knows if I might not have chosen that course; for I still stood doubting, when on the door, there came a sudden hurried knocking, which jarred on my nerve in my body. I started. I stood in the middle of the door, gazing at the door, as at a ghost. Then glad of action, glad of anything that might relieve the tension of my feelings, I strode to it and pulled it sharply open.

On the threshold, his flushed face lit up by the light behind me, stood one of the knaves I had brought with me to Auch. He had been running and panted heavily, but he had kept his wits. He grasped my sleeve instantly. "Ah! Monsieur, the very man!" he cried, tugging at me. "Quick! come this instant and you may yet be first. They have the secret. They have found Monsieur."

"Found whom?" I echoed. "M. de Cocheffort?"

"No, but the place where he lies. It was found by accident. The lieutenant was gathering his men to go to it when I came away. If we are quick, we may get there first."

"But the place?" I said.

"I could not hear where it was," he answered bluntly. "We can hang on their skirts, and at the last moment strike it."

The pair of pistols I had taken from the shock-headed man lay on a chest by the door. I snatched them up, and my hand, joined him without another word; and in a moment we were running down the garden. I

thinking, now, as she stood, silent and absorbed, by the stone seat, a shadowy figure with face turned from me? Was she recalling the man's words, sitting them to the facts and the past, adding this and that circumstance? Was she, though she had rebuffed him in the body, collating, now he was gone, all he had said and out of those scraps piecing together the damning truth? The thought tortured me. I could brook uncertainty no longer. I went nearer to her and touched her sleeve. "Mademoiselle," I said, in a voice which sounded hoarse and forced even in my own ears, "do you believe this of me?"

"What that man said of me," I muttered.

"That!" she exclaimed; and she stood a moment gazing at me in a strange fashion. "Do I believe what he said, Monsieur? But come, come," she continued, "and I will show you if I believe it. But not here."

She led the way on the instant into the house, going in through the parlor door, which stood half open. The room inside was pitch dark, but she took me fearlessly by the hand and led me quickly through it, and along the passage, until we came to the cheerfully lighted hall, where a great fire burned on the hearth. All traces of the soldiers' occupation had been swept away. But the room was empty.

She led me to the fire and there in the full light, no longer a shadowy creature, but red lipped, brilliant, throbbing with life, she stood opposite me, her eyes shining, her color high, her breast heaving. "Do I believe," she said, "I will tell you. M. de Cocheffort's hiding-place is in the hut behind the fern-stack, two furlongs beyond the village, on the road to Auch. You will know now what no one else knows, he and I and madam excepted. You had in your hands his life and my honor, and you know what M. de Barault, whether I believe that tale."

"My God!" I cried. And I stood looking at her, until something of the

looking back once before we passed the gate, and I saw the light streaming out through the door which I had just opened; and I fancied that for an instant a figure darkened the gap. But the fancy only strengthened the one single iron purpose which had taken possession of me and all my thoughts. I must be first. I must anticipate the lieutenant and make the arrest myself. I ran on only the faster.

We seemed to be across the meadow and in the wood in a moment. There, instead of keeping along the common path, I boldly singled out—my senses seemed preternaturally keen—the smaller track by which Clon had brought us, and ran unflinching along it, avoiding logs and pitfalls as by instinct, and following all its turns and twists, until it brought us to the back of the inn, and we could hear the murmur of subdued voices in the village street, the sharp low words of command, and even the clink of weapons; and could see, above and between the houses, the dull glare of lanterns and torches.

I grasped my man's arm and crouched down, listening. "Where is your mate?" I said, in his ear.

"With them," he muttered.

"Then come," I whispered, rising. "I have seen enough. Let us go."

"But he caught me by the arm and detained me. 'You don't know the way!'" he hissed. "Steady, steady, Monsieur. You go too fast. They are just moving. Let us join them, and strike in when the time comes. We must let them guide us."

"Fool!" I said, shaking off his hand. "I tell you, I know where he is! I know where they are going. Come, lose no time, and we will pluck the fruit while they are on the road to it."

His only answer was an exclamation of surprise; at that moment the lights began to move. The lieutenant was starting. The moon was not yet up; the sky was gray and cloudy; to advance where we were to step into a wall of blackness. But we had lost too much time already, and I did not hesitate. Bidding my companion follow me, and using his legs, I sprang through a low fence which rose before us, and stumbling blindly over some broken ground in the rear of the houses, came, with a fall or two, to a little watercourse with steep sides. Through this I plunged recklessly, and up the farther side, and, breathless and panting, gained the road just beyond the village and 50 yards in advance of the lieutenant's troop.

They had only two lanterns burning now and were beyond the circle of light these cast; while the steady tramp of so many footsteps covered the noise we made. We were unnoticed. In a twinkling we turned our backs, and as fast as we could ran down the road. Fortunately, they were thinking more of secrecy than speed, and in a minute we had doubled the distance between us; in two minutes their lights were mere specks shining in the gloom behind us. We lost, at last, even the tramp of their feet. Then I began to look out and go more slowly; peering into the shadows on either side of the fern-stack. On one hand the hill rose steeply; on the other it fell away to the stream. On neither side was close wood—or my difficulties had been immensely increased—but scattered oak-trees stood here and there among gorse and bracken. This had not been in a moment, on the upper side, I came upon a dense substance of the stack looking black against the lighter sky.

My heart beat fast, but it was time for thought. Bidding the man in a whisper to follow me and be ready to back me up, I climbed the bank softly, and with a pistol in my hand, felt my way to the rear of the stack; my thinking to find a hut there, set against the fern, and M. de Cocheffort in it. But I found no hut. There was and all was so dark that it came upon me suddenly as I stood between the hill and the stack that I had undertaken a very difficult thing. The hut behind the fern-stack? But how far behind? How far from it? The dark slope stretched above us, infinite, impenetrable, shrouded in night. To begin to seek in search of a tiny hut, probably well-hidden and hard to find in daylight, seemed a task as impossible as to meet with the needle in the hay! And now, while I stood, chilled and doubting, the steps of the troop in the road began to grow audible, began to come nearer.

"Well, M. le Capitaine!" the man beside me muttered—in wonder why I stood. "Which way? Or they will be before us yet!"

I tried to think to reason it out; to consider where the hut would be; while the wind sighed through the oaks and here and there I could hear an acorn fall. But the thing pressed too close on me; my thoughts would not be hurried and at last I said at a venture, "Up the hill! Straight from the stack!"

He did not demur and we plunged at the ascent, knee deep in bracken and fern, sweating at every pore with our exertions and bearing the troop close behind us. The following year he died. His son, Dintzulu, assumed a hostile attitude toward the English, and in this were aided by the Boers, to whom he had granted a strip of land in the west. The Boers established in this district "The New Republic," extended their control to Umlatusi and Satat Lucia Bay. In 1888 British and Boer entered into a friendly agreement; the former recognized the New Republic the latter pledged themselves to vacate the rest of Zululand and renounce recognition of Dintzulu's protectorate. In 1888 the New Republic was annexed to the South African Republic, the year before the remainder of Zululand having been declared a British crown colony.

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Natal and the Province of Zululand

The Uprising of the Natives—The Zulus Would Avenge Cetewayo's Dethronement—General Massacre of Whites Threatened.

Our readers probably have but hazy remembrance of recent disturbances down in the British colony of Natal, on the southern coast of Africa, and probably are paying but scant attention to present threatenings in Zululand, a province of Natal. But the disturbances were serious, the threatenings are grave; ere long news of a general massacre of the whites of that region may shock the world.

The London Graphic, discussing the South African uprising, goes so far as to say: "There is, unfortunately, only too much reason to believe that the Zulus and Kaffirs are determined to expel the white people from South Africa, if they can manage it. It is no longer the question of the loyalty of any particular chief or tribe; the contagion of rebellion has so rapidly spread that its extent cannot be measured by any degree of preciseness. Are the Basutos steadfast in their loyalty? Are the Matabele, the Mashona, and the very mixed native population of the new colonies staunch in their friendly relations with the English and Dutch? Old colonists declare that they would not trust any native, no matter how effusive his affected loyalty, while in Natal, especially, it has long been an article of faith among Europeans that the local Zulus would some day endeavor to avenge Cetewayo's dethronement by compassing a



N'KHANDLA FOREST, IN ZULULAND.

of trouble, at present is supposed to be in hiding in the practically impenetrable N'Khandla forest in Zululand. Other important chiefs have pressed themselves as being unfavorable to rebellion, among them Dintzulu, who stands to the natives as representative of the royal house of Zululand, and one to be obeyed. The Swaziland people also profess loyalty, and among the Basutos there is no unrest. But preparations are in progress in Natal in case of emergency; efforts making to keep the natives off the natives, if possible, if not to be ready should need occur.

Let us take a glance at the history of Natal, observe the white men that have struggled for a foothold in this country. Natal was first sighted by Vasco da Gama, Christmas day, 1497, and in Natal is the seat of the British Empire. The Dutch made the first attempt at settlement about 1700, but were not successful. In 1824 the English made a treaty with Chaka, king of the Amazulu, but Chaka's successor, Dingaan, broke up the English colony. In 1835 a number of missionaries established themselves at Durban. Shortly afterward the Dutch, in their great trek northward, entered Natal; thought Dingaan treacherously murdered the first band, the Boers persevered, immigration continued. Then we have the Dutch and native in conflict; in a great battle between the Boers and natives (on the Boiled river, December, 1838), the Zulus were overpowered. The following year the Republic of Natal was organized. But not long were the Dutch allowed possession of the British still held that the Afrikaners were their subjects, and in 1843 annexed the republic to Cape Colony. Some years later Natal was made an independent colony. (Previous reference has been made to the war carried on in 1879 against Cetewayo, king of the Zulus; his territory overrun and occupied, Zululand became a part of Natal.)

The Boers did not submit tamely to the English assumptions. In Natal there have taken place several memorable encounters between Boer and British. Back in 1881 the Transvaal Boers entered the extreme northwestern corner of the colony and defeated the British at Majuba Hill. In the great South African war, northern Natal was the scene of fiercest fighting between Dutch and English. "At Elandsburg, Glencoe and Ladysmith, and all along the line of the Tugela, the most obstinate and sanguinary battles of the war occurred."

The majority of the people in Natal are Zulus. The Zulus are powerful and warlike, their weapons the assegai, knobkerrie and shield. It was related the great leader Tylaka was wont to say to his men on the eve of battle: "Go, sons of Zulu, go and return no more." Surrender was unheard of; victory or death.

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Joke on the Publishers.

Poem Imitating Bret Harte's Style Given Wide Circulation and Notice.

Sam Davis, of Nevada, once made a wager that he could successfully imitate the style of any living or dead poet, and do so thoroughly that the difference was not discernible; and that the public, the press, and the critics would not detect the fraud. As a result, says Success Magazine, he wrote "Bibley and 46," to which he signed F. Bret Harte's name. The fake was put out in a publication known as "The Open Letter." It described an engineer who took his train through a snowstorm in the Sierras, dying at his post.

From the Atlantic to the Pacific the poem was copied. "Bibley and 46" was given a full page in an illustrated weekly, with a portrait of Bret Harte, and described as "the best short poem of the decade."

It was many years before Mr. Harte denied its authorship. The poem has since been incorporated in several books of popular recitations, notwithstanding Bibley freezes to death before a roaring locomotive furnace, with 150 pounds of steam up and two cords of wood within reach.

Our Pattern Department

LADIES' SHIRT-WAIST.

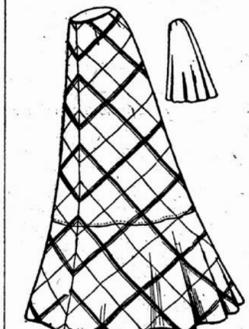


Pattern No. 5523.—Wide and narrow tucks contribute to the decoration of the smart shirt-waists here pictured in a development of French fashion. The waist closes in the back, and a belt and peplum finish the lower edge, thus giving that trim fit about the waist so desirable in a waist of this kind. The design is suitable to all the season's waisting, such as Scotch flannel, mohair, taffeta, linen and madras. The medium size will require two and five-eighths yards of 36-inch material. Sizes for 32, 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42 inches bust measure.

This pattern will be sent to you on receipt of 10 cents. Address all orders to the Pattern Department of this paper. Be sure to give size and number of pattern wanted. For convenience, write your order on the following coupon:

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 SIZE.....
 NAME.....
 ADDRESS.....

LADIES' ONE OR TWO-PIECE CIRCULAR SKIRT.



Pattern No. 5520.—An excellent design for a skirt, suitable for plaid or striped materials as well as the plain fabric is shown in this illustration. It is circular in shape and may be of one or two piece construction. If made of plaid goods it should be cut with the matched bias edges at the center of the front. Darts arranged in the upper part give a smooth fit over the hips. Provision is made for an inverted boxpleat or habit back and for round length or medium sweep. Black and white plaid was selected for the making, but several materials are suitable, such as serge, mohair, chevot and broadcloth. The medium size requires five and three-quarter yards of 44-inch material. Sizes for 22, 24, 26, 28, 30 and 32 inches waist measure.

This pattern will be sent to you on receipt of 10 cents. Address all orders to the Pattern Department of this paper. Be sure to give size and number of pattern wanted. For convenience, write your order on the following coupon:

No. 5520.
 SIZE.....
 NAME.....
 ADDRESS.....

Earthquake Eradicator.

The man was explaining his business to Maj. Beardley.

"I represent the American Rubber Tube & Tiling company," he said. "Our products are the greatest invention of the age. Any city whose water mains are made of iron or any other metal is at the mercy of earthquakes. Our proposition is to equip the water department complete with rubber water mains. Earthquakes cannot injure them. Freezing cannot burst them. They are pliable and give room for expansion."

"But in case of an earthquake," said the major, "the great buildings would fall on the rubber mains and choke off the supply of water."

"Our company," said the agent, "is now perfecting plans for rubber construction in all skyscrapers, so that they will bounce back immediately into place.—Kansas City Times.

Mr. Jones (looking over household expenses)—I don't understand this item, Mary. What does it mean? Two pounds for church expenses for October. I have no recollection of paying any such sum for the support of the church in that month.

Mrs. Jones—Henry, you are just as mean as you can be. That was what my new hat cost for the last harvest festival.—Tit-Bits.

Amende Honorable.

"No, sir," declared Bragg, "I owe nothing to any man."

"Oh, yes, you do," retorted Wise.

"No, yes, you owe an apology to every man who has listened to you blow."—Philadelphia Press.

Great Golf Drive.

Prof. Milne, the seismologist, was the first man to drive a golf ball across the Victoria falls, this being done during the recent visit of the British association to South Africa.

OUR DEVASTATING FOREST FIRES

Some Historic Fires—Carelessness Largely Cause of the Great Annual Loss—Efforts to Cope With the Problem.

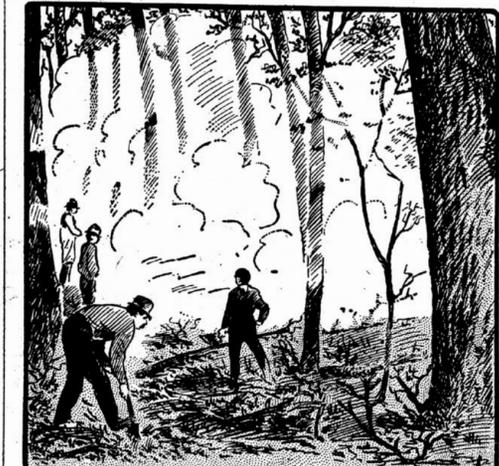
The recent forest fires in the Michigan Upper Peninsula and Wisconsin bring up other forest fires that have worked such havoc in our splendid timber lands. Fires in the Adirondacks seem to be annual visitations, sometimes reaching large proportions, sometimes effectively routed ere much damage has been done; again we hear of the great waste in the forest regions of the Pacific coast; of fires in the towering forests of the south; again, that timber lands in Michigan and Wisconsin have been swept by the fire demon.

Gifford Pinchot, chief of the forest service, United States department of agriculture, gives in the Farmers' Bulletin a short review of historic forest fires that have reached gigantic proportions. Mr. Pinchot tells of the Hinckley, Minn., fire of September 1, 1894; the great fires in Michigan in 1881; Wisconsin Peshtigo fire of October, 1871, and the Michigan fires of the same year; of the Miramichi fire of 1825.

In the latter fire a region in New Brunswick suffered. This fire at about one o'clock in the afternoon was raging at a place some 60 miles above the town of Newcastle, on the Miramichi river; before ten o'clock it was 20 miles below Newcastle. "In nine hours it had destroyed a belt of forest 80 miles long and 25 miles wide. Over more than two and a half million

cattle and buildings, for it carries with it the impoverishment of a whole region for ten or even hundreds of years afterward. The loss of the stumpage value of the timber at the time of the fire is but a small part of the damage to the neighborhood. The wages that would have been earned in lumbering, added to the value of the produce that would have been purchased to supply the lumber camps and the taxes that would have been devoted to roads, and other public improvements, furnish a much truer measure of how much, sooner or later, it costs a region when its forests are destroyed by fire."

There are two recognized fire seasons in the United States, in the spring and fall. The fire season when the greatest damage is done in the middle west, far west and parts of the south, is in the period between late August and early November. H. M. Suter, editor of Forestry and Irrigation, in an article in the Review of Reviews, says that carelessness in one form or another is cause of most of the forest fires in the United States. "Of those proceeding from carelessness fully one-half are due to railroads and their employes. Indeed, an experienced forester, who for a number of years was a locomotive engineer, is authority for the statement that at least 65 per cent of this country's forest fires are due to railroads. Sparks



FIGHTING FOREST FIRES IN THE ADIRONACKS.

across almost every living thing was found killed. Even the fish were afterward found dead in heaps along the banks. Five hundred and ninety buildings were burned; and a number of towns, including Newcastle, Chatham and Douglastown, were destroyed. One hundred and sixty persons perished and nearly 1,000 head of stock."

The next fire, the Peshtigo fire of October, 1871, was even more destructive. Two thousand square miles of Wisconsin lands were burned over, resulting in timber and other losses amounting up to many millions of dollars. Between 1,200 and 1,500 persons were killed, almost half the population of the town of Peshtigo perished. At about the same time fires raged in the neighboring state of Michigan, hundreds of people lost their lives. A strip of land about 40 miles wide and 180 miles long, extending across the central part of the state from Lake Michigan to Lake Huron, was devastated. In this last named conflagration the fire ate up timber estimated at 4,000,000,000 feet board measure, valued at \$10,000,000.

Ten years afterward, in 1881, great fires covered more than 1,800 miles in various parts of Michigan; again many persons perished, over 5,000 persons were destroyed in addition to the valuable timber.

Up in the north woods they still speak with bated breath of the dreadful Hinckley fire in Minnesota, in which so many persons lost their lives. The burned-over area was not so large as in other great fires, but the destruction of life and property was very heavy. Hinckley and six other towns were destroyed, about 500 persons perished, and 2,000 were left destitute. The estimated loss in property was \$25,000,000. The loss of life would have been much greater had it not been for the heroic conduct of the railroad men.

Heavy smoke from the frequent fires on the western coast sometimes renders navigation dangerous on Puget Sound. In 1902 forest fires in Oregon and Washington destroyed within two weeks over \$15,000,000 worth of timber and property. The loss occurred in a restricted area and represented but a portion of the country's annual forest fire loss. Yearly forest fires are looked for; the annual loss is estimated at \$50,000,000.

As the chief of the forest service suggests, the loss by great forest fires is a very difficult to estimate; "the destruction of the timber is a more serious loss than that of the

from an engine proceeding through a forested country during dry weather are almost sure to start fires. In this connection it is noteworthy that the first serious menace to the Adirondack region this spring (1903), was directly due to the hot cinders thrown out by a locomotive when a heavy wind was blowing across the tracks. The forest was in a highly inflammable condition, due to the long dry spell, and these fires burned for days. Another fire in the same region was caused by an engineer who, in order to improve the draught, took the spark arrester out of the engine while going from Saranac to Lake Placid. Section hands, too, in burning old ties, brush, weeds and