THE CHEVALIER D'AURIAC

A STORY OF FIFTY YEARS.

SYNOPSIS.

D'Auriac, commanding outpost where scene is laid, tells the story. De Gomeron is in temporary command, appointed by Gen. de Rone to examine into a charge against d'Auriac. Nicholas, a sergeant, brings in a man and woman, from king's camp at Le Fere, prisoners. D'Auriac, angered by insulting manner of de Gomeron toward woman, strikes him, duel follows and prisoners escape. Duel is interrupted by appearance of de Rone, and d'Auriac is told he will hang if found alive at close of morrow's battle. Riding over field next day d'Auriac finds Nicholas, victim of de Gomeron's malice, in imminent danger of death, and releases him from awful predicament. After battle in which King Henry utterly routs de Rone's forces, d'Auriac, lying severely wounded, sees two forms moving through the darkness robbing the bodies of the dead and wounded. They find golden collar on de Leyva's corpse, and Babette stabs Mauginot (her partner) to gain possession. Henry with retinue, among whom is fair prisoner who had escaped from de Gomeron and d'Ayen, her suitor, rides over the field. Madame rescues d'Auriac, and afterwards visits him daily in hospital. Here he learns his friend is heiress of Bidache. When well enough he is taken to her Normandy chateau, where he learns from Maitre Palin, madame's chaplain, the king is about to force her to marry d'Ayen. He sets out with Jacques, his knave, for Paris, to prevent this marriage. Delayed at Ezy, he he comes upon Nicholas, his old sergeant, who says de Gomeron is in neighborhood with associates from army and nobility, plotting treason against the king. They go to de Gomeron's retreat where they manage to overhear details of plot. Burning with revenge, Nicholas shoots at de Gomeron. Flying for their lives, the two men think themselves beyond pursuit, when suddenly they are face to face with Biron, one of the traitors, whom d'Auriac cuts down, and with de Gomeron, who makes short work of Nicholas; d'Auriac escapes. Arriving in Paris the chevalier lays what he knows of treasonable plot before Sully, master general of ordnance. Calling on de Belin, a friend, d'Auriac secures from him a servant, Ravaillac, who had previously been in service of d'Ayen. D'Ayen's marriage to Madame de la Bidache is to occur within fornight, de Belin to stand sponsor. Palin and madame arrive in Paris. D'Auriac has suspicions aroused concerning Ravaillac; later witnesses meeting with de Gomeron, therefore dismisses him. The chevalier is introduced at court by de Belin, where he charges Biron with being traitor to France and king. For his pains Henry gives him 24 hours to quit France. King now commands marriage to be celebrated on the morrow, making it imperative that flight occur that night, if madame be saved. D'Auriac therefore meets her secretly, when masked men swoop down on pair and carry them off, bound and gagged. After 24 hours' imprisonment, during which he has interview with de Gomeron and Babette, he manages to escape. At his lodgings he finds Jacques, Palin, de Belin and his host Pantin assembled in council. Next morning Pantin and d'Auriac, disguised make their way to neighborhood where they manage to get directed to the Toison d'Or.

CHAPTER XVII.—CONTINUED.

At last I came opposite the Toison d'Or. The gate leading into the little court was shut, and so was every window facing the street. The signboard was swinging sadly over the closed door, and at the first glance it looked as if the house was deserted. I would trust as little to chance as possible. I passed slowly on, and found that the Toison d'Or joined on to another but much smaller house, which had its bound set to it by the wall that crossed the street. The sash of a window on the top story of the house was up, and as I came up to it the front door swung open and a man stood on the steps and looked me full in the face. As my glance passed him, I saw that the door opened into a room that was used apparently as a shop for all kinds of miscellaneous articles, and the man himself would have stood well for the picture of a thieves' fence, which, indeed, he was.

"A good morning, captain," he said, "will you buy—or have you come to sell?" he asked, dropping his voice.

As he spoke Pantin came up and began to importune the man from a safe distance to purchase his wares; but beyond a curse, had no further attention paid him; and with a disappointed air he went slowly back toward the Toison d'Or. It flashed upon me that something had fallen my way. "I have come to buy, compere," I answered, and stepping into the shop began to examine a few cast-off doublets and flung them aside, demanding one on which the gold lace was good. A woman joined the man at this time, and whilst they were rummaging amongst their stores I hastily ran over in my mind the plan I had formed. If I could get a lodging here I would be in a position to watch who came and went from the house, and strike my blow with deliberation and certainty. So at last when the doublet was shown to me, though the price was exorbitant, I paid it without demur, and on the man asking if it should be sent to my lodging, I pretended to hesitate for a moment, and then explaining that, as I had just come to Paris and was in search of a lodging, I would take the doublet with me.

The woman, however, here cut in and explained that if it was a lodging I needed they could accommodate me.

"All the more if you buy as well as you do now, captain," said the man.

"I will sell you as cheap as you want besides," I answered, "but let me see the rooms."

"There is but one room, monsieur," answered the woman, "but it is large and furnished," and then she led me up the stairway. The room was certainly large beyond the ordinary, but I was disappointed beyond measure at finding that it was at the back of the house and would prevent me from watching who came in and out of the Toison d'Or. I objected to the situation, saying that I wanted a room overlooking the street.

"There is none," she answered, shortly, "but if monsieur desires to look on the street he may do so from the window at the end of this passage."

She pointed to a narrow passage that led from the door of the room to a small hanging turret, and from the arched windows of this I saw that I could see all I wanted without being seen myself. The woman seemed to be of the same kidney as her husband, and drove a close bargain, and after much pretended haggling I closed with her terms, and arranged also for her to bring me my meals, explaining that for the next week or so I would stay indoors, as my health was not good.

"I understand, monsieur," she said, showing her teeth.

"Then it is settled, and I will step down and bring up the doublet which I left in the shop;" with these words I counted out the rent and the money for my board, coin by coin, into her hand, as if each piece I disgorged was my last; and then stepping down, found, as I expected, Pantin at the door.

The man was for ordering him away; but his wife insisted on making a purchase, in which I joined, and the fence going upstairs at that time we three were left together. It was all-important to get rid of the woman for a moment or so, and Pantin, seeing this, sold his whole basket load at a price so small that it raised even her astonishment.

"I have sold it for luck," he said, "but if madame wishes I will sell her daily at the same rate."

"Could you bring me fruit at the same price?" I asked.

"Why not?" he answered.

"Then bring me some to-morrow."

"Certainly, captain; where shall I put these, madame?"

But she bore them away herself, and this gave me the opportunity.

"Pantin," I said, "I have taken a room here, you understand."

"And I," he answered, "have sold a cabbage to Babette. If you hear nothing more, meet me at dusk in the square behind St. Martin's."

There was no time to say more, for we heard the fence coming back. Pantin went off down the street, and I, after a word or two with the man, and an order to his wife regarding my meals, went slowly up to my room.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE SKYLIGHT IN THE TOISON D'OR.

Once back in my room I flung off my cloak and took a survey of my new quarters. The room was long and low, and situated in the topmost story of the house. In one corner was a settle covered with a faded brocade, whilst on the other side there was a wardrobe and a few necessaries. The bed was placed at the extreme end of the room, and close to the window which overlooked the back of the house, and through which from where I stood the blue sky alone was visible, there was a table and a couple of chairs. Between the table and the bed intervened a clear space, about ten feet by six, covered with a coarse carpeting. If I am thus precise in my description, I would say I have done so in order to explain clearly what follows.

So far things were satisfactory enough, and beyond what I had a right to expect in such a locality. The one drawback was that I would be compelled to use the turret at the end of the passage for my watch, and thus run the risk of being observed from the other houses. In the meantime I determined to see exactly what could be effected from the window, and pushing the table aside, so as to get a better view, looked out. I then saw that the house I was in, as well as the Toison d'Or, was built against the remains of the old walls of Paris. Below me there was a sheer drop of 50 to 60 feet, right into the bed of the abandoned fosse, which was covered by a thick un-

RAISING MYSELF CAUTIOUSLY, I PEEPED IN.

dergrowth and full of debris. I thought at first of stopping any further concern with the window, but as I was turning away I looked rather particularly at the wall below me and saw that a ledge ran along it about three feet below the window. Following its track with my eyes, I observed that it was carried along the face of the Toison d'Or, and in doing this I became aware that there was a window open at the back of Babette's house, and that this was situated on the same level as my room, but just about the middle, instead of the extreme end, as mine was. When I considered the position of this window, and that its lookout was on a place where never a soul seemed to come, I could not but think that, madame were in the Toison d'Or, in all probability her room was there, and I swore bitterly to myself at the thought of how impossible it would be to reach her. I then craned out and looked upwards, and saw that my house was a half-story lower than the Toison d'Or, and that, whilst the latter had a high, sloping roof, the portion of the building in which I was appeared to be a long and narrow terrace, with a low machicolated parapet running along the edge. Thus if there were a door or window in the Toison d'Or that opened on to my roof, it would be possible to step out thereon, and then I drew back, my blood burning. If it was possible to step out from the Toison d'Or on to the roof of the house I occupied, it might be equally easy to get thence into the Toison d'Or. Taking my sword I measured the distance of the ledge from the window sill, and then, holding on to the mullions by one hand, stretched out as far as I could, and found I could just touch the top of the parapet with the point of my blade. In short, the position was this: that, so hard and smooth was the outside of the wall it was impossible for anything, save a lizard, to get along it to the window behind which I supposed madame was prisoned, yet it was feasible, with the aid of a rope thrown over the grinning head of the gargoyle a little above me, or else over the low battlement of the parapet, to reach the roof, and the odds were in favor of there being some sort of a door or window that would give ingress thence into the Toison d'Or. I began after this to be a little more satisfied with my quarters, and determined to set about my explorations about the dinner hour, when most people would be within, and the chance of discovery reduced to a minimum.

After allowing a little time to elapse I descended to the shop and began carelessly running my eyes over the miscellaneous collection of articles therein. The fence followed me about, now recommending this thing and now that. At last I saw what looked to be a ball of rope lying in a corner and covered with dust.

"What is that?" I inquired, touching it with the point of my sword.

The man stooped without a word, and picking it up, dusted it carefully, then he unrolled a ladder of silken cord, about 12 or 15 feet in length.

"This, captain," he said, swinging it backward and forward, "belonged not so long ago to M. de Bellievre, though you may not believe me."

"I have no doubt you are speaking the truth, but it seems rather weak."

"On the contrary, monsieur, will you test it and see?"

We managed to do this by means of two hooks that were slung from a beam above us, in a manner to satisfy me that the ladder was sufficient to bear double my weight; and then, as if content with this, I flung it aside.

"Will not monsieur take it?" asked the man; "it is cheap."

"It is good enough," I answered, "if I had a business on hand; but at present I am waiting."

"If monsieur has leisure I might be able to give him a hint that would be worth something in crowns."

"I am lazy when in luck, compere. No, I will not take the ladder."

"It may come in useful, though, and will occupy but a small space in monsieur's rooms;" and, seeing that I appeared to waver, "shall I take it up? I will let it go for ten crowns."

"Five crowns or nothing," I said, firmly.

"But it is of the finest silk!"

"I do not want to buy. You can take my price or leave it."

"Very well, then, monsieur, thanks, and I will take it up myself."

"You need not trouble. I am going up, and will take it with me."

With these words I took the ladder folded in long loops in my hands and went back to the turret. There I spent a good hour or so in reexamining it, and splicing one or two parts that seemed a trifle weak, at the same time keeping a wary eye on who passed and repassed the street, without, however, discovering anything to attract attention. Finally the woman brought up my dinner, and I managed to eat after a fashion, but made more play with the Beaugency, which was mild and of a good vintage. When the table was cleared I sat still for about half an hour or so, playing with my glass, and then rising saw that my door was securely fastened in such a manner that no one could effect an entrance, except by bursting the lock. This being done I removed my boots, and unslung my sword, keeping my pistols, however, in my belt, and after a good look round to see that no one was observing me, managed to loop the ladder round the gargoyle, and then tested it once more with a long pull. The silk held well enough, but the stonework of the gargoyle gave and fell with a heavy crash into the fosse below. It was a narrow business, and it was well I had tried the strength of the cord again. I looked out from the window cautiously to see if the noise had attracted any attention, and found, to my satisfaction, that it had not. After allowing a little time to elapse, so as to be on the safe side, I attempted to throw the looped end I had made to the ladder, so that it might fall over the parapet between two embrasures, but discovered, after half a dozen casts, that this was not feasible from where I stood. Then I bethought me of my boyhood's training amongst the cliffs that overhung the bay of Auriac, and, stepping out on to the ledge of the window, managed, with an effort, to hold on to the stump of the gargoyle with one hand, and balancing myself carefully, for a slip meant instant death, flung the loop once more, and had the satisfaction of seeing it fall as I desired. Without any further hesitation I put my foot on the rungs and in a minute more was lying on my face behind the parapet, and thanking God I had made the effort, for before me was a large skylight, half open, from which I could command a view of the interior of one room at least of the Toison d'Or, and by which it might be possible to effect an easy entrance. Before going any further, however, I glanced round me to see how the land lay and was delighted to find that I could not be observed from the opposite side of the street, as the portion of the house I was on was concealed from view by the gabled roof, that rose about ten feet from me, leaving me in a sort of long balcony. Now that I think of it this roof must have been an afterthought on the part of the builders. Then I was but too thankful to find it existed, and had no time for reflections. By turning my head I could see, too, that the high wall that shut in the mouth of the passage was evidently raised as a barrier between the street and the fosse which took a bend and ran immediately below the wall. After lying perfectly still for a little, I slowly pushed myself forward until at last I was beneath the skylight, and then raising myself cautiously I peeped in.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

ROBERT BROWNING'S ROMANCE

The Most Beautiful Love Story in Literature Is That of His Courtship and Married Life.

Not once in all the years of their married life was Browning absent from his wife a single day. At home or on their occasional journeys he was ever with her, ready to protect her and wait upon her. Often ill and unable to leave her room, he nursed her with the tenderness of a woman; cheering her in her convalescence and stories and songs, or reading to her for hours at a time, as he oft had done in the days before their marriage. It was in his touching thoughtfulness—in his little acts of loving and unsolicited attention—that his love for her was most truly shown. Oftimes would he rise early in the morning, long ere the time for her awakening, and hastening forth into the garden or the fields, gather a bunch of fragrant blossoms to place at her bedside, that they might be the first realities of life to greet her with their sunshine and with their tender messages of love upon her return from the world of dreams. His every thought, his every care, was of her—to add to the joy or the comfort of her life; and many were the means devised by his thoughtful solicitude for the accomplishment of his loving purpose. To shield her delicate eyes from the light he had placed in the window of her room a small shutter of mica, so arranged that the sunlight might fall upon her table in subdued and gentle radiance.—Clifford Howard, in Ladies' Home Journal.

WITHOUT SENATORS.

Several States Have But One Representative in the Upper House.

Should the Constitution Be Amended So That Senators Could Be Chosen by the Direct Vote of the People?

[Special Washington Letter.]

One of the growing questions before our people is whether members of the United States senate shall continue to be elected by state legislatures or by direct vote of the people.

There are now 45 states in the federal union, and each state is entitled to two senators. Consequently, if every state legislature performed its constitutional duty, there would be 90 members of the national senate. When the constitution was adopted there were 13 states, each entitled to two senators; and the total membership of the national senate was 26.

Thirty-two states have been added to the federal union since the foundation of the government. By purchase, by cession and by conquest the original republic has expanded from the Atlantic to the Pacific oceans, and from the great lakes to the gulf.

But, while the republic has been expanding, and while its power has been increasing, men gifted with talents for acquisition have acquired wealth in great measure. Their sons have added to the hoards by modern methods of speculation. They ignore that Scripture which says that it is harder for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven than for a camel to pass through the gate called the needle's eye. They have laid up treasure on earth, seeming to care little or nothing for laying up treasure in Heaven.

It is because of this accumulation of riches that many of our people believe that legislatures are corruptible, and that rich men buy their way into the national senate. No higher honor can be attained by any man in this republic than that he shall be elected to the national senate; excepting, of course, the presidency. Rich men covet the distinction and the social honor.

A REPUBLICAN PAPER'S VIEW OF THE SITUATION.

It is not a secret that, not many years ago, a man expended upwards of a quarter of a million dollars to secure his election to the senate.

The salary of a senator is only $5,000 a year, and the term lasts but six years. Consequently when a man is elected to the senate his total salary for six years amounts to $30,000. And yet a man expended a quarter of a million dollars to secure an election to the senate. Why did he do it?

He expended that large amount of money simply to have the honor of being a senator; just as he expended $50,000 for a painting to adorn his parlor; just as he expended $750,000 for a house in a certain city.

Now when the expenditure of a quarter of a million dollars will enable a rich man to have himself elected to the senate many of our good people think that a halt should be called. If a man in one state can control a legislature with money, a man in every state might do the same; and hence no man could aspire to become a great law-giver without first becoming a rich man. Moreover, all legislatures might become corrupt.

That is, in brief, the argument made by the people who favor the election of senators by direct votes of the people. It is for the purpose of enabling poor men to aspire, as they did in the days of Jackson, Polk, Clay, Webster, Lincoln and Garfield; it is for the purpose of putting the poor men on a level with the rich men in aspiring to national honors and distinction that they advocate the proposed change.

But there is another side to the question. If wealth continues to accumulate, and rich men continue to aspire, they will have the advantage anyway, because they can have bigger meetings, better brass bands, bigger processions, more expensive and extensive barbecues and other entertainments; so that, even by a direct vote of the people, the election of senators might be corruptly secured. That is to say, the rich man who would expend a quarter of a million dollars to corrupt a state legislature would spend half a million to influence the votes of the people in the various polling places. The millionaire of the present can as well afford to spend half a million for the honor as he can afford to spend a quarter of a million. There is also the danger that the people might become accustomed to look for wholesale bribery, and enough of them become corruptible to sell their votes, and affect the elections.

There you have an epitome of both sides of the argument. The reason for calling attention to this condition prospectively affecting our body politic lies in the fact that during the past decade various state legislatures have failed to perform their constitutional functions, and have adjourned without electing senators, thereby depriving sovereign states of their right to complete representation on the floor of the national senate.

One striking example of this condition may be referred to without prejudice. In 1894 Senator Mitchell, of Oregon, discussing the right of the governor of Montana to appoint Lee Mantle as a senator, after the legislature of Montana failed to elect a senator, said: "Suppose a rich man should arise in Oregon, two years hence, and prevent my reelection to the senate. Suppose that rich man should be in collusion with the governor of Oregon. And, after preventing the legislature from electing me, that rich man should be appointed to the senate by the governor of Oregon, would it be right to give him a seat in this body? I say not; and I will vote against the admission of a senator from Montana appointed under such circumstances."

Strange as it may seem, two years after Senator Mitchell had delivered that speech the Oregon legislature was induced to adjourn without electing a senator to succeed Senator Mitchell. Very soon thereafter the governor of Oregon appointed one Corbett, a very rich man, to the senate. The case was considered carefully and, by a vote of two to one, the senate refused to give Corbett a seat. Thus a precedent was established. When a legislature fails to elect the governor of a state cannot appoint a senator.

The Corbett case is the last one on record. The first precedent was formed in 1793, at a session of the senate for the third congress. Senator Read, of Delaware, resigned in December, 1792, when the state legislature was in session. His successor was not elected and the governor of Delaware, in March, 1793, appointed Kensey Johns. After full discussion the senate refused to permit Mr. Johns to be seated by a vote of 20 to 7. The constitution was construed to mean that governors of states may appoint senators to succeed those who die or resign, provided the state legislatures do not have opportunity to elect successors. But when a legislature fails to perform its constitutional function, after having had opportunity to do so, the governor cannot appoint a senator. This question will again come up, however, in the cases of Senator Quay, just appointed by the governor of Pennsylvania, and Col. Daniel M. Burns, appointed by the governor of California.

Delaware four years ago failed to elect a successor to Anthony Higgins, and no appointment was made. Delaware's legislature recently adjourned without electing a successor to George Gray. Thus for a third time in its history Delaware has failed to elect a senator, and that state for a third time has but one representative in the senate, when she is entitled to two.

In recent years nine state legislatures (California and Pennsylvania being the last) have adjourned without electing senators. In some of these cases it is known that money has been liberally and lavishly used to bring about the deplorable result. Ambition, avarice, lust of power, pride of station, greed of gain and desire for personal preferment have stood between the people and their constitutional rights.

These modern conditions have caused many honest statesmen to advocate the election of senators by direct vote of the people, instead of by the legislatures of the state. In order to bring about this change it would be necessary to adopt an amendment to the national constitution. Conservative men doubt whether an amendment of this nature would meet with the approval of two-thirds of the states. There is not sufficient evidence, and not enough national interest in the charges of corruption, to induce the people to change the constitution at the present time. But resort has recently been made to a popular expedient which may lead to the adoption of a constitutional amendment.

Several of the states in their party conventions have indorsed certain individuals for the senate, campaigns have been made upon platforms containing the names of favorite sons, and legislatures have felt in duty bound to elect those who have thus been practically chosen by a direct vote of the people. The pursuance of this policy may bring about the result which so many desire, without amending the national constitution.

SMITH D. FRY.

Safeguards.

"The cashier informed me," said the president, "that he was strongly tempted to skip with the funds, but that he locked himself up with them and prayed over them all night and overcame the temptation."

"I know it," said the chief director. "I had a detective at his door, one at each window, and one on the roof—at the chimney flue—while he was praying."—Atlanta Constitution.

Woman's Way.

"You can't cut up about this hat, for I made it myself."

"Ah, you dear little economist!"

"Yes, Robert; and by making it myself, you know, I could afford to get much more elegant and expensive material than ever before."—Detroit Free Press.

Then She Felt Relieved.

"I felt sure the hero was going to be killed," she said, in describing the serial story to her best friend, "until I happened to think that the author was paid so much a word, and probably would not want to spoil a good thing."—Chicago Post.

What "Kalsomines" Are.

"Kalsomines" are cheap temporary preparations manufactured from chalks, clays, whiting, etc., and are stuck on the walls with decaying animal glue. They bear no comparison with Alabastine, which is a cement that goes through a process of setting, and hardens with age. Consumers, in buying Alabastine, should see that the goods are in packages and properly labeled. Nothing else is "just as good" as Alabastine. The claims of new imitations are absurd on their face. They cannot offer the test of time for durability.

Helpers.

Coroner—Was the victim conscious when you reached him?

Pat—Yis, sir, he worr. But bechune us I don't belave he knew ut.—Philadelphia North American.

How to Get Rich.—"Some men," said Uncle Eben, "wouldn' hab no trouble 'tall 'bout gettin' rich ef dey held on as tight to de money dey earns as dey does to de money dey borrows."—Washington Star.

Size is no criterion of strength. A small onion may be stronger than a big squash.—L. A. W. Bulletin.

Joking with an Official.

They tell a good story about an attache of the courthouse on Leavenworth street. Two jokers began "monkeying" with his tellephone the other day, disconnecting it and otherwise bothering the official. Shortly afterward one of the jokers called up the officials from another office and introduced himself as being the chief operator at the central office. "For heaven's sake see what's the matter with your telephone up there," he gruffly spoke to the official. "Whatever's the matter I don't know, but your electric current is flowing like mad into the central office here and there's about an inch of it on the floor already." The official grew pale with fright, and he rushed into the office of the two jokers. "Now you've done it," he began to fume with sincerity. "The main office has just called me up and says that on account of your blamed fooling the electric current is submerging the central office, and the girls are quitting work. Come in here now and fix that up." The two jokers expressed sorrow to the official, went in and pretended to tighten a screw and then went down cellar and took turns in having spinal meningitis.—Waterbury Democrat.

"Never wear shoes too small for you," is a good foot rule.—Chicago Daily News.