heard it in the street."

in the air."

"It is 'L'Heure Charmante,' the lat-

est craze of the Quarter," replied Dar-

rell. "You know it, then?" for she had

begun to sing. "Then why not? It is

He added his own strong and clear

voice to hers, and they sang together

Suddenly the people on their left

veered toward the dancing floor. Vera

turned quickly, her eyes burning He

nodded, and their hands were clasped

two, so strangely met, were dancing

the scars of fetters on her wrists, this

man who was alive because a bullet

fired half an hour before and meant for

this mad throng that whirled them

The music stopped with an abrupt

crash of the instruments and a break

of the voices from song to shouting,

acclaimed the favorite model and now

proudly perched upon a pedestal. She

was small of stature, and her beauty

was not of the type that "carries" to a

great distance. Her costume, however,

was wonderfully effective. She wore

a gown of pale green, brocaded with

lrises, and she held in her hands a yel-

low veil so variable in quality under

the lights that it seemed to waver

round her body like a tongue of flame.

A famous artist made a quick sketch

of her as she stood there, and then the

oldest of the students, a giant, dressed

like a gladiator, gave her his hand, and

as she stepped down from the pedestal

he kissed her on the forehead, as if to

typify the reverence for beauty in the

hearts of all that vast assembly of its

worshipers. Applause rewarded him,

and then the band struck up once more

"L'Heure Charmante." A thousand

He had descried his friends at the

"We must hurry," he added, "or they

"I, too," she replied. "It is something

"Pax vobiscum," said he.

for a moment. But I am ashamed to go

to your friends. It is like asking a fa-

"We ask nothing," returned Darrell,

"not even advice. We merely tell our

amusing little story for their greater

joy in the midst of this merrymaking.

It is a favor that we confer upon them.

It proved to be easy to overtake the

Gordons, for they returned immediate-

ly to a table and an unfinished bottle

of wine. The friar of orders gray was

a stranger in their eyes as he approach-

ed them and bowed gravely, as became

Gordon. "May I be permitted to in-

quire-Jack Darrell! Well, upon my

"And Edith!" cried Mrs. Gordon, for

as much as could be seen of Vera in

mask and domino was not without a

"You are in error," whispered Dar-

rell, stooping beside her chair. "This

lady is Vera Shevaloff, a princess by

right; an exile through injustice. 1

took her from the agents of the czar

this evening, and one of them, Robert,"

he added, looking across at Gordon

"was our friend, the pirate, Ladislov."

his wife extended her hand to Vera,

for there was a gleam in Darrell's eyes

which meant, "If you are my friend, re-

"And you are the man who forswore

"It is this that is the test," replied

adventure!" said Gordon aside. "Well,

Darrell; "my presence here. No man can expect to dictate absolutely in the

matter of general peace and quietness.

The thing is too difficult, for the house

may take fire over his head while he

lies asleep with his hands folded upon

his breast. But in regard to special

A CRIME OF THE NIHILISTS.

Gordon rose hastily and bowed, while

"And with you also, father," replied

"Pax vobiscum," said be.

suggestion of Miss Lorrimer.

vor. I am too proud."

Hasten!"

his character.

ceive her well."

I am not surprised."

soul!"

will escape us." Then suddenly, "Upon

"There are the Gordons."

hither and thither, aimless as fate.

among the revelers-this woman with

THE SPUR By Ashley Towne ETHERINGTON.

CHAPTER III.

THE BALL OF THE QUATRE-Z-ARTS.



HEN they came to the end of the street, they a livelier region; but. for Paris, it was not much to boast of, and were able to waylay

an empty vehicle, into which Darrell assisted the lady of the brown eyes. Where would monsieur wish to go? It was the cabman's question, and

Darrell seemed not to hear it. "You were on your way"- he began and paused.

"To the Place Blanche," said the coachman. "Ah, yes," responded Darrell.

will go to the Place Blanche." He took his place in the carriage and became immediately aware that his companion was shivering pitifully. As the night was unseasonably warm, this phenomenon required an explanation. "You are ill?" be asked.

"Frightened," she answered. "I am quaking with terror. Absurd, now that it is all over!"

And then she burst into tears, weeping with a perfect self abandonment which he was sufficiently experienced to recognize as the best possible relief. Her calmness in the first minutes of their acquaintance had been astounding and doubtless had been no less so in the terrible scenes that had preceded her extraordinary rescue.

separably connected, and before Dar- sent back to Siberia." rell was really gware of it he was holding her hand and caressing it as innocently as if she had been a burt child. Then suddenly she was a woconventionality.

"I am not often so weak," she said. I have borne without a tear. But I have no intention of burdening you with my sorrows. Help me through a few more minutes until I have formed a plan, and then I will relieve you absolutely of all care of me."

"Surely there must be some one with whom you would wish to communicate," be said.

"There are a few to whom I would tunately I do not know just where they are. Certainly they can be of no use to me this night. Moreover, it is disagreeable to mention the circumstance, but I am absolutely without money. I had a purse containing a small sum, but it is gone. There is more at the house where I have been living, but I dare not visit it, for I think the Rus-Perhaps tomorrow I can send word."

Darrell, "and in the meantime let me say in the gentlest way that money does not enter into this problem. I have a large pocketful, and of course ride in this cab till daylight if neces-Moulin Rouge, I might go in and con- be openly arrested outside of Russia." sult Mrs. Gordon. She is a person of expedients,"

making myself truly known to you. The circumstances of our meeting are a poor guarantee in such a matter."

"There is, however," said Darrell, of individual character. I have seen



"I am Vera Shevaloff."

good and bad women, very many of both, and I have seen women of birth and breeding and others who lacked | ride in this cab all night?" those advantages. Such being the case, though I have known you less than an bour, I am not troubled by the smallest doubt. I shall tell Mrs. Gordon exher precisely what I believe of you, and then, if I know her'-

"What can she do? She cannot take me to her home."

Darrell turned more directly toward "I cannot take it," protested Vera, her, From the brightly lighted street and while they were disputing upon

nate the interior of the carriage, and the girl's face was clearly defined.

"Why not?" he asked. "My friends have nothing to fear from the czar's spies. The fact that you are persecuted and pursued will merely make them found more lights and the more anxious to befriend you. They are not afraid of anything, and, as for annoyance, beaven help the man who tries to annoy Robert Gordon. I cabs were scarce. At have known him a good many years. last, however, they Therefore I say to you, Why not?"

"There is no reason whatever," she said, looking him straight in the eyes. "I am Vera Shevaloff, the daughter of a prince. I am of the house of Konstantin of Stavropol."

"Stavropol!" exclaimed Darrell. "Why are you surprised?"

"Because I have recently met Ivan Getchikoff, son of the governor general of the province," answered Darrell. "I saw him this afternoon in the company of Ladislov, the man whom I believe to have been the coachman of your prison on wheels. It cannot be that Getchikoff assisted him in that enterprise?"

"If it was he, I did not recognize him," she replied. "I doubt, indeed, | mind that"whether I should know Ivan in broad daylight, and this man I scarcely saw

"I think he would be above such work," said Darrell.

"The Getchikoffs are proud," she said, "but cruel as wolves. They are all powerful in Stavropol today, both In the city and the province. It is probable that I should have been taken there for some form of trial, though as to that I am merely making a guess. Darrell now saw at what expense it I have no means of knowing what would have been done with me except Consolation and tenderness are in- that I should eventually have been

"Sent back!" exclaimed Darrell. "Have you been there?"

"I accompanied my father," she anexiled, and my mother and myself service. chose to share his fate, though we who survive it. My mother lived more gown. And now for cabby." prison settlement to which we were as- ed down from the box. signed; my father, some months longer. In Stavropol, my friend, there is send word," she replied, "but unfor- The snows of Siberia are whiter than Call there at 6 tomorrow." the marble, and perhaps my father and He gave the man his card, upon another. Let us not think of it." "But you!" exclaimed Darrell. "You

escaped?"

"I was released." "Then how can you be sent back?" white hand from the folds of the cloak pens I want to know of it. Meanwhile sian agents are ignorant of the fact into the light and holding it clinched in these costumes are great luck." that I dwelt there, and I would not a peculiar manner, "in order to avoid The unfrocked monk leaned from the direct their attention to my friends. a fate worse than Siberian exile I cab window and gave directions to the "I will agree to manage that," said Gorski, governor of the district."

"Thank God!" gasped Darrell involuntarily.

"The order for my release had al- and his companion passed through unready arrived," Vera continued, "and noticed. But a moment later, as they you are more than welcome to all you Gorski dared not suppress or delay it. worked their way out of the press, a may need. As to the night, we could I knew what must happen the instant couple dressed as sailors, the woman's that I heard of the arrival of the order, costume being like the man's in the sary, but I would rather you should and so I prepared the knife for myself. minutest detail, accosted them with have rest, and as to that I have a plan. But circumstances made it possible for merry badinage. I have some friends at the students' me to sheath it elsewhere than in my ball-Mr. and Mrs. Gordon, Americans own breast. It was all very fortunate. said the woman. "You were afraid of and very nice people; precisely the sort I am told that six months had elapsed drinking too much wine." for an emergency such as this. I have and I was far from Siberia before the a card for the ball. It was my inten- suspicion arose that I had struck him in Vera's ear. "I hope our friends tion to go, but I changed my mind. down. His death was a mystery, were well behaved, for their reputation

"You came to Paris?" "Eventually, yes. But I have been in would make short work with me. I be drawing him forward. went to obtain funds that he had hidden, and I was successful. Since com-"such a thing as instinctive recognition ing to Paris I have harbored with ni- here. What are they doing? I know hilists, and that is why I am unable to nothing of these grand entertainments,

> Gordon?" "Most certainly," answered Darrell, "It is the procession," said he, stand-

best. I am afraid to leave you alone in into a captured city of Assyria." the carriage."

not be alarmed." Darrell glanced out of the cab win-

said. "It is the Church of La Trinite and he noted how her eyes were shinthat we have just passed to the left ing through the mask. there. It is a matter of five minutes. There had been music. It ceased and now. By heaven, I wish it were not then burst forth again in delirious necessary to leave you!"

said she, "to leave me forever. I am a dangerous companion for you or for winding among the painted palaces, in your friends. It is monstrous that I whose windows could be seen men and the wind of destiny." should permit you to interest them in women in the ancient Assyrian cosme. Why is it not best that I should tume, copied with great exactitude

desert you in that way, let the driver magic. One caught glimpses of fatake us to the river first. I am not the mous men in the world of art, and man who could live after such treason. among them, dominating the scene, actly what has happened; I shall tell And, besides, you haven't any money to were the beautiful women of that pay the fellow in the morning, which world, the famous models, garbed in reminds me that I must lend you some, costumes the most magnificent or the for it isn't safe to be without it in Par- most simple, some shod in gold leathis for a minute.'

posies daintily put on. there came a glow sufficient to illumi- this point the carriage rolled out into . And they all sang till the voices

the Place Blanche and presently stopdrowned the great orcnestra and the ped amid a press of vehicles before the roof rang with the song. "What is it?" asked Vera. "I have

portals of the Moulin Rouge. Darrell directed the cabman to go on a little way, and then alighted. Immediately he was aware of two figures, man and woman, who were hurrying toward him. The man was frocked like a gray friar, with cord and cowl; the woman wore a fawn colored domino, and she twirled a mask by its cord She had abundant dark brown hair, lustily. and she was tall, like Vera. Her companion was a six footer, and he looked a giant in his gray robe.

"I beg your pardon," he said in English. "Are you done with the cab? All together. Another moment and these "You leave the ball early," said Dar-

rell, without answering the question. "Is it less interesting than usual?" "We say goodby to Paris at sunrise," the young man replied. "Isn't that him had gone astray. It was in harbeastly? We have just time to get to mony with the night's adventure that our lodgings and finish packing. You they should dance and sing together in are an American, aren't you?"

"Yes," replied Darrell, "I'm an American, as you are, and I'm in a bit of a fix also, as you are. You want a cab, and I want to go into the ball with my friend, but we can't do it without costumes. If we don't get any, I shall be highest gallery, where appeared Lucia, obliged to go in alone, and she will wait in the cab; so you can't have it. If, on the other hand, you will sell me your frock-are you dressed completely nder it?"

"Oh, yes, I'm dressed all right." "And as to the domino? Could it be spared?"

"How funny!" exclaimed the young woman, with a laugh. "But everything happens in Paris. Certainly your friend can have the domino. Somebody spilled a glass of bock on the back of it"-and she turned to reveal the stain-"but if your friend doesn't "The stain is an advantage," replied

Darrell. "What says the monk?" "My frock for the cab!" cried the friar. "It is yours."

Darrell protested that he must pay the worth of the dresses-indeed much more—and he succeeded in forcing the voices seized upon the strain, the danyoung man to accept a sum that was cers whirled away into new measures, probably an agreeable addition to his and upon the instant Darrell said in exchequer. Then the two women got his companion's ear: into the cab, and it was Vera in mask and domino who got out. Meanwhile Darrell in the shadow of the vehicle edge of the lower gallery. had slipped the monk's frock over his head.

"I have made her a present of my my word, I am glad that we danced!" cloak," whispered Vera. "She fancies that I am a millionairess upon a trifling for me to have known this life if only man again, and he was a man of the swered calmly. "Upon the downfall about my wealth when she views the escapade. She will change her opinion world restrained by all the barriers of of my family four years ago he was cloak by daylight. It has seen hard

"I might give the gentleman my op-"You would be surprised to know what might have avoided it. As to what we era hat," replied Darrell, "or your suffered, there are now many books handcaffs. But the latter I value too which describe the long journey and highly as a souvenir, and the former, the horrors that are reserved for those closed, lies easily in the bosom of my

than two years after we reached the He beckoned to the driver, who climb-

"Fifty francs for you," said Darrell, "and as much more tomorrow evening a cathedral which my father built, and if you are discreet. Do you underwithin it is a tomb of white marble. stand? You will forget everything.

my mother sleep as well in one place as which was written the address of a club.

"Why do you bribe him?" asked Vera.

"If any successful attempt is made to trace you," replied Darrell, "this "Because," said Vera, extending a man will be found, and if that hap-

drove a knife into the heart of Nicholas coachman. Vera and Darrell, turning away, waved their hands in farewell.

The portal of the Moulin Rouge was beset by such a throng that Darrell

"We knew you weren't going away."

"Mistaken identity." laughed Darrell And now fate has changed it for me in | Even now, if I were disposed to deny has passed to us. Now to find the Gorthe other direction. If you wouldn't it in a fair tribunal, the act could not dons. What a lark! And I told Gormind waiting in this carriage near the be proved. That is why I shall never don this afternoon that I would never have any more fun!"

A wild outburst of applause suddenly arose upon their right, and the crowd "You cannot ask her to take any in-terest in me." said the girl. "She does pol, though that was a great risk, for of advantage from which to look down not know me, and I have no means of the Getchikoffs, who plotted and ac upon the dancing floor. Darrell felt complished my father's destruction, Vera's hand on his arm; she seemed to

"Do you care to see it?" he asked. "Why, yes," said she, "since we are seek any refuge this night. If I am an I was too young to see much of such object of pursuit upon my own ac- fetes as we had in Stavropol. There is count, I must not attract the hounds a place from which we can see."

toward another quarry. Now you have | And with the words she stepped my story. Shall you tell it to Mrs. nimbly ahead of him, securing a remarkably good position.

and the sooner the better. I am only ing close behind her. "I did not exsorry that you cannot go with me into pect to see it at this hour. It reprethe ball, but unmasked it would not be sents the entry of a Roman conqueror

"It is like a scene in a theater?" she "It is impossible that they should cried. "See the painted palaces! How have followed me," she said. "I shall beautiful, and with such an air of antiquity! There is the conqueror in his charlot. There are the warriors and the captives. It is magnificent!" "We are in the Rua Blanche," he | She turned and looked up at Darrell,

melody, which was instantly caught up "I think it would be best for you," by the throng upon the floor. The procession had passed around the circle, take the hint you have given me and from the memorials of that vanished era. Dancers were crowding upon the "Alone?" cried Darrell. "If I am to floor. Quadrilles formed as if by

> er, others barefoot, some shining with jewels, others garlanded with cheap

she was generally

known in the American colony, was a woman of broad views

and invincible independence. Her social position was very strong, being founded

acts, most of us still retain the delusion of choice. Therefore, in order to set me definitely right in the matter. the open. fate has brought me to this spot. Otherwise I might have fancled that I was free to decide whether I would or would not attend a ball. Let me dismiss the notion. I am thistledown in "I will give you my opinion of that," replied Gordon, "when I have seen the princess without her mask," CHAPTER IV.

Darrell's mind that they might be of RS. BOB GORDON, as costumes must have been noticed by many persons, including the secret police scattered about through the assembly. Yet there was little chance on ancestry, buttressed by money and that the faces of the mearers would It was Ladislov who lay there dead,

defended by tact and individualitythe last named a great power, for it is the conventional creature, who must do conventional things, while the strong personality wins a measure of freedom. She heard Vera's story, somewhat more fully told than before, yet with nothing of real importance added to the tale as Darrell had received it. Vera mentioned no names of friends in Paris and avoided any reference to a a claim of alibi. reason for her choice of that city as a As to their value in this regard, Darplace of residence, but the impression rell resolved upon a test. He had a

was strong upon Darrell that his princess was not in the great capital for the sake of its climate nor to behold its many beauties. He felt that this woman's life must be directed by some strong purpose, and if its mainspring had been the desire for vengeance that would have seemed natural. Yet she had denied complicity with nihilism, and Darrell had taken her word. He must therefore seek some other explanation of the mystery surrounding in spite of all that Americans know of the various injustices that are rife in Russia, it is impossible to hear such are sure, but slow, though their mill a narration as Vera's without a feeling that there is something novel, almost incredible, in it; that men in high station, surrounded by the attributes of power and dignity, cannot be dragged down in a moment to the level of grinding, hopeless, unrewarded toll in the mines of a frozen desert; that gently which strangers are subjected. nurtured women cannot be cast out of palaces into hovels buried in arctic

So much for policeman No. 2 and his fortunate error. Passing to No. 3, snows. Gordon heard the story with Darrell made him out to be a member of the force assigned for that evening ble, his head thrust forward, his eyes to the Moulin Rouge to watch the mershining, and his wife, who showed ry students and their guests. He had less emotion, was yet moved to clasp been brought along to testify concernthe hand that had slain the villain Goring the Gordon party, and Darrell was pleased to observe that he was gnawing his upper lip and cracking the joints of his long and bony fingers. At the last Vera showed signs of the

rell suddenly, slapping the man on the strain involved in the recital, with its ghastly memories, and so when it was

"Let us have one more look at the dancers," said Gordon, rising. do you ask?" "The sight of such light hearted people will

do us good." He turned toward the larger hall as he uttered the words, and at that moment two men came hastily up to him. "You are Mr. Robert Gordon," said one of them, and as he spoke a third man joined the two.

a growing wrath, his elbows on the ta-

ski and to hall it firmly for some sec-onds after that incident had been dis-

closed.

soon as possible.

"I am," replied Gordon. "And you are Mr. John Darrell?" "That is my name," answered the gray friar.

"It is believed that you have certain information which is desired by the police," said the officer in a low tone "Will you accompany us?"
"With pleasure," replied Darrell.

"May I ask the nature of the affair?" "The commissary will inform you," said the officer. "Shall we go at once?" Darrell was perfectly willing, his only desire being to lead these solemn faced detectives as far as possible from Vera Shevaloff.

"Pardon me one moment," he said, turning toward Gordon, and at that instant he heard one of the officers whisper to the spokesman of their party. The ladies are Mme. Gordon and Mlle. Lorrimer, Americans."

Mrs. Gordon also overheard these

words, and she said instantly: "Robert will take Miss Lorrimer and myself home, and then he will go to you, if these men will give us the nec essary information."

To this the leader of the detectives replied that his orders were to ask Darrell to accompany him to the station on the Rue Gluck, beside the opera house. If he should not be there when Mr. Gordon should arrive, there would be no difficulty in learning where he had gone.

Darrell did not wait for further words. He gave his hand to Vera and the Gordons and then burried away, attended by the officers who were kind enough to avoid giving the affair the appearance of an arrest.

There was a four seated cab outside, and it conveyed the party to the station on the Rue Gluck. He could extort no information from his companions upon the way, and, indeed, he made no great effort to do so, being satisfied in advance that it would be futile. In fact, he was of the opinion that the time could be better passed in thinking than in talking.

Undoubtedly Ladislov had made some sort of complaint, probably for assault. The purpose of the action must be the recapture of Vera, for Ladislov was not the man to ask the law to right any personal wrong so long as swords and pistols or even bludgeons continued to be procurable for money. Darrell had no fear either of the public or the private vengeance of "the pirate." He was prepared to justify his own conduct if necessary, but his first concern must be to shield Vera. It would have pleased him to do this boldly-to tell the story of the night's adventure precisely as it had occurred and then to defy the czar's agents and all other persons to do their level worst. He did not believe that there was any law in France by which she could be taken from the Gordons' house, but he was forced to admit, with the utmost delicacy, that that might depend upon the lady herself.

Obviously her business in Paris was secret, for otherwise she would have mentioned it. There was too much reason to believe that it might be nihilism under another name. But whatever it was, she evidently desired to conceal it. She was not ready to come out into

"Such being the case," said Darrell to himself when he had reached this stage of his meditations, "I am in a place that is well defined by the usages of polite society. I am called upon to lie and lie good and hard by all the the man in the shadow said: principles of honor. I don't like lying for its own sake, but I will do it for her sake, and I will make a workmanlike job of it."

When he had purchased the costumes

be remembered. The monk's hood was nearly as good as a mask, and the stain of beer on the fawn colored domine was more distinctive than anything that could be noted of the lady's actual personality. As a means for confusing any possible pursuers, the gown and the domino might have served well. though Darrell had not foreseen that they would be needed as the matter of

theory about the three men in the cab with him. The one who had conducted the "arrest" might be an agent of the district commissary of police, but Darrell suspected him of connection with the central bureau de la surete (the detective bureau of Paris). The second was a man from the precinct in which Darrell and the Gordons lived, and he was there for purposes of identification. It was he who had said that the ladies were Mrs. Gorden and Miss Lorrimer, the latter of whom Darrell now blessed for her hasty and almost secret flight from the house. The Paris police tary discipline and unquestioning obedience, combined with excellent organization, sometimes give them the delusive aspect of rapidity. It might take them a week or even a fortnight to discover that Vera had replaced Miss Lorrimer, despite the rigid supervision to

"Your name, my friend?" cried Dar-

done the others felt an impulse to with-The officer sat up so suddenly that draw her mind from retrospection as his long backbone gave forth a snapping sound as from a whip. "Henri Fontaine!" he cried.

> "Merely from interest," replied Dar-"I happened to have seen you several times this evening. You remember when the beer was spilled on

my friend's domino?" Fontaine did not reply in words, but his face was well worth noticing. A light shone favorably into the cab, revealing a glance full of "I told you so" whereat the officer was certainly surdirected by Fontaine toward the chief detective. Darrell knew that he had made a center shot and that Fontaine must have already expressed his belief that Darrell and the lady had been in the Moulin Rouge at the time of the act of which Ladislov had complained, whatever that act might be. Of course there was no certainty that the black

visaged rascal had sworn to the truth. The cab stopped, and its occupants alighted. As they entered the station Darrell was annoyed to observe that the detectives surrounded him with a somewhat elaborate display of precaution lest he should escape, and the passage of the party through the outer room excited an audible thrill of interest. They entered a private office, where Darrell perceived a gray and soldierly officer seated by a flat topped desk. Behind him sat a man who leaned forward as if buried in thought, his elbow on his knee, his chin in his hand. The attitude and the peculiar arrangement of the lights made this man's face a blurred shadow except for his left eye, which, being turned to-

ward Darrell, shone like a jewel. The three men who had brough the prisoner fell away from him, leaving him standing alone before the desk in a glare of light. Immediately the street, while he was walking toward elderly officer took up a paper from the table and began to read aloud in a hasty but monotonous tone a fairly accurate description of John Darrell, American, and of his doings since he had come to Paris.

"Sir," said Darrell in his gentlest tone, "this record is very interesting and surprisingly correct, but it does not seem to explain my presence here at this time. Would you favor me with a few words on that point?"

"The charge against you," said the officer, putting the paper carefully into a pile of them, as if to show that it was only one of many damning documents in the case-"the charge against you. Mr. Darrell, relates to Captain Sergius Ladislov."

"If Captain Ladislov has made a complaint against me," answered Dar-



"I would like to meet him face to face." rell, "I would venture to suggest that he repeat it in my presence. That is more the manner of my country. would like to meet him face to face."

The officer shook his head, but before he had denied the request in words "If such is your wish, follow me."

He arose and walked toward a door at the rear of the office, and Darrell followed him. They descended some iron steps, not too well lighted, and of the two Americans, it had come into passed into a long room below the street level. At the farther end sat more important service than merely to two policemen, one upon each side of permit of Vera's entering the hall in- a large table. Darrell at first supposed stead of waiting in the carriage. It that a third officer lay upon the table amounted to a personation, since the asleep and covered with a cloak, but as he approached, the policeman who had been seated arose and, apparently

ing from the recumbent figure.

Darrell, after a single glance at the did face, turned hastily to find the man who had led him to this room, but he was not to be seen. At the foot of the stairs he had stepped back, allowing the American to precede him, and what had become of him afterwards was a mystery. It was the tall officerwith the grizzled locks whom Darrell confronted as he turned.

"This is a great surprise to me," said:

"He had been shot in the back," replied the officer. "We have our owns opinion as to how it happened. The body was brought here, which is urusual. Moreover, as you asked to seehim, and it was so convenient"-He finished the sentence with

shrug of the shoulders. "I know nothing of this," said Darrell earnestly. "I never saw the man: until this afternoon"-

"When you had a violent quarrel," added the officer. "Nothing of the kind," retorted Dar-

rell. "I can bring abundant evidenceto prove that it was the merest trifle." He walked hastily to the table and bent over the body, which was clothed in the coachman's rough garments that the man had worn when Darrell hads dislodged him from the box of the coach. He turned the corpse upon its face, though shrinking from the touch of it. The clothing had been cut opens for an examination of the wound, but it was not very much soiled with bloods. The bullet had struck below the left shoulder blade, and it seemed to haveremained in the body.

"A doctor has seen this?" said Darrell. "What does he tell you? How long could the man have lived after receiving the injury? Where was he found?

"He was found upon the Rue de Richelieu," replied the officer. "Perhaps you may judge, from the location, how long he survived his injury."

"If you mean to intimate that I inflicted it," said Darrell, "you are uttering an absurdity, and the earlier you dismiss the idea from your mind the sooner you will reach a solution of the puzzle which this crime presents."

"As you have seen Captain Ladislov, according to your request," said the officer by way of reply, "I would suggest that we return.'

He waved his hand toward the stairway. Darrell bowed and walked in the direction indicated. When they cameinto the room above, it was emptyprised, though he endeavored not to show it. He sat down by the table and motioned Darrell to a chair near by.

"I would like to inquire"- began the officer, taking up a paper from the desk, and then he paused, reading what was written in that document with close and increasing attention. "On second thought," he continued, laying down the paper, "I have decided to ask no further questions." "Then," said Darrell, "with your per-

mission, I would like to ask a few." "I am not at liberty to answer," was the reply. "But-yes, I will ask one myself. Do you know a Russian woman named Vera Shevaloff?"

"Vera Shevaloff," repeated Darrell. as if weighing the name upon his lips. "I have never bad the pleasure of be-

ing presented to the lady." The officer bowed. "That is all," he said. "I crave your

pardon for having detained you so Darrell rose slowly and with as calm a countenance as possible, though the surprise was almost overpowering.

"I wish you a very good evening." he said. He was permitted to find his own way out of the station. Upon the the cab stand, he encountered the de-

tective, Fontaine. "It was I who cleared you, monsleur," said that individual. "I testified that you were at the ball,"

"The truth is mighty and will prevail," responded Darrell, giving the man money, "but surely there wassome other cause"-

"It is a crime of the nihilists," whispered Fontaine. "A paper was found, torn and lying on the pavement, near where the body lay. It was a sort of warrant from the czar, and it showed that Ladislov, who was an agent of the Russian secret service, was engaged in making an arrest-a kidnaping, let us say-when he lost his life. It is always a risk. The puzzle was solved: while you were down stairs. Ah, it takes little time for M. Cochefert to

get at the bottom of things." "Cochefert!" cried Darrell. "Chief of the bureau de la surete? Was he

there?" "It was he who sat at the elbow of.

the commissaire," replied Fontaine. "I am sorry that I did not succeed in seeing his face," said Darrell. "Good night, my friend. Remember that # have more money whenever you feel that you have earned it. And listen: I would like information about that paper, the warrant of arrest. It interests me. I pay well." "It is a habit of the Americans," said

(TO CONTINUED.) The Popular Song. Above the voices of the spring We hear this song

Monotonous that starts with "ping"
And ends with "pong."
—Philadelphia Press. CAUSE FOR GRATITUDE.

Fontaine.



Sur Noodle-Oh, I'm not such fool as I look. Miss Uppish-Then you've a good

obeying a sign, drew away the coverdeal to be thankful for .- St. Louis Globe-Democrat.