

THE COPPER HOUSE

A Detective Story

BY JULIUS REGIS

AUTHOR OF "NO 13 TORONI"

"Leave him alone!" interrupted Lona Ivanovna harshly, turning to Leo; "haven't you had enough of his accursed conversation?"

Rastakov, Tassler and the baron burst out laughing.

"You are really too delightful, Madame!" said the last named person; "what do you say, Mr. Grath? Have we your leave to search for Bernard Jenin?"

"I am of the same opinion as Madame Bernin," replied the young man, with equivocal civility.

Baron Fayerling's smile vanished.

"Then we quite understand one another, Mr. Grath?"

"Perfectly, baron."

The baron stepped out through the open window, and shouted a few words in Russian. A dozen figures hurried up from the terrace, and marched noisily into the hall. The baron exchanged a couple of sentences with Tassler, in a rapid undertone, and went out into the hall with Rastakov.

Marcus Tassler sat heavily down on a chair, and stared at Lona Ivanovna, who, with unruffled composure, had returned to her place near her brother; she went on with her crochet and took no notice of Tassler.

"What a cold-blooded woman you are, Lona," said the merchant, in a rather faltering voice. "After all, this affects Sergio."

"No need to tell me that," she replied, shrugging her shoulders; "you may go to your lord and master: you have nothing to do with Sergio."

He was silenced by the caustic bitterness of her voice, and remained with his mouth open, staring vaguely and irresolutely across the room at the blind man and his sister.

Sonia went quietly up to her father, and leaned her head against his shoulder; the blind man began to stroke her black hair clumsily.

Leo felt acutely distressed; these three unfortunate beings whom he already regarded as his friends, seemed so far from him, that he could not summon up courage to say another word to them. They were withdrawn into the intimacy of their home-circle, and he remained outside like a stranger. With the agonizing sensation of being the witness of a tragedy into whose inner meaning he had no right to intrude, he left the room silently, without looking at them again.

As he came into the hall, which was empty, a new and alarming thought struck him; what had become of Wallion? He heard the baron's voice, echoing sharp and clear down the well of the staircase.

"Take each floor in turn, and keep guard whilst you search the rooms. You, over there, don't pass over that corner—don't leave a stone unturned. Rastakov, take a couple of men with you, and search the attics thoroughly. Be sharp, now!"

It was evident that the searchers meant to leave nothing to chance this time; the furniture was moved about, the walls sounded, and the tramp of many feet was heard in each room in turn, till the whole house seemed full of men. If there were really anyone hidden in the Copper House, thought Leo, he would certainly be found within 10 minutes; what was the journalist doing?

The young man listened, his heart beating fast. Now they were on the second floor, and coming to his room. He ran upstairs, with the desperate intention of preventing them

law by drinking liquor themselves, they are forced to do so in complying with their duties. To charge a bootlegger with possession and sale of the dry agent must obtain actual evidence of selling. To get this evidence he must visit speakeries, make friends with the doorman and the barkeeper and buy drinks.

"Of course, a dry agent might go into a speakery, buy a drink and then spill it on the floor. But if he were observed he'd likely be killed before he left the place. So to do the job properly, the agent must not only buy liquor but drink

it. After drinking the liquor, the agent goes out and gets a warrant. A raid follows."

Wright explained that the job of getting evidence is usually given to the new men on the force.

"They come into the department and some relief the job of going out to do some drinking in behalf of Uncle Sam. But in six months time, we have to take them off the evidence-getting work. The kind of liquor they have to drink is so bad that their health is ruined."

from entering, but he was too late. As he came into the corridor, Rastakov was just leaving the room, and Leo saw with indescribable relief, that the Russian's face was dark with disappointment. They passed one another without a word, and Leo shut himself quickly in.

He flung himself into a chair, and buried his head in his hands; what should he do? His mind refused to work, and he stamped his foot in impotent vexation.

Had the journalist been caught in a trap, and helplessly resigned himself to his fate? Had he discovered Bernard Jenin's hiding-place?

"Did you look in here?" he heard the baron ask just outside the door.

"Yes," answered another voice further along the passage; "Rastakov has been there."

"Go on, then."

The steps and voices grew fainter. Leo had not raised his head. Suddenly he heard a slight sound on the floor close to his feet; a paper lay there, wrapped round a pebble. He picked it up, and saw that there was something written on the paper; he unfolded it, and read:

"Don't worry, things are going as I expected. I have concluded some useful investigation, and shall soon make myself known. M. W."

Leo sprang up. The window, which had been closed earlier in the day, had been opened later, and he realized that the little note had been thrown in through it. But he could not see a sign of the journalist outside. Only Rosenthal was walking slowly along, in his blue apron and broad-brimmed straw hat.

CHAPTER XI.
Maurice Wallion Looks About His Bit and Makes a New Acquaintance

As soon as the Problem-hunter saw Baron Fayerling go into the Copper House, he felt convinced that a crisis was at hand.

Fayerling's arrival is a bad sign," he thought, "I would rather see Ortiz himself. Where on earth can he have got to?"

He lay still for several minutes, wondering how he could manage to dodge the cordon of men which was closing in round him from the direction of the field.

"It's high time I gave Robert Lang his final instructions—but how am I going to do it?" he pondered. "It is important for me to remain here, especially on Grath's account, as it is largely through me that he has got into this fix. The Copper House is completely surrounded, and these fellows would be able to shoot the lot of us, without anyone being near enough to help us. It is odd that they should have left the telephone at the lodge in working order, and cut off the one at the house. If only I could get down to the lodge!"

He took stock of the advancing forces, and made a wry face; as things were, he was obliged to admit that it was impossible to get past them. The only chance of escape was on the other side, towards the sea. He might possibly be able to reach the railway station in some roundabout way, and telegraph or telephone to Lang from there. He crept back along the terrace-wall, almost within reach of the seven or eight men who kept guard above, and began with great circumspection to make his way seawards. He passed behind the stable and

cowhouse without meeting anybody, and as soon as he got in amongst the trees at the foot of the ridge, he started running over the soft carpet of brown pine-needles, and short grass. But in a few minutes, hearing steps and voices ahead of him, he turned off to the right. He got an occasional glimpse of the sea, gleaming through the trees, and went on boldly in that direction.

Suddenly he shrank back, and crouched down behind a thick cluster of bracken. Just where the ridge ended, on the left, he had seen three forest-guards walking towards him, and further on his right, between him and the sea, he espied yet another figure with a gun.

Had he been seen? Apparently not, but he decided that with so many men about, that way was impassable, too.

He gazed longingly at the calm, glittering bay, which was practically an inland sea, the entrance being almost closed by a long, wooded island. Exactly below him, a path ran from the house to a dilapidated pier, on the left of which stood an even more tumble-down marine store, or fisherman's cottage, with a tiled roof and one small, unglazed window. A little way out from the pier was anchored a lighter, of the type of those which one frequently sees being towed in long lines through the island channels. A slender column of smoke was rising from the cabin chimney, and on the gunwale sat a man in a cotton shirt, fishing. While Wallion was watching him, he cautiously drew in his line, and landed a fish, which gleamed like silver in the sunlight.

cautiously round the corner. he could see one side of the terrace, and the southern wing of the house, with the kitchen door. He saw something else as well: that there was no chance of getting in there now, for men were turning up on all sides, under the windows and behind the bushes; something was going on indoors, probably a fresh search for Bernard Jenin and the memorandum, but no voices could be heard: an almost unaccountable silence prevailed.

Wallion kept close to the cottage wall, and stood on tiptoe to look through one of the two windows. The gardener's house consisted apparently of a living room and a kitchen, with an adjoining tool house; it was at the window of the latter that he was standing. Nobody was there: the sun shone on hoed, spades, rakes and watering cans, shelves filled with flower pots of all sizes, worn-out scythes, and a perfect arsenal of gardening knives.

Wallion opened the window with his penknife, and climbed in. Through a door which stood ajar, he could see part of a room alongside; a table lay by the window, with flowers growing in glasses and pots, a smaller table with books and newspapers on it, and an old rockingchair.

And in the rockingchair sat Rosenthal, who called out, as he caught sight of him: "Good afternoon, Mr. Wallion: I was just expecting you!"

The journalist stepped into the room.

"Did you know that I was in this part of the world?"

"I have seen you already this morning; you are every bit as venturesome as I hoped you would be. I saw you as you were climbing in through the window with Grath. You see, that happened to be my 'beat; no one has come to or from the Copper House since yesterday afternoon without my knowledge. To avoid all misunderstanding, I may tell you that I also observed our friend Grath's escapade last evening."

The gardener spoke very deliberately and accurately, with a slight accent. His ruddy face and blue eyes were lighted up with pleasant anticipation. The journalist sat down opposite, and lighted a cigaret, first offering his case, which the other declined. They looked at one another with an expression of mutual understanding.

"You are far more daring than I," said Wallion, "since you have ventured to live in this neighborhood for several months, Mr. Max Raebel."

The gardener got up and shook Wallion warmly by the hand, then sat down again, smiling all over his face.

"Quite right, I am Max Raebel," he said; "how do you know that, as you have never seen me before?"

"I saw you when you were cutting roses in the garden; in talking to Grath, you raised your head, and I recognized the best detective in Austria, disguised as a gardener. Oh, no need to be modest about it—of course I have heard of you a hundred times, and equally of course, I have your portrait in my collection. I have long suspected that someone of your caliber was taking a hand in the game, but couldn't find out under what name that somebody was working. Since you have managed to secure such a good place right in the stalls—I suppose you have succeeded in gaining Fayerling's confidence in some extraordinary way?"

"Not at all, it was perfectly easy; I got a recommendation from Madame Sumensov in Petrograd."

"From Madame herself?"

"Yes, for nobody knows as yet that she serves two masters with equal fidelity."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

Q. How tall is the Iowa state capitol, H. T.

A. It is 275 feet high.

agents just because of this condition."

Wright said one of his men lost 40 pounds in six months of liquor-drinking, evidence-getting. Another on the job for two years was forced to take a leave of absence to regain health.

MEDICAL DISCOVERY HAMBURG (UP)—Prof. Hans Mueh, director of the University Institute for Tubercular Research is said to have discovered a method of extracting poison from morphine and similar drugs without lessening their medicinal value.

ANOTHER JAIL FOR PRISONER

Murder Suspect Secretly Moved to Balk Habeas Corpus Action

ALLIANCE, NEB.—(UP)—Rudolph Wendt, Kearney baker who was arrested as a suspect in the murder of Elvere Shaffer, 22 years old, formerly of Kearney, has been spirited out of the county jail here and taken to an unannounced place, sheriff's officers said Friday.

He is believed to be held in some city in western Nebraska. No reason was given for taking him out of the local jail and there had been no threats made to cause the authorities to believe he would be unsafe in the Box Butte county jail, it is said.

The arrival of attorneys for Wendt may have had something to do with the spiriting of the man away, authorities intimated. It is believed the action was taken to balk Wendt's attorneys who sought to have him released on a writ of habeas corpus. August Wendt, aged father of Rudolph, arrived here Thursday from Douglas, Neb., and he has retained attorneys to defend his son.

County Attorney Penrose Romig has filed charges of perjury against young Wendt. He alleges that Wendt perjured himself by his testimony at the coroner's inquest.

FISH CULTURE IS ENCOURAGED

Neb. Commission Gives Permission for Breeding in Artificial Lakes

LINCOLN, NEB.—(UP)—To encourage the production of fish and to increase the fish stocking facilities of the state, the game and parks commission has approved the application of several fish culturists in northeastern Nebraska to build artificial lakes.

Permission to build these private, artificial lakes was granted to Arthur Bleigh, of Norfolk; W. H. Dutcher, of Plainview; John Ashburn, of Tilden, and E. D. Hoover, of Riverside park, near Spencer.

The lakes are not to be used for the production of commercial fish but mainly as an experiment to supplement the state fish hatcheries in supplying fish for stocking Nebraska's streams. According to the agreement, Bleigh will furnish for fall delivery in 1930, 18,000 sunfish and bass; Dutcher, 10,000 bass, Ashburn, 30,000 bass, and Hoover 15,000 bass.

The price to be paid by the state for the fish will range from \$20 to \$50 per thousand, depending upon the size of the fish.

CONFESSED BANK ROBBER TO BE SENTENCED SEPT. 12

YORK—(UP)—Sentence is expected to be passed on Henry L. Closson, 62 years old, of Columbus, confessed bank robber, September 12, Judge H. D. Landis, of Seward notified court officials here Friday. Judge Landis said he had practically concluded investigation into the case of Closson, for whom leniency was asked by several prominent Columbus citizens when Closson appeared in court here to plead guilty to a charge of robbing a bank of Lushton recently of \$1,200.

Closson is a nursery stock salesman of Columbus where he was highly respected. Because he needed funds to meet bills, he confessed he robbed a bank. Affidavits from several Columbus business men were presented to the court testifying as to the good character of Closson.

CLEAR PASTOR OF CHARGE HIS RULE WAS TYRANNICAL

OMAHA—(UP)—A special committee of churchmen, investigating charges made its report Thursday, clearing Rev. Oliver D. Baltzly, pastor of Kountze Memorial, said to be the largest English-speaking Lutheran church in the world. Charges against him were that he had been tyrannical and had used "strong arm" methods in running the church.

Immediately following making public of the report it was announced that Dr. Baltzly had tendered his resignation because of ill health.

He had been pastor of the church for 19 years and was largely responsible for its great growth. He was known throughout church circles of the world because of his strict disciplinarian tactics.

WAYNE NORMAL SCHOOL TO OPEN SEPTEMBER 16

WAYNE—(Special)—The fall term at the Wayne State Teachers college opens September 16 and dormitory reservations and inquiries indicate that the enrollment will exceed 700, with an additional enrollment of 300 in the college training school.

COUNTY SEAT FIGHT INTO SUPREME COURT

LINCOLN—(UP)—Another chapter in the long fight of Gandy, Neb., and Stapleton over location of the county seat of Logan county was opened in supreme court Thursday with the filing of a petition appealing the decision of the district court that a county election held recently was a valid one.

The election was to decide whether Gandy should remain the county seat or whether it should be moved to Stapleton. By a large majority vote, Stapleton won the verdict.

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The Main Feat
Male Visitor (chatting to oldest inhabitant)—That's all very well, but haven't you ever done anything of any consequence?

Female Ditto—George, didn't you hear him say he'd lived in this village all his life?—London Opinion.

Sheiks, Look Out
A breed of wingless chickens has been developed in Kansas. Some day scientists will turn their attention to something really worth while and may produce a chicken without a neck.—Springfield Sun.

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