

THE MISER'S DAUGHTER

By HONRE DE BALZAC

CHAPTER XII.

Silence reigned once more in the house. The rattle of the wheels in the streets of sleeping Saumur grew more and more distant. Then it was that a sound seemed to reach Eugenie's heart before it fell on her ears, a wailing sound that rang through the thin walls above—it came from her cousin's room. There was a thin line of light beneath his door; the rays slanted a gleaming bar along the balusters of the crazy staircase.

"He is unhappy," she said, as she went up a little farther.

A second moan brought her to the landing above. The door stood ajar; she thrust it open. Charles was sleeping in the rickety old armchair, his head drooped over to one side, his hand hung down and nearly touched the floor. His breath came in quick, sharp jerks that startled Eugenie. She entered hastily.

"He must be very tired," she said to herself, as she saw a dozen sealed letters lying on the table. She read the addresses—M. Farry, Breilman & Co., carriage builders; M. Buisson, tailor; and so forth.

"Of course, he has been settling his affairs, so that he may leave France as soon as possible," she thought.

Her eyes fell upon two unsealed letters. One of them began—"My dear Annette * * *"

"His dear Annette! He loves, he is beloved! * * * Then there is no more hope! * * * What does he say to her?" These thoughts flashed through her heart and brain. She read the words everywhere; on the table, on the very floor, in letters of fire. "Must I give him up already? No, I will not read the letter. I ought not to stay. * * * And yet, even if I did read it?"

She looked at Charles, gently took his head in her hands, and propped it against the back of the chair. He submitted like a child. Like a mother, Eugenie raised the drooping hand, and, like a mother, laid a soft kiss on his hair. "Dear Annette!" A mocking voice shrieked the words in her ear.

"I know that perhaps I may be doing wrong, but I will read the letter," she said.

Eugenie turned her eyes away; her high sense of honor reproached her. For the first time in her life there was a struggle between good and evil in her soul. Hitherto she had never done anything for which she needed to blush. Love and curiosity silenced her scruples. Her heart swelled higher with every phrase as she read; her quickened pulses seemed to send a sharp, tingling glow through her veins and to heighten the vivid emotions of her first love.

"My Dear Annette—Nothing should have power to separate us save this overwhelming calamity that has befallen me, a calamity that no human foresight could have predicted. My father has died by his own hand; his fortune and mine are both irretrievably lost. I am left an orphan at an age when, with the kind of education I have received, I am almost a child, and, nevertheless, I must now endeavor to show myself a man, and to rise from the dark depths into which I have been hurled. If I am to leave France as an honest man, I have not a hundred francs that I can call my own with which to tempt fate in the Indies or in America. Yes, my poor Anna, I am going in quest of fortune to the most deadly foreign climes. So I shall not return to Paris. Your love—the tenderest, the most devoted love that ever ennobled the heart of man—would not seek to draw me back. Alas! my darling, I have not money enough to take me to you, that I might give and receive one last kiss, a kiss that should put strength into me for the task that lies before me. I have thought seriously over my position. I have grown much older in the last twenty-four hours. Dear Anna, even if, to keep me beside you, you were to give up all the luxuries that you enjoy, your box at the opera, and your toilet, we should not have nearly sufficient for the necessary expenses of the extravagant life that I am accustomed to, and besides, I could not think of allowing you to make such sacrifices for me. To-day, therefore, we part forever."

"Then this is to take leave of her! What happiness!"

Eugenie started and trembled for joy. Charles stirred in his chair, and Eugenie felt a chill of dread. Luckily, however, he did not wake. She went on reading.

Eugenie laid down the letter that seemed to her so full of love, and gave herself up to the pleasure of watching her sleeping cousin; the dreams and hopes of youth seemed to hover over his face, and then and there she vowed to herself that she would love him always. She glanced over the other letter; there could be no harm in reading it, she thought, she should only receive fresh proofs of the noble qualities with which, womanlike, she had invested the man whom she had idealized.

"My Dear Alphonse," so it began, "by the time this letter is in your hands I shall have no friends left. I am commissioning you to settle some matters of business. I have nothing, and have made up my mind to go out to the Indies. I have just written to all the people to whom any money is owing, and the enclosed list is as accurate as I can make it from memory. I think the sale of my books, furniture, carriages, horses and so forth ought to bring in sufficient to pay my debts. I only mean to keep back a few trinkets of little value, which will go some way toward a trading venture. You might send my guns and anything

of that sort to me here. And you must take 'Briton,' no one would ever give me anything like as much as the splendid animal is worth; I would rather give him to you, you must regard him as the mourning ring which a dying man leaves in his will to his executor. Farry, Breilman & Co. have been building a very comfortable traveling carriage for me, but they have not sent it home yet, get them to keep it if you can, and if they decline to have it left on their hands, make the best arrangement you can for me, and do all you can to save my honor in the position in which I am placed."

"Dear cousin," murmured Eugenie, letting the sheet fall, and, seizing one of the lighted candles, she hastened on tiptoe to her own room.

Once there, it was not without a keen feeling of pleasure that she opened one of the drawers in an old oak chest. From this drawer she took a large red velvet money bag, with gold tassels, and the remains of a golden fringe about it, a bit of faded splendor that had belonged to her grandmother. In the pride of her heart she felt its weight, and joyously set to work to reckon up the value of her little hoard, sorting out the different coins. Imprimis, twenty Portuguese moledores as new and fresh as when they were struck in 1725, in the reign of John V.; each was nominally worth a hundred and sixty-five francs. Item, five genovines, rare Genoese coins of a hundred livres each, the current value was perhaps about eighty francs, but collectors would give a hundred for them. These had come to her from old M. de la Bertelliere. Item, three Spanish quadruples of the time of Philip V., bearing the date 1720. Mme. Bentillet had given them to her, one by one, always with the same little speech: "There's a little yellow bird, there's a buttermilk for you, worth ninety-eight livres! Take great care of it, darling; it will be the flower of your flock." Item, a hundred Dutch ducats, struck at the Hague in 1750, and each worth about thirteen francs. Item, a few coins dear to a miser's heart, three rupees bearing the sign of the Balance, and five with the sign of the Virgin stamped upon them, all pure gold of twenty-four carats—the magnificent coins of the Great Mogul. The weight of metal in them alone was worth thirty-seven francs forty centimes, but amateurs who love to finger gold would give fifty francs for such coins as those. Item, the double napoleon that had been given to her the day before, and which she had carelessly slipped into the red velvet bag.

CHAPTER XIII.

Eugenie clasped her hands in exultation at the sight of her riches, like a child who is compelled to find some outlet for overflowing glee. Father and daughter had both counted their wealth that night; he in order to sell his gold, she that she might cast it abroad on the waters of love. She put the money back into the old purse, took it up, and went upstairs with it without a moment's hesitation. Her cousin's distress was the one thought in her mind; she did not even remember that it was night, conventionalities were utterly forgotten; her conscience did not reproach her, she was strong in her happiness and in her love.

As she stood upon the threshold with the candle in one hand and the velvet bag in the other, Charles awoke, saw his cousin, and was struck dumb with astonishment. Eugenie came forward, set the light on the table, and said with an unsteady voice:

"Cousin Charles, I have to ask your forgiveness for something I have done; it was very wrong, but if you will overlook it, heaven will forgive me."

"What can it be?" asked Charles, rubbing his eyes.

"I have been reading those two letters. Do you ask how I came to do it?" she went on, "and why I came up here? Indeed, I do not know now; and I am almost tempted to feel glad that I read the letters, for through reading them I have come to know your heart, your soul, your plans—the difficulty that you are in for want of money—"

"My dear cousin—"

"Hush! hush! do not let us wake anybody. Here are the savings of a poor girl who has no wants," she went on, opening her purse. "You must take them, Charles. This morning I did not know what money was; you have taught me that it is simply a means to an end, that is all. A cousin is almost a brother; surely you may borrow from your sister."

Eugenie, almost as much a woman as a girl, had not foreseen a refusal, but her cousin was silent. The silence was so deep that the beating of her heart was audible. Her pride was wounded by her cousin's hesitation, but the thought of his dire need came vividly before her, and she fell on her knees.

"I will not rise," she said, "until you have taken that money. Oh! cousin, say something, for pity's sake! so that I may know that you respect me, that you are generous, that—"

This cry, wrung from her by a noble despair, brought tears to Charles' eyes; he would not let her kneel, she felt his hot tears on her hands, and sprang to her purse, which she emptied out upon the table.

"Well, then, it is 'Yes,' is it not?" she said, crying for joy. "Do not scruple to take it, cousin; you will be quite rich. That gold will bring you luck, you know. Some day you shall pay it back to me, or, if you like, we will be partners; I will submit to any conditions that you may impose. But you ought not to make so much of this gift."

Charles found words at last.

"Yes, Eugenie, I should have a little

soul indeed if I would not take it. But nothing for nothing, confidence for confidence."

"What do you mean?" she asked, startled.

"Listen, dear cousin, I have there—"

He interrupted himself for a moment to show her a square box in a leather case, which stood on the chest of drawers.

"There is something there that is dearer to me than life. That box was a present from my mother. Since this morning I have thought that if she could rise from her tomb she herself would sell the gold that in her tenderness she lavished on this dressing case, but I cannot do it—it would seem like sacrilege."

Eugenie grasped her cousin's hand tightly in hers at these last words.

"No," he went on after a brief pause, during which they looked at each other with tearful eyes, "I do not want to pull it to pieces, nor to risk taking it with me on my wanderings. I will leave it in your keeping, dear Eugenie. Never did one friend confide a more sacred trust to another; but you shall judge for yourself."

He drew the box from the leather case, opened it, and displayed before his cousin's astonished eyes a dressing case resplendent with gold—the curious skill of the craftsman had only added to the value of the metal.

"All that you are admiring is nothing," he said, pressing the spring of a secret drawer. "There is something which is more than all the world to me," he added, sadly, and he took out two portraits, handsomely set in pearls.

"How lovely she is! Is not this the lady to whom you were writing?"

"No," he said, with a little smile; "that is my mother and this is my father—your aunt and uncle. Eugenie, I could beg and pray of you on my knees to keep this treasure safe for me. If I should die and lose your little fortune, the gold will make good your loss; and to you alone can I leave those two portraits, for you alone are worthy to take charge of them, but do not let them pass into any other hands; rather destroy them. Well, 'it is yes, is it not?'"

As the last words were spoken, she gave him for the first time such a loving glance as a woman can, a bright glance that reveals a depth of feeling within her. He took her hand and kissed it.

"Angel of purity! what is money henceforward between us two? It is nothing, is it not? But the feeling which alone gave it worth will be everything."

"You are like your mother. Was her voice as musical as yours, I wonder?"

"Oh, far more sweet."

"Yes, for you," she said, lowering her eyelids. "Come, Charles, you must go to bed; I wish it. You are very tired. Good night."

Her cousin had caught her hand in both of his; she drew it gently away, and went down to her room, her cousin lighting the way. In the doorway of her room they both paused.

"Oh! why am I a ruined man?" he said.

"My father is rich, I believe," she returned.

"My poor child," said Charles, as he set one foot in her room, and propped himself against the wall by the doorway, "if your father had been rich, he would not have let my father die, and you would not be lodged in such a poor place as this; he would live altogether in quite a different style."

"But he has Froidfont; there is Noyers, too. He has vineyards and meadows—"

"They are not worth talking about," said Charles scornfully. "If your father had even twenty-four thousand livres a year, do you suppose that you would sleep in a bare, cold room like this? That is where my treasures will be," he went on, nodding toward the old chest, a device by which he tried to conceal his thoughts from her.

"Go," she said, "and try to sleep," and she barred his entrance into an untidy room. Charles drew back, and the cousins bade each other a smiling good night.

They fell asleep, to dream the same dream, and from that time forward Charles found that there were still roses to be gathered in the world in spite of his mourning. The next morning Mme. Grandet saw her daughter walking with Charles before breakfast. He was still sad and subdued. He had been brought very low in his distress, and the thought of the future weighed heavily upon him.

"My father will not be back before dinner," said Eugenie, in reply to an anxious look in her mother's eyes.

The tones of Eugenie's voice had grown strangely sweet; it was easy to see from her face and manner that the cousins had some thought in common. Their souls had rushed together while perhaps as yet they scarcely knew the power or the nature of this force which was binding them to each other.

Toward 5 o'clock that evening Grandet came back from Angers. He had made fourteen thousand francs on his gold, and carried a government certificate bearing interest until the day when it should be transferred into rentes. He had left Cornouiller also in Angers to look after the horses, which had been nearly flogged by the night journey.

"I have been to Angers, wife," he said; "and I am hungry."

Nanon brought in the soup. Des Grassins came to take his client's instructions, just as the family were sitting down to dinner. Grandet had not as much as seen his nephew all this time.

(To be continued.)

In Arizona.

"Say, did a stranger on horseback pass through this town early this morning?" asked the sheriff from the adjoining county as he pulled up his foam covered steed.

"Naw," answered Larlat Luke. "He tried to, but th' vigilance committee nabbed him afore he wuz half way through."

According to a physician drunkenness is voluntary illness.

Topic Times

Farm land in England ranges in price from \$60 to \$120 an acre.

The Kaiser has become an ardent politician, and practices diligently and excruciatingly at every opportunity.

More emigrants left the United Kingdom and fewer foreigners settled here in 1903 than in any year since 1880.

The production of nickel in Ontario last year exceeded that of any previous year. The total was 6,998 tons, value at \$2,499,698.

In the South American regions, where cattle are killed by the tens of thousands for the export of meat and hides, the bones are used as fuel.

Between Jan. 1, 1904, and May 14, 1904, 135 days, there have been underwritten and sold in the United States securities aggregating over \$600,000,000.

America's trade with Great Britain last year aggregated \$1,000,000,000; next in importance is the trade with Germany, which is little more than one-third as much.

Count Zeppelin, who wrecked his airship and at the same time his fortune in Lake Constance, Italy, has raised \$4,000 by subscription for the purposes of building another ship.

The chalk pits in Kent, 11 miles from London, are found to be extensive ancient British cave dwellings connected by galleries which extend for miles. Near the center is a Druidical temple.

Benjamin S. Moore, of Elizabeth, N. J., recently celebrated his 55th year of actual service with the Central Railroad of New Jersey. For 53 years straight running he has been a locomotive engineer.

In the province of lower Burma, India, near the Siamese frontier, tin deposits have recently been discovered and valuable coal fields located. The tin ore is said to be of as high a quality as that mined in the Straits settlements.

Mrs. Craigie (John Oliver Hobbes), lecturing in Manchester, said that men to-day were losing the desire for immortality. They desired no more to live forever, but instead to live as pleasantly as possible here and now, she said.

"One of the most significant signs of the tendency of modern thought," says the New York Christian Work and Evangelist (Presbyterian), "is supplied by the increasing attention which men of science are devoting to religious subjects."

There is in Sweden a movement, reported, it is said, by the government, to tax all concerns and performances given by artists who are not Swedish subjects, the tax varying from \$1.50 to \$55 each concert, according to the amount of money taken for tickets.

According to a recent report of the Geological Survey, the total anthracite production for 1903 was 63,351,713 tons. The average price of \$2.50 brought the value up to \$152,036,448. The number of men employed to mine the output, which amounted to 6,000,300 more tons than in 1902, was 150,463.

The President of the British Board of Trade stated, in answer to a question in the House of Commons, that the average annual earnings of adult males employed in the principal industrial and agricultural occupations in the United Kingdom in a year of average employment might be estimated approximately at \$250 each.

The campaign of 1840 had a dramatic and unexpected sequel. Thurlovy Weed, before the meeting of the Whig convention, sought out Webster and urged him to take second place on the ticket with Harrison, but the suggestion was rejected with scorn. An acceptance of Weed's advice would have made Webster President in little more than a year.

The income tax was introduced into England by William Pitt in 1799 under the stress of the French war. It ceased in 1816, but was revived by Sir Robert Peel in 1842, and extended by Gladstone in 1853. From being a temporary war tax it has now become a permanent part of the British financial system, and is resorted to by every Chancellor who finds himself in difficulties.

1,000 PATENTS GRANTED.

The Year's Result of Inventive Genius in the Windy City.

One thousand patents a year are granted citizens of Chicago. Illinois stands seventh in the list of states that take out patents according to population, Connecticut and Massachusetts still holding their own for native ingenuity. Alaska and Alabama, first in the alphabet, are at the foot in patent winning.

The patent reports in the Chicago public library were last year consulted between 80,000 and 90,000 times by 7,000 persons, some of them patent lawyers or their clerks, but the ma-

jority those contemplating inventions, and therefore seeking to learn whether their ideas had already been anticipated.

A certain percentage of visitors are "perpetual motion cranks." There is nothing for them in the reports, so they ask for the Scientific American and similar papers that contain articles on that subject. Their errand can almost invariably be detected on their entering the room and addressing the attendants. There is a restless, feverish look and a nervous action betraying the disturbance of mind and the unbalanced ambition that has put them on this quest. While they seldom if ever exhibit anything approaching insanity, or even a lack of self-control, it is easy to see that they live near the line that is said to divide genius from madness. There is never any outbreak, but the difference between them and the ordinary visitor is unmistakable. They at least know exactly what they are after and do not have to bother with finding out whether they are likely to infringe on some already successful applicant.

Among the patents for oddities granted Chicago citizens last year is one for a bag filling machine, a clothes line prop, a churn, a dustpan, a non-refillable bottle, a "box," a convertible billiard table, a tobacco pipe, a safety coat hook, though looking coats is already safe enough in Chicago, a cheek expanding pad, a nose piece for eyeglasses, a tipping shelf for garbage, an improvement on governors, a "model burglar alarm," implying that Chicago burglars are models, a "contrivance for muting violin strings," and a pocket for golf balls. There was one also for "an attachment to brides," though not like the bride the convict said he was sent up for ten years for stealing, because a horse happened to be attached to the other end of it.

Among the 1,000 patentees were a dozen women. One invented a hair retainer, another a dress shield, another a "cooking utensil," another a dress fitting stand, but it seems to have taken a man to turn out a woman's skirt, a garter and a kitchen table.—Chicago Tribune.

TREE CUTS UP ODD ANTICS.

Idaho Acacia Is One of the Wonders of Western Plant Life.

One of the most singular trees of the American continent is a species of acacia found in northwestern Idaho and observed closely by a party of scientists recently on a tour through that region. It grows to a height of about eight feet and, when full grown, closes its leaves together in coils each day at sunset and curls its twigs to the shape of pigtails. After the tree has settled itself thus for a night's sleep, if touched, the whole thing will flutter as if agitated or impatient at being disturbed. The often-er the foliage is moistened the more violent becomes the shaking of the branches, and at length the tree emits a nauseating odor, which, if inhaled for a few moments, causes a violent, dizzy headache.

The angry tree, as it has been named, was discovered by travelers, who, upon making a camp for the night, placed one end of a canvas covering over one of the sensitive branches, using it for a support. Immediately the tree began to jerk sharply its branches. The motion continued, growing more nervous, until at last the sickening odor which it gave out drove the tired campers to a more friendly location. Curiosity, of course, prompted an investigation. One of the angry trees was dug up and thrown to one side. Immediately upon being removed from the ground the tree opened its leaves, its twigs lost their pigtails and for something over an hour and a half the outraged branches showed their indignation by a series of quakings, which grew weaker as time passed, finally ceasing altogether, when the foliage hung limp and withered. The next morning the tree was placed upright in the ground again, a little water was applied to the roots, and very soon it resumed its normal condition.

The Czar a Composer.

According to a Belgian paper, the Czar is among the composers. It is stated that at a soiree in the Winter Palace several works from the imperial pen were performed, among them one entitled, significantly enough, "The Song of Peace." This stands in three sections, the first of which depicts the turmoil of battle, while the second suggests the stricken field, covered with dead and wounded. The third invokes retribution upon those who are responsible for such horrors. Another work is written in honor of the saints of the Orthodox Church, and of those who devote themselves to a cloistered life, far from human miseries. This is dedicated to the Archduke Constantine, himself a poet and musician.

Taking No Chances.

"If you had a million dollars, what would you do?"

"I don't know that I'd do anything," answered Mr. Ardluc. "I'd probably wake up and find it wasn't so."—Washington Star.