

APACHES OF PARIS

Night Prowlers Whose Trade Is Murder and Robbery.

THE TERROR OF THE POLICE.

These Desperadoes Rarely Use a Gun, but Work With the Knife, the Bludgeon or by "Tolling"—They Have a Short and Bloody Career.

There are very few nights in the year when Paris policemen on their rounds do not stumble upon a body lying in a gory pool. Sometimes the handle of a long, slender knife protrudes between the shoulder blades; sometimes an ugly gash bleeds from ear to ear; not seldom blood oozes from mouth, nose and ears, as though the dead had not sustained any apparent wound, or three little starlike bruises may dot the temple, or a bluish line an inch wide may mar the back of the neck, just above the collar line. "Les Apaches," the "cops" whisper to each other (for Parisian police officers always go two by two), and they call for an ambulance, much relieved not to have witnessed the incident.

The steel blade, the blackjack, the brass knuckles, will serve the purpose of the Apache, according to his victim's size and presumable strength. For a prey of small stature, however, the Apache reserves what in his slang he calls "tolling." A sharp blow dazes the victim and throws him down; the Apache's knees bore themselves into the chest, while his hands seize the ears, lift the head and slam it a couple of times on the pavement until a duller thud tells of a fractured skull.

Until an Apache is an adept at "sticking" his man in very much the same way in which a Spanish torero dispatches a bull, with a single thrust between the shoulders, or at cracking a skull bone at one slam, he is held in little esteem and never allowed to tackle "big jobs" in a dangerous neighborhood, for Paris is a well policed city. The night hawk must strike like lightning, empty the dead man's pockets in a wink and slink away into the dark. Therefore Apaches very seldom carry guns; the knife is silent. Tolling, too, is safe—so many people are known to have slipped and fractured their skulls! Unless the victim is especially well dressed there is not much of an inquiry.

When it is all over the gang, which scatters like a flock of frightened sparrows, meets again at some wineshop where no one is welcome who is not "in the business."

Apaches never try to conceal their social status. Their very clothes are a sort of warning to the public. They even affect a peculiar walk, the body bent from the loins, shoulders hunched and hands plunging deep into the trousers pockets. But who would dare to molest them?

The Apache is a marked man. He joins a gang at three or four and twenty, and by thirty or thirty-five he has gone. The maws of a jail hold him for the balance of his earthly existence. He knows that. He expects it. Therefore while his freedom lasts there is no desperate chance he will not take to get at the gold that alone could save him.

Apaches are not born; they are made—made by the peculiar laws of France. Every citizen of the republic, without distinction of rank or class, must serve under his country's flag for two years. Only the physically unfit escape that servitude. At the end of his term in the ranks every Frenchman seeking employment must present as means of identification his cer-

tificate of honorable discharge.

Then it is that tragedy looms up for some unfortunates. Woe to the one whose certificate mentions the "African battalions!"

The African battalions, garrisoned at the edge of the Sahara desert, are made up of all the boys who had the misfortune of being arrested before they reached the age of twenty-one. Trivial as their offenses may have been, whether they were due or not to the indiscreet exuberance of youth or to some absurd entanglement, they are sent to the desert outposts, kept on convict fare, sleeping mostly in trenches which they dig, watched over by sentries that shoot to kill.

Under the broiling sun that lays them down fast with fever and cholera they build roads, crept over the next day by the sand. They are "the front" whenever Arabs or Moroccans threaten to shake off the French yoke. When they fall by the wayside they are tied to a horse's tail. When they protest spurs cause the horse to rear.

And when the creepy water of sand wells, bullets from the sentries or from the nomads and the hoofs of vicious horses have spared them they return to their native city with hatred in their hearts, with the loathsome memories left by association with the depraved and the morally diseased.

They return to their native city to find doors and hearts locked to them. Their military book, which they must produce, proclaims them jailbirds. Who wants to employ an ex-convict? During their two years in the African inferno they have atoned for their errors of the eighteenth or nineteenth year. For the second time they have settled their account with society. And now society refuses them a chance to show that they have (for some of them have) shed the old hide, to prove that a new heart is beating in their breasts.

Hard is the plight of an ex-convict in France.—Andre Fridon in New York Tribune.

How to Boost Union Goods.

The Women's Union Label league of Denison, Tex., prints every week a half column list of stores in that city that handle union made goods. The list carries the names of five dry goods stores, twenty grocers, eleven meat markets and about thirty miscellaneous dealers. This suggests an idea for union men and women in all cities. If they would publish a similar list it would be but a short while until all the merchants would be clamoring for the names of manufacturers making union goods.

Funny Stories.

"Ha, ha!" said the jovial man as he slapped an acquaintance on the back. "I'm glad to see you. I have one of the funniest stories on record, and you are just in time."

"I don't care for it," was the candid reply. "You see, there is often a pathetic side even to humor. I have just been out with my architect, and he showed me three of the funniest stories I ever saw. If I hadn't been paying for them I'd have laughed myself silly."

Public Ownership of Coal Fields.

One of the first results of the recent labor victory in Australia is the decision of the Victorian government to retain in its ownership the coal fields of the province and operate them for use instead of profit. An eight hour day is established for the miners, no person being permitted to work more than forty-eight hours in one week below the ground. The state will use the coal for its own railroad system and will sell the surplus for manufacturing and domestic purposes.

It Ended Well

By M. QUAD

Copyright, 1910, by Associated Literary Press.

One summer's day the lightning rod man came driving along on the Red Bridge road to halt at the comfortable farmhouse of the Widow Glendenning and say to her that as business in his line was a little slack owing to the scarcity of thunder and lightning he would make her a special rate if she wanted her barn protected. The widow was a pleasant faced, good natured woman, and she pleasantly replied that when she felt her barn needed protection she would hoist a clothes pole to the roof.

All in a good natured way, you know, and no one's feelings were hurt. The lightning rod man laughed and drove on. Ten miles away he stopped at the house of Deacon Shaw, widower. He offered the deacon a very low figure on rods, and the deacon intimated that the whole business of stopping thunderbolts was a swindle and a fraud. Nothing personal and nothing to hurt. Just a sort of a joke, you know—a joke to be returned. Two weeks later the lightning man was back at the widow's house. He had nothing to say about rods this time. What he did say was:

"Widow, I'm a man with a heart. I not only have a heart for myself, but for others. I have a heart for you. You are a lonesome, delicate woman. All widows are. Where there's no man around the house there is desolation. I can't marry you, but I can find you a second husband and warrant him true blue."

"Then bring him on," replied the widow, with a laugh. "He's a deacon and a widower. He has one child. He's worth \$6,000 or \$7,000. There is only one drawback, and that I don't call a drawback at all. It's an advantage. He's deaf and dumb. No dumb husband can scold and find fault. He can't swear at his oxen. He can't yell at his wife from upstairs or down cellar."

"How did a dumb man ever get married?" asked the widow, with a show of interest.

"By sign. I can't tell you the signs, but that must have been the way. That's the way he talks to me."

"But I don't want no deaf and dumb critter around me."

"But let him come along and call." "Oh, I can't keep him away, but how am I going to talk to him?"

"Same as he will to you—by signs." "I'm not going to make any windmill of myself, and he needn't come. I do some scolding myself now and then, and if I had a husband I wouldn't want to be swinging my arms around to let him know that I was mad. You go and marry him to some old maid."

That same day the lightning rod man drove up to the deacon's again. The deacon was ready for him, but he didn't mention rods. Instead he said:

"Deacon, you are a suffering and lonesome man. All widowers are. The world would look different to you if you were married again. I am a man with a heart, and I'm going to tell you of a widow who weeps for you—that is, she waits for you, which is about the same thing. She's fairly handsome, not over forty and has as good a farm as yours. And to crown it all, deacon, she's deaf and dumb."

"Who'd want to marry a deaf and dumb woman?" demanded the deacon. "Best wives in the world—best natured, hardest working and the most economical. Don't make no mistake, deacon. Marrying this woman means

another good farm for you. Only one child and that a girl big enough to help do the housework. Make a call at the house anyway."

Three days later he decided to call. He had been told that if he ever did call he must talk to the widow in the sign language or her feelings would be hurt.

"Now, then, who in the lands is that?" asked the widow of herself.

Two minutes later there was a rap on the front door. As she opened it the man stood there with an anxious look on his face and pointed into the room. He wanted to enter. She nodded. He must be the deaf and dumb widower. She took a chair and he took one. Then they looked at each other. She smiled and he smiled.

They were doing famously well, and it was with a bland smile on his phiz that the deacon asked her in the sign language how her corn and potatoes were coming on. The sign was too much for her. She thought he asked if she ever had earache, and she shook her head. The deacon tried again. This time she thought he was asking if she had any children, and she nodded her head and held up one finger.

"What in Josh does the woman mean?" exclaimed the caller to himself, without knowing that he was going to speak.

"Sir, who are you, to come here and make a fool of me!" shouted the woman as she sprang up with angry eyes.

"And you've made a fool of me," was the reply.

It was some little time before matters were made clear and the blame placed where it belonged. Then they begged each other's pardon and fell into sensible conversation. Yes, it resulted in matrimony after a year or so, and when the lightning rod man heard of it he heaved a long sigh and said to himself:

"Yes, I'm a man with a heart for others, but I'm no humorist. My jokes turn out the other way."

His Little Comeback.

Miss Neverstop, seating herself between two much engrossed senators, exclaims, "A rose between two thorns!" "Nay, madam," retorts one irate old gentleman; "say, rather, a tongue sandwich."—Life.

Discouraging.

He—I told your father that I just dote on you. She—And what did he say? He—That I had better find an antidote.—Illustrated Bits.

Helping Him Along.

"What is all this straw doing in the roadway? Somebody sick?" asked the man passing.

"Easy!" said the man at the gate, holding up a warning finger. "There's a young man calling on my daughter tonight who has been coming to see her for six years. He's very easily frightened. We hope he's going to propose tonight, and we are taking every precaution against his being startled!"—Yonkers Statesman.

The Barefoot Burglar.

"Have you seen the barefoot burglar?" asks the Florida Times-Union. We have. We caught her in the act yesterday morning, the three-year-old miscreant, as she stole up to our bed, stole a kiss, shook her tousled head and said, "If you don't get up, dad, you won't get any bre'fes'."—Allentown (Pa.) Democrat.

Unselfish.

Mrs. Backbay—Why are you leaving us, Bridget? Boston Cook—Me reasons are philanthropic. I want to give some wan else a chancet at the joys of living with yez.—Harper's Bazar.