

THE WANDERING JEW.

BY EUGENE SUE.

CHAPTER XXII.—CONTINUED.

"Yes," said the Jew, as he perused with emotion these lines traced so long ago, "this is the same recommendation as that which I received from my father; for it would seem that the other apartments of this house are filled with objects, on which M. de Rennepont set a high value, not for their intrinsic worth, but because of their origin. The hall of mourning must be a strange and mysterious chamber. Well," added Samuel, as he drew from his pocket a register bound in black shagreen, with a brass lock, from which he drew the key, after placing it upon the table, "here is the statement of the property in hand, which I have been ordered to bring hither, before the arrival of the heirs."

The deepest silence reigned in the room, at the moment when Samuel placed the register on the table. Suddenly, a simple and yet most startling occurrence roused him from his reverie. In the next apartment was heard the clear, silvery tone of a clock, striking slowly ten. And the hour was ten! Samuel had too much sense to believe in perpetual motion, or in the possibility of constructing a clock to go for one hundred and fifty years. He asked himself, therefore, with surprise and alarm, how this clock could still be going, and how it could mark so exactly the hour of the day. Urged with restless curiosity, the old man was about to enter the room; but, recollecting the recommendation of his father, which had now been confirmed by the few lines he had just read from De Rennepont's pen, he stopped at the door, and listened with extreme attention.

He heard nothing—absolutely nothing, but the last dying vibration of the clock. After having long reflected upon this strange fact, Samuel comparing it with the no less extraordinary circumstance of the light perceived that morning through the apertures in the belvedere, concluded that there must be some connection between these two incidents. If the old man could not penetrate the true cause of these extraordinary appearances, he at last explained them to himself, by remembering the subterranean communications, which according to tradition, were said to exist between the cellars of this house and distant places; and he conjectured that unknown and mysterious personages thus gained access to it two or three times in a century. Absorbed in these thoughts, Samuel approached the fireplace, which as we have said, was directly opposite the window. Just then, a bright ray of sunlight, piercing the clouds, shone full upon two large portraits, hung upon either side of the fireplace, and not before remarked by the Jew. They were painted life-size, and represented one a woman, the other a man. By the sober yet powerful coloring of these paintings, by the large and vigorous style, it was easy to recognize a master's hand. It would have been difficult to find models more fitted to inspire a great painter. The woman appeared to be from five-and-twenty to thirty years of age. Magnificent brown hair, with golden tints, crowned a forehead, white, noble, and lofty. Her head-dress, far from recalling the fashion, which Madame de Sevigne brought in during the age of Louis XIV., reminded one rather of some of the portraits of Paul Veronese, in which the hair encircles the face in broad, undulating bands, surmounted by a thick plait, like a crown, at the back of the head. The eye-brows, finely pencilled, were arched over large eyes of bright, sapphire blue. Their gaze, at once proud and mournful, had something fatal about it. The nose, finely formed, terminated in slight dilated nostrils; a half smile, almost of pain contracted the mouth; the face was a long oval, and the complexion, extremely pale, was hardly shaded on the cheek by a light rose-color. The position of the head and neck announced a rare mixture of grace and dignity. A sort of tunic or robe, of glossy black material, came as high as the commencement of her shoulders, and just marking her lithe and tall figure, reached down to her feet, which were almost entirely concealed by the folds of this garment.

The attitude was full of nobleness, simplicity. The head looked white and luminous, standing out from a dark grey sky, marbled at the horizon by purple clouds, upon which were visible the bluish summits of distant hills, in deep shadow. The arrangement of the picture, as well as the warm tints of the foreground, contrasting strongly with these distant objects, showed that the woman was placed upon an eminence, from which she could view the whole horizon. The countenance was deeply pensive and desponding. There was an expression of supplicating and resigned grief, particularly in her look, half raised to heaven, which one would have thought impossible to picture. On the left side of the fireplace

was the other portrait with like vigour. It represented a man, between thirty and thirty-five years of age, of tall stature. A large brown cloak, which hung round him in graceful folds, did not quite conceal a black doublet, buttoned up to the neck, over which fell a square white collar. The handsome and expressive head was marked with stern powerful lines, which did not exclude an admirable air of suffering, resignation, and ineffable goodness. The hair, as well as the beard and eyebrows, was black; and the latter, by some singular caprice of nature, instead of being separated and forming two distinct arches, extended from one temple to the other, in a single bow, and seemed to mark the forehead of this man with a black line.

The background of this picture also represented a stormy sky; but, beyond some rocks in the distance, the sea was visible, and appeared to mingle with the dark clouds. The sun, just now shining upon these two remarkable figures (which it appeared impossible to forget, after once seeing them), augmented their brilliancy.

Starting from his reverie, and casting his eyes by chance upon these portraits, Samuel was greatly struck with them. They appeared almost alive. "What noble and handsome faces!" he exclaimed, as he approached to examine them more closely.

"Whose are these portraits? They are not those of any of the Rennepont family, for my father told me that they are all in hall of mourning. Alas!" added the old man, "one might think, from the great sorrow expressed in their countenances, that they ought to have a place in that mourning-chamber."

After a moments silence, Samuel resumed: "Let me prepare everything for this solemn assembly, for it has struck ten." So saying, he placed the gilded arm-chairs round the table, and then continued, with a pensive air: "The hour approaches, and of the descendants of my grandfather's benefactor, we have seen only this young priest, with the angelic countenance. Can he be the sole representative of the Rennepont family? He is a priest, and this family will finish with him! Well! the moment is come when I must open this door, that the will may be read. Bathsheba is bringing hither the notary. They knock at the door, behind which voices were now audible.

He turned the key twice in the lock, and threw the portals open. To his great regret, he saw only Gabriel on the steps, between Rodin and Father d'Aigrigny. The notary, and Bathsheba, who had served them as a guide, waited a little behind the principal group.

Samuel could not repress a sigh, as he stood bowing on the threshold, and said to them: "All is ready, gentlemen. You may walk in."

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE TESTAMENT.

When Gabriel, Rodin, and Father d'Aigrigny entered the red room, they were differently affected. Gabriel, pale and sad, felt a kind of painful impatience. He was anxious to quit this house, though he had already relieved himself of a great weight, by executing before the notary, secured by every legal formality, a deed making over all his rights of inheritance to Father d'Aigrigny. Until now it had not occurred to the young priest, that in bestowing the care upon him, which he was about to reward so generously, and in forcing his vocation by a sacrilegious falsehood, the only object of Father d'Aigrigny might have been to secure the success of a dark intrigue. In acting as he did, Gabriel was not yielding, in his view of the question, to a sentiment of exaggerated delicacy. He had made this donation freely, many years before. He would have looked upon it as infamy now to withdraw it. It was hard enough to be suspected of cowardice; for nothing in the world would he have incurred the least reproach of cupidity.

The missionary must have been endowed with a very rare and excellent nature, or this flower of scrupulous probity would have withered beneath the deleterious and demoralizing influence of his education; but happily, as cold sometimes preserves from corruption, the icy atmosphere in which he had passed a portion of his childhood and youth had benumbed, but not vitiated, his generous qualities, which had indeed soon revived in the warm air of liberty. Father d'Aigrigny, much paler and more agitated than Gabriel, strove to excuse and explain his anxiety by attributing it to the sorrow he experienced at the rupture of his dear son with the order. Rodin, calm, and perfectly master of himself, saw with secret rage the strong emotion of Father d'Aigrigny, which might have inspired one less confident than Gabriel with strange suspicions. Yet, notwithstanding his apparent indifference, the socius was perhaps still more ardently impatient than his superior for the success of this important affair. Samuel appeared, quite desponding, no other heir but Gabriel, having presented him-

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W. A. SAUNDERS,
Attorney, Merchants National Bank.

SHERIFF'S SALE.—By virtue of an order of sale issued out of the district court for Douglas county, Nebraska, and to me directed, I will, on the 12th day of April, A. D. 1897, at ten o'clock A. M. of said day, at the EAST front door of the county court house, in the city of Omaha, Douglas county, Nebraska, sell at public auction to the highest bidder for cash the property described in said order of sale as follows to-wit:

Lots four (4) in block 134, and lot five (5) in block 184 of the Original Plat of the city of Omaha, as surveyed, platted and recorded.

Said property to be sold to satisfy Walter E. Keeler, plaintiff herein, the sums as follows, to-wit:

On lot 4 in block 134, above described, the sum of \$1,897.00, together with an attorney's fee of \$180.70;

On lot 5 in block 184, above described, the sum of \$973.45, together with an attorney's fee of \$97.54;

Which said amounts according to the judgment of the district court bear interest at the rate of ten per cent. per annum from September 28th, 1896, and are first lien upon said property.

To satisfy the further sum of three hundred and nineteen and 12/100 (\$319.12) dollars costs herein, together with accruing costs according to a judgment rendered by the district court of said Douglas county, at its September term, A. D. 1896, in a certain action then and there pending, wherein Walter E. Keeler is plaintiff and Joseph Rebecca Elizabeth Elwine Linton and Adolphus Frederick Linton, her husband, John Morris, William Morris and Frank Crisp, co-partners doing business as Ashurst, Morris, Crisp & Company, John Whittaker Cooper and William Isaac Shard are defendants.

Omaha, Nebraska, March 11th, 1897.
JOHN W. McDONALD,
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W. A. Saunders, Attorney.
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Doc. 55; No. 179.
Ex-Doc. 1; Page 66. 3-11-5

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