

THE WANDERING JEW.

BY EUGENE SUE.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE FIRST LAST, AND THE LAST FIRST.

The carriage had travelled rapidly to saint-Dizier House. During all the way, Rodin remained mute, contenting himself with observing Father d'Aigrigny, and listening to him, as he poured forth his grief and fury in a long monologue, interrupted by exclamations, lamentations, and bursts of rage, directed against the strokes of that inexorable destiny, which had ruined in a moment the best founded hopes. When the carriage entered the court-yard, and stopped before the portico, the princess's face could be seen through one of the windows, half hidden by the folds of a curtain; in her burning anxiety, she came to see if it was really Father d'Aigrigny who arrived at the house. Still more, in defiance of all ordinary rules, this great lady, generally so scrupulous as to appearances, hurried from her apartment, and descended several steps of the staircase, to meet Father d'Aigrigny, who was coming up with a dejected air. At sight of the livid and agitated countenance of the reverend father, the princess stopped suddenly, and grew pale. She suspected that all was lost. A look rapidly exchanged with her old lover left her no doubt of the issue she so much feared. Rodin humbly followed the reverend father, and both, preceded by the princess, entered the room. The door once closed, the princess, addressing Father d'Aigrigny, exclaimed with unspeakable anguish: "What has happened?"

Instead of answering this question, the reverend father, his eyes sparkling with rage, his lips white, his features contracted, looked fixedly at the princess, and said to her: "Do you know the amount of this inheritance, that we estimated at forty millions?"

"I understand," cried the princess; "we have been deceived. The inheritance amounts to nothing, and all you have done has been in vain."

"Yes, it has indeed been in vain," answered the reverend father, grinding his teeth with rage; "it was no question of forty millions, but of two hundred and twelve millions."

"Two hundred and twelve millions!" repeated the princess in amazement, as she drew back a step. "It is impossible!"

"I tell you I saw the vouchers, which were examined by the notary."

"Two hundred and twelve millions?" resumed the princess, with deep dejection. "It is an immense and sovereign power—and you have renounced—you have not struggled for it, by every possible means, and till the last moment?"

"Madame, I have done all that I could—notwithstanding the treachery of Gabriel, who this very morning declared that he renounced us, and separated from the Society."

"Ungrateful!" said the princess, unaffectedly. "The deed of gift, which I had the precaution to have prepared by the notary, was in such good, legal form, that in spite of the objections of that accursed soldier and his son, the notary had put me in possession of the treasure."

"Two hundred and twelve millions!" repeated the princess, clasping her hands. "Verily, it is like a dream!"

"Yes," replied Father d'Aigrigny, bitterly, "for us, this possession is indeed a dream, for a codicil has been discovered, which puts off for three months and a half all the testamentary provisions. Now that our very precautions have roused the suspicion of all these heirs—now that they know the enormous amount at stake—they will be upon their guard; and all is lost."

"But who is the wretch that produced this codicil?"

"A woman."—"What woman?"

"Some wandering creature, that Gabriel says he met in America, where she saved his life."

"And how could this woman be there—how could she know the existence of this codicil?"

"I think it was all arranged with a miserable Jew, the guardian of the house, whose family has had charge of the funds for three generations; he had no doubt some secret instructions, in case he suspected the detention of any of the heirs, for this Marius de Rennepont had foreseen that our Company would keep their eyes upon his race."

"But can you not dispute the validity of this codicil?"

"What, go to law in these times—litigate about a will—incur the certainty of a thousand clamors, with no security for success?—It is bad enough, that even this should get wind. Alas! it is terrible. So near the goal! after so much care and trouble. An affair that had been followed up with so much perseverance during a century and a half!"

"Two hundred and twelve millions!" said the

princess. "The Order would have had no need to look for establishments in foreign countries; with such resources, it would have been able to impose itself upon France."

"Yes," resumed Father d'Aigrigny, with bitterness; "by means of education, we might have possessed ourselves of the rising generation. The power is altogether incalculable." Then, stamping with his foot, he resumed: "I tell you, that it is enough to drive one mad with rage! an affair so wisely, ably, patiently conducted!"

"Is there no hope?"

"Only that Gabriel may not revoke his donation, in as far as concerns himself. That alone would be a considerable sum—not less than thirty millions."

"It is enormous—it is almost what you hoped," said the princess; "then why despair?"

"Because it is evident that Gabriel will dispute this donation. However legal it may be, he will find means to annul it, now that he is free, informed as to our designs, and surrounded by his adopted family. I tell you, that all is lost. There is no hope left. I think it will even be prudent to write to Rome, to obtain permission to leave Paris for a while. This town is odious to me!"

"Oh, yes! I see that no hope is left—since you, my friend, have decided almost to fly."

Father d'Aigrigny was completely discouraged and broken down; this terrible blow had destroyed all life and energy within him. He threw himself back in an arm-chair, quite overcome. During the preceding dialogue, Rodin was standing humbly near the door, with his old hat in his hand. Two or three times, at certain passages in the conversation between Father d'Aigrigny and the princess, the cadaverous face of the socius, whose wrath appeared to be concentrated, was slightly flushed, and his flabby eyelids were tinged with red, as if the blood mounted in consequence of an interior struggle; but, immediately after, his dull countenance resumed its pallid hue.

"I must write instantly to Rome, to announce this defeat, which has become an event of the first importance, because it overthrows immense hopes," said Father d'Aigrigny, much depressed. "The reverend father had remained seated; pointing to a table, he said to Rodin, with an abrupt and haughty air: "Write!"

The socius placed his hat on the ground, and with stooping head and slanting walk, went to seat himself on a chair, that stood before a desk. Then, taking pen and paper, he waited, silent and motionless, for the dictation of his superior.

"With your permission, princess?" said Father d'Aigrigny to Madame de Saint-Dizier. The latter answered by an impatient wave of the hand, as if she reproached him for the formal demand at such time. The reverend father bowed, and dictated these words in a hoarse and hollow voice: "All defeated. The affair of the Rennepont inheritance, in spite of all the care and skill employed upon it, has completely and finally failed. At the point to which matters had been brought, it is unfortunately worse than a failure; it is a most disastrous event for the Society, which was clearly entitled to this property, fraudulently withdrawn from a confiscation made in our favor. My conscience at least bears witness, that, to the last moment, I did all that was possible to defend and secure our rights. But I repeat, we must consider this important affair as lost absolutely and for ever, and think no more about it."

Thus dictating, Father d'Aigrigny's back was turned towards Rodin. At a sudden movement made by the socius, in rising and throwing his pen upon the table, instead of continuing to write, the reverend father turned round, and, looking at Rodin with profound astonishment, said to him: "Well! what are you doing?"

"It is time to end this—the man is mad!" said Rodin to himself, as he advanced slowly towards the fire-place.

"What! you quit your place—you cease writing?" said the reverend father, in amazement. Then, addressing the princess, who shared in his astonishment, he added, as he glanced contemptuously at the socius: "He is losing his senses."

"Forgive him," replied Mme. de Saint-Dizier; "it is, no doubt, the emotion caused by the ruin of this affair."

"Thank the princess, return to your place, and continue to write," said Father d'Aigrigny to Rodin, in a tone of disdainful compassion, as, with imperious finger, he pointed to the table.

The socius, perfectly indifferent to this new order, approached the fire-place, drew himself up to his full height as he turned his arched back, planted himself firmly on his legs, stamped on the carpet with the heel of his clumsy, greasy shoes, crossed his hands beneath the flaps of his old, spotted coat, and, lifted his head, looked fixedly at Father d'Aigrigny. The socius had not spoken a word, but his hideous countenance, now flushed, suddenly revealed such a sense of his superiority, and such sovereign contempt for

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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. 1898, 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 164 of the Original Plat of the city of Omaha, as surveyed, platted and recorded, all situated in Douglas county, state of Nebraska. Which 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 164, above described, the sum of \$673.86, together with an attorney's fee of \$67.34. 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 Phoebe Rebecca Elizabeth 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, Sheriff of Douglas County, Nebraska. W. A. SAUNDERS, Attorney. Keeler vs. Linton et al. Doc. 55; No. 179. Ex.-Doc. 1; Page 96. 3-11-5

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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 1st day of May, A. D. 1898, 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: The north one-half (N. 1/2) of the northwest quarter of section one (1) township fifteen (15) Range twelve (12) east in Douglas county, as surveyed and recorded, all situated in said Douglas county, and state of Nebraska. Said property to be sold to satisfy Walter E. Keeler, plaintiffs herein, the sum of one hundred and thirty-seven and 75-100 (\$137.75) dollars judgment, together with interest thereon at the rate of ten (10) per cent, per annum from September 27th, 1897, together with an attorney's fee amounting to the sum of thirteen and 75-100 (\$13.75) dollars, which said amounts the court finds to be a first valid and existing lien upon said real estate, above described. To satisfy the further sum of thirty-four and 10-100 (\$34.10) 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. 1897, in a certain action then and there pending, wherein Walter E. Keeler is plaintiff and Phoebe Rebecca Elizabeth Linton and Adolphus Frederick Linton, her husband, are defendants. Omaha, Nebraska, April 29th, 1898. JOHN W. McDONALD, Sheriff of Douglas County, Nebraska. W. A. SAUNDERS, Attorney. Keeler vs. Linton et al. Doc. 62; No. 233. 4-29-5

W. A. SAUNDERS, Attorney, Merchants National Bank. NOTICE TO NON-RESIDENT DEFENDANTS. To Archie T. Shaver, non-resident defendant: You are hereby notified that on the 20th day of April 1898, Kittle P. Shaver filed her petition in the District Court of Douglas County, Nebraska, the object and prayer of which are to obtain a divorce from you on the ground that you have wrongfully abandoned and deserted her without good cause, for the term of two years last past, and have failed to support her for more than three years. You are required to answer said petition on or before the 6th day of June, A. D. 1898. KITTLE P. SHAVER, Plaintiff. 4-29-4

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