CHAPTER VI.

A CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION, IN TWO PARTS. The next morning there was a most unusual outery in the doctor's house. The last thing before going to bed, the doctor had locked up some valuables in the dining room cupboard; and behold, when he rose again, as he did about 4 o'clock, the cupboard had been broken open and the valuables in question had disappeared. Madame and Jean-Marie were summoned from their rooms, and appeared in hasty toilets; they found the doctor raving, calling the heavens to witness and avenge his injury, pacing the room barefooted, with the tails of his night shirt flirt-

ing as he turned. "Gone!" he said; "the things are gone, the fortune gone! We are paupers once more. Boy! what do you know of this! Speak up, sir, speak up. Do you know of it! Where are they? He had him by the arm, shaking him like a bag, and the boy's words, if he had any, were jolted forth in inarticulate numbers. The doctor, with a revulsion from his own violence, set him down again. He observed Anastasie in tears. "Anastasie," he said, in quite an altered voice, "compose yourself, command your feelings. I would not have you give way to passion like the vulgar. This-this trifling accident must be lived down. Jean-Marie, bring me my smaller medicine cuest. A gentle laxative is

indicated And he dosed the family all round, leading the way himself with a double quantity. The quality of the gold." wretched Anastasie, who had never been till in the whole course of her existence, and whose soul recoiled from remedies, went floods of tears, as she supped, and shuddered, and protested, and then was bullied and shouted at until she sipped again. As for Jean-Marie, he took his portion down with

"I have given him a less amount," obhim against emotion. And now that we have thus parried any morbid consequences,

"I ren so cold," wailed Anastasie. "Cold" eried the doctor. "I give thanks to God that I are made of flerier material. Why, madanc, a blow like this would set a frog into a transpiration. If you are cold you can retire; and, by the way, you might throw me down my tronsers. It is chilly for

"Oh, no" protested Anastasie; "I will stay with you. "Nay, madanie, you shall not suffer for your devotion," said the doctor. "I will myself fetch you a shawl." And he went upstairs and returned more fully clad and with an armful of wraps for the shivering Anastasic. "And now," he resumed, "to investigate this crime. Let us proceed by induction. Anastasie, do you know anything that

can help us?" Anastasic knew nothing. "Or .. you, Jean Marie "Not I," replied the boy, steadily, "Good, returned the doctor, "We shall now turn our attention to the nonterial evidences. If was born to be a detective: I have the eve and the systematic spirit.) First, viobroken open; and it may be observed, in passing, that the lock was dear indeed at what I paid for it a crow to plack with Master Goguelat. Second, here is an instrument employed, one of our own table knives, one of our best, my dear; which seems to indicate no preparation on the part of the gang-if | blush gang it was. Thirdly, I observe that nothing has been removed except the Franchard dishes and the casket; our own silver has been minutely respected. This is wily; it shows intelligence, a knowledge of the code, a desire to avoid legal consequences. I argue from this fact that the gang numbers persons

of respectability-outward, of course, and merely outward, as the robbery proves. But Largue, second, that we must have been observed at Franchard itself by some occult observer, and dogged throughout the day with a skill and patience that I venture to qualify as consummate. No ordinary man, no oceasional criminal, would have shown himself capable of this combination. We have in our retired bandit of the highest order of intelli-"Good heaven," cried the horrified Anastasie. "Henri, how can you!"

"My cherished one, this is a process of induction," said the doctor. "If any of my steps are unsound correct me. You are silent: Then do not, I beserch you, be so vulgarly illogical as to revolt from my conclusion. We have now arrived," he rethe gang- for I incline to the hypothesis of | guilt, more than one - and we now leave this room. which can disclose no more, and turn our attention to the court and garden, Jean-Marie, I trust you are observantly following my various steps; this is an excellent piece of education for you.) Come with me to the door. No steps on the court; it is unfortunate our court should be paved. On what small matters hang the destiny of these delisaid, standing grandly backward and indi- eyes, and answer!" cating the green gate. "An escalade, as you can now see for yourselves, has taken place. Sure enough, the green paint was in several places scratched and broken; and one of the panels preserved the print of a mailed shoe.

impossible to distinguish the pattern of the "The whole robbery," concluded the doctor, "step by step, has been reconstituted. Inductive science can no further go." "It is wonderful," said his wife, "You should have been a detective, Henri, I had

no idea of your talents." "My dear," said Desprez, condescendingly. "a man of scientific imagination combines the lesser faculties; he is a detective just as he is a publicist or a general: these are but local applications of his special talent. But now," he continued, "would you have me go further! Would you have me lay my finger on the culprits-or rather, for I cannot promise quite so much, point out to you the very house where they consort? It may be a satisfaction, at least it is all we are likely to get, since we are denied the remedy of law. I reach the further stage in this way. In order to fill my outline of the robbery, I require a man likely to be in the forest idling, I require a man of education, 1 require a man superior to considerations of morality. The three requisites all center in Tentaillon's boarders. They are painters: therefore they are continually lounging in the forest. They are painters; therefore they are not unlikely to have some smattering of education. Lastly, because they are painters, they are probably immoral. And this I prove in two ways. First, painting is an art which merely addresses the eye; it does not in any particular exercise the moral sense. And second, painting, in common with all the other arts, implies the dangerous quality of imagination A man of im tion is never moral; he outsoars literal demarcations and reviews life under too many shifting lights to rest content with the in-

vidious distinctions of the law." "But you always say-at least, so I understood you"-said madame, "that these lads display no imagination whatever."

"My dear, they displayed imagination, and of a very fantastic order, too," returned the doctor, "when they embraced their beggarly profession. Besides-and this is an argument exactly suited to your intellectual level -many of them are English and American. Where else should we expect to find a thief? And now you had better get your coffee. Because we have lost a treasure, there is no reason for starving. For my part, I shall break my fast with white wine. I feel unaccountably heated and thirsty today. I can only attribute it to the shock of the discovery. And yet, you will bear me out, I supported the emotion nobly.

The doctor had now talked himself back into an admirable humor; and as he sat in the arbor and slowly imbibed a large allowance of white wine and picked a little bread and cheese with no very impetuous appetite, if a third of his meditations ran upon the missing treasure, the other two-thirds were more pleasingly buried in the retrospect of his detective skill

About 11 Casimir arrived. He had caught an early train to Fontainebleau and driven over to save time, and now his cab was stabled at Tentaillon's, and he remarked, studying his watch, that he could spare an hour and a half. He was much the man of business, decisively spoken, given to frowning in an intellectual manner. Anastasie's born brother, he did not waste much sentiment on

the lady, gave her an English family siss, and demanded a meal without delay. "You can tell me your story while we eat,"

he observed. "Anything good today, Stasie?" He was promised something good. The trio sat down to a table in the arbor, Jean-Marie waiting as well as eating, and the doctor recounted what had happened in his richest narrative manner. Casimir heard it with explosions of laughter.

"What a streak of luck for you, my good brother," he observed, when the tale was "If you had gone to Paris you would have played dick-duck-drake with the whole consignment in three months. Your own would have followed, and you would have come to me in a procession like last time. But I give you warning-Stasie may weep and Henri ratiocinate-it will not serve you twice. Your next collapse will be fatal. I thought I had told you so, Stasief Heyr No

The doctor winced and looked furtively at Jean-Marie; but the boy seemed apathetic. "And then again," broke out Casimir, "what children you are-vicious children my faith! How could you tell the value of this trash? It might have been worth notaing, or next door.

"Pardon me," said the doctor. "You have our usual flow of spirits, I perceive; but even less than your usual deliberation. I am not entirely ignorant of these matters." Not entirely ignorant of anything ever I heard of," interrupted Casimir, bowing, and cruel boy will consent to remain among his raising his glass with a sort of pert polite-

"At least," resumed the doctor, "I gave my mind to the subject—that you may be will. to believe-and I estimated that our capital would be doubled." And he described the nature of the find. "My word of honor;" said Casimir, "I half

believe you! But much would depend on the "The quality, my dear Casimir, was"-And the doctor in default of language, kissed his linger tips,

"I would not take your word for it, my good friend," retorted the man of business "You are a man of very rosy views. But this robbery," he continued-"this robbery is an odd thing. Of course I pass over your nonsense about gangs and landscape paintserved the doctor, "his youth protecting ers. For me, that is a dream. Who was in the house last night?

"None but ourselves," replied the doctor. "And this young gentleman?" asked Casimir, jerking a nod in the direction of Jean-Marie

"He too"-the doctor bowed. "Well; and, if it is a fair question, who is

he?" pursued the brother-in-law. "Jenn-Marie," answered the doctor, "combines the functions of a son and stable boy He began as the latter, but he rose rapidly to the more honorable rank in our affections. He is, I may say, the greatest comfort in our

"Ha!" said Casimir. "And previous to becoming one of you?" "Jean-Marie has lived a remarkable existence; his experience has been eminently formative," replied Desprez. "If I had to choose an education for my son, I should have chosen such another. Beginning life with mountebanks and thieves, passing onward to the society and friendship of philosophers, he may be said to have skimmed the volume of human life.

with a meditative air. pared his mind for a vigorous defense. "Did you ever steal yourself?" asked Casimir, turning suddenly on Jean-Marie, and for the first time employing a single eyeglass which hung round his neck. "Yes, sir," replied the boy, with a deen

"Thieves!" repeated the brother-in-law.

Casimir turned to the others with pursed lips, and nodded to them meaningly. "Key said he; "how is that?" "Jean-Marie is a teller of the truth," re-

turned the doctor, throwing out his bust, "He has never told a lie," added madame, "He is the best of boys." "Never told a lie has he not?" reflected

tention, my young friend," he continued. "You knew about this treasure?" "He helped to bring it home," interposed

"Desprez, I ask you nothing but to hold your tongue," returned Casimir "I mean to neighborhood, it is far from improbable, a | question this stable boy of yours; and if you are so certain of his innocence, you can afford to let him answer for himself. Now. str." he resumed, pointing his eveglass straight at Jean Marie, "you knew it could be stolen with impunity? You knew you would not be presented! Cone Did you, or did you not?

"I did." answered Jean Marie, in a finser able whisper. He sat there changing color like a revolving phares, twisting his fingers sumed, "at some idea of the composition of leysterically, swallowing air, the picture of

"You know where it was put?" resumed the inquisitor.

"Yes," from Jean-Marie "You say you have been a thief before," continued Casimir. "Now how am I to know that you are not one still! I suppose you could climb the green gate?"

"Yes," still lower from the rulprit. Well, then, it was you who stole those cate investigations! Hey! What have we things. You know it, and you dare not deny here! I have led you to the very spot," he it. Look me in the face! Raise your sneak's



"Raise your sweak's eyes." But in place of anything of that sort Jean-Marie broke into a dismal howl and fled from the arbor. Anastasie, as she pursued to capture and reassure the victim, found time to send one Parthian arrow-"Casimir, you are a brute!

"My brother," said Desprez, with the greatest dignity, "you take upon yourself a

"Desprez," interrupted Casimir, heaven's sake be a man of the world. You telegraph me to leave my business and come down here on yours. I come, I ask the business you say 'Find me this thirf" Well I find him; I say 'There he is!' You need not like it, but you have no manner or right to

"Well," returned the doctor, "I grant that; I will even thank you for your mistaken zeal.

you or Stasie! "Certainly not," answered the doctor. "Very well; then it was the boy. Say no more about it," said the brother-in-law, and

he produced his eigar case. "I will say this much more," returned Desprez: "If that boy came and told me so himlieve him, so implicit is my trust I should conclude that he had acted for the best." "Well, well," said Casimir, indulgently. "Have you a light! I must be going. And,

it was partly that that brought me down, You never acknowledge my letters—a most unpardonable habit " My good brother," replied the doctor

by the way. I wish you would let me sell

your Turks for you. I always told you it

business; but I can perceive your limitament," observed the man of business. "Your limitation is to be downright irrational." "Observe the relative position," returned the doctor with a smile. "It is your attitude to believe through thick and thin in one man's judgment-your cwn. I follow the

eyes. Which is the more irrational! I leave it to yourself." "Oh, my dear fellow," cried Casimir, "stick to your Turks, stick to your stable boy, go to the devil in general in your own way and be done with it. But don't ratiocinate with me-I cannot bear it. And so, ta ta. I might as well have stayed away for any good

And Casimir departed. The doctor that night dissected his character before Anasta-"One thing, my beautiful," he said, "he has learned one thing from his live long acquaintance with your husband: the word ratiocinate. It shines in his vocabulary like a jewel in a muck heap. And, even so, he continually misapplies it. For you must have observed he uses it as a sort of taunt, in the case of to ergotise, implying, as it werethe poor, dear fellow!-a vein of sophistry.

forgiven him-it is not his nature, it is the nature of his life. A man who deals with money, my dear, is a man lost." With Jean-Marie the process of reconcilia tion had been somewhat slow. At first he was inconsolable, insisted on leaving the family, went from paroxysm to paroxysm of tears; and it was only after Anastasie had been closeted for an hour with him, alone, that she came forth, sought out the doctor. and, with tears in her eyes, acquainted that

gentleman with what had passed. At first my husband, he would hear of nothing," she said. "Imagine! if he had left us! what would the treasure be to that? Horrible treasure, it has brought all this about! At last, after he has sobbed his very heart out, he agrees to stay on a conditionwe are not to mention this matter, this infamous suspicion, not even to mention the robbery. On that agreement only, the poor,

"But this inhibition," said the doctor, "this embargo-it cannot possibly apply to me?" "To all of us," Anastasie assured him. "My cherished one," Desprez protested "you must have misunderstood. It cannot

apply to me. He would naturally come to "Henri." she said, "it does; I swear to you

"This is a painful, a very painful circum stance," the doctor said, looking a little black. "I cannot affect, Anastasie, to be anything but justly wounded. I feel this, I feel it, my wife, acutely." "I knew you would," she said. "But if you had seen his distress! We must make

allowances, we must sacrifice our feelings." "I trust, my dear, you have never found me averse to sacrifices," returned the doctor "And you will let me go and tell him that

you have agreed? It will be like your noble nature," she cried. So it would, he perceived-it would be like his noble nature! Up jumped his spirits, triumphant at the thought. "Go, darling," he said nobly, "reassure him. The subject

is buried; more-I make an effort, I have accustomed my will to these exertions-and it is forgotten. A little after, but still with swollen eyes and looking mortally sheepish, Jean-Marie reappeared and went ostentatiously about his business. He was the only unhappy memher of the party that sat down that night to supper. As for the doctor, he was radiant.

He thus sang the requiem of the treasure: "This has been, on the whole, a most amusing episode," he said. "We are not a penny the worse-nay, we are immensely gainers. Our philosophy has been exercised; some of the turtle is still left-the most wholesome of elicacies; I have my staff; Anastasie has her new dress; Jean-Marie is the proud possessor of a fashionable kepi. Besides, we had a glass of Hermitage last night; the glow The doctor could have bitten his tongue still suffuses my memory. I was growing positively niggardly with that Hermitageesitively niggardly. Let me take the hint. We had one bottle to celebrate the appearance of our visionary fortune; let us have a second to console us for its occultation. The third I hereby dedicate to Jean-Marie's wed-

ding breakfast. CHAPTER VII. THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF DESPREZ. The doctor's house has not yet received the compliment of a description, and it is now high time that the omission were supplied, for the house is itself an actor in the story, and one whose part is nearly at an end. Two stories in height, walls of a warm yellow, tiles of an ancient ruddy brown diversified with moss and lichen, it stood with one wall to the street in the angle of the doctor's property. It was roomy, draughty and inonvenient. The large rafters were here and there engraven with rude marks and patterms; the handrail of the stair was carved in countrified arabesque; a stout timber pillar, which did duty to support the dining room roof, bore mysterious characters on its darker side, runes, according to the doctor; nor did he fail, when he ran over the legendary history of the house and its possessors, to dwell upon the Scandinavian scholar who had left them. Floors, doors and rafters had made a great variety of angles; every room had a particular inclination; the gable had tilted toward the garden, after the manner of a leaning tower, and one of the former proprietors had buttressed the building from the side with a great strut of wood, like the derrick of a crane. Altogether, it had many marks of ruin; it was a house for the rats to desert; and nothing but its excellent brightness—the window

glass polished and shining, the paint well scoured, the brasses radiant, the very prop all wreathed about with climbing flowers -nothing, but its air of a well tended smiling veteran, sitting, crutch and all, in the sunny corner of a garden, marked it as a house for comfortable people to inhabit. In poor or idle management it would soon have hurried into the blackguard stages of decay. As it was, the whole family loved it, and the doctor was never better inspired than when he narrated its imaginary story and drew the character of its successive masters, from the Hebrew merchant who had re-edified its walls after the sack of the town, and past the mysterious engraver of the runes, down to the long headed, dirty handed boor from whom he had himself acquired it at a ruinous expense. As for any alarm about its security, the idea had never presented itself. What

had stood for centuries might well endure a little longer. Indeed, in this particular winter, after the finding and losing of the treasure, the Desprezes had an anxiety of a very different order, and one which lay nearer their hearts. Jean-Marie was plainly not himself. He had fits of heetic activity, when he made unusual exertions to please, spoke more and faster, and redoubled his attention to his lessons. But these were interrupted by spells of melancholia and brooding silence, when the

boy was little better than unbearable. "Silence," the doctor morafized-"you see, Anastasie, what comes of silence. Had the boy properly unbosoned himself, the little disappointment about the treasure, the little annoyance about Casimir's incivility, would long ago have been forgotten. As it is, they prev upon him like a disease. He loses flesh his appetite is variable, and, on the whole,

impaired. I keep him on the strictest regimen, I exhibit the most powerful tomes; both in vain.'

"Don't you think you drug him to: much?" asked madame, with an irrepressible shudder. "Drug!" cried the doctor; "I drug! Anastasie, you are mad!" Time went on, and the boy's health still

called in his conferre from Bourron, took a expense. The bottle circulated somewhat was pretty soon under treatment himself-it scarcely appeared for what complaint. He and Jean-Marie had each to take medicine at different periods of the day. The doctor used to lie in wait for the exact moment. watch in hand. "There is nothing like reguself I should not believe him; and if I did be | larity," he would say, fill out the doses, and

dilate on the virtues of the draught; and if the boy seemed none the better, the doctor was not at all the worse. Gunpowder day the boy was particularly low. It was scowling, squally weather. Huge broken companies of clouds sailed meant smash. I tell you so again. Indeed, swiftly overhead; raking gleams of sunlight swept the village, and were followed by intervals of darkness and white, flying rain. At times the wind lifted up its voice and bellowed. The trees were all scourging themblandly, "I have never denied your ability in | selves along the meadows, the last leaves flying like dust. The doctor, between the boy and the weather, was in his element; he had "Egad, my friend, I can return the compli- a theory to prove. He sat with his watch out and a barometer in front of him, waiting for the squalls and noting their effect upon the human pulse. "For the true philosopher," he remarked delightedly, "every fact in nature is a toy." A letter came to him, but as its arrival coincided with the approach of same opinion, but critically and with open another gust he merely crammed it into his

next moment they were both counting their pulses as if for a wager. At nightfall the wind rose into a tempest, besieged the hamlet, apparently from every side, as if with batteries of cannon; the houses shook and groaned; live coals were blown upon the floor. The uproar and terror I've done. Say good-by from me to Stasie of the night kept people long awake, sitting You alone are hipped. About a house-a front of Anastasie when the doctor arrived, and to the sullen hang dog of a stable boy, if with pallid faces giving ear.

It was 12 becore the Desprez family retired. By 1:30, when the storm was already somewhat past its height, the doctor was awakened from a troubled slumber, and sat up. A noise still rang in his ears, but whether of this world or the world of dreams he was not was accompanied by a sickening movement of the whole house, and in the subsequent lull Desprez could hear the tiles pouring like s cataract into the loft above his head. He plucked Anastasie bodily out of bed.

"Run!" he cried, thrusting some wearing As to his cruelty to Jean Marie, it must be apparel into her hands; "the house is falling! To the garden!" She did not pause to be twice bidden; she was down the stair in an instant. She had never before suspected herself of such activity. The doctor meanwhile, with the speed of a piece of pantomime business, and undeterred by broken shins, proceeded to rout out Jean-Marie, tore Aline from her virgin slum-

> girl tumbling behind him, still not half The fugitives rendezvoused in the arbor by some common instinct. Then came a bull's eve flash of struggling moonshine, which disclosed their four figures standing huddled from the wind in a raffle of flying drapery, and not without a considerable need for more. At the humiliating spectacle Anastasie clutched her night dress desperately about her and burst loudly into tears. The doctor flew to console her; but she elbowed him away. She suspected everybody of being the general public, and thought the darkness was alive with eyes.

> Another gleam and another violent gust arrived together: the house was seen to rock on its foundation, and, just as the light was once more eclipsed, a crash which triumphed over the shouting of the wind announced its fall, and for a moment the whole garden was alive with skipping tiles and brickbats. One such missile grazed the doctor's ear; another descended on the bare foot of Aline, who instantly made night hideous with her shrieks.

By this time the hamlet was alarmed, lights flashed from the windows, hails reached the party, and the doctor answered, nobly contending against Aline and the tempest. But this prospect of help only awakened Anastasie to a more active stage "Henri, people will be coming," she

"I trust so," he replied. "They cannot. I would rather die," she "My dear," said the doctor reprovingly, you are excited. I gave you some clothes,

creamed in her husband's ear.

What have you done with them?" "Oh, I don't know-I must have thrown them away! Where are they?" she sobbed. Desprez groped about in the darkness 'Admirable!" he remarked; "my gray velveteen trousers! This will exactly meet your

"Give them to me!" she cried fiercely; but as soon as she had them in her hands her mood appeared to alter-she stood silent for a moment, and then pressed the garment back upon the doctor. "Give it to Aline," she said "poor girl." "Nonsense!" said the doctor. "Aline does

not know what she is about. Aline is beside herself with terror; and, at any rate, she is a peasant. Now I am really concerned at this exposure for a person of your housekeeping habits; my solicitude and your fantastic pantaloons." He held them ready. "It is impossible. You do not understand,"

she said with dignity. By this time rescue was at hand. It had been found impracticable to enter by the street, for the gate was blocked with masonry, and the nodding ruin still threatened further avalanches. But between the doctor's garden and the one on the right hand there was that very picturesque contrivance-a common well; the door on the Desprez' side had chanced to be unbolted; and now, through the arched aperture, a man's bearded face and an arm supporting a lantern were introduced into the world of windy darkness, where Anastasie concealed her woes. The light struck here and there among the tossing apple boughs, it glinted on the grass; but the lantern and the glowing face became the center of the world. Anastasie crouched back from the intrusion.

"This way!" shouted the man. "Are you all safef" Aline, still screaming, ran to the nev comer, and was presently hauled head foreguest through the wall.

said the husband. "I cannot," she replied. "Are we all to die of exposure, madame: thundered Dr. Desprez. "You can go!" she cried. "Oh, go, g away! I can stay here; I am quite warm. The doctor took her by the shoulders with

"Now, Anastasie, come on; it's your turn,

"Stop!" she screamed. "I will put them She took the detested lendings in her hand once more; but her repulsion was stronger than shame. "Never!" she cried, shudder

ing, and flung them far away into the night Next moment the doctor had whirled her to the well. The man was there and the lantern: Anastasie closed her eves and appeared to herself to be about to die. How she was transported through the arch she knew not; but oace on the other side she was received by the neighbor's wife, and enveloped in friendly blanket. Beds were made ready for the two women. lothes of very various sizes for the doctor

and Jean-Marie; and for the remainder of the night, while madame dozed in and out or the borderland of hysterics, her husband sat beside the fire and held forth to the admiring neighbors. He showed them, at length, the causes of the accident; for years, he explained, the fall had been impending; one sign had followed another, the joints had opened, the plaster had crackled, the old | ments, marks the falling house"walls bowed inward; last, not three weeks ago, the cellar door had begun to work with | the stable boy appears to have his share difficulty in its grooves. "The cellar!" he said, gravely shaking his head over a glass of mulled wine. "That reminds me of my poor vintages. By a manifest Providence the Hermitage was nearly at an end. One bottle-I lose but one bottle of that incomparable wine. It had been set apart against Jean-Marie's wedding. Well, I must lay down some more; it will be an interest in life. I am, however, a man somewhat advanced in | ripped another stitch out of the air balloon of years. My great work is now buried in the fall of my humble roof; it will never be comsay cheerful. Can your priest do more?"

pleted-my name will have been writ in water. And yet you find me calm-I would By the first glimpse of the day the party sallied forth from the fireside into the street The wind had fallen, but still charioted a world of troubled clouds; the air bit like frost; and the party, as they stood about the ruins in the rainy twilight of the morning, beat upon their breasts and blew into their hands for warmth. The house had entirely fallen, the walls outward, the roof in; it was a mere heap of rubbish, with here and there a forlorn spear of broken rafter. A sentinel was placed over the ruins to protect the But your hypothesis was so extravagantly slowly declined. The doctor blamed the property, and the party adjourned to Tenweather, which was cold and boisterous. He | taillon's to break their fast at the doctor's

> fancy for him, magnified his canacity, and | freely; and before they left the table it had begun to snow. For three days the snow centinued to fall, and the ruins, covered with tarpaulin and watched by sentries, were left undisturbed. The Desprez' meanwhile had taken up their abode at Tentaillon's. Madame spent her time in the kitchen, concocting little delicacies, with the admiring aid of Mme. Tentaillon, or sitting by the fire in thoughtful abstraction. The fall of the house affected her wonderfully little; that blow had been parried by another; and in her mind she was continually fighting over again the battle of the trousers. Had she done right! Had she done wrong! And now she would appland her determination; and anon, with a horrid flush of unavailing penitence, she would regret the trousers. No juncture in her life had so much exercised her judgment. In the meantime the doctor had become vastly pleased with the situation. Two of the summer boarders still lingered behind the rest, prisoners for lack of a remittance; they were both English, but one of them spoke French pretty fluently, and was, besides, a humor ous, agile minded fellow, with whom the doc tor could reason by the hour, secure of comprehension. Many were the glasses they emptied, many the topics they discussed. pocket, gave the time to Jean-Marie, and the "Anastasie," the doctor said on the third morning, "take an example from your husband, from Jean-Marie. The excitement has done more for the boy than all my tonics, he takes his turn as sentry with positive gusto.

As for me, you behold me. I have made

friends with the Egyptians; and my Pharaoh

is, I swear it, a most agreeable companion.

to the 'Pharmacopœia'-the labor of years lying buried below stones and sticks in this depressing hamlet? The snow falls; I shake it from my cloak! Imitate me. Our income will be impaired, I grant it, since we must re-

build; but moderation, patience and philosocertain. Another clap of wind followed. It phy vill gather about the hearth. In the meanwhile, the Tentaillons are obliging; the table, with your additions, will pass; only the wine is execrable-well, I shall send for some to-day. My Pharaoh will be gratified to drink a decent glass; aha! and I shall see if he possesses the acme of organization-a palate. If he has a palate, he is perfect." "Henri," she said, shaking her head, "you

> ings; no woman could shake off the memory of so public a humiliation." The doctor could not restrain a titter. "Pardon me, darling," he said; "but really, to the philosophical intelligence, the incident

are a man; you cannot understand my feel-

appears so small a trifle. You looked extremely well"bers, seized her by the hand and tumbled down stairs and into the garden, with the "Henri!" she cried. "Well, well, I will say no more," he replied, "Though, to be sure, if you had consented to indue-A propos," he broke off,

"and my trousers! They are lying in the snow-my favorite trousers?" And he dashed in quest of Jean-Marie. Two hours afterward the boy returned to the inn with a spade under one arm and a curious sop of clothing under the other. The doctor ruefully took it in his hands. They have been!" he said. "Their tense is past. Excellent pantaloons, you are no more Stay! something in the pocket," and he produced a piece of paper. "A letter! ay, now I mind me; it was received on the morning of the gale, when I was absorbed in delicate

investigations. It is still legible. From poor dear Casimir! It is as well," he chuckled, "that I have educated him to patience. Poor Casimir and his correspondence-his infinitesimal, timorous, idiotic correspondence!" He had by this time cautiously unfolded the wet letter; but, as he bent himself to decipher the writing, a cloud descended on his

"Bigre?" he cried, with a galvanic start. And then the letter was whipped into the fire, and the doctor's cap was on his head in the turn of a hand. "Ten minutes! I can catch it, if I run," he eried. "It is always late. I go to Paris. I hall telegraph."

"Henri! what is wrong?" cried his wife. "Ottoman bonds!" came from the disappearing doctor; and Anastasie and Jean-Marie were left face to face with the wet trousers. Desprez had gone to Paris, for the econd time in seven years, he had gone to Paris with a pair of wooden shoes, a knitted spencer, a black blouse, a country nightcap, and twenty frames in his pocket. The fall of the house was but a secondary marvel; the whole world might have fallen and scarce left his family more petrified.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE WAGES OF PHILOSOPHY. On the morning of the next day the doc or, a mere specter of himself, was brought back in the custody of Casimir. They found Anastasic and the boy sitting together by the fire; and Desprez, who had exchanged his toilet for a ready made rig out of poor materials, waved his hand as he entered and sunk speechless on the nearest chair. Madame turned direct to Casimir. 'What is wrong?" she cried.

"Well," replied Casimir, "what have I told you all along! It has come. It is a clean | The tin can com shave this time; so you may as well bear up and make the best of it. House down, too,

ear Bad luck, upon my soul." "Are we—are we—ruined?" she gasped. The doctor stretched out his arms to her. "Ruined." he replied, "you are ruined by

Casimir observed the consequent embrace through his eyeglass; then he turned to Jean-Marie. "You hear?" he said. "They are ruined; no more pickings, no more house, no more fat cutlets. It strikes me, my friend, that you had best be packing; the present speculation is about worked out." And he nodded to him meaningly. "Never!" cried Desprez, springing up. Jean-Marie, if you prefer to leave me, now

that I am poor, you can go; you shall receive your hundred francs, if so much remains t me. But if you will consent to stay"-the doctor wept-"Casimir offers me a place-as clerk," he resumed. "The emoluments are slender, but they will be enough for three. It is too much already to have lost my fortune; must I lose my son?" Jean-Marie sobbed bitterly, but without a

"I don't like boys who cry," observed Casimir. "This one is always crying. Here! you clear out of this for a little; I have business with your master and mistress, and these domestic feelings may be settled after I am gone. March!" and he held the door open, Jean-Marie slunk out, like a detected thief. By 12 they were all at the table but Jean-

"Hey?" said Casimir. "Gone, you see Took the hint at once." "I do not, I confess," said Desprez, "I do not seek to excuse his absence. It speaks of want of heart that disappoints me sorely." "Want of manners," corrected Casimir. 'Heart, he never had. Why, Desprez, for a clever fellow, you are the most gullible mortal in creation. Your ignorance of human nature and human business is beyond belief. You are swindled by heathen Turks, swindled by vagabond children, swindled right and left, up stairs and down stairs. I think it must be your imagination. I thank my stars I

have none," "Pardon me," replied Desprez, still humbly, but with a return of spirit at sight of a distinction to be drawn; "pardon me, Casimir. You possess, even to an eminent de gree, the commercial imagination. It was the lack of that in me-it appears it is my weak point-that has led to these repeated shocks. By the commercial imagination the financier forecasts the destiny of his invest-"Egad." interrupted Casimir: "our friend

The doctor was silenced: and the meal was continued and finished principally to the tune of the brother-in-law's not very consolatory conversation. He entirely ignored the two young English painters, turning a blind eveglass to their salutations, and continuing his remarks as if he were alone in the bosom of his family; and with every second word he Desprez' vanity. By the time coffee was "Let us go and see the ruins," said Casimir.

over the poor doctor was as limp as a napkin. They strolled forth into the street. The fall of the house, like the loss of a front tooth, had quite transformed the village. Through the gap the eye commanded a great stretch of open snowy country, and the place shrunk in comparison. It was like a room with an open door. The sentinel stood by the green gate, looking very red and cold, but he had a pleasant word for the doctor and his wealthy

Casimir looked at the mound of ruins, he tried the quality of the tarpaulin. "H'm," he said, "I hope the cellar arch has stood. If it has, my good brother, I will give you a good price for the wines. "We shall start digging to-morrow," said the sentry. "There is no more fear of snow

"My friend," returned Casimir sententiously, "you had better wait till you get The doctor winced, and began dragging his offensive brother-in-law toward Tentaillon's. In the house there would be fewer auditors, and these already in the secret of

stadle boy with his luggage; no, egad, he is taking it into the inn. And sure enough, Jean-Marie was seen to cross the snowy street and enter Tentaillon's staggering under a large hamper. The doctor stopped with a sudden, wild

"Halloo," cried Casimir, "there goes the

"What can he have?" he said. "Let us go and see." And he hurried on. "His luggage, to be sure," answered Casimir. "He is on the move-thanks to the commercial imagination. "I have not seen that hamper for-for eve so long," remarked the doctor. "Nor will you see it much longer," chuckled

Casimir, "unless, indeed, we interfere. And, by the way I insist on an examination " "You will not require," said Desprez, pos itively, with a sob; and, casting a moist, triumphant glance at Casimir, he began to run. "What the devil is up with him, I wonder?" Casimir reflected; and then, curiosity taking the upper hand, he followed the do tor's example and took to his heels. The hamper was so heavy and large, and Jean-Marie himself so little and so weary,

it up stairs to the Desprez' private room.

and he had just set it down on the floor in

few dresses! What are they in comparison and was closely followed by the man of busi- chre.

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ness. Boy and hamper were both in a most sorry plight, for the one had passed four months underground in a certain cave on the way to Acheres, and the other had run about five miles as hard as his legs would carry him, half that distance under a staggering

"Jean-Marie," cried the doctor, in a voice that was only too seraphic to be called hysterical, "is it !- It is!" he cried. "Oh my son, my son!" And he sat down upon the hamper and sobbed like a little child. "You will not go to Paris, now," said Jean Marie, sheepishly.

"Casimir," said Desprez, raising his wet face, "do you see that boy, that angel boy He is the thief; he took the treasure from a man unfit to be intrusted with its use; he brings it back to me when I am sobered and San Francisco, San Diego, Colton, Los humbled. These, Casimir, are the Fruits of Angeles, San Bernardino and San Jose, my Teaching, and this moment is the Reward of my Life." California, also to Portland, Oregon, at "Tiens," said Casimir.

THE EXD.

Sash Weights from Tin Caus.

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