

.

Then, as the stiff brew penetrated down-

Synopsis of Preceding Chapters. "Ha, Sir Sholto MacKim, while you stand William, sixth earl of Douglas, falls in ove with the Lady Sybila, the niece of the rench ambassador, Marshai de Retz, who love with the Lady Sybilla, the niece of the French ambassador, Marshai de Retz, who chances to be crossing the Douglas estates. Shoito MacKim, son of the Douglas armorer, distinguishes himself in archery and is made captain of the castle guard and later is knighted for brave conduct in the tournament. James, earl of Avondale; Fir Alexander Livingston, guardian of the king's person; Sir William Crichton, chan-cellor of the realm, and Marshai de Retz begin to plot against the earl of Douglas. Lady Sybilla agrees to become their tool and to hure William into their power. Earl Douglas visits Castle Crichton and falls deper into love with Sybilla. She confesses her love for him, repents her agreement with his enemies and then urges him to return home with all speed. Marshai de Retz takes Sybilla to Edinburgh and Wil-liam accepts the Invitation of the young king of Scotland to visit the court. At the bother are arrosted and imprisoned. Early the next morning the Douglases are brought perfore the king's court and sentenced to be executed at once. Sybilla declares her love before the court and the two brothers go forth to their death. Shoito stirs up the countrymen and in three days every man of the Southand to visit of the young the countrymen and in three days every man When I have done all without assistance from the wise Sir Sholto I will return; but not before. Fare your knightship well." Paris by the Versailles road, and the latter | that fair land of southern Brittany. insisted on silence till they were past the forest of St. Cyr, which was at that time ever, and clear of the valley of the Seine branches, the yet blacker darkness where and its tangled boscage of trees, Gilles in- the gaps between their trunks showed a sisted on there and then breaking a bottle of wine to the success of their journey, and the weary travelers. Yet they rode on, to the new service and duty upon which Sholto eagerly. Malise grimly and the Lord Laurence was to enter at the end of it. first hamper to Laurence, who, barely tast- an adventure through, however irksome it ing the excellent Poltevin vintage, handed may have proved. executed at once. Symila declares her love hefore the court and the two brothers go forth to their death. Sholto stirs up the countrymen and in three days every man of the Southland is on his way to Edin-burgh to avenge the death of the young earl. At the gate of Castle Thrieve the three MacKims meet, tell the Lady Douglas of the loss of her sons and learn in turn from her that Maud Lindessay and little Margaret have ben kidnapped by De Retz. The Lady Douglas gives Sholto a priceless suit of armor blesses him as her son and starts him out to search for the two girls. Around Edinburgh the Douglases are gathering. The sons of James, the new earl, refuse to sup-port their father's cause and swear to avenge their cousin William's death. Sholto, with his father and brother and Lord Jamis Douglas, go to Parls, find Marshal de Retz's house and plan to rescue the girls. the leathern bottle to de Sille. That sallow companion a second chance, proceeded to greater interests in the quest than hequaff the entire contents of the pigskin. ward, it was not long before the favorite of the marshal began to wax full of vanity and swelling words. "I tell you what it is," he said, "there would be trembling in the heart of a very great man when the cravens returned without me. For I am no sniveling ignoramus, but a gentleman of birth; aye, and one who,

CHAPTER XLV.

The Bonsting of Gilles de Sille. The head of Gilles de Sille was still swathed in bandages when, with an additional awaddling band across his eyes, he and Laurence, that truant scion of the house of O'Halloran, stole out into the night. chill had descended with the darkness and a pale dank mist from the marshes of the Seine made the pair shiver as arm in arm

wicked thing, in thus without warning dethe age when it is the habit of youth to defolly.

practically deserted. They approached it cautiously from the back lest they should run into the arms of any of the numerous enemies of its terrible lord, who, though not abhorred in Paris as in most other places which he favored with his visits, had yet little love weared upon him even there.

came vawning out to the bars at the sound of Gilles de Sille's knocking, and after a growl of disfavor admitted the youth and his companion.

"What-gone, my master gone!" cried an astounded air, "Impossible!"

De Sille, curbing his wrath in order to get an answer.

THE OMAHA DAILY BEE: SUNDAY, JANUARY 8, 1899.

couple of guards and their uncovenanted stranger a word or a bite for their beasts." womankind, it looked down on its green Then he called to his companions: island meadows, while on the horizon hung ere I burst their inner doors as well." the smoke of the wood fires lit at morn and Then at this by no means empty threat eve by the good wives of Nantes. To that place the three had next journeyed and had beheld the great Hotel de cheery voice, to those within the silent

Suze, set fike an enemy's fortress in the house: "Good people, we are no robbers, midst of the turbulent city, over against the castle of the king. But the hotel, though held like a place of arms, was untenanted tell us which house is the inn that we may explosive puffs. by the marshal, his retinue or the lost Scot- receive refreshments for ourselves and our tish maids. horses.

They found the strong castle of Tiffauges, Then there came a voice from behind the above the green and rippling waters of the door: "There is no inn nearer than Pornic Sevree, void also. No light gleamed out of We are poor people and cannot support one. that window of sinister repute, high in the We pray your highnesses to depart in cliff-like wall, from which strange shapes peace! were known to look forth at high noon.

"But, good sir " answered James Douglas North, south and east, the three had rid-"that we cannot do. Our steeds are footden through the country of Retz. There reweary with a long day's journey. Give us mained but Machecoul, more remote and also the shelter of your barns and a bundle of darker in repute than any of the other dwellfodder, and we will be content. We have ing places of Gilles de Retz. As they rode food and drink with us. Open, and be not westward toward it they became day by afraid. day more conscious of the darkening dawn

"Of what country are you? Are you of of that atmosphere of fear and suspicion the household of the Sieur de Retz?" Laurence and Gilles de Sille rode out of which, murky and lowering, overhung all "Nay," cried James, again; "we are pilgrims returning to our own city of Albi, in

The wast pine forest, from which rose the the Tarn country. We know nothing of any lonely towers of this, the marshal's most Sieur de Retz. Look forth from a window exceedingly dangerous for horsemen not remote castle, could now be seen serrated and satisfy yourself." darkly against the broad belt of the sky. traveling in large companies. Once they darkly against the broad belt of the sky-were fairly on the road to Chartres, how- The somber blackness of their spreading "Then if there be treachery in your hearts

beware!" said the tremulous voice again, "for I have four sons here by me, whose powder guns are even now ready to fire way into the wood, increased the gloom of from all the windows if you mean harm." A white face looked out for a momen from the window, and as quickly ducked James with the dogged resignation of a Having proposed this tonst, he handed the good knight who may be depended to see within. Then the voice continued its bleating.

"My lords, I will open the door. But for James of Avondale thought with some give the fears of a poor old man in a wide, youth immediately, without offering his truth within himself that the others had empty house."

The door opened and a curious figure ap - the peared within. It was a man apparently talked. younger MacKim having at stake the honor decrepid and trembling, who in one hand of his swetheart. Maud, the elder the life of his young mistress, the last of the Gallocarried a lanthorn and in the other a staff, over which he bent with many wheezings Yet it was with that jolly heart of his of exhausted breath.

"What would you with a poor old man? beating strong and loyal under his brown palmer's cloak, that James Douglas rote he said.

light, which flickered most dismally in his

"I am a poor, poor man," he quavered.

"That will do famously," said James Doug-

"I have naught in the world save some bar-

spread fingers in the dust of the yard.

of gold, that were ruin indeed!"

been with his claws.

said Sholto smiling.

and retract their liberality.

hidden that beautiful gold!"

"Ah,

"I cannot find it, good gentleman," he

Sholto picked up the lantern which had

gold glittering on some farm yard rubbish.

With a little shrill cry like a frightened

bird the old man fell upon it, as it had

"Bite upon it and see if the gold be good!"

"Alas!" cried the cripple, "I have but

the right mintage and greasiness. O, lovely

ey meal and a little water."

well for all you give us."

a alert expression.

ooden lanthorn.

stone, was placed in the midst, and from the | such as could not be got nearer than Paris, rafters depended many chains and hocks. A with wine of some rarer vintage than that "Come hither and speak to these cravens wooden settle ran half round the hearthstone out of the cripple's resinous pigskin. These on the side farthest from the draught of the and much else La Meffraye pressed upon door. The weary three sat down and them, till she had completely won over the came the Lord James and spoke aloud in his stretched their limbs. The fire had burnt lord James, and even Malise, easy-natured, low, and Sholto, reaching to a faggot heap like most very strong men, was taken by by the side wall, began to toss on boughs of the sympathetic conversation and gracious but poor travelers and strangers. Be not green birch in handfuls, till the lovely white atraid. All we want is that you should flame arose and the sap spat and hissed in kindliness of the wife of poor, afflicted Caesar Martin of St. Philbert. Only Sholts kept his suspicion edged and pointed, and resolved that he would not sleep that night,

edge.

ments.

"We are poor Scots who have lived long

under the protection of your good King

Charles, the seventh of that name, and hav-

ing been restored to our possessions after

the turning out of the English, we are mak-

ing a pilgrimage in order to visit our friends

and also to lay our thanks upon the altar

Birch when 'tis green Makes a fire for a king! Malise hummed the old Scots lines, and

the cripple coming in at that moment raised a shrill bark of protest. "Now haste thee with the barley brew," said Lord James, "for my stomach is as deep as a well and as empty as the purse of a

younger son." The strange cripple emitted another birdlike cachinnation, like the sound which is threw off the black colffure of green fungoid made by the woden flywheels wherewithal hair. She placed her choicest morsels beboys fright the crows from the cornfields fore the young captain of the Douglas when the August sun is yellowing the land. guard.

"Poer old Caesar Martin can show you "You do not speak like the folk of the something better than that." he cried as he south," she said to the Lord James. "Neither hirpled out (as Malise described it afterward), and presently returned dragging a are you northmen nor of the Midi. From what country may you be?" the question great iron pot with a strength which seemed dropped casually as to fill up the time. incredible in so ramshackle a body.

"Ha! ha!" he said, "here is fragrant stew, smell it. Is it not good? In ten minutes it will be so hot and toothsome that you will scarcely have patience to wait till it be decently cool in the platters. This is not common Angevin stew, but Bas Brebon, which is a far better thing."

Malise rose and relieving the old man, of the blessed St. Andrew in his own town with one finger swung the pot to a crook that in Scotland." hung over the cheerful blase of the birch-The old woman listened, approvingly nodding her head as the Lord James reeled off

The old cripple, Caesar Martin, now this invention. But at the mention of the mounted on a stool and ettrred the mess with land of the Scots La Meffraye pricked her a long stick, at the end of which was a steel ears. "Scots-" she said, meditatively, "that

will surely interest my lord, who hath but "God bless you, say I, brave gentlemen, recently returned from that country, whither they say he hath been upon a very con-

brave and fortunate that blew you hither to fidential embasey from the king." taste of my broth. There be fine pigeons It was the Lord James who asked the here, fat and young. There be leverets, next question. juicy and tender as a maid untried. There

"Have you heard whether any of our na--what think you of that?" (he held each up tion returned with him from our country! on a prong as he spoke). "And here be We would gladly meet with any such, that larks, partridge stuffed with sage, ripe we might hear again the tongue or our nachestnuts from La Valery, and-whisper it tivity, which is ever sweet in a strange not to any of the marshal's men, a fawn land, and also, if it might be, take back

from the park of a month old, dressed like tidings of them to their folk in Scotland." a kid so that none may know." "Nay." answered La Meffraye, standing "I suppose that so much providing is for before them with her eyes shrewdly fixed

upon the face of the speaker, "I have heard The cripple laughed again his feeble, of none such. Yet it may well be, for the fleeting laugh. marshal is very fond of the society of the

young, even as I am. He has many boy was but a weakling's policy to tell you so, singers for his choir, maidens also for his lest there should have been evil in your religious processions. Indeed, never do I hearts. But I have a wife, and that is visit Machecoul without finding a pretty boy enough. You may have heard of her. She or a stripling girl passing so innocently in is called La Meffraye."

and out of his study." As he spoke his face took on an access "Is his lordship even now at Machecoul?" of white terror, even as it had done when asked James Douglas, bluntly. The Lord he looked out of the window.

James prided himself upon his tact, but "La Moffraye is she well named," he rewhen he set out to manifest it Sholto groaned peated the appellation with a harsh croak, inwardly. He never knew from one moment as of a nighthawk screaming. "God foreto another what the reckless young lord fend that she should come tonight and find might do or say next. you here!"

"I do not even know whether the marshal "Why, good sir," smiled James Douglas, is now at Machecoul. The rich and great, "if that be the manner in which you speak they come and go, and we poor folk underof your housewife, faith I am right giad to stand it no more than the passing of the have remained a bachelor." wind or the flight of the birds. But let us Caesar, the cripple, looked about him and get to our couches. The morn will soon be lowered his voice. here and it must not find our bodies un-

"Hush!" he quavered, breathing hard, so that his words whistled between his toothless gums. "You do not know my wife, I tell you, she is the familiar of the marshal himself."

cottage, which they did by moving the bench back and stretching themselves with "Then," cried James Douglas, slapping their heads to the wall and their feet to the his thigh, "she is young and pretty of a fire. Sholto lay on the side furthest from surety. I know what these soldiers are the entrance of the room to which La familiar with. I would that she would come Meffraye had retired with her husband. home and partake with us now!" "Nay," said the old man, without taking

Malise was on the other side and Lord James lay in the midst, as most befitted his rank. "you mistake, kind sir; I meant offense. These last were almost instantly asleep. familiar in witchcraft-in deviltry, not, as being tired with their journeying and heavy with the meal of which they had partaken, it were, in levity and cozenage."





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way house of Douglas.

toward Machecoul, only whistling low to

himself and wishing that something would

their

happen to break the monotony of

they ventured carefully forth. Laurence was doing a foolish, even certing his companions. But he was just at ceive themselves with the thought that a shred of good intent covers a world of

The fugitives found the Hotel de Pornic

The custodian in the stone cell by the gate

Gilles striking his hand on his thigh with "Whither has my master gone?" asked

"He said that he went to Tiffauges.

"We would have shelter and fodder, if it please you to give them to us, for God's grace. The old man trembled so vehemently that your four sons?" said Sholto. "I have no sons, honest sir." he said. "It

fork of two prongs. And as he stirred he and good pilgrims! Surely it was a wind

Whether that be true, you have bette means of knowing than I."

The swarthy youth turned to Laurence. "How much money have you, Master O'Halloran; I have spent all of mine and this city swine will not lend me a single sou for my expenses. We must to the stables and follow the Sleur de Retz forthwith to Brittany."

"I have ten golden angels, which the prior of my convent gave me at my departure,' said Laurence, with some pride. His companion nodded approvingly.

"That will see us through-that is, with care. Give them here to me!" he added, after a moment's thought; "I will pay them out with more care, being of the country through which we pass." But Laurence, though headlong and reck-

less, had not been born a Scot for naught. "Wait till there is necessity," he replied cautiously, "and they shall not be lacking. Till then they are quite safe with me. have them in a secret place iH to be gotten at hastily."

Gilles de Sille turned away with some movement of impatience, yet without saying another word upon the subject. "To the stables!" he said, turning to the

concierge. "I suppose we can have horses to ride after my lord?"

"So far as I am concerned," growled Labord, "you can have all the horses you want-and break your necks off each one of them if you will. It will save some hemp and hangman's hire! Such devil's dogs as you two be bear your dooms ready written on your faces."

And this saying nettled our Laurence, who prided himself no little on an allure blonde and fine.

enemies. Do I not speak the truth?"

him Latin by the mile, out of the books

called Seutonius and Tacitus-such high

flavored tales and full of-well, of things

So ran Gilles de Sille on as the miles fied

behind their horses' heels and the towers

of Chartres rose gray and solemn through

CHAPTER XLVI.

The Country of the Dread.

The three remaining Scottish palmers were

riding due west into a sunset which hung

like a broad red girdle over the Atlantic.

All the sky above their heads was blue-gray

there was suspended this bandoher of flam-

The adventurers were not weary of their

ues. They were only sick of heart with

the morning mists before the travelers.

such as my master loves-!"

ervant Gilles de Sille.

te went on.

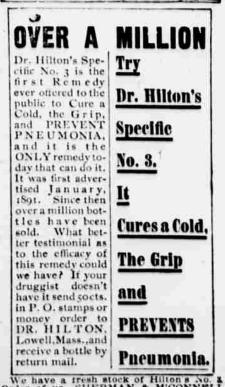
ing scarlet.

the fruitlessness of it.

But Gilles de Sille cared no whit for the servitor's sneers so long as they got horses between their knees and escaped out of Paris that night. In an hour they were ready to start and Laurence had expended one of his gold angels on the provend for the journey, which his companion and he stored in their saddlebags.

And in this manner, like an idle lad who for mischlef puts body and soul in peril, went forth Laurence MacKim to take up service with the redoubtable Messire Gilles de Laval, Sieur de Retz, high chamberlain of Charles VIII, marshal of France and companion in arms of the martyred Maid of Orleans.

Now, before he went forth from the street of the Ursulines, he laid a sealed letter on the bed of his brother, which ran thus:



Ve have a fresh stock der of us. SHERMAN DRUG CO., Omaha, Neb.

CAESAR MARTIN TELLS OF HIS WIFE, THE WERE-WOLFE.

himself. I warrant the rascals who ran Nor had he long to wait. For just as the was in danger of shaking out the rush away would smart right soundly for leaving the sun was setting they rode all three me behind. For Gifles de Sille is no simple- abreast into the little hamlet of St. Philon. He knows more than is written down bert and saw the sullen waters of the in the catechism of holy church. None can Etang de Grande Lieu spread marshy buch my favor with my lord, no matter what and brackish, as far as the eye could reach. they testify against me. For me, I have edged by black peat bogs and overhung only to ask and have. That is why I take | perilously by gloomy pines nodding over such pride in bringing you to my lord of pools blacker than serivoner's ink.

As the three Scots looked into the Retz. I know that he will give you a post about his person, and if you are not a simple stockaded entrance of the village they could fool you may go very far. For my master is see the children playing on the long, ira friend of the king, and, what is better, of regular street and the elder folk sitting ouis the dauphin. He gat the king back a about their doors in the evening light. whole province-a dukedom, so they say-But as soon as the clatter of the horses from the hands of some Scots fool that had it hoofs were heard, borne from far down the ff his grandfather. And, in return, the aisles of the forest, there arose a sudden king will protect my master against all his clamor and a crying. From each door rushed forth a woman who snatched a boy Laurence hoped that he did, but liked not here and there and drove a little herd of the velled hints and insinuations of some children before her indoors, glancing around

surprising secret in the fife of the marshal, and behind her as she did so with the possessed by his dear cousin and beloved anxious look of a motherly barndoor fowl when the hawk hangs poised in the windless With an ever-loosening tongue, the favorsky.

By the time the three men had entered the "A great soldier is our master-none gate and ridden up the village street all greater, not even Dunois himself. Why, he was silent and dark. The windows were rode into Orleans at the right hand of the The doors were barred and the vilshut. maid. None in all the army was so great lage had become a street of living tombs." with her as he. I tell you Charles himself "What means this?" said the Loid James, iked it not, and that was the beginning of the people are surely afraid of us!"

an the pother of talk about my lord-igno-'Tis doubtless but their wonted welcome rant gabble of the countryside, I call it. to their lord, the Sieur de Retz. He seems Lord, if they only knew what I know, then to be popular wherever he goes." said Malise, indeed. But enough! Marshal Gilles is a grimly, "but let us dismount and see if we nighty echolar as well, and hath Henriet the clerk-a weak bleating as that will some can get stabling for our beasts. Did they not tell us there was not another house for day blab if my master permit him not to miles betwixt here and Machecoul?" slice his gizzard-he hath him up to read

So, without waiting for dissent or counter opinion, the master armorer went directly up to the door of the best appearing house in the village, one which stood a little back from the road, and was surrounded by a Here he dismounted and knocked loudly with his sword hilt upon the outer gate. The noise reverberated up and down

the street and was tossed back in undiminished volume from the green wall of pines which stood up about the village. But there was no answer, and Malise grew rapidly weary of his own clamor.

"Hold my bridle," he said curtly to Sholto "and with a single push of his shoulders he broke the wooden bar, and the two halves and lucent. But along the horizon, as it of the outer gate fell apart before him. A seemed for the space of two hand breadths great yellow dog of the country rushed

furiously at the intruders, but Malise, who fodder and forage for the night. Then the was as dexterous as he was powerful, rehis cars, whereat Malise picked him up, house tucked him under his arm and with thumbs

First upon leaving Paris they had gone to the castle of Champtoce, and had surveyed the noble range of battlements crowning the about his windpipe effectually choked his thinks her demon tells her everything. But barking. Then, releasing him, Malise took La Meffraye will not know where I have heights above the broad poplar-guarded wilno further notice of this valorous enemy, low-grown levels of the Loire. The Chateau and the poor, loyal, bailled beast, conscious de Thouars also they had seen, a small white- of defeat, crept shamefacedly away to hide tween his fits of coughing. gabled house, most like a Scottish baren's his disgrace among the faggots. But Malise was growing indignant and

tower, which the Marshal de Retz possessed But Malise was growing indignat in virtue of his neglected wife Catherine. But Malise was growing indignat In it her sister, the Lady Sybilla had been | "Never did I see such mannerless folk," cleanly kept and firm to the feet. The fireborn. Solitary and tenantiess, save for a he growled, "they will not even give a place, with a low hearth round it of built

but every sense in Sholto's body was keenly dished in great platters of wood, and the guests fell keenly to, each being provided awake. A vague inexpressible fear possessed him. He lay watching the red embers, and with a wooden spoon. The meat they cut through the wide opening in the root he with their daggers, but the most part was, could discern the twinkling of a star. however, tender enough to come spart in Within the chamber of La Meffraye there their fingers, which, as all know, better preserves the savor.

At first the cripple denied having any wine, but another gold angel from the Lord silence was complete. James induced him to draw a leathern bottle from some secret hoard and decant it into a pitcher for them. It was resinous and Spanish, but, as Malise said, "It made warm the way it went down." And, after all, with wine, that is always the principal thing. As the feast proceeded old Caesar Martin dwelling of Caesar the cripple. told the three Scots why all the long streets of the village had been cleared of children so quickly at the first sound of their horses'

"And in truth if you had not come across the moor, but along the beaten track from the Chateau of Machecoul, you would never have caught so much as a glimpse of any child nor mother in all St. Philbert!'

His hand fumbled a moment at the closely buttoned collar of his blue blouse. Then he succeeded in undoing it and showed his neck. From chin to bosom it was a mass

of ghastly bites, some partially healed, more of them recent and yet raw, while his skin, as. "We are hungry men, and will pay so far as the three Scots could observe it, was covered with a hieroglyphic of scratches, The countenance of the cripple instantly claw marks, and it seemed the bites of some

changed. He looked up at the speaker with flerce, wild beast. doomed inmates. "Great Master of heaven!" cried James Suddenly from the adjoining chamber Douglas, "what hellhound hath done this to cry burst forth so shrill and terrible that

"Pay," he said, "pay--did you not say you would pay? Why, I thought you were you?" not only Sholto but Malise also leaped to gentlefolks. Now by that I know that you "The wife of my bosom," quoth very his feet. are none, but of the commonalty like mygrimly Caesar, the cripple.

"Mercy-Mercy! Have mercy, La Mef-"A good evening to you gentlemen, all," fraye!" it wailed. James Douglas took a gold angel out of said a soft and winning voice from the door

Sholto rushed across the floor, strikis belt and threw it to him. The cripple way. At the sound the old man staggered, ing the body of James Douglas in his haste. collapsed upon the top of the piece of money reeled, and would have swayed into the fire He dashed the door of the inner chamber and groped vainly for it with eager out- , had not Sholto seized him and dragged him open and was just in time to see something out upon the floor. All rose to their feet. dark and lithe dart through the window and In the doorway of the cottage stood an old disappear into the indigo gloom without. From the bed there came a series of gasppiped, shrill as an east wind. "Alas, what woman, small, smiling, delicate of feature. shall I do? Poor Casper cannot find it. She looked benignly upon them and coning moans, as from a man at the point of It was not a piece of gold-do tell me that tinued to smile. Her hair and her eyes death.

t was not a piece of gold-to lose a piece were the most notable features about her. "For God's sake bring a light!" cried The former was abundant and hung loosely Sholto, "there is black murder done here." His father ran to the hearth, and seizing about her brow and over her shoulders in lipped from his trembling hand. The tal- wisps of a curious green white, the color of a birchen brand, the end of which was still low was beginning to gutter out, as it lay on moldy cheese, while under shaggy white eyered, he blew upon it with care and success its side, and in a moment showed him the brows her large eyes shone plercing and till it burst into a white, brilliant flame that green as emerald stones on the hand of lighted all the house. Then he, too, entered the room where Sholto with his sword ready some dusky monarch of the Orient.

The woman it was who spoke first, bein his hand, was standing over the gasping, fore any of the men could recover from their

surprise "My husband," she said still calmy, smiling upon them, "my poor husband has doubtless been telling you his foolish tales. one tooth. But I know the coin. It is of The saints have permitted him to become gold-beautiful gentlemen. Bide where demented. It is a great trial to a poor

> had placed him, his lips white and gluey. And as he lay he muttered audibly, "La Meffraye! La Meffraye! O, what will be-

ceived him with so sound a buffet on the stick, but nevertheless chuckling to him. weariedly kind, and brought forth from her head that he paused bewildered, shaking self all the way, preceded them into the store many dainties for their delectation. She talked with touching affection of her

be Martin

> Wild bee honey from the woods she placed before them, and white wheaten bread,

was silence. Sholto could not even hear the Strong Drink is Death heavy breathing of Caesar Martin. The Suddenly from far away there came up the howling of a wolf. It was not an uncommon sound in the forests of France or even in those of his own country, but somehow Sholto listened with a growing dread. Nearer and nearer it came, till it seemed to reverberate immediately beneath the caves of the

rested or our eyes unrefreshed."

La Meffraye showed her guests where to

make their beds in the outer room of the

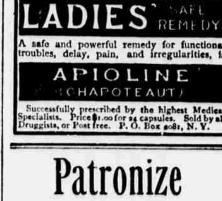
The flicker of the embers died slowly out Malise lay without sound, his head couched on his hand. Lord James began to groan and moved uneasily, like one in the grip

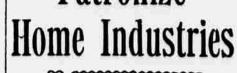
of nightmare. Solto listened acutely. Outside the house he could hear the soft padpad of wild animals. Their pelt seemed almost to brush against the walls behind his head with a rustle like corded slik. Sholto

felt nervously for his sword and cleared it instinctively of the coverture in which he was wrapped. Exectation tingled in his cheeks and palms. The silence grew more

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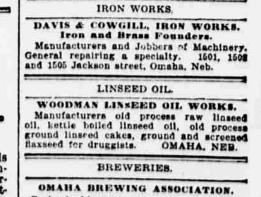
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CHAPTER XLVII. Cacsar Martin's Wife. Presently he returned and conducted then to a decent stable where they saw their beasts bestowed and well provided with old cripple, more than ever bent upon his she is clever," he muttered, "she

grovel in the dust like a beast. So he sniggered senilely to himself

It was a low, wide room of strange aspect into which the old man conducted his guests. The floor was of hard beaten earth, but

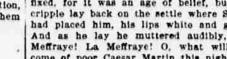
dying thing on the bed. When Malise thrust forward the torch, lo there, extended on the couch on which they had laid him two hours before, lay the yet twitching body of Caesar, the cripple, with his throat well-nigh bitten away. But La Meffraye was nowhere to be se

woman like me, but the will of heaven be done! The three Scots stood silent and trans-Every detail in the manufacture of Coc fixed, for it was an age of belief, but the Imperial Champagne is watched with greatest care. Hence, its record. cripple lay back on the settle where Sholto

come of poor Caesar Martin this night?"

you are and I will be back with you in a

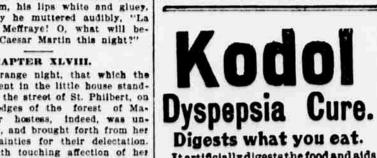
And the old man limped away with as tonishing quickness to hide his acquisition, lest, mayhap, his guests should repent them



CHAPTER XLVIII.

It was a strange night, that which the three Scots spent in the little house standing back from the street of St. Philbert, on the gloomy edges of the forest of Machecoul. Their hostess, indeed, was unpoor husband, afflicted with these strange fits of wolfish mania, in the paroxysms of which he was wont to tear himself and

This she told them over and over, as she moved about, setting before them dainties from secret stores of her own, obviously unknown, or perhaps forbidden, to Caesar



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