# H Modern Mercenary.

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Synopsis of Preceding Chapters.

Maasau, a little European duchy in Europe, which has maintained its independence because of the jealousies of the large surrounding countries, seems about to be swallowed up. Germany is represented at Revonde, the capital, by the shrewd statesman, Baron von Elmur. Engiand's influence is strong and Major Counsellor's presence means much. Russia and France are also playing the diplomatic game. At the time the story opens John Rallywood, a young Englishman, who has served seven years in the Maasau frontier cavary, is about to resign his commission, when Selpdorf, the chancellor and "man of the hour," bends for him and makes nim a Gentleman of the Guard. Rallywood meets Valerie Selpdorf, the chancellor's daughter. The Gentismen of the Guard object to the appointment of the Englishman. Unzlar, a leader and a suitor for Valerie's hand, arranges for the affair of honor involved, misses his shot, and, with his companions, is overcome by the manly bearing of Rallywood. The guests at the palace bail overwhelm the young Englishman with congratulations. Countess Sagan takes a great interest in Rallywood and invites him to Castle Sagan with a parcy. Von Elmur plots with Selpdorf in benalf of Germany to disband the guard. Sagan protests. The diplomatic game becomes involved. Synopsis of Preceding Chapters.

#### CHAPTER IX.

### The Castle of Sagan.

The broadly flowing Kofn forms part of the northeastern boundary of the state of Maasau. Its dark waters rush tumultuously from the gorge below the castle of Sagan and fling a vast inclosing arm about the bleak plains and marshes of which the wastes of the frontier consist.

It is a land where even summer dwells

To the north a chain of hills rises black against the sky and there, set upon a holdly jutting spur, the castle of Sagan dominates the inhospitable landscape like a frown upon a sinister face.

The whole spur and the hill behind it are rough with ragged pine woods and below the banks shelve to the river with a broken scattering of deciduous trees that leave on the eye the chill impression of leafless branches tangled against a background of gray and stony slopes,

Some two or three miles south of the castle the river breaks across a step-like outcrop of rock and thus forms that famous ford, across which the counts of Sagan used in the old days to lead their foraging expeditions over the border.

Simon of Sagan, the present count, inbringing the original savage to the surface.

of the stolid, silent peasantry that lived celier, under his rule. A fierce and fearless sportsman, his dependents delighted in boasting of the prowess of a master whose capricious With Sagan, throughout life, to desire was Like other savages, he quickly tired of his fancies when once gratified. Mme. de Sagan suddenly; then, as Valerie by a frantic passion for the beautiful young "Shall I tell you. Valerie?" wife whom he had now come to regard with The other turned with the pink something dangerously near hate.

In dealing with such a temperament as this both Elmur and Selpdorf were well aware that they were handling an explosive that might at any moment wreck their most carefully laid plans. They would very as usual much have preferred to have made a tool of the reigning duke, but Selpdorf, who had been plying him for more than a month with a ceaseless and exhaustive course of innuendo, discouragement and veiled duke's reply on the day of the review that nothing further was to be hoped for in that direction.

he was untrammeled by principle, and was, moreover, prepared to meet them half way. rendered their schemes no whit safer. The only hope of security lay in clinching the matter as quickly as it was possible to do

so. Once the German grasp had been fairly laid upon the state, the nominal sovereign might struggle as he liked; he could hurt no one but himself.

M. Selpdorf's chief contribution toward the new plot-which was to be carried out at the count's own fortress, the castle of Sagan-consisted in sending an urgent letter after his daughter, begging her to fall in with Von Elmur's wishes.

Valerie received the letter in Mme. de Sagan's apartments. The countess lay on by being rendered a service. Perhaps this a couch, reading a French novel and yawn-

"What a devoted papa!" she exclaimed, glancing up Valerie did not immediately reply. She

was standing at the deep embayed window that looked out toward the river and the What do you think of Rallywood?" apparently endless desolation beyond. only moved very slightly, thereby turning in an atmosphere of diplomacy without has saved some other woman's life?" learning the wisdom of keeping her own laughed.

Baron von Elmur's admiration, but only of late had he seemed anxious to make his aspiratione manifest to the public-a much more significant fact. For the German was in one way a universal admirer; he made qualified love to most of the good-looking ladies about the court, and also, perhaps, more pointedly to some who were not good looking, thus gaining much profit and some pleasure. His high shouldered, portly, personable figure, his handsome face its close-set, narrow eyes, rose before Valerie's mental eye. Her future hus-How absurd; how impossible! And she suddenly laughed a soft, throaty ripple of laughter.

Isolde moved noiselessly, and coming behind Valerie, caught her by the shoulders and swung her half round.

"What are you laughing at?" she asked over the girl's shoulder.

Valerie moved away gently from under the slender hands. "Can you imagine yourself in love with

Baron von Elmur?" she asked. "Were you laughing at that?" inquired the other, incredulously

'Yes," with another little laugh.

"Ah! the devoted papa has been writing of Baron von Elmur?" said the countess with an arch smile. "But I can understand being in love with Von Elmur! He is-difficult. Men no longer in their first youth are much the most interesting. The love of a young man is simple; he says what he means, but when he grows older it is not so. By that time he has gathered memories, enlightenment, experiences, and he begins by thinking

be knows one through and through. And why? Because he knows other women-and them how imperfectly! As if we were not as various as the colors in the old Sagan diadem! Each woman is made differently and each reflects her own color. To teach man-old enough to appreciate it-this

[Copyright, 1899, by Doubleday & McClure | little fact about ourselves is, I assure you never a dull amusement."

Valerie paused before she spoke. "Now I know why you married, Isofde!" "Ah, yes! but I was too young to realize that Sagan is a bear who cannot be taught to dance. I had just left school. I could not choose. But you, Valerie, you have a fortune before you! Poor Anthony, like all other young men, is desperately in earnest; he gives one the blues. I know he already bores you; but Von Elmur ... Ah, that is alto-

gether another affair." Mme, de Sagan sank down beside a little buhl table and tapped on it impatiently with her slight fingers. Against the light of the afternoon glow she watched the outline of Valerie's cheek. For Mile. Selpdorf had returned to her contemplation of the landscape. A curl of blue smoke from among the trees on the nearer bank of the Kofn held her gaze and suggested thoughts, which she was taking up one by one, as it were, and examining soberly enough.

Rallywood had been stationed at Kofn Ford when first Isolde made his acquaintance. The girl recalled a description she had heard of the tall young Englishman galloping along the flat road to the rescue of the pretty, terrified countess, whose Arab had been merely cantering along, capering now and again from sheer lightheartedness and without malicious intent, until its timid rider chose to scream, when it reared and started with flying hoofs toward the marshes. Valerie went on to picture Rallywood holding the trembling woman on her saddle till her escort and grooms overtook them, and at the picture the girl's 11p curled and quivered with angry scorn-of a sudden she hated and despised them both, but especially she despised Rallywood for having succumbed to Isolde's shallow beauty! Thus it will be seen that Mile. Selpdorf was inclined to underrate Mme, de Sagan's points. Isolde was not only wonderfully pretty, but she was endowed with a superficial eleverness, and kindliness and tact, all of which rendered her irresistible to nine men out of A mere chameleon, Isolde almost always believed in herself and her own moods, therefore it was little wonder that the men whose phases of humor she reflected believed in her also, and moreover thought her as adorable and as full of delicious changes as Cleopatra.

Isolde had told the story of her adventure to Valerie, dwelling on the facts that the herited in an unmodified degree the more hero detested-absolutely detested-all predatory and uncivilized instincts of his other women, also that in physique he folforefathers. Illiterate, brutal and cunning, lowed the most approved English pattern, the thin veneer laid by the nineteenth cen- and was an exceptionally good specimen at tury upon his coarse-grained nature was that. Altogether Valerie had found the apt to rub off on the very slightest friction, description sufficiently attractive to induce her to pay Rallywood that coquettish little He was at once the terror and the pride visit in the antercom of the Hotel du Chan-

While these things passed through her thoughts her eyes were still fixed upon the blue plume of smoke that rose and melted cruelties they never dreamed of resenting. over Kofn Ford, for its position indicated the whereabouts of the blockhouse used by to have, and in his pursuit of the wished- the frontier patrol, and here Rallywood for object he was hampered by no new-had lived during the early part of his ac-

"What are you thinking of?" inquired Not four years ago he had been possessed made no immediate answer, she added

"I don't imagine you can guess," she said, with a faint smile.

Mme. de Sagan's little trill of laughter was not quite so childish and irresponsible

"But I can. You were thinking of Rallywood. You think rather often of Rallywood. my dear girl."

The guess, so near the truth, startled Valerie, although she gave no sign. What temptation, was at length convinced, by the could have suggested such an idea to Isolde? Instantly Valerie was on the defensive. Her delicate nostrils quivered slightly and her hand-a larger and more capable hand than For this reason the German party was Isolde's-closed more firmly upon her fathobliged to fall back on Count Sagan. That er's letter, as she replied, with that firm directness which was so surprising a trait in her father's daughter:

"Yes, I was thinking of him-and you The blockhouse where he lived is down there; I can see the smoke. That reminded me of it all. By the way, Isolde, it seems that some young men have a shade of interest about them."

"This one is rather unlike all the others." returned Mme. de Sagan with gravity. saved my life, and, well, he is different from anybody else. He assumes nothing." It is a fact worthy of consideration that while a man rarely establishes a claim on a woman by rendering her a service, a woman always establishes a claim on a man

"No," repeated Valerie, thoughtfully, "he certainly assumes-nothing.' "What do you mean by that, Valerie?" exclaimed Isolde irritably. "You are in one

is as it should be.

of your incomprehensible moods today. "I hardly know what to think yet. Very likely I shall never come to any conclusion back even more completely upon her about him. He is not my affair, and what companion. The girl had not lived so long can be more uninteresting than a man who

"You have recommended Von Elmur to my notice-I shall certainly spend She had for some time been aware of my time to more profit in studying him." A servant entered.

"His excellency, Baron von Elmur, wishes to wait upon your ladyship." Elmur advanced bowing. After greeting his hostess he turned to Valerie with a man-

ner that was new in their intercourse. He dropped from the courtier to the man pure and simple. Kissing the girl's hand, he said earnestly:

"I feared you were not to arrive until to-

morrow." Mme. de Sagan, who had raised her eyebrows and made a little grimace at Valerie behind the minister's back, here interposed: "I persuaded her to travel here with me hope, baron, you feel how greatly I have befriended you!"

"You will find me grateful, madame. In the meantime, I have been sent to warn you that his highness has already arrived at the foot of the hill, and to beg you to descend to the great hall, where the count is waiting to receive him.

"Come, Valerie," said the countess, with little catch in her breath and an added fleck of color in her soft cheeks.

The great hall was half filled with servants and retainers, ranged according to the fashmemory of man, for the ceremonious reception of the reigning duke. Half a dozen huntsmen held in leash as many couples of huge boarhounds at one side of the hall; on the other servants, carrying gold trays of refreshments, stood in line. Above these, again, clustered the numerous guests who

had already arrived. As the countess, looking very young and fair and slender, walked down the center, Sagan, who had been draining a goblet of wine, thrust the cup back upon the tray and catching his wife's hand roughly, said, with an audible oath:

"You're fate. She shrank back, suppressing a cry, from

Sagan advanced to meet him, but the duke, glancing round the hall with a shudder, cut bis wife forward. his formal greetings short,

irritably. Sagan's response was covered by the en- we should wish it to do." trance of the suite, the whole party being For answer the duke shook his head feebly, roopers of the guard. Then Sagan, with a up the long hall through a rustling silence. scowling face, offered the duke the customary cup of wine, and, comparative silence being restored, the ducar answer came previably o all ears;

brought my own drinking."

"There is one point, madame, in which I

his angry grasp. But few had time to notice better," said the duke, laughing. "Now, her. She had known him slightly for a she was still laughing and talking to her her friend discourteously treated. the incident, for the outer door clanged back pray lead me to my apartments. The jour-upon its hinges to admit the duke, who, shiv-ney to Sagan fatigues in this weather—and, fully met the shrewd, kindly eyes under man's question, including a clear repty to ering in his turs, entered upon the arm of after all, it would look better if I died at their shaggy brows. Instantly she liked his own, showed him that the chancellor's home in the palace at Revonde."

"I will lead you to your apartments, sire," Sagan wears a more gloomy and cut- she said, offering the duke her slender hand. throat air than ever, cousin," he said "I am sure that the air of Sagan is as loyal

as surselves, and will do for you all that brought up by Rallywood and a couple of and, calling Colendorp to his side, passed

Count Simon of Sagan. "No, my good Simon, your wine is like produced by her rash championship of Mme. courself, rather too strong and a triffe rough de Sagan, Valerie kept up a semblance of or my taste. Let Briot be called. I have self-possession. Her clear coloring faded to extreme pallor, but her proud eyes showed So saying, he waved the attendants aside, no sign of shrinking from the curious and, approaching Isolde, he raised her as she glances cast upon her. She caught a trenchant aside from Sagan to Elmur:

"These cursed women will ruin us."

him and to her own surprise found herself daughter was much more than a more willful At a glance from Elmur, Sagan motioned talking of the indiscretion of which she girl. had been guilty and of her wish to return

"John Rallywood," he grunted, as he "Mademoiselle, are you a loyal Mansaun?" turned away, 'Is after all not so great an to Revende in consequence. asked Counsellor, gravely, An attendant intercepted the German be

Valerie's soft dark eyes gazed steadily "I am loyal," she replied, in an earnest

underbreath. "Then stay in Sagan. If your words carried so long a tag of meaning to others you can see that Mansau may have need of Simon time to cool before meeting him, but

all her loyal children soon." "Whom can we trust?" she asked sud-Although secretly dismayed at the effect | denly, almost in a whisper, for Elmur, seeing her in conversation with Counsellor, now fore whom the count could blow off the first approached with a ceremonious air. Counsellor smiled as he stood squarely untoward speech. If pent up within his

beside ber. "Choose!" he said briefly, "Choose what?" asked Elmur in his most | explode. Defeat meant much to Elmur; his

deferential manner. Mademoiselle's choice in the most trivial matters is of importance."



"IF YOU WILL NOT ACCEPT THE SALU TE OF YOUR DUKE, MADEMOISELLE, MAY I ASK YOU TO WHAT YOU ASPIRE?"

wise than his!" he said, with malicious galthe rear. bending forward, he kissed the countess with empressment on both cheeks. his head, and their glances met.

She trembled under the caress, though she was hardly aware of it, for her eyes were on her husband, whose daily increasing dislike man's gray eyes; they fell upon her stern, for herself she could not understand, and alienated, almost inimical. The change was only newly beginning to dread. Valerie, standing immediately behind the countess overheard and resented the details of the scene. It was unbearable to see Isolde helplessly baited by Sagan and the duke-each man gratifying the spleen of the moment at the expense of a woman, who was obliged to submit to their discourtesy. Of all the guests Mile. Selpdorf alone stood erect, forgetting, in her indignation, to join in the general obeisance. The grand duke, looking up, found her flushed and flashing and superlatively handsome. His flabby cheeks twitched and his bleared eyes brightened. "Mile. Selpdorf, since you will not salute me. I can at least claim the right as your duke to salute you," he said, stepping to-

Instantly Valerie sank into an exaggerated courtesy, thus adroitly avoiding the duke's outstretched hand and ready lips His feeble legs failed, he stumbled forward pitched into the arms of Elmur, who set him upright with a gentle skillfulness

that almost cheated the eyes of the specta The duke, slightly shaken and exceed-

ingly annoyed, turned upon the girl: "Mademoiselle grows proud!" "Forgive me, sire, I did not dream that

you would stoop so low!" rejoined the girl, with apparent humility. "If you will not accept the salute of your

duke, mademoiselle, may I ask you to what you aspire?" he added contemptuously. Valerie was not of a meek spirit, and she saw a way in which she might revenge Isolde, little comprehending the far-reach

ing consequences of her thoughtless words "I aspire to be maid of honor to the grand duchess of Maasau," she answered, with a glance toward the countess. The duke glared round him into the cir

le of half-curious, half-terrifled faces, for this was a piercing home thrust, his eye dwelt for a moment upon Sagan, towering tall and rugged and strong as one of his own native rocks, and he recognized that his cousin, although ten years his senior as age is counted, was infinitely younger in his unimpaired energies and rude health. Also Duke Gustave of Maasau was superstitious, and it struck him as an ill omen that the representative of Selpdorf should have failed him at the critical moment, and thus flung him headlong into the arms of Germany.

Out of all these crowding thoughts arose not only vivid fear, but a resolution, of which none at that time believed him to He grew white about the be capable. mouth, his protruding lip twitched omi-"It is not always lucky for even so young

and beautiful a woman as you are to count ion, which has obtained at Sagan during the on dead men's shoes," he said in a low, penetrating voice. A happy inspiration came to Mme. de She took Valerie's hand in hers Sagan. and addressed the duke with a quivering

smile that somehow vouched for her earnestness at the moment. "You mistake Valerie, sire; she and I both desire the same honor-to attend your highness' consort, if it would please you to take

it would please your husband little," retorted the duke. "I hoped your highness knew me better,"

"It might please me, madame, but I doubt

protested Sagan, sulkily. "I de, my good Simon; I know you much

never find a wife more beautiful or-more; and erect, watching the duke's suite file up | ance was perceptible in her manner and the hall, Rallywood, as before, bringing up Elmur, noting it, came to the final conclusion that this girl was not only extraor-As he came in line with her he turned

That look, which she always recalled as distinctly his, was wiped from the young struck her like a blow. But before she could fling back her silent defiance at him he was gone, without a second glance, or seeking in any manner to soften the insolent

rebuke he had dared to convey. She resolved to go to her own rooms and make instant arrangements for a return to Revonde. Her heart was hot in her, as looking around, she found herself standing alone. Elmur, apparently forgetful of the deep personal devotion he had so lately manifested, was conversing with a group of Maasaun nobles, his back turned conveniently toward her. Sagan had disappeared and not one of those whom she knew so well and who ten minutes ago would have felt honored by seeking her, but now seemed too deeply engaged to notice that she stood

A moment later Counsellor approached

dinarily handsome, but also exceptionally he prefers to deal in murder wholesale! capable. Having made so grievous a mis- What of your wars and annexations? take, and taken the punishment of it, she was still mistress of herself. It was a gallant spirit and well worth capturing.

"Major Counsellor has asked me to choose flowers for the ball tonight. I choose roses, I think it is very nice of me, Major Coun- judgment. I take my world as I find it, my ellor, for is not the rose the emblem of good baron!" England?" said the girl, with a coquettish smile at the older man.

which means the power of being a dangerous

the pleasure of begging mademoiselle to ing. accept my flowers."

"You are too late, baron; but perhaps you will escort me to the west tower, where I daresay Mme. de Sagan is already waiting

Counsellor looked after the tall, graceful figure of the girl as she ascended the staircase with Elmur at her side. He could see the indignant outburst of a girl who thought

In no great space of time the sight of that impassive, high-shouldered figure, sitting calmly by, imposed a growing sense of restraint upon the count. "What do you think of our chances now that Gustave's suspicions have been set on the alert?" he asked at last, coming to a stop in front of Elmur. "That fool of a wife

that was to be.

Valerie with Mme, de Sagan.

tency," he said.

"My lord desires to speak to your excel-

Elmur frowned. He wished to allow Count

this summons was imperative, and, besides,

he knew the danger of failing to provide a

safety-valve in the shape of a listener, be-

ebullitions of rage over Mile, Selpdorf's

own breast, there was no knowing in how

disastrous a manner Sagan's ill-humor might

the annexation to the fatherland of this

troublesome little state; they had falled.

therefore Elmur had pledged himself to

Elmur stood with his back against a

massive carved bookshelf and looked at Sa-

gan, who, with a cigar butt buried in his

ragged beard, was walking, with long, un-

certain steps up and down the floor. The

"Act I, Scene I," said Elmur at last and

Sagan stopped short and turned a blood-

shot sidelong glare upon him, his dark old

"By heaven! It is going to be a tragedy!"

he shouted, anud burst into a whirlwind of

hideous curses, coupled with the names of

The German picked out a comfortable chair

a horrible energy in the old man's attitudes,

fed of late, had now flamed into a regnant

passion, and the cooler, more wary, unscru-

His long smouldering ambition, nursed and

tiger in the old man was awake.

fingers working convulsively.

Valerie and his wife.

and she in her turn blabs all before the world." Elmur sat still and dumb. His face enraged Sagan once more.

dangers in our mountains and marshes. Do ou not understand?" Baron von Elmur stood up. He bore his

most dignified air, and there was something in his whole aspect that made the "In the first place, her death under the degrees," said Sagan,

circumstances would look strange. In the

Sagan's red eyes twinkled cunningly. "Hear my plan. I am not so squeamish as you thin-blooded moderns, or at least as thought. The wild beast instinct in him you pretend to be!" He placed his finger gave him intuition of danger. Elmur was on the minister's breast, and drew back a playing Germany's game, but since his aim little, the better to enjoy the approbation | was the count's own, it was impossible at he expected to read in the other's face. "We this stage to disentangle the precise cause will say that the girl fell ill, and I, in my of suspicion. anxiety, sent Mme. Sagan-my own wife, mark you-to accompany her to Revonde. If both should happen to be killed by an

what could the world say?" Elmur drew away from the insistive finger with an unmistakable movement. He bowed stiffly and moved toward the door.

"I do not know what the world might do or say, but I can answer for Ludwig von Elmur. My master does not deal in murder, my lord, so I beg your leave to withdraw. "What? sneered the other, "he does no deal in murder? Rather, you would say of the Germans in West Africa? Take care, Elmur, that you are not acting over hastily For my part, I don't believe that a life or so would weigh too heavy in the balance as against a province, even in your master's

"Pardon me, my lord, you take the world as your ancestors found it! You may be Elmur's face clouded. This interfering all your fathers were, but however time old fellow had the power of making friends, goes at Sagan, the rest of the world has not stood still since the middle ages. And the world is on my side today. Besides," "I had hoped," he said aloud, "to have added more suavely, "we should gain noth-We should alienate Selpdorf, who is useful, and who knows too much. As for the duke, after such an affair, he could never be eased of his suspicions."

"I don't ask to ease him. I mean to cure him," retorted Sagan, meaningly. "I am certain Mme. de Sagan has been silent. The speech of Mile. Selpdorf was

Discourteously treated? Isolde rudely

treated? By whom? "Forgive me once more, my lord; but, in

the first place, by yourself." Sagan laughed aloud, his ill-remper vac-

shing before the humor of the notion that anyone could take exception to a man's rudeness toward his own wife.

"Posts' the girl is a bigger idlot than I thought her. Let us hope she'll never meet fore he regained the hall, after leaving with worse at the hands of her own hus-

band "I join in the hope, my tord, since I am o be that most fortunate man!" It was not the most felicitous moment, but Elmur was aware that in no other way could be assure Valerio's safety against the treachery of his colleague.

Sagan fell back a step. "So-the wind blows from that quarter? Take heed, baron, Selpdorf is a slippery

"But by this arrangement we land him

finally." "It may be so." Sagan tugged broodingly reputation was at stake. Other men had at his beard, after a pause adding: "Well, undertaken this same mission—to bring about well, the girl is safe enough for me, if you can answer for her. Come back and sit down. We must act while Gustave is here. Once we secure the guard, we can force him to do-as we please. First a compromise, then abdication, then-" he brought his hand down heavily upon the table and eat staring before him at a vision of a dream fulfifieda vision of Duke Simon of Maasau.

Elmur's lip curled as he watched the man, who, for the time being, was oblivious of all but the realization of his own ambition. Duke Simon-a name, but never a living power-only a German puppet, pulled hither and thither at will by the controlling hand "What are your plans, my lord?" he asked

aloud. The count started and raised his head,

pulousness of the younger man looked with future wife, and she must blind him. A

"We have three of the guard here-Unziar, Rallywood, Colendorp. You know that as soon as we have made sure of their officers and seated himself, crossing his legs with a the men will follow of themselves. Now manifest intention of pattence. There was Unziar is no saint."

"But he fights the better because he is sinner." "He is not to be tempted, then. But he is in love with Mile. Selpdorf-with your

repugnance upon the blind fury of the duke man in love is easily blinded." "And Rallywood?" asked Elmur. "We don't-want Rallywood," rejoined Sagan, with an odd glance at Elmur. "I can manage him if you will leave him to

> "I conclude Rallywood is capable of taking care of himself."

The count grinned. "Exactly what I believed you would think. of mine has blabbed to Selpdorf's daughter, There remains only Colendorp. But Colendorp is the man we must have-all will depend on Colendorp." "Do you suppose he will bend?"

"If not he must break! But, no; I know "But I am master in Sagao. The girl him well! I have chosen him because he nust be got rid of! There are a hundred touches no woman! Men who don't love women love money, and men who do-" "Love both," said Elmur, quietly. "Tomorrow night Colendorp shall be here

dorp is a poor man-as men go in the guard -and we must approach him softly and by Elmur concealed a smile. A course of second, we have nothing to gain from it," softness and caution seemed impossible in

with me. You also will be present. Colen-

connection with the headstrong old man who counseled it. Sagan, left alone, stood engrossed in

(To be Continued.)

America makes the finest brand of chamaccident we should be well rid of them—and pagne, Cook's Imperial Extra Dry. It is what could the world say?"

FUN AT A CARPENTER'S.

A Few Puns Made of the Tools in The carpenter had put down his tools and gone for his luncheon, relates the Pittsburg Dispatch.

"Life with me is a perfect bore." said the Auger. "I'm a little board myself," said the

Small Plank "There's no art in this country," observed the Screw-driver, "Everything's screwed in my eyes."

"You don't stick at anything long enough to know just what you're driving at," interfeeted the Glue

"That's just it," said the Screw. "He nover goes beneath the surface the way the Jack Plane and I do." "Tut!" cried the Saw. "I go through things just as much as you do. Life's stuffed with sawdust."

"Regular grind," said the Grindstone. "I agree with you," observed the Bench 'It doesn't make any difference how well do my work. I'm always sat on." "Let's strike," said the hammer. "You hit "That's it," cried the Auger.

he nail on the head that time." "I'll hit it again," retorted the Hammer; and he kept his word, but he hit the wrong nail. That is why the carpenter now wear his thumb in a bandage. It was his thumbnail the Hammer struck.

## Constipation

Caused by over-work! Over-eating! Over-drinking! No part of the human body receives more ill treatment than the bowels. Load after load is imposed until the intestines become clogged, refuse to act, worn out. Then you must assist nature. Do it, and see how easily you will be cured by CASCARETS Candy Cathartic. Not a mass of violent mercurial and mineral poison, but a pure vegetable compound that acts directly upon the diseased and worn out intestinal canal, making it strong, and gently stimulating the liver and kidneys; a candy tablet, pleasant to eat, easy and delightful in action. Don't accept a substitute for CASCARETS.



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