been doing very badly—so badly, that he had lost heart, and had decided to tempt fortune that evening no longer. He met Tom at the door.

"Well," said Tom, "how have you got on?"

"Like a crab," responded Mr Draker. "Backwards. We're ten thousand francs out on the day's play."

"Phew!" Tom whistled. "Why, that leaves barely the original capital."

"Barely the original capital," returned Draker. "If we'd dropped the game three days ago, eh?"

"Ah!" said Tom. "I wish we had."

They paced along the terrace in silence.

"Oh, I say, Finch," said Draker, suddenly, "there's a very rummy thing happened. You saw that old boy they ran out of the rooms an hour ago? They've got him locked up for passing a forged note, and who in the name of wonder do you suppose he pretends to be?"

"Why, how should I know?" Tom asked.

"He says," said Draker, and then he began to laugh. He was so hearty in his laughter that Tom had to join him even before he knew the joke. "He says he's the Bishop of Stokestithe."

"What?" Tom almost shrieked. "Another of 'em?"

He had to tell Draker of his adventure, and Draker agreed that it was the most astonishing thing he had ever heard of—the most amazing thing.

"Two of 'em, begad, personating the same highly respectable old Johnny at the same hour, in the village. I say, Finchie, if I were you I should just squander myself in the direction of the gendarmerie and look up Number Two. You can sit on his pretensions, anyway, and I should salt the tail of Number One as well, I fancy."

"Well, you see," said Tom, "in a sort of a way, don't you know, I've given my parole to Number One. But I really think I'll go down and have a look at Number Two. Will you come with me?"

"Why, no," returned Draker. "I think I'll go back and give the system another chance. My coming away may have broken the luck, you know."

"All right," said Tom; "but go light if the luck's against you. I'll find you there."

So Draker went back to the tables, and Tom inquired his way to the gendarmerie. Arrived there, he presented his card and stated his business.

"You have a person here in charge for having passed a forged note. I understand that he is an Englishman, and that he professes to be the Bishop of Stokestithe."

I forget whether it is a fourth or an eighth part of the landed forces of the Principality who is on duty at one time. Whichever it is, he replied that this was so.

"Very good," said Tom. "I happen to know the Bishop of Stokestithe very well, and, if you will allow me to look at him only for a moment, I have no doubt that I can put an end to that ridiculous pretension. I have very good reason to believe that the Bishop of Stokestithe is in Paris at this time."

The representative of the landed forces was not quite sure whether it lay within the sphere of his duty to accede to this request; but the sight of a five-franc piece dissipated prejudice, and Tom was permitted to look at Number Two. Number Two sat with his face buried in his hands, and the officer poked him gently with his scabbard.

"Holla! Il y'a un m'sieur, ici—"

He got no further, for the prisoner looked up, and sighting Tom, sprang to his feet, and Tom fell back with a gesture of amazement as he had never been impelled to use in all his life before.

"Good heavens, sir!" Tom cried. take arise?"

"How on earth did this absurd mis-

"Mr Finch," said the Bishop, "let it be enough for you, sir, that I resent this intrusion. I resent it, sir."

"But," cried Tom, turning on the officer, "this gentleman is really the Bishop of Stokestithe. This is a gentleman of the very highest status, a member of the first Legislative Chamber. Do you know what an English bishop is—you turtle? Do you guess what you are doing in detaining here a gentleman of his character and standing? It is the most absurd, ridiculous, idiotic—Who is in authority here? Is the Prince de Monaco at home? Who is there whom I can see to put an end to this astonishing farce?"

Tom's French served him excellently. He really spoke the language fairly well, but he was shy about it, as a rule, and distrustful about verbs and genders. Now, his excitement put these petty obstacles out of mind, and he felt that he was eloquent. But the Bishop's guardian was very doubtful about this recognition, which, to his mind, smelt of the theatre. He turned gruff and sulky, and he bore Tom out of the chamber and locked his prisoner in, and knew nothing about anything and would answer no questions.

When Tom got into the streets again, he felt quite feather-headed.

"I'm mad," he said; "stark, staring mad! That's all that's the matter. I haven't seen the Bishop, I haven't been to the gendarmerie. Staunton's a figment of the brain. It's all gammon and spinach—all of it—all! They'll stick a plaster on my head by-and-by, and I shall be all right again. I felt sane enough five minutes ago."

All this was a mere exuberance of words, for he knew well enough that the adventure was real; but, for the time being, the pretence served. It kept his amazement at arm's length—it prevented it from overwhelming him.

In a very little while his wits got to work, and he began to see that however the Bishop of Stokestithe had brought himself into this amazing mess, it might be in his power to get his lordship out of it, and it does no harm to add that he thought he might find his own advantage in it. He welcomed the chance the fates had given him to be of service to the Bishop. To be quick, to be discreet, to prevent this most ridiculous accident from getting abroad—these things were at once his duty and likely to be serviceable. How to act! He called to mind an ancient crony of his who was now an attache to the British Embassy at Paris. It might be worth while to send him a full account of the affair by wire, insisting upon his secrecy and getting him to set the ambassador in motion. The telegram would reach Paris in an hour, and if it found his man at once it was possible that the Bishop might be freed that night. Surely that was safer and speedier than fooling about amongst a crowd of silly functionaries in Monte Carlo. He began to concoct the telegram, and would have taken measures for its immediate dispatch, but that he was for the moment without money. He had given his last hundred-franc note to Draker to make a level sum at the tables, and had forgotten to ask it back again. He raced to the Casino, and met his chum on the terrace. He opened up the terrible story at once, and somehow Draker seemed less surprised and interested than he should have been.

"What has come over you, man?" Tom asked. "But never mind that now. I'm going to wire to our embassy at Paris, and straighten this mad business out. You must let me have that hundred francs, old chap."

Young Draker stood stock still on the terrace walk, and his chin was on his breast.

"Come on," said Tom. "Don't keep me waiting. This affair must be seen to."

And still young Draker made no move and spoke no word.

"Draker," said Tom, in vague alarm, "what's the matter?"

"I am very much afraid, Tom," said Draker, "that so far as any aid of mine goes poor old Durgan is likely to stop in chokey."

"You don't mean—?" said Tom, and paused.

"Yes, I do," said Draker.

"But there hasn't been time," Tom objected, with a chill creeping at his heart.

"Oh, lor', yes," said Draker. "Lots! I knocked up against the maximum, Thomas, and I am a shipwrecked crew. Come and stand me a drink before I die, for I haven't the price of a shoe-tie between here and London town."

"Nor I," said Tom. "I haven't a cent. about me."

Draker broke into wild laughter and Tom took him by the arm and led him into the hotel. They sat down and ordered cigars, and brandy and seltzer water and the waiter obeyed the order and stood by for payment. "Oh, chalk it up," said Draker, with a groan.

"Put it in the bill," Trom translated, and the waiter went away. He was back in two or three minutes with their account, which he handed on a salver. They looked at the total with their heads together and then they looked at each other and laughed desolately. Then Draker emptied his glass and rose.

"This is my fault," he said, "and I'll go and face the music."

"It's nobody's fault," said Tom, "and I'll go with you."

So they went together to the manager who had known what the matter was five minutes before.

"Look here," said Draker. "We two British citizens are stony. If you'll be good enough to send a wire to London for me, I can get enough to-morrow to pay up, and when that's done I'll clear out."

"Ill fortune at the tables, gentlemen?" said the manager. They nodded gloomily and the manager smiled. These Monte Carlo people have a most wonderful knack of knowing with whom they deal. They never bully a gentleman, and they very, very rarely trust an outsider too far. It must be a quaint education in worldly wisdom to keep hotel in that haunt of the wealthy and the poor—that place where broken hopes are mended or ground to powder in an hour: where defaulting clerks who have run away with fifty pounds make an income for a day which passes Vanderbilt's or Rothschild's, and careless, solid millionaires are sometimes stranded as high and dry as if they had not a farthing in the world.

"It will be quite right, gentlemen," said the manager, when they had named their respective bankers and the amount for which they desired to draw. "And in the meantime, gentlemen, please order anything of which you may stand in need."

They felt that they stood in need of more brandy and another syphon. They called for these comforts and sat and sipped in sadness.

"I say, Finchie," said Draker, after a long spell of silence, "I don't think so much of the rotten old system as I did."

Tom gave no answer. He had been respectably brought up, and he felt it impossible to express an opinion of the system without doing injustice to his training. "But what the deuce," Draker asked, "did it always work out all right for until we got the money on it?"

"I don't know," said Tom. "I don't care a red cent. about the system. So far as I'm concerned the system's drowned and dead and done for. I'm thinking about old Durgan."

"Ah!" said Draker, willing to find consolation anywhere. "We've made a mess of it, but we ain't in quod. That's some comfort."

"Oh, this shoddy age" cried Tom. "This beastly age of cheap things for the million!"

"What's the matter with the age?" asked Draker. "What have cheap things for the million got to do with us?"

"Why," Tom responded, "if we had lived in a solid, self-respecting age we could never have been cleaned out like this. You've got a three-dollar bit of Yankee machine-made rubbish ticking at the end of a black ribbon, and I have another. Only a dozen years ago a gentleman's watch was worth something, and now I can't raise the cost of a wire to Paris, and Lucy's father is in chokey."

(To be continued.)