

entrance, and, standing in the front of the building read the prayers prescribed by the Church, and, after blessing it, the procession marched round the church, and entering by the main door proceeded to the altar, which was next blessed. The ceremony being over, his Lordship was conducted to a throne, which had been prepared for him. The Rev. Father Aubrey—who recently arrived from Home—then ascended the altar, and, in grand voice, chanted Mass. The rev. gentleman undoubtedly has no superior as a vocalist in the priesthood of the colony. After the Gospel had been sung, his Lordship left the throne and approached the rails. Prior to commencing his sermon, Dr Grimes made a touching reference to the death of Madame Sullivan (Sacred Heart Convent, Timaru), and to the loss sustained by the parish as regards education, appealing to all to pray for her. His Lordship took for his text: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth. For the first heaven and the first earth were gone, and the sea is now no more. And I, John, saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice from the throne, saying: Behold the tabernacle with men, and He will dwell with them, and they will be His people, and God Himself with them shall be their God" (Book of the Apocalypse, xxi., 1, 2, and 3). His Lordship preached a most eloquent, instructive, and impressive sermon, in the course of it passing a high tribute to the Rev. Father Fauvel, pastor of the parish, for his unlimited zeal, with much emphasis eulogising the rev. gentleman's passion for the beauty of the House of God, and spending all his means on beautifying it. He also praised the people of Pleasant Point for the beautiful church they had erected, and for the generous manner in which all had contributed to the work, remarking that they had a reason to "rejoice and be glad." His Lordship said they could make their church still more beautiful, and God would reward them for it. The Temuka choir (under the charge of the Sisters of St. Joseph) contributed greatly to the success of the day, and Mr. M. de H. Duval kindly rendered several of the solos in the Mass. Miss Gaffaney presided at the organ, which was kindly placed at the disposal of the choir by Messrs. Begg and Co., of Timaru. The items rendered were:—Before Mass: "Laudate Mariam," "Kyrie," and "Gloria," Est's Mass; "Credo," "Sanctus," "Agnus Dei," Winter's Mass; offertory, "O Maria"; after Mass: "May Carol."

After the ceremony was over, Dr Grimes, accompanied by Fathers Aubrey and Foley, proceeded to Timaru, where he preached on the feast of the day (Blessed Virgin's) in the evening.

UNDER THE SHADOW OF A CRIME.

BY E. B. MARSHALL.

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It may generally be assumed, when one comes across a horse bridled and saddled, that the rider is, if not on the back of his Rosinante, at least not very far away. Such was the natural enough inference drawn by a peasant who, one bright forenoon early in June, 1880, observed a riderless hack nibbling peacefully away at the herbage in the forest of Fontenay aux-Roses, which is, as any one who has lived in Rouen knows, a favourite haunt of those *Rouennais* who love to cultivate an appetite for luncheon by a morning promenade. Seeing a bright five-franc piece in prospect, our Jacques Bonhomme, after securing the animal—an easy matter, by the way—proceeded to look for its owner.

"That has not the air of being vicious," thought the peasant, *apropos* of the animal he held by the bridle, and speculating upon the probability of the rider having been thrown; "but some of these gentlemen of the town know as much about a horse as a fish about apples. I thought it," he added some few minutes afterwards, as, coming to a turning where the alley he was following opened out into a kind of small clearing, he saw a human form extended motionless upon the ground before him. After a first glance, Jacques seemed more astonished than his previous self-addressed remarks concerning the equestrian capacities of "those gentlemen of the town" would have seemed to warrant; and well he might, for the man lying in the centre of the clearing wore the uniform of an army officer, and Jacques knew that the military riding-schools, with their hours of bare-back riding, turned out cavaliers who could stick in their seats as well as a circus performer. Jacques eyed the horse somewhat askance, as he went up to the helpless soldier.

Two minutes later, our Jacques Bonhomme was bestriding the animal which he had captured, and was urging it as fast as hand and voice could make it gallop in the direction of the town; and some few hours later, all Rouen was talking of the murder that had been committed that morning in the wood of Fontenay-aux-Roses.

The afternoon of that same day, perhaps the most wretched and distressed creature in all Rouen was Héleine Lapeyre, the only daughter of one of the "leading citizens" of that cathedral city. She, like every one else, had heard the news of the murder of Major Magnier, and the tidings affected her more nearly than any one else. Major Magnier had been a friend of her father's and, what is more, had hoped to transfer that friendship into a much closer and deeper relationship by a marriage with the daughter. Though, as has been said, perhaps the most miserable creature in all Rouen was Héleine Lapeyre, it does not follow that the girl was grieving simply because she had lost a possible husband. As a matter of fact Héleine had no idea of regarding the death of Major Magnier in this light, for she had always been indifferent to his attentions, her heart having been given into the keeping of another man. Still she could not but be deeply moved at hearing of the death, under such terrible conditions, of one whose only fault was that he had loved her. The measure of her grief, or, to speak more correctly, of her misery and wretchedness was abnormal and requires explanation. This explanation will be afforded by introducing the reader into the room in which Héleine and her mother, a well preserved, kindly-looking woman, were seated, the one busy with some feminine work, the other sitting listlessly

with her hands in her lap. The two women were discussing the all absorbing topic of the murder.

"You must not allow it to distress you so, child," Madame Lapeyre remarked. "It is horrible, certainly," and a tear of sympathy, or pity, or both, stole down her face; "but it is God's will."

Madame Lapeyre had been aware of the attentions paid by Major Magnier to her daughter, but, with a mother's instinct, had divined that they were not received with favour. Still, she understood that a shock must have been given to her daughter's nervous system, and seeing Héleine sitting opposite to her, a picture of unutterable, tearless anguish, she put down her embroidery and moved to a seat beside the girl. Stealing one arm around her daughter's waist, with the other hand she pulled the drawn face to hers. At this Héleine broke down completely. Words came with the sobs, jerked out, as it were, and words of surprising import. At first Madame Lapeyre was unable to grasp their terrible meaning. As there is no reason why the reader should be required to suffer the same delay, we will endeavour to present Héleine's revelations—for to her mother they were revelations—in a more concise and lucid style, than the girl was mistress of.

Major Magnier had been laying siege to a place already in possession of an enemy. Among the officers of the same regiment was one Captain de Soubeyron, who, a native of Rouen, had known Héleine Lapeyre almost from her childhood. Monsieur and Madame Lapeyre had taken no notice of the intimacy existing between their daughter and De Soubeyron, neither in the distant past, when it was merely a boy and girl friendship, nor in the more immediate past, when they mistakenly regarded it as such, for the boy and girl friendship had ripened into a strong and deep love between man and woman. Major Magnier had been more observant, and from having merely a suspicion of the real state of affairs, he had come to possess the complete certainty that he had been worsted in the struggle for Héleine Lapeyre's heart and hand, for there was no likelihood of her having to bestow the latter upon any other than the man to whom she had forfeited the former, De Soubeyron's connections, prospects, etc., being satisfactory in every way, and, in some respects indeed, superior to those possessed by Magnier. Instead, however, of retiring from the field, as he might have done, with his eagles still in his possession, Magnier lost control over himself, and thus exposed himself to an ignominious disaster. This result, inevitable considering the character of the contest, had arrived on the day preceding that on which this story opens. Under circumstances into which it is not necessary to enter, Héleine had shown her preference for De Soubeyron. The Major had lost his temper, and forgetful of everything save that he was in the presence of a hated rival, vented his spleen by addressing De Soubeyron in the most insulting fashion. Héleine was witness of the scene. What she most feared was that it would not end there, but that it would have consequences which might be disastrous for her lover. De Soubeyron had, to use a vulgar phrase, been "hard hit." Though he had, in Héleine's presence, borne himself with dignity, the girl saw that there were within him smothered fires which would burst forth in terrible fury. Now, on the very day succeeding this altercation between the two men, Major Magnier had been found dead. Do what she would to banish the thought, the remembrance of the scene of yesterday, and of the evil look which she had seen in her lover's eyes, would force itself upon her.

Madame Lapeyre, at first utterly amazed at the situation which her daughter's broken words placed before her, came, by the light of calmer reason, to see its absurdity. Such baseness was impossible in any gentleman, and least of all possible in Alfred de Soubeyron's case. As for the idea of the two men having met that morning in the wood, and of the scene of the previous day being repeated and extended, she dismissed that as in the highest degree improbable.

Héleine would willingly have found herself convinced by her mother's reasoning, but the horrible idea which had taken possession of her was too strong. It was a kind of nightmare, and, do what she would, she could not shake it off.

It was not that she *believed* exactly that it was as she feared—her faith in her lover was too firm for that—but she *feared* that it might be so.

The girl was still a prey to those harassing thoughts, when Monsieur Lapeyre entered the room. Immediately on hearing of the alleged murder of Major Magnier he had gone to make inquiries.

His first words on seeing his wife and child on his return were:

"He is not dead!"

"Not dead?" echoed the two women, Madame Lapeyre, adding,

"Thank God!"

"No—not yet; what was at first taken for death was merely a state of complete unconsciousness. There is, however, no hope of saving his life. The assassin's knife has done its work too well. What the doctors cannot quite understand is that poor Magnier should remain so long unconscious. His condition is entirely abnormal. He had not bled at all, or very little, that is exteriorly. There are no bruises or anything of that kind to account for the state of coma in which the poor fellow lies. Doctor Edmund says he can only account for it by supposing that the knife had been dipped in some subtle poison, the existence and the effects of which are unknown to science. It is a strange affair altogether."

"Is he not expected to recover consciousness?" asked Madame Lapeyre.

"Yes, the doctors say that a man in his state usually comes to his senses just before death. Let us hope that he will do so, so that the murderer will not escape. It all depends on Magnier being able to say who is the man."

"Is there no other clue?" asked Madame Lapeyre.

"Yes, there is one—the knife was found sticking in the poor fellow's breast. It is a peculiar weapon—with a silver-chased haft, and a long, thin, triple-edged blade. But whatever is the matter with Héleine?"

The girl had suddenly fainted.

(Concluded in our next.)