

Cut Off in Paris

BY ARTHUR E. McFARLANE

A MONTH before, young — very young — Mr. and Mrs. Kidder Hoadley had stepped from a Gare du Nord taxicab, thanked those departing Robinsons immeasurably, and, fifteen minutes after their arrival in Paris, had found themselves occupying an apartment which lacked nothing conceivable in French taste on the one hand or in American conveniences on the other. Their feelings had been such that in the impossibility of embracing the apartment itself they had once more turned to and with rapture embraced each other. Attempt to imagine an existence that combined a view down the boulevards and a tiled and porcelain bathroom, drop-lights from Barbediennes, and a drop-cabinet sewing-machine from New Jersey! In the kitchen there was a choice between a fourteenth-century spit and a twentieth-century gas-range. And below, in the person of M. le Comte de Montégut de Vezensac, dwelt a gentleman whose family, if not its representatives, had been noble for thirty generations! Louise had commanded Kidder to make his acquaintance at once.

He had not made it, however. Personally he did not like either the Count's face or his style. And—while he did not confide this to Louise—if M. le Comte continued to gleam his teeth at her like that when they passed upon the stairs, there were moments when Kidder felt that in the end it might even be necessary to have some doings with him.

Neither he nor Louise, however, was giving a great deal of thought to M. le Comte. It was their first visit to Paris. They were daily going to the sources of pure delight on the top of three-cent busses. While Louise visited Louvre and Luxembourg, Kidder explored miles of bone-filled catacombs and the scenes of revolutionary massacres. "Jinks, too, it was things like that that you came to Europe for!" Almost every

second day they set forth together for Versailles or Chantilly or Fontainebleau. And such happiness was to last as long as the Robinsons remained in Egypt—which, as Sybil Robinson had written, was going to be just as long as it was any way possible to induce them, the Hoadleys, to take care of things in the Rue de Lagadeu.

On this particular afternoon, however, Kidder had stretched himself out in Colby Robinson's den for a smoke, which soon became a nap. And Louise, happily reminded by the two big bundles of laundry just left in by their *blanchisseuse de fin*, had settled down to a small wifely task which she had already procrastinated for much too long. Kidder, having "travelled light," had had to replenish his wardrobe in Paris. Of one very necessary article of fine linen he had ordered six. They were well made, too, with impeccably turned cuffs, and collars which fitted, as the French brightly image it, "like the lunette of the guillotine." But, from their many-pleated backs and starched bosoms, those shirts extended themselves downward to a length wholly incredible. Plainly it was the custom—or the costume—of the country, one of those foreign facts which even Bacdeker does not warn us of. And since that day rarely had the Hoadleys gone forth on one of those expeditions to Versailles or Chantilly or Fontainebleau but, sooner or later, Kidder had begun with groanings to allude to himself as The Human Cocoon, The Walking Winding-Sheet—"And when, oh, when was she going to cut them down?"

And, as he had never by any chance brought the matter up at a time when it would have been humanly possible to do that "shortening," the thing had gone on until Louise had begun to have it seriously upon her conscience. In all their three months of married life it was the one

housewifely request that Kidder had made of her, and for almost three weeks it had gone unheeded.

But now the reminder and the opportunity had come together. The first yellow bundle of laundry opened in the Robinson sewing-room showed her the garments in question. She softly closed the two doors between sewing-room and den so that Kidder might not be disturbed. It took her some time to find a pair of shears. But, having found them, she set to work. And, since Kidder had asked her to take off at least a yard, she removed a good foot and a half. She had just dealt with the third, and had opened the sewing-machine to do the re-hemming, when in the now more widely opened bundle she noticed something—a style of collar which she had never seen Kidder wearing. . . . With a pulse that seemed to stop and wait for her to say that it might go on again, she made an examination. The examination revealed other things that were not Kidder's. In fact, nothing in that parcel was Kidder's!

It is in moments of shock that our real character is revealed to us. Louise Hoadley was the daughter of a long line of Episcopal clergymen. She had probably never told four lies in her whole life. But, as she weakly got that bundle together again and tried to make it look in every way as if it had never been opened, the intention to deny—to deny absolutely and unequivocally—came to her less as a resolve than as a simple reflex action. She felt possibilities of horror in the situation that morally permitted of her doing nothing else. She knew that that *blanchisseuse* had another customer over on the Boulevard Haussmann, a young Sorbonne professor. Probably she would not discover her mistake until she got to him. There might be several minutes yet.

As a matter of fact, she had time even to imitate the peculiar knot tied by *blanchisseuses de fin*. But barely had she finished, when from the stairs there came the sound of perturbed and heavily hurrying footsteps.

"Madame was the last person," explained that much apologizing laundress—"the last person she had thought of in the matter." She had the proper bundle with her now, and she recognized the missing one the moment she beheld it. Obviously, too, she noticed nothing. Lifted by a first great shoreward billow of relief, Louise told herself that she might yet come out of it *altogether*!

Some ten minutes later, Kidder Hoadley became somnolently aware that Louise was calling him. "Dearie," she called—"dearie, come—come here a minute." And in her voice there was a tone, or



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rather a dry-throated absence of tone, which, once he got it, brought him quickly. Louise was standing in the half-darkness at their hall door, which she held on the chain. In the hall were two persons. In one of them he believed he recognized the large, massive country-woman who looked after their laundry. Over her quivering extended arm she was holding certain objects wide and

white, at which her companion was speechlessly pointing. It was evident that mere words were of little avail to him.

"Voilà!" said the *blanchisseuse*, like another Julia presenting the corpse of the murdered Geta.

"C'est à vous! It is to you, Monsieur!" said the gentleman. It was M. le Comte de Montégut de Vezensac!

"He—he—he—they think *I* did it," said Louise.

As Kidder gaped he remembered, and as he remembered he knew all. And

—"Lord! Oh, give me *time* for it, Louise!"—and thence over a footstool into the den. "*Whoo-oo!*" he cried. "*Wee-ee!*" And getting himself to the cozy corner, he wallowed throughout its length. "Oh, give me *time!*" . . . Far from standing up beside his wife like a man and a protector, he lay down like a weakling and a poltroon. Could the Count once have got to him past that door-chain, he would have found him incapable of standing up even on his own behalf. And he remained where he lay, represented only by the sounds that came from him, until, a moment later, the scene had reached its close.

"Très-bien!" said Madame la Blanchisseuse, and started down the stairs.

"Très-bien!" said Monsieur le Comte. And, scarcely leaving the interval demanded by his rank, he followed her.

"Well—well, anyway," began Kidder, at length, seeing that Louise would not speak to him—"anyway, it's finished with *now*."

"Yes!" she said, again taking the other side of the table, "it's finished now!"

That was what they said. And so simple were they, so uninformed of the spirit and character of the modern Gauls, that they believed it, too!

Finished with! As Madame la Blanchisseuse thrust herself heavily down the Rue de Lagadeu, "But *why* did they do it—*why?*" she kept repeating.

As for Monsieur le Comte, it was not alone that he had been wronged—though, *nom de Dieu*, is it nothing for a nobleman whose means are in reality very limited to discover that the major part of his laundry—laundry, moreover, which at that hour he was impatiently awaiting—had at one stroke of gratuitously fiendish malevolence been reduced to what in Anglo-Saxondom can be represented only by the mocked-at contumely of the



MERE WORDS WERE OF LITTLE AVAIL

there were various things which he might have done—brought to bear all his French, for example, in an attempt to apologize to Monsieur le Comte, or all his change in an attempt to square Madame la Blanchisseuse. What he did was to emit a kind of whimpering whoop, which rose gradually to a coyote-like yelping. He fell back through the Robinson hall into the Robinson drawing-room

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"dicky"? Hardly more seethingly could his blood have boiled under the amputation of half his titles.

And yet all this was minor. With that instant comprehension on the face of Monsieur Hoadley, with his first bellow of insulting laughter, Monsieur le Comte had been confirmed in what he had darkly suspected from the beginning. There was *intention* in what had occurred! He might not as yet understand fully, but he understood enough! And—though Madame, doubtless unwillingly, might have made herself the *instrument*—those so intolerable yells and shoutings of triumph with which Monsieur had continued to reply to his every demand for an explanation made it very plain with whom he had to deal. The one thing which kept Monsieur le Comte from remounting those apartment stairs with swords and pistols was this: Madame la Blanchisseuse had insisted upon rushing forth for an *agent-commissaire de la sûreté*.

An *agent-commissaire de la sûreté* is a species of detective, but one who detects affairs so grave, whose aspect and expression are themselves of such a gravity,

that he is forever prevented from detecting in plain clothes: he would be recognized at a glance even by one of his fellows. Nor was the quality of this present *agent* lost upon those two Americans. No longer did they keep the chain upon their door. The Robinson inner hall was the scene of what next took place. It is known in France as the *interrogatoire*.

Monsieur le Comte testified to fact and to motive. From his first *rencontre* with Monsieur, the latter had shown himself *booldogue* and *antipathique*. And, since observing Monsieur in this last hour (he observed him now with an eye of asps and vitriol), he had been able to guess sufficiently well the meaning of the outrage of to-day so apparently inexplicable. "In America, with its humor always brutal, to cut the tails from a gentleman's vestment *intime* was, without doubt, *une espèce d'injure*—a species of insult aboriginal and *de dernière classe*! It was as it were in one gross and *mequante acte d'apache* to submit the honor, *la haute sensibilité*, of an opponent to *le scal'p, le hamstreeng!*"

Madame la Blanchisseuse testified as to the error which had given opportunity

for the affair. And, if that bundle of laundry had not been in the apartment Hoadley for long, granting that Madame acted quickly, the time would have sufficed. . . . She herself had in a manner



MADAME LA CONCIERGE BEGAN TO SPEAK VERY RAPIDLY

been responsible, she acknowledged it freely. But would any one say that she was a woman capable of doing a deed like that? When Monsieur le Comte had held up those garments before her, even without his language, she had had a veritable weakness of the limbs!

It would have been better for those Hoadleys had they confessed at once. But, from the commencement of that *interrogatoire*, Madame Hoadley again denied, denied *absolument*. Though guilt marked her every lineament, she professed to know nothing whatever about it.

"Eh bien!" said M. le Comte, "let the question be put to Monsieur!"

With the young wife who has been raised in an atmosphere of true idealism, it is an article of faith that her husband shall continue to believe in her even when he is well aware that she is not telling the truth. And if circumstances rendered it impossible for M. Hoadley to

attain to this marital height, it was still possible for him to rise to another: Whatever Madame had said he swore to. He, too, conceded nothing, acknowledged nothing, understood nothing. It was another case of *absolument*. He went further, in fact. He did not even admit that Madame la Blanchisseuse was their laundress. As far as his French allowed, he suggested that she might well be an impostor and no laundress at all. And the power of such a defence showed itself in this, that when he had finished, that *blanchisseuse de fin* was no longer capable of utterance. She made her way bursting down-stairs. And she returned with Madame la Concierge.

Madame la Concierge, being put under interrogation, began to speak very rapidly of the *porte-cochère*—that big double gate by which alone you may gain admittance to French apartment-houses—though little of what she said did those Hoadleys understand at the time. They merely continued to deny, to deny *absolument*. . . .

What in America is known as "the third degree" is in French practice known as the *confrontation*. The criminal is if possible *confronté* with the mangled and ghastly remains of his victim. If they are not sufficiently ghastly to begin with, they can easily be rendered so. And if there are no ghastly remains obtainable, he is *confronté* with the *évidences* of his crime. The *agent-commissaire* said something to the two complainants. They disappeared. When they remounted, the large arm of Madame la Blanchisseuse was extended with its pale burden of corpses. And again Monsieur le Comte, controlling himself by a supreme effort, limited himself to pointing.

For a moment Mr. Hoadley also controlled himself. Then he gave an exhibition which in its very shamelessness the *agent-commissaire de la sûreté* would have been justified in acting upon alone. But, following the sage prudence of his kind, he now made *sûreté* doubly sure by passing on all responsibility to those above him. The next step was for *mes-sieurs les chefs de bureau*.

It may be taken as a measure of his real feelings that when, fifteen minutes later,

Mr. Kidder Hoadley, looking from a front window, took note of the cortège that was then arriving, he put on a specious jauntiness. "That's right," he said. "Get some more, now. Bring 'em all! What we particularly need for an affair like this is the President and the Secretary of the Navy."

Louise sat apart. She lifted her hands and let them fall again. "Kidder," she said, "has it occurred to you that this may get into the *papers*—and be copied *home*?"

"That's all right now, little girl. We're denying it, ain't we? We're not giving 'em an inch. We're not knowing any more than if we'd been caught rebating."

If an *agent-commissaire* alone carries with him an atmosphere of gravity, is it necessary to say how profound is the atmosphere of gravity which can accompany an *inspecteur*, a *chef de bureau*, two more *agents-commissaires*, a *gardien de la paix*, an official interpreter, and an official stenographer, both the latter in cocked hats? Outwardly, the business of upholding the dignity of the government of France is upon the shoulders of a Senate and a Chamber of Deputies. Those who are truly informed know that in reality it rests upon the shoulders of six or seven too - little known gentlemen in the office of the Twenty-ninth Arrondissement. It is not without reason, then, that they are grave. And when they have to do with something which they do not in the least understand, their gravity becomes a gravity indeed.

The three *agents-commissaires* stood to attention with the expression of those detailed to assist at an execution. Madame la Blanchisseuse bowed and bowed again. M. le Comte de Montégut de Vezensac, though as a member

of the old nobility he spat upon the Republic, also permitted himself once to bow. Then, lest that first *agent-commissaire* had not heard aright, the *constatation* was from its beginning taken again.

Again Monsieur le Comte, having *constaté* how much against his disposition it was to be compelled, *sacré Dieu*, to appear in such a matter at all, bore his almost conclusive testimony.

Again Madame la Blanchisseuse bore her testimony, testimony wholly conclusive.

Again the Hoadleys, Madame and Monsieur, maintained a *dénégation*—pretended themselves to be of an ignorance complete.

Again during the *confrontation*, Madame was unable to rest her eyes upon the *évidences* at all. And Monsieur, after the most frightful efforts to control himself, ended by giving precisely the same exhibition that he had given twice before. Only the united strength of those three *agents-commissaires*, in truth, kept Monsieur le Comte from throwing himself upon him and giving him the death.

One would have said that both *confrontation* and *interrogatoire*, having followed the same course, could conclude only as the first had concluded.



May Nelson, Paris 10.

THE THREE AGENTS-COMMISSAIRES STOOD TO ATTENTION

But, when this time Monsieur Hoadley had burst finally into his yells, his ululations *insensées*, Monsieur l'Inspecteur and Monsieur le Chef de Bureau, as if with one voice, breathed forth an "Ah-h!" of profound intelligence. They looked at each other with a meaning, with a significance.

Of a first significance, too, was the fact that they now addressed their *interrogatoire* no longer to Monsieur but to Madame Hoadley.

"Madame would perhaps wish to communicate the affair to her Ambassador?"

"No!" cried Madame. "No!—No!—No!"

A second time Monsieur l'Inspecteur and Monsieur le Chef de Bureau regarded each other.

"Très-bien!"

"Très-bien!"

But it was in the testimony of Madame la Concierge, now again called up, that the new direction which the *interrogatoire* had taken made itself really felt. The incident narrated by Madame la Concierge—that of the *porte-cochère*—dated back to the first night Monsieur and Madame had remained out after ten o'clock. And, told from the standpoint of the Hoadleys, it was briefly this: They had returned to find the *porte-cochère*, according to custom, firmly closed. At that time neither of them knew the location of the bell, or, for that matter, that there was any such thing. Knocking effected nothing. Obviously, decisive action was called for. And, taking five yards, Kidder had bucked that *porte-cochère* for a touch-down. It had opened with a crash of cheap bolt castings. And he had got Louise half-way up-stairs before the concierge had recovered from a terrified certainty that she had to deal with the whole Belleville colony of anarchists. Next morning Louise had paid for the damage—Kidder not having the French for it—and given the concierge ten francs for herself in the bargain. At the time, Madame la Concierge deposed, she had accepted the explanation of Madame 'Oadly. She understood now the mistake she had made in not reporting the affair at once to the *bureau*. She would, indeed, have done so later had there been anything of an equal seriousness between then and to-day.

But, *with* this affair of to-day, it was enough! The conclusion was so plain, so *indicatif* to all, that, when for a necessary intermission that provisional court of *constatation* arose, none of those composing it even felt the need of putting its conclusion into the regular official language.

The Hoadleys did not understand everything. Kidder, because of his weakness in linguistics, in fact, understood very little. But Louise had understood what was sufficient for both. And, when once more they were alone, she could only sit where they had left her. In French phrase she was *clouée*—nailed!

"It's all right now, little girl," Kidder again began to babble. "Nothing to worry about whatever. They've merely gone out to get the chief coroner and the commissioner of the morgue."

"Kidder," she said, "do you know—have you any first *conception* of the belief they're under now?"

"Well, not for more than pass-marks. I wouldn't want to try to take honors on it. But don't you worry a bit. If once you let them get you sea—"

"But it isn't me. It's *you*!"

"*Me*?"

"Yes, and they—they"—her voice rose and rose with the horror of it—"except the Count, and he believes you did it on purpose—they think you're *insane*, that's all! That's what comes of always getting the laugh out of things, as you say. They think you're insane, and that I've been trying to cover you up—to attract the notice to *me*!"

"Now look here, joker—"

"And do you know what they've gone out for now? Do you know what they meant by some one *adjoint à l'inspection médicale des aliénés*? Well, just what we'd call an expert from Bellevue! One of them's gone to ring him up, and the rest are only waiting down-stairs till he comes. And if you don't look sane to him . . . Kidder! If you're going to look like *that*!—Oh—my—goodness! And when I've told you there wasn't anything funny in it from the beginning?"

"Oh, now, Louise! Oh, pshaw! you know—" But his voice had its own huskiness. "Why, this time to-morrow we'll be laughing our heads off over it."



MONSIEUR HOADLEY BURST INTO YELLS

The thing is simply to take it naturally—to take it rationally!”

“Take it rationally—I should think you would! Oh, if father were only here! But, anyway, if you start up that crazy, senseless hee-haw at the *next* examination, you know now just exactly where it ’ll land you!”

And he was offered every chance to take it rationally. That young *médecin-inspecteur* was the first Frenchman he had ever liked on sight. He was, indeed, precisely the kind of keen, well-tailored, vandyked, and genial young professional—he might have been from Cornell or Johns Hopkins—who tells you with a slap that, as a matter of fact, there’s nothing the matter with your engine at all, but as you’re an old friend he’ll prescribe two weeks off for fishing. He might, officially, belong with the police; but the first all but contemptuous movement of the hand with which he put them behind him, that first warming beam of comprehension which he turned on their harried victims, showed the sort of person he really was. There was no need for the Hoadleys to tell him how great, how insufferable a mistake had been made. As his hand closed upon Kidder’s, he seemed to get

it all intuitively. He kneaded Kidder’s arm and smiled salvation through his very being. “*Ah, quelle erreur, mes amis!—Quelle stupidité!—Quelle im-bécillité!*” Already he had become the trustiest, the most understanding, the oldest of college chums! In fact, that display of international and comprehending friendship, arriving when it did, came near to unmanning the object of it. M. Hoadley broke away, and getting himself into the den, began to grope for the cigars—for the Robinson wine-closet.

And how much greater was the effect upon Louise! If that young *médecin-inspecteur* had talked movingly to Kidder, to her he spoke with a fineness of feeling, a chivalrousness, a deep and true appreciation of what she as a *woman* had that day been through, which, she felt, if she allowed him to talk so a minute longer, indeed, could end only with her falling upon his neck. And she begged him to speak to Kidder again.

He did, or rather, through Monsieur *l’Interprète*, he spoke to both of them. He inquired if Monsieur had not veritably been the object of a persecution by the police? *Non? Non?* But at least, now that she had some one to speak for her, Madame would no doubt wish

to communicate the affair to her Ambassador—*Non?* Then it was only Madame's philosophy, her nobility of heart, that led her to refrain. But he believed well that there were matters which (though one might not choose to impart them to *these gentlemen*), if at some time he should have the great happiness, the high honor, to call himself a friend—?

For his part, Kidder, still breathing relief in huge gulps, was by now only waiting the chance to tell the doctor the whole story. It wasn't a thing you could bring out, of course, before that stageful of buttony bats. But as soon as they'd been given due notice to quit, he'd get the doctor back into the den there, and share that afternoon's richness with him, if he had to do it in sign-language. It would be the first real chance he'd had to have his laugh out. So far it had been like getting caught in church, or at a funeral. He'd had to let go, of course—and he'd have had to even if he knew it was going to send him to the chair! It had got him sort of hysterical. But he hadn't had any real *satisfaction* out of it.



SHE FELT THAT IT COULD END ONLY BY HER FALLING ON HIS NECK

The French alienist is the most practical of psychopaths. He knows that the *aliéné* may, through hours of ordinary examination, succeed in concealing his *aliénation*. The one direct diagnosis is to reconstruct before him that ideagroup, or even image, in connection with which the mental obliquity was first made manifest. While the doctor was still talking to young Mr. Hoadley—while, indeed, they were now mutually kneading each other's arms in the fulness of their understanding—Kidder noticed that the doctor's eyes were turning toward the door. Madame la Blanchisseuse was once more standing darkly in the dusk, her arm burdened once more with its pallid tragedy. And once more—but this time under the compulsion of the police—M. le Comte de Montégut de Vezensac unfolded an arm from a bosom *de Vésuve* and pointed.

"*Whoo-oo! Wee-ee!*—" The subject of professional observation waved them away. "Oh— Oh, Lord, are you back at that again! Oh, powers above!"

"Kidder!" shrieked Louise. "*Stop! Oh, stop in time!*"

But if he heard, he neither heeded nor remembered. She could only turn in her agony to the friend and protector whom the last hour had so blessedly bestowed upon them.

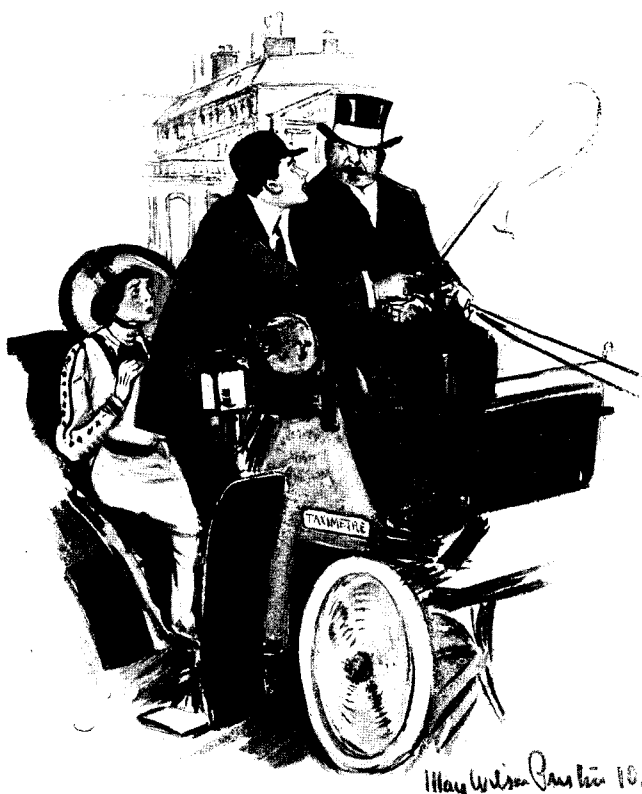
She turned to him, to become aware that the face of that *médecin-inspecteur* had undergone a transformation to freeze one's blood! As if in a single moment his expression had changed to one of a cool, a calm, a ruthlessly scientific satisfaction! His eye shone happily—with the brightness of a nickelled instrument. "*C'est assez*," he said. It was all that was needed. And he reset his glasses. In fact, the sole person who, plainly, still believed with her in Kidder's responsibility for his conduct, was Monsieur le Comte. And this time the Count could be restrained by no human power whatever. Beating his way through part of the intervention, and dragging the rest along with him, he precipitated himself upon that *grand cochon*—that great pig *d'Américain*. He sought to rend him. To be wholly truthful, he tried to *bite* him!

"G'way," breathed the sufferer, faintly. "G'wan away. . . I'll slap you on the wrist. . . I'll stick a pin in you!"

"He says," the official interpreter translated, "that he will strike him a blow upon the wrist—that he will thrust at him with a pin."

"*Parfaitement!*" said the friend and protector. "And, but five minutes since, one might have believed that Monsieur—voilà!" Madame he no longer saw. He turned to give instructions to M. l'Inspecteur: Monsieur would not, as yet, come under the classification "*presumé dangereux.*" It would be better, *en effet*, to place no *gardien* save at the street door. Doubtless by night Madame would be willing to communicate, herself. And he departed.

Great deeds are frequently but the product of great need. About eight that evening Monsieur and Madame Hoadley descended to the courtyard. Madame explained to the *gardien*—the policeman—at the foot of the stairs that M. l'Inspecteur had wished her to call upon her Ambassador. The *gardien* understood. He regarded her with a sympathy. He allowed himself to go as far as the curb to stop a yellow-bodied open cab: Monsieur must, however—he regretted to say it—remain with him. Monsieur accepted the order with a mildness to touch the heart. He saw Madame prepare to depart without him; he passed the *gardien* and returned sadly to the stairs. And next moment the *gardien*, seized back to back, found himself whirling upward and over and upon his axis as if from the saddle of some bucking bronco. He came down, hurting himself *atrocement*, to behold Monsieur—*diable de diables!*—half-way



"GARE DU NORD!" CAME CHOKINGLY FROM MONSIEUR

to the cab. The cab itself was half-way to a gallop; not entirely so, for in that case Monsieur might not have been able to overtake it!

How did that cabman understand? The French are a people of logic. It was logical that Monsieur should wish to follow Madame, particularly after his moment with the *gardien*. It was also logical that Monsieur should now desire to travel fast.

"*Vite! Vite! Vitement!*" came from Madame as he mounted. And, "Gare du Nord!" came chokingly from Monsieur, along with a piece of twenty francs.

Had Jehu been driving in front of that cabman, he would have been arrested for impeding traffic! In seven minutes they could see the station gates. "Fore Lawndon, à gauche, à droite!" First to your left, then to your right," said that cabman of genius. Without those six golden words, indeed, they would have been late. . . Why were they not

stopped at Calais? The French, let it be said again, are a people of logic. Since those Hoadleys had thus delivered France of themselves, why take any further steps—unless, indeed, they should attempt at some time to *return*?

And when at length, by endless diplomatic mediation and the payment of damages, they had finally come into possession of their baggage again, Louise Hoadley, far from wishing ever to re-enter France, desired only that she might never hear French spoken more.

Kidder, however, resented the whole affair. He, too, might have no desire to return to Paris immediately; but not improbably he *would* have such a desire in future. And he was much averse to being compelled to return in disguise. He felt resentful in particular against M. le Comte de Montégut de Vezensac, who, he now realized, had been the well-spring of the whole trouble. He felt that he could not rest—much less go back to work—till he had gone *some* distance at least toward squaring things with him. And with the unpacking of Louise's largest trunk something greatly resembling an opportunity presented itself. There ensued an hour of grim but satisfying composition. The following morning there came into the hands of M. le Comte an epistle

which, translated back again, read in part as follows:

"You were right. It was I who did it—I. You were also right in your inference as to the significance of the act. It is thus, Monsieur, that our fathers the aborigines have been accustomed to pass the insult, from a time immemorial. It will, perhaps, not affect your position so long as you continue to remain in France. But should you at any time contemplate visiting America—for example, upon that high mission of matrimonial alliance which has drawn to our shores so many of your compatriots of rank—then, Monsieur, you will understand that your position will at once become very different. Possibly you could in that event assist yourself by laying the matter—need I say without the mention of names—before a committee of gentlemen of the New York press. And if, Monsieur, the outcome is to be the field of honor, I await you. But until then, according to the usage of my country, I continue to hold in my possession the pieces which remain."

To illumine any seeming obscurity in the concluding sentence it is necessary to explain that the epistle of the Hon. M. Kidder Hoadley went to M. le Comte de Montégut de Vezensac upon a square of Irish linen not of the shape commonly used for correspondence. It had also been freshly laundered.

Alone

BY CONSTANCE JOHNSON

DEAR, I am strong, and working can forget you;
 Dear, I can nerve my soul to face the night;
 But, O Belov'd! I cannot face the waking,
 Cannot endure the tender, dawning light.

After deep sleep, that seems to end all sorrow,
 Must I renew the bitter fight each dawn?
 After sweet dreams, which God in mercy sends me,
 Must I awake and always find you gone?