

self-possession of his demeanour, the somber glitter of these black eyes, pin-points below shaggy eyebrows, inspired the large man with a certain uneasiness. Not at all a chap to quarrel with, was his thought. However, being himself a widely travelled man—Boulogne, Dieppe, Paris, Switzerland, and even Venice—he had none of that insularity of which foreigners accuse some Englishmen; and he had endeavoured to make conversation during the journey. The small man had proved a poor companion, taciturn to a fault, sparing of words where a nod would satisfy the obligations of courtesy, and seemingly fonder of his pipe than of his fellow-man. A man with a secret, thought the Englishman.

The train had jolted out of the station, and the porter had faded out of the landscape. "A deserted spot," remarked the Englishman, whose name was Bevan, "especially in such fearful heat. Really in the summer of 1911, it was hardly as bad. Do you know, I remember, once at Boulogne——" He broke off sharply, for the brown man, sticking the ferrule of his stick repeatedly in the sand, and knotting his brows, came suddenly to a decision. "What do you know of heat?" he cried, fixing Bevan with the intensity of a demon. "What do you know of desolation?" Taken aback, as well he might be, Bevan was at a loss to reply. "Stay!" cried the other. "What if I told you my story? There is no one here but ourselves." He glared menacingly at Bevan, seemed to seek to read his soul. "Are you a man to be trusted?" he barked, and broke off short.

At another time Bevan would most certainly have declined to become the confidant of a stranger; but here the solitude, the heat, not a little boredom induced by the manner of his companion, and even a certain mistrust of how he might take a refusal, combined to elicit a favorable reply.

Stately as an oak, Bevan answered, "I was born an English gentleman, and I trust that I have never done any-

thing to derogate from that estate." "I am a Justice of the Peace," he added after a momentary pause.

"I knew it!" cried the other excitedly. "The trained legal mind is that of all others which will appreciate my story. Swear, then," he went on with sudden gravity, "swear then that you will never whisper to any living soul the smallest word of what I am about to tell you! Swear by the soul of your dead mother."

"My mother is alive," returned Bevan.

"I knew it!" exclaimed his companion, a great and strange look of god-like pity illuminating his sunburned face. It was such a look as one sees upon many statues of Buddha, a look of divine, of impersonal compassion.

"Then swear by the Lord Chancellor!"

Bevan was more than ever persuaded that the stranger was a Frenchman. However, he readily gave the required promise.

"My name," said the other, "is Duguesclin. Does that tell you my story?" He asked impressively. "Does that convey anything to your mind?"

"Nothing at all."

"I knew it!" said the Frenchman. "Then I must tell you all. In my veins boils the fiery blood of the greatest of the French warriors, and my mother was the lineal descendant of the Maid of Saragossa."

Bevan was startled and showed it.

"After the siege, sir, she was honorably married to a nobleman," snapped Duguesclin. "Do you think a man of my ancestry will permit a stranger to lift the shadow of an eyebrow against the memory of my great-grandmother?"

The Englishman protested that nothing had been further from his thoughts.

"I suppose so," proceeded the Frenchman more quietly. "And the more, perhaps, that I am a convicted murderer."

Bevan was fairly alarmed.

"I am proud of it," proceeded Duguesclin. "At the age of twenty-five my blood was more fiery than it is to-