

also that Dodu would not be such a fool as to try to take advantage of that circumstance; and he would be right, curse him! It implies the intensest depth of feeling to curse in the Morse code with one's feet—ah! how we hated him!

"Dodu explained that he was telling me these obvious things for several reasons: (1) to gauge my intelligence by my reception of them, (2) to make sure that if we failed it should be by my stupidity and not by his neglect to inform me of every detail, (3) because he had acquired the professional habit as another man might have the gout.

"Briefly, however, this was his plan: to elude the guards, make for the coast, capture a boat, and put to sea. Do you understand? Do you get the idea?"

Bevan replied that it seemed to him the only possible plan.

"A man like Dodu," pursued Duguesclin, "takes nothing for granted. He leaves no precaution untaken: in his plans, if chance be an element, it is an element whose value is calculated to twenty-eight places of decimals.

"But hardly had he laid down these bold outlines of his scheme, when interruption came. On the fourth day of our intercourse he signalled only 'Wait. Watch me!' again and again. In the evening he manoeuvred to get to the rear of the line of convicts, and only then dragged out 'There is a traitor, a spy. Henceforth I must find a new means of communicating the details of my plan. I have thought it all out. I shall speak in a sort of rebus, which not even you will be able to understand unless you have all the pieces—and the key. Mind you engrave upon your memory every word I say.'

"The following day: 'Do you remember the taking of the old mill by the Prussians in '70? My difficulty is that I must give you the skeleton of the puzzle, which I can't do in words. But watch the line of my spade and my heelmarks, and take a copy.'

"I did this with the utmost minuteness of accuracy and obtained this figure. At my autopsy," said Duguesclin,

dramatically, "this should be found engraved upon my heart."

He drew a notebook from his pocket and rapidly sketched the subjoined figure for the now interested Bevan.



"You will note that the figure has eight sides, and that twenty-seven crosses are disposed in groups of three, while in one corner is a much larger and thicker cross and two smaller crosses not so symmetrical. This group represents the element of chance; and you will at least gain a hint of the truth if you reflect that eight is the cube of two and twenty-seven of three."

Bevan looked intelligent.

"On the return march," continued Duguesclin, "Dodu said, 'The spy is on the watch. But count the letters in the name of Aristotle's favourite disciple.' I guessed (as he intended me to do) that he did not mean Aristotle. He wished to suggest Plato, and so Socrates; hence I counted A-L-C-I-B-I-A-D-E-S—10, and thus completely baffled the spy for that day. The following day he rapped out 'Rahu' very emphatically, meaning that the next lunar eclipse would be the proper moment for our evasion, and spent the rest of the day in small talk, so as to lull the suspicions of the spy. For three days he had no opportunity of saying anything, being in the hospital with fever. On the fourth day: 'I have discovered that spy is a damned swine of an opium-smoking lieutenant from Toulon. We have him: he doesn't know Paris. Now then: draw a line from the Gare de l'Est to the Etoile; erect an equilateral triangle on that line. Think of the name of the world-famous man who lives at the apex.' (This was a touch of super-genius, as it forced me to use the English alphabet for the basis of