

## *A Peculiar Business in Paris*

### *The Avocation of Connubial Spying*

A Paris correspondent writes as follows of the avocation of the Connubial Spy:

Although this individual, who is a real character, and is generally called the “Vidocq of the jealous,” is quite above attending to business himself, he has organized a complete establishment of surveillance, to which applications may be made, and where assistance may be secured (for cash), without the slightest difficulty. It is even possible to arrange matters by the month, quarter, or year—for all the world as if you were subscribing for a newspaper, except that it is somewhat more expensive. The price of an annual subscription is 3,000 francs, or \$600.

For this sum, a jealous husband is kept advised of every step Madame takes outside the conjugal domicile, during an entire twelve month, day and night. Nor has Madame any right to complain, for she enjoys precisely the same privilege, and may learn all her husband’s movements as if she never left his side. However, except in rare instances, the yearly plan is not patronized. Suspicion is ordinarily confirmed or removed, in a very brief period, and a few days are generally sufficient. In these cases, the charge is twenty francs per diem.

Not long ago, a certain Parisian Othello, of an uncommonly doting species, all at once tormented himself with a notion that Mrs. Othello held clandestine meetings with Capt. Cassio, of the Grenadiers, who was her own cousin to boot. Off posted Mr. O. to the chief of the conjugal-spy establishment, and employed an expert “shadow” to keep an eye upon Mrs. O’s promenades.

The surveillance lasted a week. It might have gone on for a longer period, but the spy rendered so good an account of the lady he was employed to watch, that, at the end of eight days, her worthy husband began to suspect that he had made an ass of himself and was spending twenty francs a day for nothing. He consequently informed Vidocq that he was quite satisfied, and called for his bill. A bit of paper was forthwith presented to him, upon which his indebtedness was set down at 400 francs.

“Four hundred francs!” exclaimed the good man. “There is a mistake in this! Our engagement has extended over a period of eight days only, and, at twenty francs a day, the amount is 160 francs.”

“Very true, sir,” replied the other; “but I thought I could venture to include Madame’s bill in yours.”

“What! You don’t mean to say my wife owes you anything?”

“Yes, sir; twelve days following and watching, at twenty francs, 240 francs, which, added to your 160, makes the 400.”

The excellent husband was not displeased at this. Oh! far from it. So, his wife had set a watch over him! It became perfectly evident that she must be jealous of him, and women are not jealous of men they do not love. He joyfully paid the money, took a receipt, and was about leaving the “office,” when, struck with a sudden idea, he turned to Vidocq and asked—

“When was it my wife employed one of your men to follow me?”

“You, sir? She never engaged us to follow you!”

“Then what the d—! is the meaning of these 240 francs—hey?”

“Why, sir, some days before you came to us, to have Madame watched, Madame employed us to look after Cassio of the Grenadiers. And I’m sorry to say sir, the reports we have made to Madame have not been so satisfactory as was desirable. The Captain is a hard case, sir, a *very* hard case; and he has been going on with Ma’mselle Clementine, of the Opera, in a manner most shockingly to our feelings as conjugal agents.”

Of course Othello left, more or less pulverized by this “professional” revelation.

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