

A Good Anecdote of Vidocq

A rich merchant went to him to consult on a deficit of \$15,000 francs which he found on his books. Vidocq demanded:

“What is the age of your cashier?”

“Twenty-five. But I am as sure of him as of myself; he has also been robbed; he is a victim like myself.”

“Are you married?”

“Yes.”

“How old is your wife? Is she handsome? Is she honest?”

“Oh, Sir, my wife is virtue itself—honorable, attached to me, above—”

“Never mind all that; your cashier is twenty-five; is your wife handsome?”

“Since you insist on knowing, she is handsome, but—”

“But! But! No matter about the buts! You wish to find your money, don’t you, and you have confidence in me?”

“Of course I have, since I am here!”

“Very well, then; go back home, make her believe that you are going on a journey, and introduce me into the house.”

This was done. The merchant left home, and Vidocq hid himself in the closet near the chamber of the lady. Breakfast was served, a young man was shown in, and was thus addressed by Madame:

“Very well, Arthur, he is gone, but he suspects us, and we are lost.”

The rival of Carpentier went over a long tirade of love and desolation, concluding with these words:

“Only one road is left open to us; let us take what remains and embark for—”

Vidocq stepped out of his concealment. Tableau!

“My children be calm, or I’ll break both your heads,” said Vidocq. “We understand each other I suppose? Now, tell me where is the stolen money?”

“We have only 100,000 francs left,” replied the woman.

“Are you telling the truth?”

“Oh, I swear it.”

“Very well! Give it to me.” The money was given over.

“Now, then, let this affair be forgotten; never speak of it to your husband and he shall know nothing. As for you, Sir, give me your delicate little thumbs.” He placed handcuffs on the gentleman, conducted him to Havre, put him on a ship bound for America, and left him with the French adieu: “Go and hang yourself elsewhere.”

Vidocq came back to Paris, handed the 100,000 francs to the merchant, saying “Your cashier was the thief, but he had spent 50,000 francs of the money with a *danseuse*; I embarked him for New York.” Afterwards no happier family was ever known than that of the merchant.—Paris Correspondent of the N. Y. Times

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