ARSÉNE LUPIN VERSUS SHERLOCK HOLMES

MAURICE LEBLANC

translated by
GEORGE MOREHEAD

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1910

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ABOUT AUTHOR



Maurice Leblanc (1864-1941)

"The Mastermind Behind the Gentleman-Burglar"

Maurice Marie Émile Leblanc was a profound French novelist and short story writer whose creation of the charming, elusive master thief Arsène Lupin left an indelible mark on world detective fiction. Operating during the vibrant era of Belle Époque France, Leblanc redefined the boundaries of crime literature by introducing a protagonist who was not a defender of the law, but a brilliant outlaw with a strict moral code.

Early Life and Literary Ambitions:

Born on December 11, 1864, in Rouen, Normandy, Leblanc was the son of a wealthy Italian ship-owner. Growing up in a prosperous household, he was deeply influenced by the rich cultural atmosphere of 19th-century France. Although his father strongly pushed him to pursue a practical career in the local manufacturing industry, Leblanc's heart belonged entirely to literature.

In his twenties, he abandoned his studies and moved to Paris to immerse himself in the bohemian literary scene. His early works consisted of psychological novels and short stories heavily influenced by masters of French realism, such as Gustave Flaubert and Guy de Maupassant. While these early efforts earned him critical praise and respect from fellow intellectuals, they achieved very little commercial success, leaving Leblanc struggling financially for nearly two decades.

The Birth of Arsène Lupin:

Leblanc’s destiny changed forever in 1905. Pierre Lafitte, the editor of the newly launched popular magazine *Je sais tout*, approached Leblanc with a specific request: to write a crime story modeled after the immense British success of Arthur Conan Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes.

Instead of creating another brilliant detective, Leblanc turned the concept completely on its head. In July 1905, he published ***The Arrest of Arsène Lupin*** (*L'Arrestation d'Arsène Lupin*). The story introduced a charismatic, aristocratic thief who stole only from the corrupt, rich, and elite, using wit, disguise, and immaculate manners instead of violence. The character was an instant, overwhelming sensation. Readers demanded more, and what was meant to be a single short story quickly transformed into a lifelong literary phenomenon.

The Literary World of Lupin:

Leblanc's writing perfectly captured the spirit of his time. The *Arsène Lupin* universe combined the romance of the fading 19th century with the rapid technological advances of the early 20th century, featuring automobiles, wireless telegraphs, and modern steamships.

Leblanc famously blurred the lines between fictional universes by introducing Arthur Conan Doyle's famous detective into his stories. Following legal threats from Doyle's lawyers, Leblanc cleverly rearranged the letters

to create **"Sherlock Holmes"**, turning the British detective into a brilliant but frequently outsmarted rival to Lupin. Over the course of nearly thirty years, Leblanc dedicated his career to expanding this universe, writing over twenty novels and numerous short story collections featuring the gentleman-burglar.

In recognition of his immense contributions to French literature and cultural export, Maurice Leblanc was awarded the prestigious *Légion d'honneur* by the French government.

Most Notable Works:

While Leblanc wrote several standalone science-fiction and mystery novels, his legacy rests primarily on the following masterpieces:

- ***The Extraordinary Adventures of Arsène Lupin, Gentleman-Burglar*** **(1907)**: The foundational collection of the first nine short stories that introduced Lupin’s genius, disguises, and daring escapes to the world.
- ***Arsène Lupin versus Sherlock Holmes*** **(1908)**: A legendary battle of wits between the world’s greatest detective and France's most elusive thief.
- ***The Hollow Needle*** **(1909)**: Widely considered Leblanc's finest novel, where Lupin uncovers a historic secret chamber used by the kings of France, hidden inside a famous rock formation in Normandy.
- ***813*** **(1910)**: A darker, epic, and complex masterpiece that sees Lupin entangled in international

politics, secret treaties, and a mysterious murder plot.

- ***The Crystal Stopper* (1912)**: A high-stakes political thriller where a vulnerable Lupin must use every ounce of his intellect to save his accomplices from the guillotine.

Later Years and Legacy:

As the years progressed, Leblanc grew somewhat resentful of his creation, feeling that Lupin had completely overshadowed his serious psychological fiction. Yet, he continued to write for his millions of devoted fans worldwide. In 1939, following the outbreak of World War II, Leblanc fled Paris and moved to the safety of Perpignan in southern France. He passed away there from pneumonia on November 6, 1941, at the age of 76.

Today, Maurice Leblanc is celebrated as a pioneer of the caper story and the anti-hero archetype. His creation, Arsène Lupin, remains an immortal pop-culture icon, continuously adapted into global television series, anime, movies, and video games, proving that the charm of the gentleman-burglar is truly timeless.

PREFACE

The Ultimate Clash of Intellects. A Master Thief. A Legendary Detective.

When a series of daring thefts and baffling disappearances leaves the Paris police completely helpless, there is only one man in the world capable of stopping the chaos. Drawn out of his retirement, the world's most brilliant analytical mind arrives in France with a single goal: to capture Arsène Lupin. But the charming gentleman-burglar is not an ordinary criminal. For Lupin, the arrival of his greatest adversary is not a threat, but the ultimate invitation to a high-stakes psychological game where every move could mean ruin.

What follows is a spectacular, fast-paced duel of wits across grand châteaux, secret passages, and fog-covered streets. As the master detective untangles clues that seem impossible to solve, Lupin deploys brilliant disguises, clever misdirections, and calculated risks to stay exactly one step ahead. It is a thrilling battle between flawless logic and sheer creative genius, where the boundary between the hunter and the prey blurs with every chapter.

Experience the historic rivalry that captivated generations of mystery lovers worldwide. Witty, unpredictable, and filled with sharp dialogue, this definitive tale delivers the ultimate showdown of crime and intellect, building toward a climax that neither genius saw coming.

I

LOTTERY TICKET NO. 514

On the eighth day of last December, Mon. Gerbois, professor of mathematics at the College of Versailles, while rummaging in an old curiosity-shop, unearthed a small mahogany writing-desk which pleased him very much on account of the multiplicity of its drawers.

"Just the thing for Suzanne's birthday present," thought he. And as he always tried to furnish some simple pleasures for his daughter, consistent with his modest income, he enquired the price, and, after some keen bargaining, purchased it for sixty-five francs. As he was giving his address to the shopkeeper, a young man, dressed with elegance and taste, who had been exploring the stock of antiques, caught sight of the writing-desk, and immediately enquired its price.

"It is sold," replied the shopkeeper.

"Ah! to this gentleman, I presume?"

Monsieur Gerbois bowed, and left the store, quite proud to be the possessor of an article which had attracted the attention of a gentleman of quality. But he had not taken a dozen steps in the street, when he was overtaken by the young man who, hat in hand and in a tone of perfect courtesy, thus addressed him:

“I beg your pardon, monsieur; I am going to ask you a question that you may deem impertinent. It is this: Did you have any special object in view when you bought that writing-desk?”

“No, I came across it by chance and it struck my fancy.”

“But you do not care for it particularly?”

“Oh! I shall keep it—that is all.”

“Because it is an antique, perhaps?”

“No; because it is convenient,” declared Mon. Gerbois.

“In that case, you would consent to exchange it for another desk that would be quite as convenient and in better condition?”

“Oh! this one is in good condition, and I see no object in making an exchange.”

“But—”

Mon. Gerbois is a man of irritable disposition and hasty temper. So he replied, testily:

“I beg of you, monsieur, do not insist.”

But the young man firmly held his ground.

“I don’t know how much you paid for it, monsieur, but I offer you double.”

“No.”

“Three times the amount.”

“Oh! that will do,” exclaimed the professor, impatiently; “I don’t wish to sell it.”

The young man stared at him for a moment in a manner

that Mon. Gerbois would not readily forget, then turned and walked rapidly away.

An hour later, the desk was delivered at the professor's house on the Viroflay road. He called his daughter, and said:

"Here is something for you, Suzanne, provided you like it."

Suzanne was a pretty girl, with a gay and affectionate nature. She threw her arms around her father's neck and kissed him rapturously. To her, the desk had all the semblance of a royal gift. That evening, assisted by Hortense, the servant, she placed the desk in her room; then she dusted it, cleaned the drawers and pigeonholes, and carefully arranged within it her papers, writing material, correspondence, a collection of postcards, and some souvenirs of her cousin Philippe that she kept in secret.

Next morning, at half past seven, Mon. Gerbois went to the college. At ten o'clock, in pursuance of her usual custom, Suzanne went to meet him, and it was a great pleasure for him to see her slender figure and childish smile waiting for him at the college gate. They returned home together.

"And your writing desk—how is it this morning?"

"Marvellous! Hortense and I have polished the brass mountings until they look like gold."

"So you are pleased with it?"

"Pleased with it! Why, I don't see how I managed to get

on without it for such a long time."

As they were walking up the pathway to the house, Mon. Gerbois said:

"Shall we go and take a look at it before breakfast?"

"Oh! yes, that's a splendid idea!"

She ascended the stairs ahead of her father, but, on arriving at the door of her room, she uttered a cry of surprise and dismay.

"What's the matter?" stammered Mon. Gerbois.

"The writing-desk is gone!"

When the police were called in, they were astonished at the admirable simplicity of the means employed by the thief. During Suzanne's absence, the servant had gone to market, and while the house was thus left unguarded, a drayman, wearing a badge—some of the neighbors saw it—stopped his cart in front of the house and rang twice. Not knowing that Hortense was absent, the neighbors were not suspicious; consequently, the man carried on his work in peace and tranquility.

Apart from the desk, not a thing in the house had been disturbed. Even Suzanne's purse, which she had left upon the writing-desk, was found upon an adjacent table with its contents untouched. It was obvious that the thief had come with a set purpose, which rendered the crime even more mysterious; because, why did he assume so great a risk for such a trifling object?

The only clue the professor could furnish was the strange incident of the preceding evening. He declared:

"The young man was greatly provoked at my refusal, and I had an idea that he threatened me as he went away."

But the clue was a vague one. The shopkeeper could not throw any light on the affair. He did not know either of the gentlemen. As to the desk itself, he had purchased it for forty francs at an executor's sale at Chevreuse, and believed he had resold it at its fair value. The police investigation disclosed nothing more.

But Mon. Gerbois entertained the idea that he had suffered an enormous loss. There must have been a fortune concealed in a secret drawer, and that was the reason the young man had resorted to crime.

"My poor father, what would we have done with that fortune?" asked Suzanne.

"My child! with such a fortune, you could make a most advantageous marriage."

Suzanne sighed bitterly. Her aspirations soared no higher than her cousin Philippe, who was indeed a most deplorable object. And life, in the little house at Versailles, was not so happy and contented as of yore.

Two months passed away. Then came a succession of startling events, a strange blending of good luck and dire misfortune!

On the first day of February, at half-past five, Mon. Gerbois entered the house, carrying an evening paper, took a seat, put on his spectacles, and commenced to read. As

politics did not interest him, he turned to the inside of the paper. Immediately his attention was attracted by an article entitled:

“Third Drawing of the Press Association Lottery.

“No. 514, series 23, draws a million.”

The newspaper slipped from his fingers. The walls swam before his eyes, and his heart ceased to beat. He held No. 514, series 23. He had purchased it from a friend, to oblige him, without any thought of success, and behold, it was the lucky number!

Quickly, he took out his memorandum-book. Yes, he was quite right. The No. 514, series 23, was written there, on the inside of the cover. But the ticket?

He rushed to his desk to find the envelope-box in which he had placed the precious ticket; but the box was not there, and it suddenly occurred to him that it had not been there for several weeks. He heard footsteps on the gravel walk leading from the street.

He called:

“Suzanne! Suzanne!”

She was returning from a walk. She entered hastily. He stammered, in a choking voice:

“Suzanne … the box … the box of envelopes?”

“What box?”

“The one I bought at the Louvre … one Saturday … it was at the end of that table.”

“Don’t you remember, father, we put all those things

away together."

"When?"

"The evening … you know … the same evening. …"

"But where? … Tell me, quick! … Where?"

"Where? Why, in the writing-desk."

"In the writing-desk that was stolen?"

"Yes."

"Oh, *mon Dieu!* … In the stolen desk!"

He uttered the last sentence in a low voice, in a sort of stupor. Then he seized her hand, and in a still lower voice, he said:

"It contained a million, my child."

"Ah! father, why didn't you tell me?" she murmured, naively.

"A million!" he repeated. "It contained the ticket that drew the grand prize in the Press Lottery."

The colossal proportions of the disaster overwhelmed them, and for a long time they maintained a silence that they feared to break. At last, Suzanne said:

"But, father, they will pay you just the same."

"How? On what proof?"

"Must you have proof?"

"Of course."

"And you haven't any?"

"It was in the box."

"In the box that has disappeared."

"Yes; and now the thief will get the money."

"Oh! that would be terrible, father. You must prevent it."

For a moment he was silent; then, in an outburst of energy, he leaped up, stamped on the floor, and exclaimed:

"No, no, he shall not have that million; he shall not have it! Why should he have it? Ah! clever as he is, he can do nothing. If he goes to claim the money, they will arrest him. Ah! now, we will see, my fine fellow!"

"What will you do, father?"

"Defend our just rights, whatever happens! And we will succeed. The million francs belong to me, and I intend to have them."

A few minutes later, he sent this telegram:

"GOVERNOR CRÉDIT FONCIER
"RUE CAPUCINES, PARIS.

"AM HOLDER OF NO. 514, SERIES 23. OPPOSE BY ALL LEGAL MEANS ANY OTHER CLAIMANT.

"GERBOIS."

Almost at the same moment, the Crédit Foncier received the following telegram:

"NO. 514, SERIES 23, IS IN MY POSSESSION.

"ARSÈNE LUPIN."

Every time I undertake to relate one of the many

extraordinary adventures that mark the life of Arsène Lupin, I experience a feeling of embarrassment, as it seems to me that the most commonplace of those adventures is already well known to my readers. In fact, there is not a movement of our "national thief," as he has been so aptly described, that has not been given the widest publicity, not an exploit that has not been studied in all its phases, not an action that has not been discussed with that particularity usually reserved for the recital of heroic deeds.

For instance, who does not know the strange history of "The Blonde Lady," with those curious episodes which were proclaimed by the newspapers with heavy black headlines, as follows: "Lottery Ticket No. 514!" … "The Crime on the Avenue Henri-Martin!" … "The Blue Diamond!" … The interest created by the intervention of the celebrated English detective, Sherlock Holmes! The excitement aroused by the various vicissitudes which marked the struggle between those famous artists! And what a commotion on the boulevards, the day on which the newsboys announced: "Arrest of Arsène Lupin!"

My excuse for repeating these stories at this time is the fact that I produce the key to the enigma. Those adventures have always been enveloped in a certain degree of obscurity, which I now remove. I reproduce old newspaper articles, I relate old-time interviews, I present ancient letters; but I have arranged and classified all that material and reduced it to the exact truth. My collaborators in this work have been Arsène Lupin himself, and also the ineffable Wilson, the friend and confidant of Sherlock Holmes.

Everyone will recall the tremendous burst of laughter which greeted the publication of those two telegrams. The name “Arsène Lupin” was in itself a stimulus to curiosity, a promise of amusement for the gallery. And, in this case, the gallery means the entire world.

An investigation was immediately commenced by the Crédit Foncier, which established these facts: That ticket No. 514, series 23, had been sold by the Versailles branch office of the Lottery to an artillery officer named Bessy, who was afterward killed by a fall from his horse. Some time before his death, he informed some of his comrades that he had transferred his ticket to a friend.

“And I am that friend,” affirmed Mon. Gerbois.

“Prove it,” replied the governor of the Crédit Foncier.

“Of course I can prove it. Twenty people can tell you that I was an intimate friend of Monsieur Bessy, and that we frequently met at the Café de la Place-d’Armes. It was there, one day, I purchased the ticket from him for twenty francs—simply as an accommodation to him.”

“Have you any witnesses to that transaction?”

“No.”

“Well, how do you expect to prove it?”

“By a letter he wrote to me.”

“What letter?”

“A letter that was pinned to the ticket.”

“Produce it.”

“It was stolen at the same time as the ticket.”

"Well, you must find it."

It was soon learned that Arsène Lupin had the letter. A short paragraph appeared in the *Echo de France*—which has the honor to be his official organ, and of which, it is said, he is one of the principal shareholders—the paragraph announced that Arsène Lupin had placed in the hands of Monsieur Detinan, his advocate and legal adviser, the letter that Monsieur Bessy had written to him—to him personally.

This announcement provoked an outburst of laughter. Arsène Lupin had engaged a lawyer! Arsène Lupin, conforming to the rules and customs of modern society, had appointed a legal representative in the person of a well-known member of the Parisian bar!

Mon. Detinan had never enjoyed the pleasure of meeting Arsène Lupin—a fact he deeply regretted—but he had actually been retained by that mysterious gentleman and felt greatly honored by the choice. He was prepared to defend the interests of his client to the best of his ability. He was pleased, even proud, to exhibit the letter of Mon. Bessy, but, although it proved the transfer of the ticket, it did not mention the name of the purchaser. It was simply addressed to "My Dear Friend."

"My Dear Friend! that is I," added Arsène Lupin, in a note attached to Mon. Bessy's letter. "And the best proof of that fact is that I hold the letter."

The swarm of reporters immediately rushed to see Mon. Gerbois, who could only repeat:

"My Dear Friend! that is I. … Arsène Lupin stole the

letter with the lottery ticket."

"Let him prove it!" retorted Lupin to the reporters.

"He must have done it, because he stole the writing-desk!" exclaimed Mon. Gerbois before the same reporters.

"Let him prove it!" replied Lupin.

Such was the entertaining comedy enacted by the two claimants of ticket No. 514; and the calm demeanor of Arsène Lupin contrasted strangely with the nervous perturbation of poor Mon. Gerbois. The newspapers were filled with the lamentations of that unhappy man. He announced his misfortune with pathetic candor.

"Understand, gentlemen, it was Suzanne's dowry that the rascal stole! Personally, I don't care a straw for it, … but for Suzanne! Just think of it, a whole million! Ten times one hundred thousand francs! Ah! I knew very well that the desk contained a treasure!"

It was in vain to tell him that his adversary, when stealing the desk, was unaware that the lottery ticket was in it, and that, in any event, he could not foresee that the ticket would draw the grand prize. He would reply;

"Nonsense! of course, he knew it … else why would he take the trouble to steal a poor, miserable desk?"

"For some unknown reason; but certainly not for a small scrap of paper which was then worth only twenty francs."

"A million francs! He knew it; … he knows everything! Ah! you do not know him—the scoundrel! … He hasn't robbed you of a million francs!"

The controversy would have lasted for a much longer

time, but, on the twelfth day, Mon. Gerbois received from Arsène Lupin a letter, marked "confidential," which read as follows:

"MONSIEUR, the gallery is being amused at our expense. Do you not think it is time for us to be serious? The situation is this: I possess a ticket to which I have no legal right, and you have the legal right to a ticket you do not possess. Neither of us can do anything. You will not relinquish your rights to me; I will not deliver the ticket to you. Now, what is to be done?

"I see only one way out of the difficulty: Let us divide the spoils. A half-million for you; a half-million for me. Is not that a fair division? In my opinion, it is an equitable solution, and an immediate one. I will give you three days' time to consider the proposition. On Thursday morning I shall expect to read in the personal column of the *Echo de France* a discreet message addressed to *M. Ars. Lup.*, expressing in veiled terms your consent to my offer. By so doing you will recover immediate possession of the ticket; then you can collect the money and send me half a million in a manner that I will describe to you later.

"In case of your refusal, I shall resort to other measures to accomplish the same result. But, apart from the very serious annoyances that such obstinacy on your part will cause you, it will cost you twenty-five thousand francs for supplementary expenses.

"Believe me, monsieur, I remain your devoted servant, ARSÈNE LUPIN."

In a fit of exasperation Mon. Gerbois committed the grave mistake of showing that letter and allowing a copy of

it to be taken. His indignation overcame his discretion.

“Nothing! He shall have nothing!” he exclaimed, before a crowd of reporters. “To divide my property with him? Never! Let him tear up the ticket if he wishes!”

“Yet five hundred thousand francs is better than nothing.”

“That is not the question. It is a question of my just right, and that right I will establish before the courts.”

“What! attack Arsène Lupin? That would be amusing.”

“No; but the Crédit Foncier. They must pay me the million francs.”

“Without producing the ticket, or, at least, without proving that you bought it?”

“That proof exists, since Arsène Lupin admits that he stole the writing-desk.”

“But would the word of Arsène Lupin carry any weight with the court?”

“No matter; I will fight it out.”

The gallery shouted with glee; and wagers were freely made upon the result with the odds in favor of Lupin. On the following Thursday the personal column in the *Echo de France* was eagerly perused by the expectant public, but it contained nothing addressed to *M. Ars. Lup.* Mon. Gerbois had not replied to Arsène Lupin’s letter. That was the declaration of war.

That evening the newspapers announced the abduction of Mlle. Suzanne Gerbois.

The most entertaining feature in what might be called the Arsène Lupin dramas is the comic attitude displayed by the Parisian police. Arsène Lupin talks, plans, writes, commands, threatens and executes as if the police did not exist. They never figure in his calculations.

And yet the police do their utmost. But what can they do against such a foe—a foe that scorns and ignores them?

Suzanne had left the house at twenty minutes to ten; such was the testimony of the servant. On leaving the college, at five minutes past ten, her father did not find her at the place she was accustomed to wait for him. Consequently, whatever had happened must have occurred during the course of Suzanne's walk from the house to the college. Two neighbors had met her about three hundred yards from the house. A lady had seen, on the avenue, a young girl corresponding to Suzanne's description. No one else had seen her.

Inquiries were made in all directions; the employees of the railways and streetcar lines were questioned, but none of them had seen anything of the missing girl. However, at Ville-d'Avray, they found a shopkeeper who had furnished gasoline to an automobile that had come from Paris on the day of the abduction. It was occupied by a blonde woman—extremely blonde, said the witness. An hour later, the automobile again passed through Ville-d'Avray on its way from Versailles to Paris. The shopkeeper declared that the automobile now contained a second woman who was heavily veiled. No doubt, it was Suzanne

Gerbois.

The abduction must have taken place in broad daylight, on a frequented street, in the very heart of the town. How? And at what spot? Not a cry was heard; not a suspicious action had been seen. The shopkeeper described the automobile as a royal-blue limousine of twenty-four horsepower made by the firm of Peugeon & Co. Inquiries were then made at the Grand-Garage, managed by Madame Bob-Walthour, who made a specialty of abductions by automobile. It was learned that she had rented a Peugeon limousine on that day to a blonde woman whom she had never seen before nor since.

"Who was the chauffeur?"

"A young man named Ernest, whom I had engaged only the day before. He came well recommended."

"Is he here now?"

"No. He brought back the machine, but I haven't seen him since," said Madame Bob-Walthour.

"Do you know where we can find him?"

"You might see the people who recommended him to me. Here are the names."

Upon inquiry, it was learned that none of these people knew the man called Ernest. The recommendations were forged.

Such was the fate of every clue followed by the police. It ended nowhere. The mystery remained unsolved.

Mon. Gerbois had not the strength or courage to wage such an unequal battle. The disappearance of his daughter

crushed him; he capitulated to the enemy. A short announcement in the *Echo de France* proclaimed his unconditional surrender.

Two days later, Mon. Gerbois visited the office of the Crédit Foncier and handed lottery ticket number 514, series 23, to the governor, who exclaimed, with surprise:

"Ah! you have it! He has returned it to you!"

"It was mislaid. That was all," replied Mon. Gerbois.

"But you pretended that it had been stolen."

"At first, I thought it had … but here it is."

"We will require some evidence to establish your right to the ticket."

"Will the letter of the purchaser, Monsieur Bessy, be sufficient!"

"Yes, that will do."

"Here it is," said Mon. Gerbois, producing the letter.

"Very well. Leave these papers with us. The rules of the lottery allow us fifteen days' time to investigate your claim. I will let you know when to call for your money. I presume you desire, as much as I do, that this affair should be closed without further publicity."

"Quite so."

Mon. Gerbois and the governor henceforth maintained a discreet silence. But the secret was revealed in some way, for it was soon commonly known that Arsène Lupin had returned the lottery ticket to Mon. Gerbois. The public received the news with astonishment and admiration.

Certainly, he was a bold gamester who thus threw upon the table a trump card of such importance as the precious ticket. But, it was true, he still retained a trump card of equal importance. However, if the young girl should escape? If the hostage held by Arsène Lupin should be rescued?

The police thought they had discovered the weak spot of the enemy, and now redoubled their efforts. Arsène Lupin disarmed by his own act, crushed by the wheels of his own machination, deprived of every sou of the coveted million … public interest now centered in the camp of his adversary.

But it was necessary to find Suzanne. And they did not find her, nor did she escape. Consequently, it must be admitted, Arsène Lupin had won the first hand. But the game was not yet decided. The most difficult point remained. Mlle. Gerbois is in his possession, and he will hold her until he receives five hundred thousand francs. But how and where will such an exchange be made? For that purpose, a meeting must be arranged, and then what will prevent Mon. Gerbois from warning the police and, in that way, effecting the rescue of his daughter and, at the same time, keeping his money? The professor was interviewed, but he was extremely reticent. His answer was:

"I have nothing to say."

"And Mlle. Gerbois?"

"The search is being continued."

"But Arsène Lupin has written to you?"

"No."

"Do you swear to that?"

"No."

"Then it is true. What are his instructions?"

"I have nothing to say."

Then the interviewers attacked Mon. Detinan, and found him equally discreet.

"Monsieur Lupin is my client, and I cannot discuss his affairs," he replied, with an affected air of gravity.

These mysteries served to irritate the gallery. Obviously, some secret negotiations were in progress. Arsène Lupin had arranged and tightened the meshes of his net, while the police maintained a close watch, day and night, over Mon. Gerbois. And the three and only possible dénouements—the arrest, the triumph, or the ridiculous and pitiful abortion—were freely discussed; but the curiosity of the public was only partially satisfied, and it was reserved for these pages to reveal the exact truth of the affair.

On Monday, March 12th, Mon. Gerbois received a notice from the Crédit Foncier. On Wednesday, he took the one o'clock train for Paris. At two o'clock, a thousand banknotes of one thousand francs each were delivered to him. Whilst he was counting them, one by one, in a state of nervous agitation—that money, which represented Suzanne's ransom—a carriage containing two men