

SURVIVORS TALES OF FAMOUS CRIMES

WALTER WOOD



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CRIMES**

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EDITED BY
WALTER WOOD

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Stories of the War," "Men of the North Sea," etc.

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INTRODUCTION

MANY volumes are in existence which deal entirely with records of crime, but I believe that none amongst them is composed solely of narratives related by persons who were actually associated with famous criminal cases.

Personal records have a peculiar fascination and interest, because they bring us into intimate touch with the subject dealt with; and such stories have an added attraction when they relate to murder mysteries, for they involve the most violent passions of human nature—love, hatred, lust, and greed of gold.

These narratives illustrate the working and effects of such emotions. They are concrete, and may be fully relied upon as accurate accounts of the cases dealt with, because I made myself responsible, when necessary, for verifying statements which were made on the strength of time-dimmed memories. The occasional uncertainties which were met with related mostly to dates; as for general facts and impressions, I discovered that each case was indelibly stamped upon the

mind of the particular informant interrogated. Nevertheless, to assure accuracy in detail, each completed story was submitted to the teller for approval. In several instances a tale was told to me either on the scene of the crime or in some room which was closely connected with the event, so that one became linked as intimately as it was possible to be with the atmosphere of the case.

I have had no wish to dwell on horrors, or to pander to any morbid taste. I desired to give a collection of stories which should be very human documents and also remind us that grim and stealthy deeds are inseparable from our daily life. I believe that I have been able to secure many interesting little sidelights on the character and acts of notorious evildoers which have not been previously published.

Much patient and willing help has been given to me by my informants, and I gladly acknowledge it; while I am under very special obligations to Dr. George Fletcher, J.P., for putting at my disposal much of his unique and unrivalled material relating to the Palmer and Tichborne cases.

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SURVIVORS' TALES OF FAMOUS CRIMES

CHAPTER I

THE MOAT FARM MURDER

[A FORGER who was dramatically arrested at the Bank of England was found to be a murderer also. This felon was Samuel Herbert Dougal, a man of undoubted ability, who had served in the Army for twenty years and had reached the rank of sergeant. He lost his position through forgery, and was sent to prison. Afterwards he lived by his wits, and proved to be a callous libertine and an unscrupulous villain. A well-to-do lady named Miss Camille Cecile Holland became infatuated with him, and as Mr. and Mrs. Dougal they went to live at the lonely Moat Farm in the heart of Essex. Miss Holland vanished, and not until four years later were her remains found in a ditch at the farm. It was proved that Dougal had murdered Miss Holland,

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and he was hanged at Chelmsford Prison on July 23, 1903. Before going to live at Moat Farm, Dougal and Miss Holland resided with Mrs. Wisken, a widow and well-known inhabitant at Saffron Walden. Mrs. Wisken became the principal witness for the Crown, and this is her story of the famous crime.]

It was in this very room where we are talking that Dougal and Miss Holland, as man and wife, spent a good deal of their time when they were living with me.

At this very place where I am sitting I put a fur cape, which I will show you, on Miss Holland, and here, with tears in her eyes, she said "Good-bye" for what proved to be the last time. She was driven away in a trap by a man we called "Old Pilgrim" to the Moat Farm with Dougal, and I never saw her again till four years later, when I was taken to do my share in identifying her and to send to the gallows one of the biggest scoundrels that ever lived. Ah! If I had but known then what he really was and what he must have had in his mind to do, Miss Holland, one of the sweetest, kindest, and gentlest of women, would not have gone; I should not have let her leave me, and she might have been alive to-day. But I had not the

The Moat Farm Murder

slightest suspicion that there was anything amiss all the time—three months they were with me—and, of course, I had not the remotest idea that they were not married. To me they came as Mr. and Mrs. Dougal, and as such they drove away to live at the Moat Farm, seven miles from here.

The Moat Farm is a very quaint old place, dating from the time of Elizabeth, and as lonely a building as you will come across in a day's walk. It was an extraordinary place—great changes have been made since the murder was done—and the house was full of all sorts of odd corners and nooks and queer rooms and recesses. I have known it well all my life, and my dear father and grandfather knew it well, too, for they had often done work at it. You could weave many mysteries and romances around the farm, where plenty of strange things were lying about, amongst them a grinning skull, which was used as a candlestick.

The house and garden were on a perfect little island. They occupied about half an acre, and were completely surrounded by a wide moat, which was about five feet deep. This moat was supplied with water from springs, and was crossed by a bridge leading to the house. Sometimes the water, in which there was fish,

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flowed very quickly when the discharges from the springs were heavy.

In addition to the moat there was a ditch in front of the house, or, rather, a drain, because all the drainage of the farm went into it. At the time I am speaking of the ditch was being filled up, and "Old Pilgrim" and one or two more men were doing the work. We shall come to that dreadful ditch again by and by.

Dougal had been negotiating for the purchase of the farm, and had made inquiries about rooms. Miss Parnell, a relative of the lady from whom Dougal bought the farm, knew me and recommended me, and he came and arranged that "Mrs." Dougal and himself should live here until the farm was ready.

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon of January 26th, 1899, just as darkness was setting in, that they came to my house. Miss Holland, as I shall call her, had travelled a great deal, and she brought a lot of luggage and clothing with her. Dougal and she used this room as a dining- and sitting-room. They had a bedroom upstairs.

Dougal was a big, fine man, five feet ten and a half inches high and weighing sixteen stone—but he had shrunk to twelve when they hanged him. He was remarkably pleasant

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spoken, and often enough he would come down in the cold winter mornings and warm his hands at the fire there and chat away as I did my duties; and often enough, too, he would go to the window and talk to a canary which I had in a cage at the time. Yes, as pleasant as you like. Sometimes he would take Miss Holland's breakfast upstairs, and she would have it in bed, and then take her bath and dress and come down. She had been used to a good deal of society, and I loved to listen to her talk. She had had a love affair earlier in her life, and she told me all about it. The lover had been drowned, but an engraved amethyst ring of his had been washed ashore and picked up, and this she constantly wore next to her wedding ring. She once allowed me to put the lover's ring on my own finger. It was a splendid ring of very thick gold. I think she was pleased to let me have it on, because, you see, I saw a great deal of her, and she used to call me "Mother, dear," and say that when she was settled at the Moat Farm she would want me to go and live there and take charge of the place for her. But that was never to be.

The name of Miss Holland was mentioned very soon after the pair came to live with me. Dougal said that if a letter addressed to Miss

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Holland came to the house, he wanted me to take it in, saying to me that it would be all right. The following day a letter did come, and I put it under the door of the bedroom, never supposing that anything was wrong. Several other letters came addressed to Miss Holland, and I always let the lady have them, as they had to do with her money. I naturally thought she was keeping the money in her maiden name, as other letters were addressed to Mrs. Dougal.

The days went slowly by, Dougal often going to London and the Moat Farm to conclude arrangements for living there. Indoors, he was a temperate enough man, seldom taking more than a little whisky, and that chiefly with the late dinner which was provided for them. They say that he was a regular churchgoer, but I don't remember that he ever went to church while he was living with me. When the real truth was learned about him we knew that he spent a good deal of his time in the hotels and public-houses and in bad company. A villain, indeed, and a hypocrite he proved to me, and it seems that he must have murdered two or three women he had married before he met Miss Holland,

Miss Holland had with her when she came to me a beautiful little spaniel called Jacko—there

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he is in the case behind you. She was devoted to the faithful animal, which, in his dumb way, gave some sort of inkling of what had happened at the Moat Farm, if we could only have understood things better at the time. But I will come to Jacko again by and by.

All sorts of things crowd into my memory as I speak. I well remember Dougal coming home one night from London bringing with him two great eggs, which he took out of his overcoat pocket.

“How do you like them, Mrs. Wisken?” he asked. “Do you think they were dear at five shillings each? They are goose eggs, prize ones, and when we get to the farm we shall have some very fine geese.”

I told him I thought the eggs seemed very dear. “But,” I added, “I hope your five shillings will very soon be five pounds.”

Well, the day came when the farm was ready for them, and they went to live in it. That was on April 27th, 1899. “Old Pilgrim” came for them with a pony and trap. Here is the fur cape I put on Miss Holland when she was leaving the house. She flung her arms round my neck and kissed me as she said: “Good-bye, Mrs. Wisken. I shall see you again in a fortnight or three weeks. Keep that material

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till I come; then you shall change me a cheque and make me another dress."

She was speaking of some stuff I had to make up—I was trained as a dressmaker—but I did not carry out her wish, for I never saw her again. I had, however, made certain things for her, and these largely helped me in identifying her long afterwards and bringing home his guilt to Dougal.

Talking of cheques, I ought to say that it was Miss Holland's money which paid for everything—she was worth, I think, about seven thousand pounds. Dougal seemed to have nothing. But there were no people here who would cash the cheques, naturally enough, not knowing the parties; but it was all right when the cheques were made payable to me.

More than £1,500 of Miss Holland's money had gone in buying the Moat Farm, where she and Dougal took up their residence after leaving me. Dougal still came into Walden and went to London, and Miss Holland busied herself in attending to the furnishing of the house and carrying out alterations. She meant, amongst other things, to have a bath put in, and the bath was sent to the farm, where I saw it long afterwards. Dougal himself did all sorts of things at the farm: paperhanging, painting,

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whitewashing, and making beehives and a greenhouse. He was very handy in this way, having been so long in the Royal Engineers.

One day, about sixteen months after Dougal and Miss Holland left me, Jacko suddenly turned up here, and, naturally enough, I and my daughters were delighted, because we thought we should see his dear mistress again. No mistress came, however, and I noticed that Jacko would not leave us. So we put our things on and went to the Common, quite expecting to see Miss Holland and Dougal; but there were no signs of them, and Jacko insisted on going back home with us. I had him with me for three weeks; then I wrote to the Moat Farm, to Miss Holland, explaining that I had the little dog with me, and asking what I should do with him.

In answer to that letter Dougal wrote saying that I could turn Jacko out one dark night, and he would find his way home. Knowing how much his mistress valued him, and fearing he would get lost, I kept him on. A few days later Dougal came here to the side door, where not many people could see him, and not to the front door, which is more public. I was surprised at this, and asked him if he would not go to the front door; but he said that he would

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rather not, and that he was quite all right where he was.

“Have you little Jacko still?” he asked.

“Yes,” I told him.

“Will you let me have him?”

Of course, I replied that I would, and Dougal entered the house and said to the spaniel: “Come along, Jacko. You have no business to run away from your mistress like this! How much do I owe you, Mrs. Wisken?”

I told him that he owed nothing at all; but he put a shilling down and took Jacko away. After Dougal left I found that he had dropped a glove, and he came back for it, though I fancied that he was very unwilling to do so.

I had done my best to learn something about Miss Holland—what she was doing, how she liked the Moat Farm, and when I should be likely to see her again; but not a word could I get out of Dougal. He evaded every question.

I never saw him again for nearly four years, and then he was driven past here in a fly, handcuffed, and in charge of police, who had brought him from Cambridge Prison, for by that time Dougal had been arrested on the

The Moat Farm Murder

charge of forging Miss Holland's name—a charge which before long was to be followed by that of the wilful murder of her.

Then I knew that when Dougal came stealthily to the side door for Jacko, and refused to answer any question of mine about Miss Holland, he was a deliberate and cold-blooded assassin.

Little by little, during a period of many weeks, the dreadful truth came out, and the story was this: For a week or so after leaving me Dougal and Miss Holland were at the Moat Farm, passing, of course, as man and wife, as they were supposed to be. Then a servant went, and Dougal's conduct was such that the girl complained to her mistress, who was very angry with him and slept in the spare bedroom with her for protection. This was the night before the murder. Miss Holland was finding out how Dougal had deceived her.

On May 19th, 1899, in the evening, Dougal drove Miss Holland away from the farm, and what happened was told by the servant. Miss Holland spoke to her in the kitchen, saying: "Good-bye, Florrie; I shan't be long." That was about half-past six.

Dougal had put the horse in the trap, and Miss Holland drove away with him. She had

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no luggage with her, and it was quite clear that she did not mean to be absent for long.

In two hours Dougal returned—*alone*.

The servant was astonished and frightened; and well she might be afraid, knowing that she was unprotected, in such a lonely house, at night, in the company of a man whose real character had been revealed to her. She asked where her mistress was, and Dougal, who was never at a loss for a reply to any question, told her that Miss Holland had gone to London, and that he was going to meet her when she came back. Several times he went out and remained for a while, then returned to the house and told the terrified girl that the mistress had not yet come.

At last, just before one o'clock, he said the servant had better go to bed; and upstairs she went, but not to bed or to rest. Who could, in such a house, with such a man? She went to her room, but neither undressed nor slept, and thankful she must have been that the darkness was so short and that day broke so soon. Never did it break on a more cruel, wicked crime!

At about six o'clock the servant heard a knock at her bedroom door. It was Dougal calling her. She went downstairs, and found

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that he had got the breakfast ready in the kitchen. He said he had received a letter from Miss Holland, who told him that she was taking a short holiday, and would send a lady friend down to the farm to look after things. That day the servant left the farm, her mother, owing to complaints, having gone to fetch her.

Gone to London for a holiday! How coolly and deliberately the man lied! What amazing calmness he showed, knowing what he did know—for he had shot Miss Holland dead, and buried her in the ditch. The exact method of the murder and the precise time will never be known, but it is believed that on returning from the drive Dougal took the trap back into the shed, Miss Holland being with him, that he fired a revolver—which was a silent one—close to the back of her head, and killed her on the spot. He certainly carried her, fully dressed, and buried her in the ditch.

From the night of that ghastly crime Dougal continued to live at the Moat Farm and to carry on the work exactly as if nothing had happened. Yet all the time he knew that the body of the woman who had given everything to him was lying in the foul ditch in front of his very windows. To show how callous and cunning he was, he actually planted some shrubs

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over the very grave some months after the murder. When he had done this he must have felt pretty secure; at any rate, he was always ready with excuses and explanations, for, of course, questions were very soon asked about Miss Holland.

Dougal was ready with his story. Miss Holland—"Mrs." Dougal, of course—had gone to London, and had left her clothing and jewellery at the farm.

And who was the lady who went to the Moat Farm just after Miss Holland's disappearance?

Oh! The lady was his widowed daughter, who had gone to keep house for him during his wife's absence; but, as a matter of fact, the "widowed daughter" was the real Mrs. Dougal herself.

Month after month went by, year followed year, and four years passed without news of any sort being heard of Miss Holland. During all that time this amazing man conducted the business of the Moat Farm just as if Miss Holland lived. He opened and dealt with all letters addressed to her, and carried out transactions with banks and stockbrokers just as he would have done if she had given him the necessary authority—and all this, of course,

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because of the clever way in which he forged her name. All the time he was going about drinking and amusing himself at hotels and inns, and in other ways acting like the thorough villain he was.

To all appearances Dougal was leading a happy life, and it may be that he had begun to feel that he was perfectly safe, and that his sin would never find him out; but for a long time people had been talking, they had been putting two and two together, and were wanting some explanation of the extraordinary mystery of the disappearance of the poor lady who had first gone to the Moat Farm with him as his wife.

But the day was coming, and was very near, when Dougal must have known that he stood in peril of his life.

Rumours went so far that a police superintendent went to the Moat Farm, and made inquiries about the missing lady, who was said to be concealed in a cupboard. The superintendent said he would like to make a search, and to this Dougal readily assented, and satisfied the visitor with his bogus tales.

It was in October, 1902, when a gentleman from the bank came to me and inquired about Miss Holland. I told him what I knew, and it

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was in this same month that another gentleman came to see me, as Dougal was trying to get a divorce from his wife, who was living with him at the farm, and she was also trying to get one from him.

Things were working slowly round, and in the early part of 1903 detectives were set to watch Dougal, who knew that at last the police were on his track. His conduct showed that he was thoroughly alarmed and realised that his desperate game was up.

He did not waste an hour. He drew money from a bank at Bishop's Stortford, and got some from another bank; then he hurriedly packed some baggage at the Moat Farm and bolted.

Dougal went to London, and set to work to get as much of Miss Holland's money as he could lay hands on—and he had already secured a good deal.

On March 18th Dougal went to the Bank of England to change some notes. Now, it happened that these notes had been stopped, and the cashier had Dougal detained till a police inspector came. The inspector arrested him. While on his way to the police station Dougal ran off, hoping to escape, but he dashed down a street with a dead end to it,

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so that there was not much trouble in recapturing him. From that time the police never let him go. Each time he appeared in public he was handcuffed, and bail was always refused.

It was as a forger that Dougal first appeared in custody, and a long case was slowly built up against him. Time after time he was brought to Walden and remanded, but it was not the forgery charge that interested people so much as the systematic search which was now being made at the Moat Farm with the object of finding out what had happened to Miss Holland.

The police took possession of the place, and for weeks they worked in bitter weather in the most astonishing manner, draining the moat, going into every nook and crevice of the house and farm buildings, and doing all that was humanly possible. Sometimes the men worked up to their waists in black slime, and several times there were narrow escapes from drowning in the perishingly cold spring water of the moat.

Discouraging to a degree was the work, but there was success at last, and that was on April 27th, when a policeman who was digging in the ditch came across what proved to be

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human remains—all that was left of Miss Holland.

Then it was that the charge of murder was brought against Dougal.

I cannot possibly make you realise what a state of excitement the whole countryside was thrown into by the terrible discovery, for Dougal by that time had become a very well-known man, and there had been so much talk about the strange affair and so many explanations of the mystery. Swarms of people flocked to the Moat Farm, full of curiosity to see a place of which so much had been heard, and was in itself so very interesting. People drove and rode and walked, and the roads were alive with motors, traps, cycles, and pedestrians, coming from everywhere and making for just one place—the Moat Farm.

Whenever Dougal was brought to Walden it was a signal for practically putting up the shutters, for there was an entire stoppage of business, so intense was the interest which was taken in him. Often enough he was driven past this very house, handcuffed, and I was mostly at the window to see him go by on his way to the police court. I had to pay many visits, too, to the Moat Farm while the inquest was being held. Once when I was at

The Moat Farm Murder

the farm I had to pass through the conservatory, a place of which Miss Holland often spoke when she was living with me, because she was very fond of flowers and plants, and meant to get some of my own plants to take to the farm.

As I passed through the conservatory I saw Dougal sitting in a chair, handcuffed, and guarded by gaolers. He saw me and bent forward and gave quite a polite bow—and that was his usual performance whenever we met face to face.

I remember so well the last bow he ever gave me. That was when the judge had put on the black cap and was passing sentence of death.

I was looking straight at Dougal, and I saw that the tears were streaming down his cheeks. He was trembling terribly and gripping the rail in front of the dock; yet, in spite of it all, he smiled at me and bowed very politely for the last time. I do not know what was passing through his mind, but he could see then he was done.

But I am getting on a little too fast. I must go back to the Moat Farm, where I was taken to identify what was left of Miss Holland. The remains had been placed in the

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conservatory, and, terrible though the ordeal was, I passed through it successfully, for something seemed to say within me: "Go on, go on." By means of clothing which I had made for her and a pair of boots which I readily identified—they had been repaired in Walden, and Miss Holland had uncommonly small feet—and in other ways, I had no difficulty in doing my share in establishing identity. I saw the bullet-hole in the skull, at the base, so that perhaps Miss Holland never knew what happened.

There were many tedious days at the inquest, and the magistrates had Dougal before them about a dozen times; then he appeared at the Shire Hall, Chelmsford, to be tried for his life by Mr. Justice Wright and a jury. The trial lasted two days, and at the end of it Dougal was found guilty and was sentenced to death. A great deal depended on what I had to say, and there had been many efforts to trip me up; but I never wavered, because I had nothing but the truth to tell.

I shall never forget Dougal's looks when he was in the dock. He smiled at me now and again, as if I was going to say something to his benefit; but I did not. I was in a rage, and could not help it.

The Moat Farm Murder

When he was sentenced Dougal said he was not guilty, but he confessed his guilt just before the hangman drew the bolt. He is buried in Chelmsford Prison yard. Miss Holland is buried in the cemetery here.

I brought little Jacko to live with me, and when he died a natural death I had him properly stuffed, and there he is in the glass case.

Here is one of the dresses Miss Holland used to wear, and here is a black cashmere shawl she used to put over her shoulders when she went upstairs. These her nephew gave me, as well as her fur cape; and here it is—the cape I put on her that day when she kissed me good-bye at the door, and I never again saw her alive.

CHAPTER II

HENRY WAINWRIGHT'S CRIME

[FORTY years ago a crime was committed which aroused almost as much interest and excitement throughout the country as the poisonings by Palmer, the Rugeley doctor. This was the murder of a young milliner by Henry Wainwright, a man of considerable standing in Whitechapel Road, London, E. For twelve months Wainwright's crime was not discovered; then it was sensationally revealed through the medium of one of his former employees and his own folly. Wainwright was convicted at the Central Criminal Court on December 1st, 1875, after a nine days' trial before Lord Chief Justice Coleridge. His brother Thomas was found guilty of being accessory after the fact, and was sentenced to seven years' penal servitude. Henry Wainwright was hanged at Newgate on December 21st. Mr. J. M. Steel, whose story is here retold, was one of the witnesses at the trial, and was called to prove the pawning and redemption of a wedding ring and keeper

Henry Wainwright's Crime

which belonged to the murdered woman and was found on her mutilated remains.]

I became acquainted with Henry Wainwright before I saw him in the dock at the Old Bailey being tried for wilful murder.

Wainwright was a brush manufacturer in a good way of business, and had two shops in Whitechapel Road, numbered 215 and 84. He was in partnership with his elder brother, Thomas, who was afterwards in the dock with him for nine long days.

Henry was a fine-looking man on the right side of forty. He weighed about fourteen or fifteen stone, and was well built and jovial, fond of life, and more than usually attractive to women. He was the last man in the world you would suspect of being a murderer. He was a married man with five children—his wife was a most respectable, deserving woman—but that did not prevent him from carrying on with other women, a weakness which in the end sent him to the gallows.

Henry's conduct made him very hard up—threw him, indeed, into bankruptcy; and one day there was a fire at No. 84. A relative of mine hurried to the rescue, got a ladder, ran up into the upper rooms, and saved some books

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—the very things that Henry did not want to be preserved, for they gave clear evidence of his position and showed that he meditated arson, a crime of which he would, no doubt, have been found guilty if he had not been convicted for murder.

That is how I first got to know Henry Wainwright. We became on speaking terms, and occasionally spent a little time together; and very good company he was too, full of cheerful conversation and always ready with a laugh and a joke. Little did I imagine then that he had committed a murder so dreadful that the revelation of it filled the country with horror. Nobody suspected him of the conduct of which he was undoubtedly guilty. He was highly esteemed in his own circle, and was, I believe, a great chapel-goer.

In those days Whitechapel Road, in the neighbourhood of the London Hospital, where Henry lived and did his business, was very different from what it is now, though many of the old houses are standing, and the premises on which the murder was committed are in existence, but altered and renumbered. Life went more easily then, and there was not the rush that reigns to-day. A man like Henry Wainwright could have made a great deal of

Henry Wainwright's Crime

money comfortably if he had stuck to his business and gone straight.

At that time I was twenty-seven years old, and manager to a pawnbroker in a large way of business in Commercial Road, Mr. W. Dicker. Those were the days when sailing ships with famous names came home from long voyages, and men would hurry ashore with large sums of money, hard earned, which they would recklessly squander. I have known a sailor come ashore with sixty pounds, and not have a halfpenny left next day—the girls and the harpies had got it all. Many were the strange things that were brought to me to pawn—evidences of folly on the part of men who so easily fell victims to those who battered on them when they were ashore.

Few things are particularly noticed when they are pawned or redeemed, and certainly a busy man does not pay attention to such commonplace objects as rings, so I cannot say that I showed undue interest in a wedding ring and a keeper which were pledged on May 20th, 1874, in the name of Anne King, of 3, Sidney Square; yet that transaction became very material later on, when Henry Wainwright, who had called himself Percy King, was being tried for the murder of Harriet Lane,

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who was known as Anne King, his supposed wife.

I had good reason to make myself well acquainted with that pawning episode and all the details of the crime, because from first to last of it I had to spend seventeen days, and very weary most of them were, in and about the courts.

We observed at that time a custom, which was duly followed in this case, to the effect that when a man or woman wished to pledge anything and refused to give a Christian name, we provided one. In this instance the rings were offered in the name of King, no Christian name being given, and we accordingly recorded the transaction in the name of "Anne." It was always "Anne" for a woman and "John" for a man.

This wedding ring and keeper were pawned, then, in the name of Anne King.

The transaction in itself was too small and commonplace to be remembered by me, and I gave no thought to it until September, 1875, when a horrible discovery was made in the most extraordinary fashion—a woman's mutilated remains were found in the possession of Henry Wainwright. A very brief examination showed that the remains had been recently severed

Henry Wainwright's Crime

with some such weapon as a chopper, and that the woman had been murdered and dead a long time.

Wainwright and a girl named Alice Day were arrested, and later on Thomas Wainwright, a married man, was taken into custody.

Bit by bit, through the inquest, the magistrate's inquiry, and the trial at the Central Criminal Court, the whole terrible story was told, and as I was associated with the affair from start to finish, I will tell you what it all amounted to and how the mystery developed.

Harriet Louisa Lane was a young milliner who had served her apprenticeship at Waltham Cross and gone to Whitechapel about the end of 1870. She fell in with Henry Wainwright, with the result that a child was born. Henry was at that time in business with Thomas, and matters were far from flourishing. The association with the girl was kept up, and again she expected to become a mother. She and Henry were passing as man and wife—Mr. and Mrs. Percy King—and there is no doubt that as she did not make any attempt to work at her ordinary business, and threw herself entirely on Wainwright, she was a very great and growing burden.

Henry had to find new lodgings for Harriet,

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and he got them at Mrs. Foster's, 3, Sidney Square, very near the spot where there was such a tremendous commotion with anarchists a few years ago. He took Harriet, the two children, and a woman who, he said, was a nurse, and arranged for them all to live in the house. He explained that, as he was a traveller, he would be away a good deal and would not see much of his family. As a matter of fact, he was then conducting his business a few hundred yards away, and was living in Tredegar Square, quite near, with his real wife and children. The so-called nurse was a Miss Wilmore, who had been a fellow apprentice with Harriet, and had gone to live at Sidney Square and help to look after the children on agreed terms.

Henry never visited Sidney Square after leaving Harriet and the children there. He was getting deeper and deeper into the mire. He became a bankrupt, his liabilities being more than £3,000, apart from a considerable sum which he owed another brother named William. He was being harassed all round, and as he was not able to clear off a mortgage he got into heavy difficulties regarding No. 215, White-chapel Road.

Meanwhile Harriet needed money very

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badly, and she was determined to have it from the man who had ruined her; but he could not always find money to give her, and she was reduced to such desperate straits that she pawned almost everything she possessed, even to her linen. The first thing she seems to have pawned was the wedding ring, which she brought to me.

The fact that Henry was far from being niggardly is shown by his contributions to Harriet's maintenance, for while he could afford to do so he allowed her £5 a week, though he had the heavy expenses connected with his own wife and five children to meet.

But the time was rapidly approaching when Henry could not give Harriet money at all, and accordingly she made her way to one of his shops and was very violent and disagreeable. Wainwright tried to pacify her by sending money by his manager, but she was not easily satisfied; and once, when two pounds had been offered, she scornfully threw it on the floor, saying that it was only enough to pay the rent which was owing. Altogether Harriet went to the shop about twenty times, and on one occasion at least Henry got so desperate that he threatened to murder her.

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The squalid climax came one night when Harriet went back to Sidney Square the worse for drink, and created a disturbance in the street which so badly upset her that Miss Wilmore had to sit up all night with her.

The landlady gave Harriet notice to quit, but as the poor girl had nothing with which to pay the rent she was allowed to remain two days longer.

By that time Henry had managed—I do not know how, but it must have been a desperate business—to scrape together fifteen pounds, and this he gave to Harriet, who at once paid her rent and debts, and for whom Miss Wilmore got things out of pawn. Harriet made herself smart and attractive.

Things seemed better now. Sidney Square was to be left, and a new start made at Stratford, where Miss Wilmore was to live with the children. On a Friday afternoon—it was September 10th—Harriet Lane left Sidney Square, carrying only a nightdress in a parcel. She was in good health and spirits, and there was not the slightest reason for supposing that she meant to do mischief to herself; but from that time she was never again seen alive, except by Wainwright. He lured her into No. 215, shot her and cut her throat, and

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buried her in a grave in the floor which he had already dug for her.

For a whole year—an exact year to the day, I believe—the body remained in its awful resting-place, and Wainwright went about his daily duties more or less as if nothing had happened.

Miss Wilmore became alarmed and troubled because of the absence of her friend, and she went to No. 84 and asked Wainwright what had become of Harriet. Henry was quite prepared with an explanation, and said that Harriet had gone to Brighton.

But, said Miss Wilmore, how could Mrs. King possibly have gone to Brighton when her sole luggage was only a nightdress?

Oh, Wainwright told her, Harriet was all right, because he had given her money with which to buy clothes.

With that explanation Miss Wilmore had to be satisfied. Following it came in due course a letter from a man who called himself Frieake, who had more than once visited Harriet in Sidney Square. The letter said that Frieake and Harriet were going to the Continent together, that she was making a fresh start in life, and was severing her connection with all her old friends.

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It turned out that "Frieake" was none other than Thomas Wainwright, who was already trying to shield his brother from the consequences of the terrible crime which he had committed.

Things were swiftly going from bad to worse with Henry. He was forced to give up possession of No. 215 and take a position as manager with a Mr. Martin. This meant that No. 215 was put in the possession of caretakers, and consequently there was the ever-present risk of the awful secret being revealed.

Henry must have known, despite all his care and cunning, that his crime would be discovered when the decomposing body in the grave made its presence known.

People were in possession of the premises, and it seemed as if he would never have the chance to try and take away and destroy the evidence of his guilt. But it happened that No. 215 became temporarily uncared for, and instantly Henry took steps to carry out a purpose which he must have had in mind for a long time. With the help of Thomas he bought a spade, a chopper, and some American cloth, and set to work to remove from the grave the body he had concealed a year before.

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The body, as it happened, had been buried in chloride of lime instead of quicklime, and this had brought about the very result that the murderer desired to avoid, for, instead of destroying the body, it had preserved it.

So far Wainwright had acted cunningly and cautiously—that is shown by his successful concealment of his crime for a whole year; but now he did a thing which a moment's thought would have shown him was equal to putting the rope round his neck. He actually asked a man named Stokes, his former foreman, to go with him to No. 215 and help to carry two parcels to the Borough—parcels which were made up of the remains of the murdered woman!

On Saturday afternoon, September 12th, Wainwright and Stokes went to the back of No. 215, through the yard, which is still there, and entered the warehouse, which was about eighty feet long. At Wainwright's request Stokes went upstairs for the parcels; then Wainwright called out and said: "Oh, they're here, under some straw, where I put them a fortnight ago." This was said, doubtless, to prepare Stokes for anything unpleasant which he might notice.

Stokes returned to the warehouse, and

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noticed a chopper which had some very disagreeable matter on it. Wainwright readily gave an explanation of the state of the implement, which he wrapped up in paper and put aside; then he asked Stokes to take up the parcels. Stokes began to lift them, but said they were very heavy and very disagreeable.

By that time Wainwright must have seen that the game was up, but he never faltered in his determination to see the dreadful business through. He told Stokes that he would help him, and, taking up the lighter of the two parcels, they left the warehouse and walked as far as Whitechapel Church. Then Stokes declared that he must rest, and he put his parcel down; so did Wainwright, saying that he would fetch a cab, and telling Stokes to wait till he returned.

As soon as Wainwright had gone Stokes, full of suspicion and a terrible curiosity, hastily unfastened the American cloth, and to his horror found a decomposed human head and a severed hand. He instantly retied the parcel, and with astonishing presence of mind gave no sign, when Wainwright came back with a cab five minutes later, of having made such a ghastly discovery.

The two parcels were put into the cab, a

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four-wheeler; then Wainwright told Stokes to go home, and he would see him at seven o'clock. But Stokes had learnt far too much to be able to leave the matter, and he resolved to carry it through to the very end. There is little doubt that his action sent the murderer to the scaffold.

Wainwright drove off, and instantly Stokes started in pursuit, beginning one of the most amazing chases that ever took place in London streets. Wainwright's intention was to go into the Borough, but he ordered the cabman to drive in the opposite direction, and after travelling some distance, with Stokes in pursuit, he stopped and took up a girl named Alice Day, a ballet dancer; then the cab turned round and began to go towards London Bridge. Wainwright told the driver to go over the bridge and continue till he was told to stop.

From beyond the London Hospital to the other side of London Bridge is a long distance for a man to run, and the roads and pavements were much more difficult to cover forty years ago than they are to-day.

Stokes hurried after the cab, fearful of losing sight of it, and he soon began to feel exhausted. He pantingly begged two police-

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men to stop the cab, telling them that there was something badly wrong; but, incredible as it seems, they laughed at him and told him he was mad.

Away the cab went, Stokes gamely following until he was over London Bridge. Then, not far from the end of the bridge, in the High Street, he saw the cab stop and Wainwright get out with one of the awful parcels.

Wainwright was making towards an empty place of business called the "Hen and Chickens," which his brother Thomas had occupied, and in the cellar of which there was a great mound of earth in which, doubtless, Henry meant to bury the remains once for all.

Two policemen were near, and again Stokes called for help. He told them that something was wrong and begged them to take action. This time Stokes did not appeal in vain.

Wainwright had got one parcel into the "Hen and Chickens," and was carrying the other from the cab when one of the policemen went up and said: "What have you got in that parcel?"

How Wainwright's soul must have sunk!
How his heart must almost have stopped beat-

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ing! What terrible emotions must have surged through his guilty mind! Yet he was bold enough to answer: "What business is it of yours? Why do you interfere with me?"

It was no good. The other policeman had now come up, and they entered the "Hen and Chickens" and began to open the first parcel.

Then Wainwright's fortitude forsook him. He begged the constables for God's sake not to tamper with the parcel—he offered them £20 if they would let him go, then said he would make it £200; but the men had opened the parcel and had seen the dreadful nature of the contents.

The policemen told Wainwright that he must go with them, and, with Alice Day and the parcels, the cab went to the nearest police station.

An examination showed that the parcels contained the remains, in ten portions, of the body of a woman.

No time was lost in going to the White-chapel warehouse and examining the place. Then it was seen that part of the floor at the back was raised and that the boards and joists had been sawn away, making a shallow grave about five feet long and three feet wide. There

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was abundant trace of chloride of lime, and a chopper and spade were found, as well as fragments of human remains.

Wainwright had taken the body out of its resting-place on the previous day, and with the chopper had rudely hacked it to pieces; he had then tied up the portions in the American cloth.

When asked to explain how the remains came into his possession, Wainwright told a clumsy lie. He said that they had been given to him to take to the "Hen and Chickens" by a Mr. Martin, who had promised him five pounds for the job. That tale was easily proved to be false, and it was very soon seen that the girl Alice Day knew nothing of the crime, and she was discharged after being brought before the magistrate. She declared in court that though she had been on friendly terms with Wainwright, there had been nothing further between them.

The next development, when Henry had appeared in the police court, was the arrest of Thomas Wainwright at his address at Fulham; and finally the two brothers, who had had such splendid chances of making a good thing out of their business, stood in the dock at the Old Bailey, financially ruined, to take their trial

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for a crime that was to send one of them to a shameful death.

Day after day that horrible court was packed by people who ranged in rank from a duchess downward, for the case had aroused intense and universal interest.

In those days I was very much like Stokes in appearance, and often enough, when we left the court, we were followed by great crowds of people. More than once we made them laugh by such simple tricks as exchanging hats. We were pretty cheerful, and passed a good deal of our time while waiting to be called in playing cards and draughts and dominoes. In going to the police-court trial the witnesses used to pass through rows of policemen, so great was the pressure of the people who were eager to get a glimpse of anybody connected with the case.

Henry did not strike me as being very much upset at the prospect of a verdict of guilty, and, if I may put it so, he looked quite at home in the dock. I well remember how he laughed when I was recalled after giving my evidence.

I had told about the pawning of the wedding ring and keeper, and Henry's counsel tried to discredit my evidence because of the use of the Christian name of Anne.

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The Lord Chief Justice wished to see the original pawntickets, and so I fetched them from Commercial Road. They were on a long file, about five feet in length, and when I got back into the witness-box I began quickly to pull the tickets about to find what I wanted.

“Good gracious!” exclaimed the Lord Chief Justice. “I thought it was a snake!”

Everybody in court laughed, and Henry and Thomas laughed as loudly as anybody, particularly Henry.

Pretty nearly everything came out in evidence; but not the real details of the murder, for only Henry could give those. But it was clear that what had happened was this: Henry decoyed Harriet into the lonely warehouse, shot her in the head from behind with a revolver, fired two more shots, and then cut her throat, stripped her, and buried her in the grave which he had made in the floor. He burned the clothing in a neighbouring grate, but left the rings on the fingers!

Three shots were heard by some men who were working near, and one of them ran out, but it was thought that the sounds came from firing by a man who was known to practise with a double-barrelled gun, and no further heed was paid to the matter.



1



2

WAINWRIGHT RELICS IN THE "BLACK MUSEUM"

- 1. Fragment of cigar, bullet, jewels, etc.
- 2. Hammer and cleaver used by the murderer

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How perilously near was Henry to being caught as a red-handed murderer! What would have happened if the men had actually burst into the warehouse? Would he have shot them also, or turned the weapon on himself? Who can tell?

There was no difficulty in proving the possession of the revolver, because Henry had kept one in his desk at No. 84, and had tried to pawn it; but he had taken it away because he could not get the advance he asked for—fifty shillings.

There was one fact which was never made public, and it was this: that the night before the murder Harriet told her landlady that Henry had threatened to shoot her. But no circumstance of that sort was needed to satisfy the jury about the prisoners' guilt. They were absent for less than an hour, then they went back into court—and Henry was sentenced to death and Thomas to penal servitude for seven years.

Henry was hanged four days before Christmas, and it is told of him that the night before his execution he smoked a cigar and boasted of his victories over women. Certainly, in the dock, though he denied the murder, he confessed that he had been wickedly immoral.

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A great deal of sympathy was shown, and rightly, for Henry's poor suffering wife and the helpless, innocent children, and a fund of more than twelve hundred pounds was raised to help them.

I do not know what happened to Thomas when he came out of penal servitude, but I believe that he had something to do with a public-house. Neither do I know what has happened to the other witnesses who were called at the trial. Stokes, I believe, went into business on his own account, helped to some extent by a special grant of thirty pounds which the Lord Chief Justice made to him for his uncommon effort in making the murder known to the police and sending Henry Wainwright to the gallows.

CHAPTER III

THE SHAM BARONET

[THE late Lord Brampton, who when he was Mr. Henry Hawkins appeared as counsel in both the Tichborne trials, paid a compliment to Dr. George Fletcher, J.P., in referring to him as a great authority on this famous case. There is no living person who has a deeper knowledge of the Tichborne case than Dr. Fletcher. He came into close association with the Claimant; for many days he attended the first trial, which lasted 103 days, and he was occasionally present during the second trial, which lasted 188 days, and finally he examined the mortal remains of the man who, having passed out of public notoriety, died, almost starved, in a miserable attic off the Edgware Road, in London. Dr. Fletcher tells the story of the greatest impostor who has been known in modern England.]

The Tichborne case is such an enormous subject that it is uncommonly difficult to know where to start and what to say; but I can

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begin by explaining briefly that a fine young officer in the 6th Dragoon Guards (The Carabiniers), Roger Tichborne, was drowned in 1854 off the coast of South America, at the age of twenty-five, and eleven years later a coarse butcher from the Australian bush turned up, and, saying that he was the long-lost Roger, claimed the Tichborne estates, which were worth £30,000 a year. It took seven years and two lengthy trials in our law courts to prove that this man was a marvellous impostor, and it cost the country half a million sterling to stamp him as a liar—and that was quite irrespective of the enormous sums which were subscribed, and lost, by deluded people who pinned their faith to the creed that the butcher from the bush was the missing heir to a baronetcy.

Throughout the whole of the exciting times of the trials, when the Tichborne case occupied the attention of the country almost to the exclusion of every other subject, and when people most vehemently took one side or the other, my father-in-law was rector of Ovington, a village adjoining the Tichborne Estate in Hampshire.

I first met the Claimant during the autumn of 1867, when I was spending part of the long

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vacation at Ovington, and I saw him several times during the next few years when he was collecting evidence in the neighbourhood in favour of his claim. I had, therefore, many opportunities of forming an opinion of him and seeing what he was really like; and a more unpromising impostor, in the circumstances, it is almost impossible to imagine.

I always did marvel, and I marvel now, that anyone could have been deceived for a moment as to the real character of the Claimant. Roger Tichborne was a gentleman, and, no matter what his vicissitudes in his early years might have been, he would have retained sufficient characteristics to show his breeding and origin; but there was no redeeming feature about the Claimant. He was a thoroughly low-born, vulgar, illiterate fellow, plebeian to a degree, and I never saw a sign in him of anything approaching education and refinement. His pronunciation of English was terrible; his accent was pure Cockney, and very far removed from the speech of an officer in the Carabiniers; in fact, in all general characteristics he was hopeless. It is easy for some men, however insignificant their position in life may be, to hold their own in good and decent company—they are adaptable and impressionable to

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superior surroundings; but the Claimant was nothing of the sort. He was inherently and incorrigibly common, vulgar and ignorant, and he remained so from first to last.

One of the most amazing things in this astounding case was the dissimilarity between the real Roger and the impostor from the bush. The lost heir was a tall, slim officer of ten and a half stone, and a gentleman; the Claimant was a hill of flesh, a twenty-five stone monster, and a vulgar atrocity. Yet it took seven years to persuade quite a multitude of people that he was what the Attorney-General called him: a conspirator, a perjurer, a forger, and a lying impostor—in short, as great a criminal as could be found in the annals of our law courts.

Let me briefly review the essential preliminary facts of this unexampled case. They are these: Sir Henry Tichborne died in 1821, leaving four sons. The eldest, Sir Henry, died in 1845; the second, Edward, took the name of Doughty, and was known as Sir Edward Doughty—he had one daughter, Kate, who was to figure prominently in the great drama. The third son, James, had two sons—Roger, born in 1829, and Alfred, born in 1838. As Sir Edward Doughty had no sons, Roger—who

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was to achieve so much posthumous fame—became the prospective heir. He was born in Paris, and was brought up entirely in that city until he was sixteen years old.

Roger's mother was a bad-tempered, weak-minded woman, and hated all the Tichbornes so much that she spared no effort to keep Roger away from them, and did all she could to bring him up as a Frenchman, the result of her conduct being that young Roger lived in an utterly wretched home. When Sir Henry died (in 1845), Roger's father, James, insisted upon taking his son over to the funeral and introducing him, as the prospective heir, to the relatives. Roger was sent to school at Stonyhurst, and there he remained for three years. So ignorant was he of English, speaking only a few words of our language, that the boys ridiculed him, calling him "Frenchy." Roger, however, progressed, and passed from Stonyhurst into the Carabiniers. Fortunately, as it happened, his Army examination papers were preserved. In three years—at the end of 1852—Roger sold out from the Carabiniers, those being the days of purchasing and selling commissions in the Army.

Roger now saw a good deal of his cousin Kate, and, naturally enough, he fell in love

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with her; but the match was opposed and finally was broken off, and there was a sad farewell interview at Tichborne Park, of which we shall hear later.

Deeply grieved by his enforced separation from Kate, Roger determined to go away on a long voyage, and in March, 1853, he started on a three years' trip round the world. On April 24th, 1854, having travelled over a great part of South America, he set sail from Rio de Janeiro for New York in a ship called the *Bella*. She was overtaken by a terrible storm on the second day, and though wreckage and boats were picked up, not a soul was ever heard of, and the law presumed that Roger was drowned. His will was proved, his brother Alfred became the heir to the estates, and on the death of their father, in 1862, Alfred succeeded to the property. Alfred died in 1866, and three months later his widow gave birth to a son, who succeeded to the estates. This baby, represented by his trustees, became the defendant at the first trial, when the Claimant tried to secure the estates; and the baby became Sir Henry Tichborne, who died in 1910, and was succeeded by his son, Sir Joseph Tichborne, who, now twenty-six years old, lives at Tichborne Park.

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These details will, I think, clearly explain the state of things which arose from the loss of the *Bella* and the disappearance of Roger; but there was an unexpected development, for Roger's mother, on hearing of the loss of the ship, was distracted, and, always somewhat feeble-minded, her reason gave way, and she positively refused to believe that he had perished. She declared that he would soon return, and she always kept a light burning in the hall at Tichborne Park, which is on the high road from Portsmouth to London.

But the Dowager Lady Tichborne did more than just wait and mourn. She advertised persistently and extensively for news of her missing son, and in 1865, when the gold fever was at its height in Australia, she wrote freely to agents who had offices open for inquiries concerning missing friends. Her advertisements were seen in Sydney, and a lawyer named Cubitt replied saying that he could probably find her son. He asked her if she was prepared to go to the expense of sending someone to New Zealand. Of course, the overjoyed lady would pay almost anything, and she actually sent £400—though no son was ever found for her in New Zealand. But the lawyer had got a good nibble, and he was not going to let such

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a valuable catch go. He had a sort of partner named Gibbes at Wagga Wagga, a little bush town three hundred miles from Sydney, and this man happened to see copies of *The Illustrated London News* and *The Times* containing the advertisement, in four languages, of the missing Roger.

Now, there was at Wagga Wagga an enormously fat man named, according to the sign over his door, Castro, and he was a butcher. He had come to financial grief, and found it necessary to go to Gibbes to be taken through the bankruptcy court. It became his duty to make certain revelations, and amongst them was the fact that his real name was not Castro. He had been convicted for horse-stealing, and had taken the name of Castro on coming out of prison. He had not disclosed to Gibbes what his real name was, and Mrs. Gibbes suggested to her husband that this might be the baronet who was advertised for.

At this time there returned to Wagga Wagga a man named Slade, who had been a gardener for some years to the Tichbornes, and he had not only the newspapers with the advertisements in them, but also pictures of the Tichborne estate, and the butcher Castro, meeting him, began his amazing career of fraud.

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Pause for a few moments to get a clear idea of the person who foisted himself off as an English gentleman and heir to an old baronetcy and a rent-roll of £30,000 a year.

Arthur Orton was born at Wapping, in the East End of London, in 1834, and was the son of a butcher. As a child he had St. Vitus's dance, and for that reason, and because there was no School Board in those days, he received practically no education. As a boy he helped to cut up meat, and became an expert slaughterman. The St. Vitus's dance did not improve, and the boy went to sea; but he deserted his ship at Valparaiso, and went inland seventy miles to a place called Melipilla. For two years he remained there, the only Englishman, and stayed with a storekeeper named Thomas Castro. In 1851 Orton returned to England in the ship *Jessie Miller*, spent a year at Wapping, and kept company with a young woman named Mary Ann Loder. They were both tattooed at Greenwich Fair.

How fatal to Orton was that tattoo mark to become! Mary had "A.O." tattooed on her arm, and long afterwards, when the impostor was posing as the heir to the estates, she met him and said: "Come now, Arthur, we're pals, you know. Here's your initials on my

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arm, and there, you know"—pointing to his own arm—"you'll find 'A.O.' also." But the scoundrel was too cunning to show his arm, and he resolutely refused to bare it.

Now, that tattoo mark "A.O." *was* on Orton's arm. I saw the scar when he was alive, and after his death, in a miserable poverty-stricken attic in a by-street off the Edgware Road, I saw it again. When the spot was first seen in public there was a deep recent scar found, and on being questioned the Claimant calmly said: "That was where I was vaccinated in France." On the opposite arm, however, I saw the ordinary scars of vaccination, and Dr. Guy, a prison surgeon, told a friend of mine that he saw on Orton's arm, when the Claimant was in prison, the remains of "A.O." deep below the scar.

Orton left England in December, 1852, in charge of some Shetland ponies, and went to Hobart Town, where he started in business as a butcher. In March, 1854, he wrote to Mary Ann Loder and his sister, a Mrs. Jury. Then he was not heard of again by his relations, except as the Claimant.

After many adventures Orton settled at Wagga Wagga as Castro. He married a servant girl who could neither read nor write

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and who had to make her mark in the marriage register.

Now began a series of posings and deceptions which are so amazing and ludicrous as to be incredible to a generation that knew not Orton. The huge butcher of Wagga Wagga began to shake his head and mutter mysteriously about his family and property in England. In books, whenever he got the chance to do so, he wrote the name, "Roger Tichborne," and carved on trees the missing man's initials, "R.C.T." One day, when he was in his veranda, smoking a pipe with the large initials "R.C.T." carved on the bowl, the agent Gibbes went up and said: "Come now, it's no use disguising who you are any longer. I know it full well—and there are your real initials."

Orton clapped his hand over the initials as he exclaimed: "Hush! For God's sake, don't utter a sound. But did you see—did you really?"

"See!" answered Gibbes. "See! Of course I saw—and if you don't write to your mother at once I shall."

And so the monstrous claim began, and it prospered enormously because of the blind faith that the feeble-minded Dowager Lady Tichborne had in him. She advanced large

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sums of money and unconsciously did everything she could to play into the hands of the Claimant and the gang which came together to support the fraud—a small band of unscrupulous men who must not be confounded with the supporters who honestly but foolishly believed in the Claimant. For one thing, the Dowager wrote to tell the Claimant to go to the Metropolitan Hotel in Sydney, where he would find Bogle, a nigger “who was your dear father’s servant for thirty-two years, and he will tell you all about yourself.”

Tell the Claimant all about himself! What a wondrous piece of luck, when he knew so little of his real antecedents as a gentleman and heir to a baronetcy! The Wagga Wagga butcher packed up, took his wife and a new-born babe, and in the company of Gibbes drove in state into the yard of the Metropolitan Hotel, and, seeing a black man in the yard, he exclaimed: “Hallo, Bogle, is that you?”

The old negro was so greatly puzzled that he saluted the wrong man, who, curiously enough, was about the build of the missing Roger. But the Claimant was equal to the occasion, as he proved equal to many more. He prevented any further mistake by throwing

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an arm round Bogle and saying: "Come, now, 'aven't I just altered?"

"Why, yes," answered Bogle slowly, for even then he must have resolved to be the hoary-headed sinner he proved to be; "yes, you have. I should hardly have known you." And no wonder, for Roger, when he last saw him, was an officer and a gentleman, five feet ten inches high and weighing only a little over ten stone; and here he was greeted by a butcher of twenty-three stone!

From that hour, until the conviction of the Claimant, Bogle never left his newly-found long-lost master. Bogle, I should explain, had been picked up in Jamaica forty years before by Roger's uncle, Sir Edward Doughty, and had lived at Tichborne Park with Sir Edward and afterwards with Roger's father, so that he knew as much as anybody of the details of the domestic life at Tichborne. He had been pensioned, and had gone to live at Sydney, where the Claimant met him. The old nigger threw himself heart and soul and body into the fraud, playing, like the rest of the conspirators, for very high stakes.

After spending a week in Sydney the Claimant and Bogle and others started for England, and in due course there began the

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great attempt to get possession of the Tichborne estates.

In May, 1871, the trial began, and for twenty-two days the Claimant was in the witness-box. His side closed on December 21st, 1871, and the trial was resumed in the following month, when the Attorney-General, for the defendants, spoke for twenty-six days. On the 103rd day of the trial, which was March 6th, 1872, the jury expressed the conviction that the Claimant was not Roger Tichborne, and he was nonsuited. By that time it was calculated that the law proceedings had cost the estate £92,000.

As soon as the civil trial was over the Claimant was arrested and taken to Newgate. Finally, on February 28th, 1874, after a trial lasting 188 days, the Claimant was found guilty of perjury and forgery, and was sentenced to the severest punishment which the law allowed—fourteen years' penal servitude.

On October 20th, 1884, the Claimant was released on ticket-of-leave.

When you remember that the Attorney-General's opening speech at the second trial extended over a period of five weeks, and that the judge took six weeks to sum up, you will realise that it is impossible to do more than

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give a very few of the incidents from the thousands that arose in the course of the trial, and I will mention only a small number which particularly impressed themselves upon me as I listened to the trial.

Of outstanding interest and importance was the association with the case of Kate Doughty, Roger's cousin and *fiancée*. When Roger left Stonyhurst he saw a good deal of Kate, who lived with her parents at Tichborne Park. When the time for parting came, Roger, who was a Catholic, vowed that if he returned safely from his wanderings and married Kate, he would build a chapel to the Virgin Mary. He gave a copy of this vow to Gosford, the steward of the estate, and it became very famous as the "sealed packet"—a crucial test in the case—and another copy he gave to Kate.

A year after Roger was drowned, and all hope of his being alive had been abandoned, Kate married Sir Joseph Radcliffe, a Yorkshire baronet, and was a proud and happy mother when, twelve years later, the sealed packet came up in an awful and unexpected manner. Kate had kept her own copy, but Gosford, after Roger's death, had destroyed his. It was of vital importance to the Claimant that he should know the contents of the packet, but when first

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questioned he, naturally enough, did not even know of its existence. He was then living in a small house at Croydon, with his family and Bogle, and Kate, who for ten years had been Lady Radcliffe, had an interview with him. Can you wonder that she utterly failed to recognise her old lover in the butcher from Wagga Wagga? But at the trial, when pressed by the Attorney-General respecting this sealed packet—thinking Gosford had destroyed the only copy—he said it contained instructions for Gosford to make arrangements for his cousin's confinement; and then the scoundrel declared in open court that he had seduced the lady in a plantation in Tichborne Park. But this vile, infamous accusation was completely refuted, and it was shown that Roger Tichborne was not in the country at the time the Claimant said this thing happened, and there was not, of course, the slightest speck on the fair name of the lady. She lived to be seventy-four years old, was the mother of ten happy, healthy children, and was beloved and honoured for miles around her home in Yorkshire.

Let us look for a moment at the Claimant's version of his experiences at a public school—this illiterate lad from the East End who did not know even the benefits of a Board School

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education. When in the box he was shown Roger's own "Cæsar" and asked what language it was in.

"Greek," was the prompt and astounding answer.

"Yes, Greek to you," was the Attorney-General's quick comment.

Roger's Euclid papers were shown to the Claimant, and the Attorney-General asked him what Euclid was about.

"Fortifications!" answered the Claimant.

Then he was asked if he ever reached the *Pons asinorum*. But it was clear that the Claimant had never heard of it, any more than he had heard of Euclid, so the Attorney-General helped him by translating and saying that it meant the Ass's Bridge.

"Did you ever cross it?" asked the Attorney-General.

The Claimant appealed to the judge and asked if he was to be insulted.

The judge assured him that there was no insult.

Then the Claimant was asked: "Where is this Ass's Bridge?"

"A mile an' a 'alf from Stony'urst!" was his prompt reply.

As to Stonyhurst, I remember that the very

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first time I spoke to the Claimant I said: "Well, one thing must go terribly against you, and that is if you ever have a jury who went to a public school and they find that out of, say, three hundred boys you don't know the name of a single lad in the whole school."

When I said that I scarcely expected to sit day after day in court, as I did, and listen to the amazing lies and evasions of the Claimant. He literally writhed in the box, and the perspiration streamed from him. One of his choicest answers was to the question: "Were you ever in the seminary?"

"I wish *you* were there now!" replied the badgered Claimant, who had mistaken the word seminary for cemetery.

The Claimant was asked about his study at Stonyhurst—was it in the quad.? He looked confused, and Coleridge suddenly said: "What is a quad.?"

"A place where *you* ought to be!" almost groaned the unhappy victim of the ruthless but perfectly just cross-examination.

Finally, the Claimant was forced into the explanation that a quadrangle is "a thing that goes round—a sort of staircase!"

Can you wonder that long before entering

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the box the Claimant had realised that the desperate game was up?

While on the way to England Sir Alfred Tichborne, Roger's brother, died, and a baby was born three months later—the baby already referred to. Writing to the Dowager Lady Tichborne on hearing of the birth, the Claimant said: "Ah, my poor sister-in-law, with her husband so recently bereft a corpse, I will be generous. Let her give me one year's income, and I will go back gladly to the Bush, and the babe and she may have the rest."

Yes, indeed, by that time he would thankfully have settled the matter for ever by the payment to him of "one year's income"—£30,000—but he had gone too far, and he knew that if he did not try to face the monstrous imposition through he would be prosecuted. He had borrowed heavily on the strength of his claim, and people had subscribed large sums of money to help him. One man alone, Mr. Guildford Onslow, who died in 1882, spent about £15,000 in supporting the Claimant.

Without dealing with events strictly in order, I will mention one outstanding circumstance to show that there was some excuse for people supporting the impostor, especially if they had

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never seen him, and that was the recognition of him as her son by the Dowager.

Despite his brazen audacity, the Claimant dreaded and put off this interview; but at last he was forced to meet the Dowager, who was living in Paris. The inevitable meeting came about—but by that time the Claimant had shammed illness, and, instead of going to the Dowager, she went to him at his hotel and found him there in bed, groaning, with his face to the wall, in a darkened room. She tried to embrace him, but he kept his face averted and gave her no chance of really seeing him. Finally, addressing two men who had gone with him, she said: “Here in your presence I recognise this man as my long-lost Roger!”

It was impossible after that to disillusion the poor lady, and she was not even influenced by the French tutor of Roger, who, on seeing the Claimant, declared instantly and emphatically that it was not and could not possibly be the missing heir, and that the man was an impostor. Roger spoke French like a native, but when the tutor addressed the Claimant in that language the illiterate fellow could not, of course, understand a word he said, while his own British dialect was pure Cockney of a low type.

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On the point of his education the Claimant frequently found himself in trouble. On the way to England the captain of the ship and the passengers marvelled that a prospective baronet and an English gentleman should show such an utter lack of education, and his defects were commented upon; so he told them that his education had been neglected because of St. Vitus's dance, which was the result of a fire "in the servants' 'all" at Tichborne Park when he was nine years old—a fatal slip of the tongue, for Arthur Orton did have St. Vitus's dance at the age of nine, caused by a big fire next door to his home at Wapping, and I have shown that the real Roger was never in England until he was sixteen years of age.

Though it is impossible to do more than refer to some of the leading incidents in this unparalleled case, yet I must not omit to mention one or two of the outstanding people who were connected with it. One witness who was called for the Claimant was a man named Baigent, described in Hawkins's reminiscences as "the historian of the Tichborne family," who knew more of the Tichbornes than they knew of themselves—a man whose cross-examination by Hawkins, which occupied

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ten days, did more than anything else to destroy the Claimant's case.

Another dramatic witness in the case was a foreigner named Jean Louie, who swore that he picked up the Claimant at sea when the *Bella* was lost. He was quickly proved to be an unconscionable and very clumsy liar, for his portrait was seen in a London shop window by two gentlemen who identified him as a man they had employed, and were able to prove that in the year in which he said he had picked up the shipwrecked Roger he was at that very time undergoing penal servitude. As a perjurer he was sent back to penal servitude for five years more.

I will make only one more remark about the trials, or rather the second of them. It was noted for the ruin of the very promising career of Dr. Kenealy, the Claimant's counsel, who conducted the defence in such an outrageous manner, slandering the judges and witnesses and insulting the jury, that he was disbarred and his professional career ended. Hawkins says of him that at last he was compelled, in order to stop his insults, to declare openly that he would never speak to him again on this side of the grave—"and I never did."

After serving his sentence Orton made a

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tour of the country, lecturing; but he had had his day. The bubble was pierced, and the man sank lower and lower. For twelve years he eked out a living as a potman at low public-houses, marrying for his second wife the daughter of a poor washerwoman in Hull. Finally, after twelve months' extreme poverty and illness, he died in a squalid garret; and there, directly after his death, I saw him.

There is one opinion which I held about the Claimant at the time of his death, and I hold it now. It is this—that those who believed in him and stood by him to the extent of furnishing him with large sums of money for the purpose of sustaining his preposterous and monstrous claim should at least have helped him in his utter destitution and fatal illness. Instead of doing that, they absolutely ignored him.

The Claimant was buried in Paddington Cemetery. No stone marks his grave, which is, however, readily pointed out by the attendants.

It is a strange circumstance that the man who had befooled half the people of Great Britain should have died on All Fools' Day—the First of April, 1898.

CHAPTER IV

THE PENGE MYSTERY

[Two brothers and two sisters were sentenced to death at the Old Bailey on September 26th, 1877, by Mr. Justice Hawkins, who thenceforward became known—undeservedly—as “the hanging judge.” The prisoners, all young people, were Patrick Llewellyn Staunton, artist; Elizabeth Ann, his wife; Louis Adolphus Edmund Staunton, auctioneer’s clerk; and Alice Rhodes, a young woman, mistress of Louis and sister of Mrs. Patrick Staunton. After a trial lasting seven long days, the quartet were found guilty of the murder, by starvation, of a weak-minded woman named Harriet Staunton, the wife of Louis, and were condemned. In passing sentence the judge referred to the murder as “a crime so black and hideous that I believe in all the records of crime it would be difficult to find its parallel.” The death sentences, however, were not carried out. Alice Rhodes was speedily released, and the other sentences were commuted to penal servitude for life. Patrick

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Staunton died in prison; his wife was released after a few years, and, under another name, prospered in business; in 1897 Louis Staunton was released, married, had a family, and, under a new name, did well. One of the witnesses called at the trial was Mr. J. T. Hilder, station-master at Penge, now retired, and it is his story which is told.]

On April 12th, 1877, I was on duty at Penge Station, where I was stationmaster. A train which was due at 8.36 P.M. came in, and two young men and a woman alighted. I particularly noticed these three, because the men began to drag the woman along the platform, each holding an arm. It was quite clear that for some reason the woman could not walk, and I went up and made an examination. The woman did not speak, and she was in a terrible condition.

I said to the men: "This lady is not in a fit state to be dragged along the platform. Don't drag her; I'll send for a chair, so that she can be carried."

My ticket-collector, Marsh, was near, and I told him to get a chair. He fetched one from the waiting-room, and the woman was put on to it. She was shaking violently, but did not

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make any remark. It was an ordinary chair, such as you saw in waiting-rooms at railway stations nearly forty years ago—we had no invalid chairs in those days.

While the lady was seated on the platform a cab was sent for. This took some time, because we had to send up to the village for one. Penge was then a good class suburb, a quiet, pleasant place, very different from the Penge of to-day.

When the cab came I advised the two men to carry the lady to it on the chair, and they did so. They took the chair from the platform and put it as close as possible to the door of the cab. The lady was lifted from the seat into the vehicle, which then drove away.

A stationmaster has a very busy life—and busy it was indeed in those days, though I loved the work—and I had no time to dwell on the subject of the two men and the helpless lady.

The incident did not make any great impression on my mind, but I remember that the men did not say anything, except to thank me. I heard nothing more about the matter until the next day, when our family doctor, Dr. Longrigg, told me that a lady had died at No. 34 Forbes Road, and that she had been in the

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house only a very short time—a few hours. From what he said I could not doubt that this was the lady who had been dragged along the platform at the station by the two men; but I did not suspect that anything was seriously wrong until a police sergeant came and told me that I should be wanted to give evidence at an inquiry into the circumstances attending the death of the lady at No. 34.

Time has dulled my memory, of course, regarding many details, but I remember saying: “Oh, bother it! All my arrangements will be upset. Can’t you get someone else?”

The sergeant did get someone else, but he got me also, and for more than three months I was closely connected with what became known as the Penge Mystery, a murder case which absorbed the attention of the whole country and one concerning which there was an amazing divergence of opinion. Later on I will tell you what my own opinion was and still is. Meanwhile, I want to say that I had what I think is an unusual experience—I was to have been called as a juryman at the inquest; but I got out of that duty, and, instead, I was compelled to appear as a witness at the inquest, the police-court proceedings, and the trial, which ended in the two men I had seen on the plat-

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form at Penge, and two women, being sentenced to death for the murder of the lady who had been taken in the cab to No. 34.

The case in itself was so horrible and extraordinary that at the time little else was talked about. It proved an amazing sensation, and I am going to say something which I believe has not been said by anyone so far—and it is this: that the bringing to trial and judgment of these four people was very greatly due to the persistent enterprise of a penny-a-liner, a man of the real old school of newspaper correspondents. I do not remember his name—he is pretty certain to be dead now, for he was older than I—but I can quite clearly recall his appearance. He was a little, short man, and had a lot of whiskers. A persistent little fellow he was, who gave me and others no rest, and who did everything he could to force the matter on to the attention of the public and the police. I am sure that it was largely due to his efforts that the Penge mystery became so famous.

Bit by bit the case was built up, and it was an awful story that was unfolded when, at the Old Bailey, the Stauntons and Alice Rhodes were tried for the murder of Harriet, the wife of Louis. It was a terrible thing to see two

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brothers, young men, and two sisters, young women, in the dock together. The case of Alice Rhodes was particularly sad, for while in prison awaiting trial she had given birth to a child—and she was herself only a girl, just out of her 'teens. The father of the child was Louis Staunton, with whom she had been living while Harriet was being slowly done to death.

The old court at the Old Bailey—what a horrible place it was!—where Mr. Justice Hawkins presided, was packed day after day, many of the persons present being ladies, who had gone to the court just as they would have gone to a theatre, having plenty of spare time on their hands and finding amusement necessary. For my own part I greatly disliked being concerned in the business, and was always glad to get away and back to my work.

There were some famous men connected with the case. The Attorney-General, Sir John Holker, and the Solicitor-General, Sir Hardinge Giffard, as well as Mr. Poland, Q.C. Louis Staunton was defended by Mr. Montagu Williams and Mr. Charles Mathews; Patrick Staunton was defended by Mr., now Sir, Edward Clarke; and Patrick's wife and Alice Rhodes were ably represented by other counsel. I have been reading Mr. Montagu Williams's reminis-

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cences lately and Sir Edward Clarke's speeches, and they have in many ways brought back this famous trial vividly to my memory. I remember Mr. Montagu Williams quite well. He was at that time at the height of his fame. I was particularly struck by the extraordinary way in which his face worked when he was addressing the jury or cross-examining the witnesses.

This was the case which made the reputation of Sir Edward Clarke. I have read in one of his speeches that as a result of it his income, which had steadily increased to £3,000 a year, suddenly rose to £5,000.

The story which was unfolded in that crowded, foul court during those seven long-drawn-out days was one of the most terrible and dramatic ever known, even in a criminal court. Harriet Staunton was the daughter of a Mrs. Richardson, who became Mrs. Butterfield by her second marriage with a clergyman of that name. Mother and daughter did not get on well together, and in 1874 Harriet Richardson, as she then was, went to live with an aunt at Walworth. There she became acquainted with the mother of Mrs. Patrick Staunton and Alice Rhodes, and, fatal thing for her as it proved, with Louis Staunton, who visited the aunt's house. Louis was a young fellow of twenty-four, not well off by

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any means, and there is no doubt that he learned that Harriet had money of her own as well as expectations, and determined to marry her, though she was ten years older than himself, feeble-minded, and certainly not personally attractive. In all she was worth about £3,000.

It was not long after their first meeting that Louis and Harriet became engaged, despite the opposition of Mrs. Butterfield, who unsuccessfully tried to get her daughter officially certified as a lunatic. A bitter feeling sprang up between Harriet's mother and Louis, especially when the young man had married Harriet at Clapham. And there was reason for Mrs. Butterfield's dislike, for Louis behaved insolently to her, and she knew that he had lost no time in laying hands on Harriet's ready money and getting her to make over to him all that she was entitled to receive. In this respect matters reached such a state that Mrs. Butterfield was forbidden to call and see her daughter, and her requests for information concerning Harriet were ignored. Later on Mrs. Butterfield's resolute action undoubtedly did much to put the police on the track of the Stauntons and bring them to the fearful position in which they found themselves at the Central Criminal Court.

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I ought to explain that the trial, in the ordinary course of things, should have taken place at the assizes at Maidstone, but owing to the strong local feeling against the prisoners it was transferred to the Old Bailey.

Very soon after the marriage Louis and his wife and Patrick and his wife were living in the same street at Brixton, where Harriet gave birth to a boy. By that time Alice Rhodes was living in the house, and guilty relationship existed between her and Louis. Well might Mr. Montagu Williams describe the Penge mystery as a "terrible story of crime and debauchery."

One of the saddest parts of the whole dreadful business is that Harriet knew what was going on, but was not mentally capable of getting redress. She seems to have been really attached to her worthless husband and the poor little child, which was to come to a sorry end.

From Brixton Louis and Harriet went to live at Gipsy Hill, Norwood. Then it came about that all the Stauntons, and a girl called Clara Brown, were, at the end of 1875, living at Cudham, a lonely little village in Kent. Patrick and his wife occupied a five-roomed house called "The Woodlands," and about a mile away Louis lived in a small farm which was known as "Little Grays."

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It was at this stage that the measures were taken which ended in Harriet's pitiful death. Louis Staunton declared that Harriet was intemperate, and that he would leave her—the post-mortem examination showed no trace of such indulgence—and accordingly he arranged that Harriet and their child should live with his brother at "The Woodlands," and that he should pay £1 a week for their maintenance. As soon as he had got rid of his wife and child in this way, Louis was living with Alice Rhodes as his wife, and the pair were known as Mr. and Mrs. Staunton.

During all this time Mrs. Butterfield, Harriet's mother, had not let matters rest. She heard rumours of ill-treatment, and, meeting Alice Rhodes at London Bridge Station, she demanded to know what was happening. It should be borne in mind that she had seen Louis and Harriet, and both had forbidden her to go near the house at Cudham, Harriet doubtless acting under her husband's influence.

Alice declared that she did not know anything, but Mrs. Butterfield noticed that she was wearing Harriet's favourite brooch.

Patrick Staunton was as bad as his brother Louis, for he threatened Mrs. Butterfield, warning her not to go near Cudham, as he had a

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gun. The evidence given at the trial showed that Patrick was a man with a violent temper, which caused him frequently to resort to physical force.

When, for the last time, Mrs. Butterfield went to "Little Grays" and inquired about Harriet, she was told that her daughter was well, but that she should not see her.

Louis Staunton, who was present, took up a knife and threatened his mother-in-law, but Mrs. Patrick interfered and pushed Mrs. Butterfield out of the door.

As a result of her experience at "Little Grays," Mrs. Butterfield communicated with the police, but nothing definite was done in the matter for the time being.

By this time Louis had secured everything that had been his wife's. He had got Harriet out of the way, and he set to work to get rid of the helpless little child. The poor mite was already in a very bad way.

The two brothers and Mrs. Patrick took it to Guy's Hospital, and there a lying story was told and a false name was given. On the day following its admission to the hospital the child died; but no notice was taken of the affair, though, later on, Mr. Justice Hawkins said he was satisfied that they brought about its death.

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The child had been his mother's companion at "The Woodlands," where Harriet was kept a prisoner in one small and filthy room, and where she was being slowly starved to death. She grew weaker and weaker, got dirtier and dirtier, until at last she was in a state that can hardly be described. At first she had her meals with the family; then the servant girl, Clara Brown, took to the squalid room such oddments of food as the Stauntons felt disposed to give the wretched prisoner, who was brutally beaten at times by Patrick Staunton. Harriet's outdoor clothing was taken from her, so that she could not leave the house, and the two or three garments that were left to her got into a hopelessly verminous and unclean condition.

The purpose which Louis Staunton had in mind was being surely carried out—that purpose was to get rid of Harriet and marry the girl Alice Rhodes, and in carrying it out Louis had the very great help of his brother and his sister-in-law; to a lesser extent, that of the betrayed girl also.

The time came when it was seen that Harriet was dying, and then it was that steps were taken to get the poor soul into another district, so that when the end came a certificate

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could be obtained without awkward questions being asked.

The Stauntons resolved to take Harriet into lodgings at Penge, and in doing that they made one of those amazing blunders which have so often sent the most cunning murderers to the gallows. They thought that by going to Penge they would be in the county of Surrey, and that the death would be registered at Croydon; but they discovered, as a matter of fact, that the lodgings they had taken were not in Surrey, but in Kent, though only a few yards from the boundary, so that in this respect they had been completely baffled.

The brothers and Patrick's wife had taken the lodgings at Penge, saying that they were wanted for an invalid lady who could eat, but would not, and giving the impression that she was a relative. Nothing was said as to Harriet being Louis's wife.

Having engaged the rooms, the three returned to Cudham and made preparations for the last journey of the dying woman. They dressed her, and in the evening carried her down and put her into a wagonette which Louis had, and in this they drove to Bromley Station, where they took the train to Penge, from which I saw them alight.

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When they reached the lodgings the brothers left, Mrs. Patrick and Alice Rhodes remaining in charge of the victim.

Throughout that unspeakable night these three women, one surely dying and the two watching her, were in the room. Doubtless Harriet was past all consciousness, but what must have been the feelings of the watchers, knowing what they did know?

It was about nine o'clock at night when Harriet Staunton was carried into the lodgings. That was on a Thursday. Shortly before two o'clock on the following afternoon she died.

Immediately steps were taken to register the death; and now it was that justice began to overtake the Stauntons. Louis Staunton had obtained a certificate from Dr. Longrigg that death was due to cerebral disease and apoplexy; but the doctor soon withdrew that certificate and communicated with the coroner. His suspicions had been aroused in an astonishing way. Louis Staunton, not knowing where the death should be registered, went into a shop which was a sub-post office to inquire.

It happened that there was in the shop a man named Casabianca, who heard Louis ask questions and mention that the deceased woman came from Cudham. Casabianca was at once

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deeply interested and amazed—and well he might be, for he was the dead woman's brother-in-law!

Louis went away, and Harriet's death was ultimately registered at Bromley by a nurse who had been called in at the lodgings.

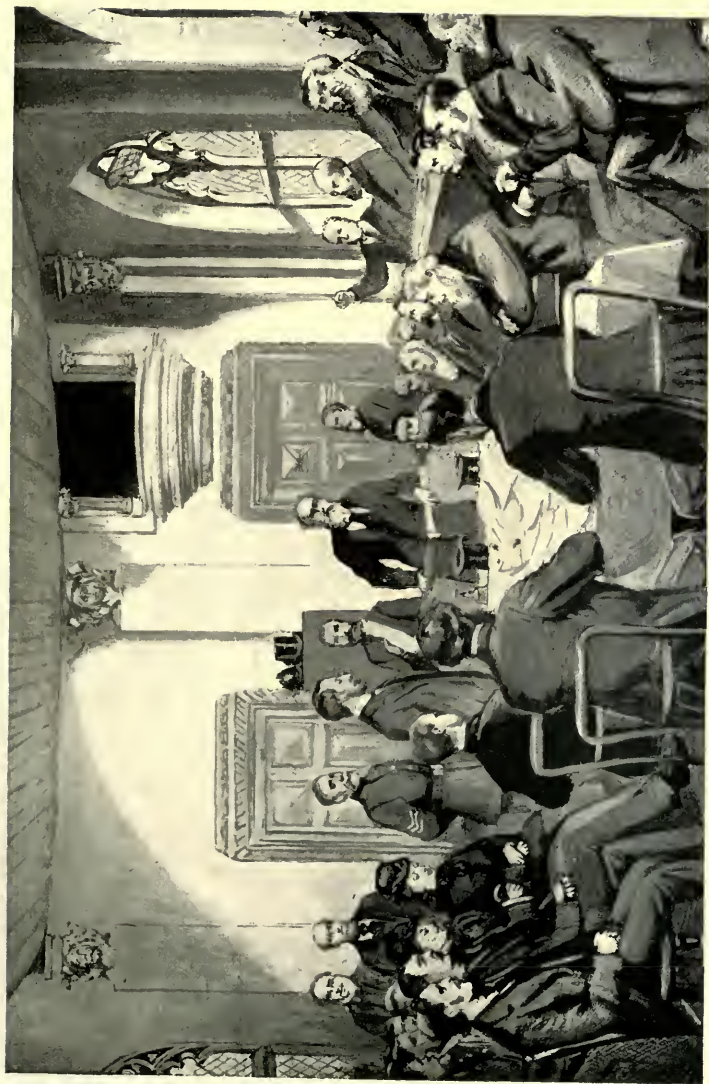
Casabianca promptly gave information to Dr. Longrigg and to the police. Mrs. Butterfield heard of the death, and hurried to the lodgings and saw her dead daughter in her coffin.

On the coroner's warrant a post-mortem examination of the body of Harriet Staunton was made, and it was found that the unfortunate woman was literally a skeleton, weighing only a little over five stone. It was clear that the woman had been slowly starved to death.

An inquest was held—the jury met several times—and as the result of it the Stauntons and Alice Rhodes were arrested on a charge of wilful murder; on that charge also they were committed for trial by the Bromley magistrates.

The long and terrible trial at the Old Bailey was ended by the judge's summing-up, which became famous. Powerful speeches had been made for the defence, which took the line that death was due to tubercular meningitis.

The summing-up was one of the most



THE INQUEST ON HARRIET STAUNTON

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remarkable things of its kind on record. It began at half-past ten in the morning, and the judge spoke until twenty minutes to ten at night, with only short intervals for refreshments.

I was not present in court at the very end of the trial. I had gone away as soon as I knew that I should not be wanted again, and it was not until next morning that I heard that all the prisoners had been sentenced to death. I knew, however, that the last scene had been a terrible one—as dreadful, surely, as any that was ever witnessed even at the Old Bailey, for two brothers and two sisters had been sentenced to the gallows.

It was not far short of midnight when the judge pronounced the words of doom. After an absence of about an hour and a half the jury returned into court, and in tones that could be scarcely heard, because of his deep emotion, the foreman, in answer to each of the four questions put by the Clerk of Arraignment, said “Guilty.”

It happened that the streets outside the Old Bailey were packed with people, for this trial had gripped the popular imagination in a most remarkable manner. By some means the verdict became known to the crowd almost as soon as

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it had been given, and there entered into the densely packed, foul, gas-lit court a roar of exultation and execration, even as the judge's wig was covered by the black cap.

When the verdict was given Alice Rhodes fainted in the dock, the doomed brothers clasped hands—it was said of them that in spite of all their faults they were devoted to each other—and the miserable mother of a gaol-born babe moaned, “Oh, give me a chair!” as the judge uttered the words which consigned her to the hangman.

According to the sentence the execution was to take place at Maidstone Gaol, and the condemned prisoners were taken there. But though the verdict was received with almost unanimous approval, yet there soon began a movement for the alteration of the punishment, largely on the ground that the judge had ignored the evidence for the defence, the object of which was to show that Harriet's death was due to natural causes.

Alice Rhodes was speedily released, and at last, though there seemed every probability of the brothers being hanged, they were reprieved, with Mrs. Patrick—one of them to spend twenty long years in penal servitude, and one to die in gaol.

CHAPTER V

KATE WEBSTER'S REVENGE

[EARLY in 1879 a murder was committed at Richmond which for callousness and savagery has few parallels. The affair became known as "the Barnes Mystery," because of the discovery at Barnes of a box containing human remains. These proved to be portions of the body of a lady named Mrs. Julia Martha Thomas. The story which follows tells how the mystery was solved. Mr. George Henry Rudd, whose narrative it is, was one of the professional witnesses called in this celebrated case.]

I knew nothing whatever about Kate Webster until I was concerned in the case through the action of the police.

I had treated as a patient Mrs. Julia Martha Thomas, a lady who lived at Vine Cottages, Richmond. She came to me in the ordinary way, and I saw her in my surgery. It was necessary that I should make a cast of her mouth, and this I did. At that time,

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February 22nd, 1879, Mrs. Thomas was a total stranger to me; but she saw me again four days later, and for the last time on March 1st.

I never saw her again.

In the ordinary course of things a bill was forwarded, and this brought me into communication with the police, from whom I learned that Mrs. Thomas had been murdered in exceptionally atrocious circumstances.

Soon afterwards a woman named Kate Webster, who had been Mrs. Thomas's servant for a few weeks, was arrested and charged with the murder of her mistress, and as I had to appear as a witness at the preliminary investigation by the magistrates, I became as well acquainted with the appearance of the accused individual as I was with that of my patient. This circumstance is interesting, because it happened that the servant passed herself off as the mistress, though it would be impossible to imagine two persons who were more unlike each other than these.

Mrs. Thomas was a small, well-dressed lady, while Webster was an uncommonly tall, powerful and ill-favoured woman, looking as if she belonged to the tramp class. Mrs. Thomas was about fifty-four years of age at the time of her death, and Webster was something under thirty.

Kate Webster's Revenge

This attempt of the servant to pass herself off as her mistress proved to be one of those deadly errors which are so often committed by murderers who in other respects have carried out their intentions with great cunning.

The story which was gradually unfolded showed that a crime of almost unparalleled ferocity had been committed. The public at the time became well acquainted with the ghastly details of the affair; but it is not necessary to recall or dwell on them now. The chief interest of the crime centres in the method of its execution, the strong probability there was at the outset that it would never be discovered, and the subsequent slow building of the evidence which at last sent the tall, gaunt woman to the scaffold.

There was a good deal of delay in preparing the case for the Crown, but this was inevitable in view of the circumstantial nature of the testimony and the large number of witnesses who were called—there were more than fifty of them.

It might easily have happened that on the mere casual visit to my surgery of a patient, and the making of a model in the usual way, would have depended the positive identification of the deceased lady; but the identity was proved

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completely in other and many ways, and the guilt of the accused woman was thoroughly established.

I had last seen Mrs. Thomas on March 1st, which was a Saturday. On the following day, in the evening, she was seen alive for the last time.

She vanished. After her disappearance began the sensational case which became known, first as the Barnes Mystery, and then as the Richmond Murder. It attracted an amount of attention which will be readily recalled and understood by a very great number of persons who are still living, and are not very old at that.

On that first Sunday in March Mrs. Thomas was seen at the Presbyterian service which was held in the Lecture Hall at Richmond. Certainly, between seven and eight in the evening she was known to be alive.

Towards the close of that Sunday Mrs. Thomas went home, and about nine o'clock a sound was heard by someone in the adjoining house—such a sound as that which would be made by a heavy chair falling—but no particular attention was paid to it at the time. Vine Cottages were, and are, a pair of semi-detached, small villas, and are so built, a wall only dividing

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them, that sounds are readily heard between one and the other. At that time the adjoining house was occupied by Mrs. Thomas's landlady, an independent lady named Miss Ives.

Early on the following morning, Monday, while it was still dark, a light was noticed in one of the bedrooms at the back of Mrs. Thomas's house, and from the back premises there came the sound of boiling in the copper. These sounds were familiar, and were associated with the washing, which so often begins early on Monday morning in many households.

A very unusual and unpleasant smell was also noticed by the neighbours; but none of the incidents I have mentioned caused suspicion that anything was wrong or that anything unusual had happened to Mrs. Thomas.

There was no sign of Mrs. Thomas throughout that Monday, but Kate Webster was seen by several people who called for orders. Webster was apparently going about her duties in the ordinary way as servant. She seemed to be busy washing, for the copper had been in use and she was hanging things out to dry. To tradespeople she gave orders calmly, and to one caller who saw her at the door she explained that she was very busy getting the

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house ready for visitors who were expected. At that time her sleeves were rolled up, and there was every appearance of her statement being correct. During the whole of that Monday, from before six o'clock in the morning, when the boiling of the copper was plainly heard in the adjoining house, Webster was busily engaged indoors, and there was nothing to show that she was not performing her ordinary duties.

On the Tuesday Webster, much more smartly dressed than it was her custom to be, and wearing jewellery, went to Hammersmith and called on some people there named Porter. She told them that she was now a widow, that her name was Mrs. Thomas, and that she had come into some property at Richmond.

This was one of the many mistakes committed by Webster in her attempts to conceal the guilt which was finally established against her; for she was in every way utterly unlike the woman she was personating, and, in view of what she had done, it is amazing that she made such an extraordinary statement.

After spending some time at the house at Hammersmith, Webster went out with Porter and his son, a lad of about sixteen years, who afterwards proved a most important witness for the Crown. She was then carrying a common

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black bag, which she had taken to Hammer-smith with her—a heavy bag for its size, the weight being estimated at about twenty-five pounds.

It was arranged that Webster and the man and his son should go out together, and the three went towards Barnes, where the Porters entered a public-house. While they were inside Webster temporarily vanished, and when she rejoined the Porters she no longer carried the black bag. No particular attention was paid to the fact that the bag was missing, for it is the sort of article that can be disposed of without exciting comment or notice.

After some talk Webster said she would like the lad to go back to Richmond with her, as she wanted his help in carrying a box from Vine Cottages to the station, and it was arranged that young Porter should assist; but it was stipulated that he should get home in time to go to bed, so that he should not be late for work on the following morning.

Webster and the lad proceeded together to Vine Cottages, and while he remained below she went upstairs and brought down a corded wooden box, about a foot square—the kind of thing which is used by carpenters for holding tools. As a matter of fact, this particular box

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was used by Mrs. Thomas to hold a couple of bonnets which she wore.

It was, for its size, a very heavy box, and this was the thing which she needed help to carry to the station to which she said she was going. Here again, as it proved, Webster committed a fatal error, for it became an easy matter to prove that the box was the property of Mrs. Thomas and to associate its contents with the crime that had been so deliberately carried out.

Webster at this time seems to have been quite cheerful and self-possessed. Before leaving the house she ran her fingers over the piano belonging to Mrs. Thomas, who was, I believe, a good musician, and remarked that it was a fine instrument.

The corded box was lifted up, and Webster and the lad left the house; but instead of going to the railway station they proceeded to Richmond Bridge and crossed it.

At the other side of the bridge the box was placed in the farthest recess, the woman telling the lad to put it down and go away, and that she would join him. She told him to go towards the station, and accordingly he began to recross the bridge.

The lad was walking towards the Richmond

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end when he heard a slight splash. When he reached the end of the bridge Webster rejoined him, but she had no box with her. The lad, however, does not seem to have been suspicious, and he afterwards said that Webster's conduct did not strike him as being peculiar. She gave a satisfactory excuse and said that they would now get home. As he had missed his last train to Hammersmith, he went to Vine Cottages and spent the night there.

On the Wednesday morning, on the lower side of Barnes railway bridge, a box was found just as the tide was ebbing. This was at a quarter to seven o'clock, and the man who saw it, being suspicious, communicated with the police, with the result that the box was examined and found to contain human remains. It was taken to Barnes mortuary.

At about the same time other human remains were discovered on a refuse heap at Twickenham—a foot and ankle—and it was soon obvious that these and the contents of the box had belonged to the same person. There was not, however, anything to connect these discoveries with the disappearance of Mrs. Thomas; but that mystery was soon to be cleared up to a very great extent.

Meanwhile Webster had been very busy.

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Through her friends the Porters she had got into touch with a publican named Church, on the representation that she had furniture at Vine Cottages which she wished to sell. Unsuspecting, Church entered into negotiations, with the result that he agreed to buy the things, and got as far as having a van at Vine Cottages to take them away.

Now came the beginning of the developments that explained the non-appearance of Mrs. Thomas and the singular sounds which had been heard in her house.

The landlady, Miss Ives, seeing the van and the preparations for removal, naturally became curious to know what was being done by her tenant. She asked Webster where Mrs. Thomas was, and how it happened that she had not said anything of her intention to leave the house.

Webster became confused and made unsatisfactory answers, the result being that the vanmen were paid a certain sum and went away, taking a few small articles with them, and Webster hurried to Hammersmith, borrowed a sovereign, took her child, a boy, who had been staying there, and fled to Enniscorthy, in Ireland, her native place.

There was now every reason for the inter-

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vention of the police, and accordingly they took charge of the matter and set to work methodically to find out what had taken place.

Very soon it was established that an exceptionally dreadful murder had been committed, and that there was a close connection between the disappearance of Mrs. Thomas and the discovery of the human remains at Barnes Bridge and Twickenham.

Examination of the house showed that there were bloodstains on various parts of the walls and the floors, that there were calcined human bones in the kitchen fireplace and under the copper, and that the outside of the copper had been newly whitewashed. There were other signs of atrocity which it is not necessary to mention; but the main inference was clear, and it was this—that a terrible murder had been committed, and that uncommon pains had been taken to remove all evidence of the crime.

The next stage in the dreadful drama was the sending of police officers to Enniscorthy and the arrest of Kate Webster on the charge of murdering Mrs. Thomas.

Webster was taken into custody and was brought back to Richmond by way of Holy-

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head. On the journey, having been charged and cautioned, she made a statement which amounted to this—that she knew that her mistress had been murdered, and she endeavoured to make out that the crime had been committed by other people.

On the strength of what she said, Church, an entirely innocent man, was arrested and placed in a position of terrible peril; but it was soon obvious that there was not a shadow of ground for the accusation against him, and he became an important witness for the Crown.

Little by little the dreadful nature of the crime was revealed, and by the time Webster appeared before the judge and jury at the Central Criminal Court the murder had been pretty well reconstructed.

And this was the story: Mrs. Thomas had been slain, and the body had been then cut up and partly burned and partly boiled, the kitchen fire and the copper having been used for these purposes. In order to get rid of some portions of the remains the wooden box had been thrown into the river at Richmond Bridge and had been discovered at Barnes railway bridge. Other parts of the body, doubtless including the head, had been put in the black

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bag and disposed of; but no trace of the bag was ever found after it was seen in Webster's possession.

It will be seen how nearly Webster entirely escaped. She had succeeded so well in the earlier stages of her crime that it is surprising she did not continue the success to the very end.

But murder will out, and certainly it came to light in this case. Apart from the fact that important parts of the remains were never found, there were sufficient left to leave no question as to the identity of the murdered individual.

It might, of course, have happened that the chief point in the identification would have depended upon proving that the model which I had taken exactly corresponded with the mouth of the deceased; but, fortunately for justice, there were other ways of establishing the identity of Mrs. Thomas, and when Webster was finally committed for trial there was a strong case against her. There were the signs at the house, the corded box was known to have been used by Mrs. Thomas as a bonnet-box, and the furniture removal men had taken a few things away—dresses in the pockets of which were compromising letters. In her hasty flight, too,

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the prisoner had left her watch behind, and this was found, though quite apart from that there was abundant evidence of her association with the house and being in it when the murder must have been committed.

There was another thing proved which was of great importance.

A gold plate was produced which I examined and compared with the cast I had taken of the lower jaw of Mrs. Thomas. I found that this plate corresponded with the cast, and left no doubt that it had belonged to the deceased lady, though she was not wearing it when she came to see me, explaining that it hurt her. This plate was given by Webster to a man to sell, and he disposed of it for six shillings, Webster giving him a shilling for his trouble.

The murder was so uncommonly atrocious that it aroused an enormous amount of interest throughout the country, and the interest was fully maintained in spite of the postponement of the trial from one sessions to another, so that the prisoner might have time to prepare her defence.

Webster had been arrested towards the end of March, but it was not until July that she was put on her trial at the Central Criminal Court before the Hon. Mr. Justice Denman.

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The trial was a protracted business, occupying six long days, and it was conducted by the Crown in the fairest possible manner.

The prisoner had every chance of proving her innocence, but she was not in a position to do so, and she must have known that there was practically no hope of an acquittal; yet to the very end she was under the impression that she would be found not guilty—certainly after her condemnation she believed to the last that she would be reprieved—though why she should have encouraged any such hope it is hard to understand.

Day after day the court was packed with men and women, and every point in the case was followed with acute interest. And through it all the tall, gaunt, ill-favoured woman who was in peril of her life remained apparently unmoved, even when the most ghastly of the details were gone into, as they are of necessity gone into on such occasions as this.

At the end of that long, and to me, very wearisome trial, the prisoner, who had not made any defence and had not called any witnesses, was found guilty, the jury being absent from court about an hour and a quarter.

There was some delay in passing sentence

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of death, as Webster wished to consult her solicitor. He went into the dock and had some earnest private talk with her, but no one knew what the conversation was about.

The court was crowded, and there was an intense and awful silence, broken at last by the judge gently but firmly intimating that quite sufficient time had been given for any necessary question to be asked and answered. Then the solicitor left the dock, and the convicted woman was asked if she had anything to say why sentence of death should not be passed upon her.

Webster seemed to be quite calm and collected, and she answered in clear, firm tones that she was not guilty, and made a short speech protesting her innocence; but her very protest served only to confirm the justice of the verdict, for she said: "And another thing, I was led to this."

In uttering this she removed any possible doubt that might have lingered in one's mind.

I was in the crowded court when all this was taking place, and I supposed that when the judge had assumed the black cap and passed sentence the dreadful proceedings were ended; but there was still another sensation

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in a case which had offered many great surprises.

The condemned woman had been actually removed from the dock and people were beginning to leave the court when she was brought back, and it was privately intimated to the court that she declared herself as about to become a mother.

All who were in court were utterly taken aback by this fresh development, and as far as I recollect the judge himself said that in all his experience he had never known an instance like it. His lordship did not hesitate to fall back on the wide criminal knowledge of the Clerk of Assize, Mr. Ivory, and a jury of women was sworn to try this unexpected issue. When such a plea is put forward by a condemned woman a jury of matrons has to be empanelled, and upon their verdict it rests whether or no there shall be a stay of execution.

There were then, as there had been throughout the trial, a good many women in court, and very soon a dozen had been sworn and were in the box which had been occupied by the men who had found the prisoner guilty.

A celebrated surgeon, Mr. Bond, was present, and he and the jury of females and a few other

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persons in court, including myself, withdrew to the jury room, to which the prisoner, in the care of two women warders, was taken. It was soon found that she had lied in her statement, and the jury of matrons returned to the court, where, after some legal argument, the judge again summed up, very briefly, to the occupants of the box, addressing them as "Ladies of the jury."

The matrons were only two or three minutes before giving their verdict.

As soon as their finding had been delivered Webster was removed from the dock. She was taken straight to Wandsworth Prison, where she had been previously confined for lesser offences, and there she was hanged.

Before being executed this strange and forbidding woman confessed that she alone did the murder, that her mistress reproved her for being under the influence of drink, and that she knocked her down the stairs and then strangled her. There is very good reason to believe, however, that the crime was premeditated.

It was stated at the time that Webster, while in prison for the last time, was very submissive and docile, and was thankful to be in a gaol which was familiar to her, and where

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she was undoubtedly treated with the utmost kindness to the very end.

The house where the murder was committed is still standing—we will go and see it—but the name of the spot has been changed. When we have looked at it we will go a little farther, and I will point out to you a much more interesting place, and that is the one which is associated with the Lass of Richmond Hill.

CHAPTER VI

THE MASTER CRIMINAL

[IF the question were asked : Who is the most notorious criminal of modern times? the almost universal answer would be Charles Peace. And the reply would be correct, for Peace has a record which is unparalleled in recent generations. He was a crafty hypocrite, a skilful burglar, and a murderer. He was so merciless and callous that he actually saw an innocent man sentenced to death for a murder which he himself committed. Peace was eventually caught while burgling, and his chief crimes having been brought home to him, he was hanged at Armley Gaol, Leeds. The teller of this story, Mr. Alfred Tate, is an old sergeant of the Metropolitan Police, and he it was who, in company with a comrade, arrested Peace while he was committing a burglary at Blackheath.]

I joined the Metropolitan Police force when I was twenty-five years old. I was in the force some twenty-five years, and I have been out

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of it as long, so that makes me about seventy-five, doesn't it? Well, that's my age, and yet, in God's mercy, I keep fit and well, and in my little quiet way I enjoy life and all it offers.

I have been spared from many dangers—cholera, attempted murder, and riot amongst them. I survived the great cholera visitation of 1849; in the course of doing my duty as a policeman I was shot at twice by burglars, one of whom got ten years' penal servitude and the other five years'. I have had other narrow shaves—too many of them—but I suppose that really the narrowest of all was when I bore a hand in the arrest of Charles Peace, though at the time of the capture I had no more idea than the man in the moon who he was. I often think that the real reason of my salvation was the carrying out of the lesson that was taught to the old London policeman: Get the first hit in—that is, of course, when desperate characters have to be dealt with.

You want to hear about Charles Peace? Very well, then, I will tell you what I remember—and my memory is very good, despite my growing years.

At the end of 1878 I was a policeman at Blackheath, and was on duty with a comrade named Robinson. At that period we were work-

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ing in pairs, because a good many burglaries had been committed and there was no clue to the burglar, and one of the two men was armed with a loaded revolver. On this particular night it was Robinson who had the revolver. I had my truncheon.

We were on Blackheath, and it was getting very late. Midnight came and went, and at about twelve-fifteen we came across a respectable-looking man who was sitting on one of the seats.

Recent events had made us very suspicious, and I eyed the man carefully. Then I said: "Hallo! What are you doing here?"

Quite coolly the man replied: "I don't know what business it is of yours, governor; but if you want to know, I'm looking at the lights o' London!"

I got rather angry—partly because of the tone of the man, and partly because I thought it was such a poor excuse to offer, so I answered: "Don't talk rubbish about the lights of London. Get up and go away."

The man rose, muttering, and walked off, and Robinson and I resumed our beats, carefully examining the houses, especially those which were empty and were in charge of the police.

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It was our custom to take particular measures to give us warning if any burglary had been committed, and in one case, that of a semi-detached house, we had fastened cotton across the doors and windows—a thin line which could not be seen in the darkness and would be easily broken. When that line was not to be seen or felt we knew that someone was up to mischief.

It was pretty well after midnight when we examined the house and saw at once that the line was missing, showing that something was wrong.

I felt excited all at once, and the two of us stalked the house as carefully as we could, for we never knew what might be in store. We looked around the front of the house, but there was nothing to be seen. Most fortunately we did not make a noise or show a lantern, or neither of us would have been living—I am sure of that.

We crept round to the back of the house, where there was a long garden, and I whispered to Robinson: "Look! There's a shadow on the blind! And I do believe it's the man who said he was looking at the lights of London."

We held a short council of war to decide what should be done and who should do it. The

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door was open, and it was easy to enter the house, but there was obviously a heavy risk to be run.

“Who’s going in first?” asked Robinson.

“I don’t care which of us it is,” I answered; “but you’d better go first, as you’ve got the shooter.”

“All right,” he replied; and we made our way noiselessly upstairs to the door of the bedroom on the blind of which we had seen the shadow.

We stood in the open doorway for a few seconds, and I took in a queer scene.

There was the burglar carefully and quietly examining jewellery and other articles by the light of his bull’s-eye lantern, acting just as a respectable business man would act who was valuing articles he meant to buy. That was the look of the man—and he was calculating, too; but he did not mean to pay anything for what he was getting. There he was, a littlish man, absorbed in his task, which was a merciful thing for us, because on a dressing-table near him and within easy reach was an ugly brute of a revolver.

Robinson had his revolver out, and, holding this in his right hand, he rushed into the room, calling on the burglar to surrender.

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Like a flash the man was on his guard, and his hand made a snatch at the revolver on the dressing-table.

I don't quite know how it all happened, but I rushed past Robinson and flew at the burglar like a bird, and struck him a blow with my truncheon, telling him that it would be useless to resist, as we had plenty of help outside.

"How many more of you are there?" he asked; and I told him to mind his own business and come out.

As he seemed likely to be troublesome, I gave him another tap with the truncheon; then we got the handcuffs on him and took him, without any trouble, to Blackheath Road Police Station, which is, I believe, still standing.

When we got our burglar to the station we carefully searched him, and though we did not just then know who he was, we knew that we had caught a very uncommon criminal, for he had a belt round his body which was filled with cartridges, and another belt which was entirely lined with skeleton keys, so that he could open any door, and he had the revolver which we saw lying on the dressing-table, and which we took very good care to secure. It was fully loaded, so that the man was thoroughly well equipped for the risky game he was playing.

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All the prisoner's belongings were taken from him and put aside, and a list was made of them in the usual manner, so that, in case nothing was proved against him, he would get them back. But the articles were never returned to him, and they are now, I believe, in the museum at Scotland Yard, with many more criminal trophies relating to notorious men and women.

When the prisoner had been charged in the usual way he was asked for his name, and he promptly answered that it was Reynolds.

I said: "You're the man I saw on a seat at twelve-fifteen this morning, and you told us you were looking at the lights of London."

"Oh no, you didn't," he answered quite quietly. He had an amazingly assured way with him, and looked so eminently respectable that you might easily have believed him; but I knew that I was not mistaken, so I said positively:

"Yes, I did."

Then the inspector turned to me and asked: "Did you see him?" And I assured him that I had seen the man.

Then the prisoner owned up and said that I was right. He added: "My name is Peace"

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—and that made me think we had caught big game.

“What’s your proper address?” the inspector asked; and Peace gave it—Queen’s Road, Peckham. It seems odd, talking about the matter now, that he was so open; but I am certain that he never imagined that he would be trapped for the hangman. I am not pretending to feel any sympathy for him—he was an unmitigated monster, and deserved far more than the death he got on the gallows. It is no good wasting kindness on criminals like him.

When these preliminaries had been carried out Peace was put in a cell, and, a search warrant having been issued, the house in Queen’s Road was forcibly entered, and there was seen an astonishing collection of goods and articles, all or most of which were proved to be the proceeds of clever and mysterious burglaries.

Peace had kept dark for a long time, but now there was a very brilliant light thrown on him and on his past.

A description of him was circulated in the ordinary way and by telegraph, with the result that a large number of detectives and other police officers came and identified him as a man who was wanted for burglaries. The net was closing in around him and was beginning to

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hold him very tight, but Peace did not seem much concerned when, on the morning of his arrest, he was brought up at Greenwich Police Court and charged with the burglary at the house where we had caught him. Formal evidence having been given, he was remanded for a fortnight.

What was this man like when we arrested him? Well, he was most respectable, and he had an extraordinary knack of making a lie seem to be a truth. He was thoroughly plausible, and as deceitful in his speech as he was in his dress—and he had quite a genius for disguising himself. That was the reason why it was so hard to identify him in many cases as the perpetrator of crimes. He was, as I have said, a littlish man, wearing a light overcoat, a black suit, and a bowler hat. In those days we called the bowler “Müller’s cut-down,” because of the way in which the hat of Mr. Briggs, who was murdered by a German named Müller in a North London train, had been cut down by the murderer.

Peace had such an oily way with him that he could have talked a good many people into believing anything, and he was as cunning as Old Nick himself. He was, in a way, fond of music and art, and there was found at his

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house a violin on which he frequently played. Those who heard him, and thought him a most respectable citizen, little suspected that he was the actual murderer of a policeman for whose death another man had been condemned to the gallows, and that this seemingly good and upright person was actually in the assize court when the innocent man was convicted! I will speak of that case later.

I never had the slightest pity for the ruffian, and I never knew anybody who had. I don't think there was as much cheap sentiment about then as there is now.

While Peace was under remand he was seen repeatedly and the inquiries about him were conducted ceaselessly. When he was in the police court again there was no hesitation in sending him to take his trial on the charge of burglary, and he was committed to the Old Bailey.

Meanwhile it was being realised that he was guilty of more than one cold-blooded murder as well as of many crafty burglaries. In particular it became obvious that he was concerned in the death of Mr. Dyson, at Bannercross, near Sheffield, who, in 1877, was shot by a burglar. A charge of murdering Mr. Dyson was preferred against him, and this meant that

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Peace had to be taken from London to Yorkshire, to be tried at the assizes at Leeds.

The man did not want to die—he was too big a coward for that; but he must have known that his fate was by this time pretty well sealed and that he could not escape conviction by a jury. Little as he wished to die, he desired still less to be hanged, and so, when he was being taken into Yorkshire by two warders, he made a most desperate attempt to escape from the train by which he was travelling.

Watching for his chance, Peace suddenly sprang at the open window with such force and so skilfully that he actually went out head first, and would most likely have been killed on the spot if one of the warders had not grabbed him by the ankle and held on to him with all his might.

Peace struggled furiously to get free, head downward and hanging from the window of the compartment in that flying express. But the warder did not let go for some time; and that is all the more astonishing, because he had to hold on alone, the whole of the window space being taken up by himself, so that his comrade could not get near to help.

To hold on for any length of time to such a desperate character under such conditions

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was too much even for an experienced prison warder, and as the train could not be stopped there was nothing for it but to let the prisoner go, and so he crashed to the line, and the train tore on some distance before it could be stopped. Then a rush was made for the spot at which Peace had escaped, and there he was found—not dead, as was fully expected, but too badly hurt to get away. He was taken on to his journey's end, where he recovered and found that his desperate attempt to cheat the hangman had failed. I do not know what he supposed would be the result of such a mad leap, but he may have fancied that by chance he would escape uninjured, and that his cunning would enable him to be at large once more to carry on his scoundrel's work.

It was on January 22nd, 1879, that this notorious criminal sprang from the train and nearly cheated the gallows; it was on February 4th following that he appeared in the Crown Court at the assizes held at Leeds by Mr. Justice Lopes. The indictment charged him with the murder of Mr. Dyson. I was very glad to think that the end of the business was near at hand, because I had been in Leeds waiting for several days, and I can't say that I cared for the place.

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The trial began and ended on the same day, and the evidence left no doubt that Peace had murdered Dyson very deliberately. In the dock the monster did not appear to be very much concerned, and it is said that he actually had some hope of an acquittal. His counsel did his best for him—he was defended by Mr. Frank Lockwood, who afterwards became Solicitor-General—but no impression was made on the jury, who, when the judge had summed up, were only a few minutes in finding the prisoner guilty.

The judge wasted no words while passing sentence of death, and then the warders closed round and the criminal was taken away, going down the dock stairs with perhaps as little sympathy as any man ever got who descended them.

Peace was taken to Armley Gaol, about two miles distant, to await his execution in three weeks. There seemed to be a positive wave of relief in the country when it was realised that this dangerous villain, who had made himself a terror to the police as well as to the general public, was put beyond the power of doing further mischief.

Any lingering doubt that might have existed as to the justice of his punishment was dashed

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by the confession Peace made of the murder which I have mentioned—that of the policeman Cocks.

On November 27th, 1876, an absolutely innocent lad named William Habron was condemned to death at the Old Bailey for the murder of Cocks. The real murderer, Peace, was in court, and he heard the sentence passed; he knew later that the hangman was actually in the prison, arranging for the execution, yet he did not give a hint that there had been a terrible miscarriage of justice. Habron, at the eleventh hour, was reprieved and sent to penal servitude for life. Finally the lad, whose father had died of a broken heart, got a “free pardon,” but only because of what Peace confessed when he knew that there was no hope for him in this world.

Peace was hanged in a semi-public way—that is to say, representatives of the Press witnessed his end. He was a hypocrite and a coward to the end, for on the scaffold he made a whining speech and told the hangman that the rope hurt him. He was executed on gallows that were erected in the prison yard, and he was buried in the yard, not far away. I believe the identical scaffold is in the Chamber of Horrors at Madame Tussaud's, and on it is

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a figure representing Peace in the convict dress he wore when he was hanged. Another figure is that of Marwood, the executioner.

The extraordinary public interest which was aroused in the case of Peace was shown by the eagerness of people to get mementoes of him.

I was present at the house at Peckham when the things in it that had been got together by this cunning burglar were sold by auction. There were all sorts of musical instruments, and there was a good deal of competition for the fiddle on which the man used to play. There were also a pony and cart, which Peace used when he was going about and which helped him to keep up the impression that he was a person of the utmost respectability. The pony and cart were bought by a Walworth costermonger, who promptly christened the animal Charles Peace, which I think was rather hard on it. The sale lasted two days, and very good prices were realised. I imagine that some of the money raised went to pay for Peace's trial. The whole of the household arrangements showed that Peace was a man of great taste in some directions. He had an astonishingly clever way of deceiving a lot of people into the belief that he was a gentleman, and I have

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often thought that he might have won great success if he had turned his talents to honest efforts.

The capture of such a notorious scoundrel attracted enormous public attention, and Robinson came in for a great deal of it. He was made much of and fêted and dined and persuaded to go on the music-hall stage. In the end he was called upon to resign from the police force, and he had to make a living by selling newspapers outside "The Angel." Finally he died in a workhouse.

I got nothing out of the business, nor did I expect anything; and what I never had I shan't miss.

Have I the truncheon that I used on Peace? No; I had to give it up when I left the force. And the bull's-eye lantern you see here is not the one I had that night on Blackheath when we caught him. It's a lamp I use at night in winter to show me where I'm going, because, you see, we have no gas or electric light in a little place like this, which is more than two miles from a railway station.

CHAPTER VII

THE BRIGHTON RAILWAY MURDER

[IN 1881 a profound sensation was caused throughout the country by the murder of Mr. Frederick Isaac Gold in a first-class compartment of an express train from London Bridge Station to Brighton. The murderer, Percy Lefroy, alias Mapleton, escaped from custody in the most astonishing manner, and remained in hiding for more than a week. His arrest was a matter of such intense interest that it was made known at the Lord Mayor's banquet and in the House of Commons. An important witness in the case was Mr. Thomas Picknell, and this is his story of the crime.]

Just on this spot where we are standing—in the six-foot way—I picked up a collar on the afternoon of June 27th, 1881. It was an ordinary turn-down collar of the type very common in those days, but there was an extraordinary thing about it, and it was this: the collar was covered with blood. I examined the

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collar, and so did my mate, who was with me. Having done so, I let it drop back into the six-foot way.

I was a ganger at that time, and it was my duty to examine a certain section of the line twice every weekday and once every Sunday. I was carrying out that task when I found the collar.

In spite of the stains I did not think much of the discovery, for I supposed that a passenger had scratched his neck and had taken the collar off and thrown it out of the window of a passing train. All sorts of odd things are disposed of in this manner.

After throwing the collar back into the six-foot way we walked on to Balcombe Station, about three-quarters of a mile away, and there I was startled to hear that another mate of mine, named Thomas Jennings, had found the dead body of a man in Balcombe Tunnel. Balcombe, as you see, is a quiet little country place, with not much going on, but it suddenly became very busy and famous, for a crime had been committed which filled the country with horror and was the thing that was mostly talked about for many a long day.

I soon learned what had happened. Jennings had walked through the tunnel to do some

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haymaking, and, having finished, he was walking back towards the station, carrying a naphtha lamp with him. He had got almost exactly in the middle of the tunnel when he found the body lying in the six-foot way—that is, of course, the space between the two sets of metals. At that time the cause of death was not known, and I don't suppose that any time was lost in trying to find out. The main thing was to report the affair at the station and get the body out of the tunnel.

There was great excitement all at once. An engine and a brake were got—a brake such as a guard uses on a goods train—and the engine took a number of us into the tunnel to get the body up and bring it on to Balcombe. It was a gloomy business, and a strange scene it was as we gathered round the body in the six-foot way, working by the lights of our naphtha lamps—just the sort of lamps you see at fairs and lighting costers' carts at night. The task was very difficult, too, because of the constant traffic through the tunnel, which caused us time after time to get into the manholes for shelter.

We were in the tunnel about an hour, because we had to wait for a policeman. At the end of that time we had got the body into

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the brake, and it was drawn by the engine to the station and carried to the "Railway Inn," where it was put in the coach-house.

When we first saw the body it was lying on its back, with the head towards Brighton. Even in the gloomy light of the tunnel it was evident that terrible injuries had been caused, for the face was covered with blood, and on this the black dust from passing engines and the ballast had settled thickly, making the features look as dark as a negro's. It was clear enough that murder had been done, and that there had been a long and fierce struggle before Mr. Gold was lying in the middle of Balcombe tunnel.

I first picked the collar up—it was soon secured, of course, in view of the discovery of the body—at about a quarter to five. By that time an extraordinary thing had happened at Preston Park Station, just outside Brighton.

A ticket-collector, on opening the door of a first-class compartment, found a young man in it who had neither hat nor collar, who was covered with blood, and who was looking as if he had been badly knocked about. Blood was spattered all over the compartment, and the young man, Percy Lefroy, asked for a policeman to be sent for. When one came he

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declared that when he left London Bridge two men were in the compartment with him, one of them an elderly person, and the other looking like a countryman.

Lefroy said that on entering a tunnel he was murderously assaulted by one of the men and became insensible, and that he knew nothing more until he reached Preston Park. While he was telling his tale it was noticed that a watch-chain was hanging from his shoe, and on his attention being called to this circumstance he explained that he had put his watch there for safety.

Lefroy was allowed to keep the watch and chain and to go on to Brighton, the policeman being with him. He was taken to the Town Hall, where he made a statement, and he was then removed to the hospital, where his injuries were attended to. He showed a keen wish to get away, saying he wished to return to his home at Wallington, near Croydon, where he lived with a second cousin. He was given permission to go back, but the case looked very suspicious, and two railway policemen accompanied him. On the journey, at one of the stopping-places, the party learned that Mr. Gold's body had been found. This was stated by an official of the company, and Lefroy

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heard it; but it does not seem that he was greatly upset by the tidings. He reached Wallington and the cousin's house; then he told the police that he was going out to see a doctor. Amazing as it seems, he was allowed to go, and from that moment, for more than a week, all trace of him was lost.

An inquest was held—a tremendous affair it was for a little place like Balcombe, special wires being fitted so that long telegrams could be sent off to the newspapers—and a verdict of wilful murder was returned against Lefroy. A reward, too, was offered for his arrest, and the whole country was thrown into a state of the most intense excitement and a lot of people were quite unnerved when it came to a question of travelling by train.

I spent many weary days at the inquest, at the police court proceedings, and at the trial at the assizes, so that every detail of the case became familiar to me, and I remember them pretty well even now. So I will just outline the actual story of what happened on that famous summer day in 1881.

Mr. Gold was a retired London business man, about sixty-four years old, and lived at Brighton. He was still interested in a business in London, and every Monday morning he went

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to town to get his share of the profits. This money he sometimes took home with him, and at other times he paid it into the bank. On this particular Monday morning he received £38 odd, and with the exception of the shillings and pence he put the money into the bank and then went to London Bridge Station, which he reached just before two o'clock.

The train, an express, left London Bridge at two o'clock, the only stopping-places being Croydon and Preston Park. Mr. Gold, who was a season ticket holder, was well known on the line. He occupied a seat in a first-class smoking compartment, and just before the train started Lefroy, who had been walking up and down the platform looking into the carriages, jumped in and seated himself in the compartment. At Croydon the guard noticed that Mr. Gold was apparently taking a nap, for he had a handkerchief over his head.

When the express reached Merstham Tunnel a passenger heard four reports, which he thought were fog-signals, but which proved to be revolver shots.

Lefroy had begun his murderous work by firing with a revolver which he had got out of pawn. Then began a long and terrible struggle, for Mr. Gold, though elderly, was a big, power-

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ful man, and he defended himself in the most resolute manner.

Mile after mile the fight went on—it was calculated afterwards that the struggle was continued over a distance of fourteen miles. It began when the train was about seventeen miles from London, and ended only in the middle of Balcombe Tunnel, about thirty-one miles from London Bridge, with the flinging out of the compartment of a man who by that time had one bullet in the head and about fourteen knife wounds on various parts of the body. The medical evidence showed that the actual cause of death was a fracture at the base of the skull, which was, no doubt, the result of the fall from the train into the six-foot way.

That there was a fierce struggle was shown by the statements of a woman who lived in a cottage at Horley, about eight miles from Merstham Tunnel. She was outside the cottage, and as the train dashed by she saw two men struggling in a compartment. They were standing up, and at first she did not know whether or not they might be engaged in the sort of horseplay which so often takes place in trains.

The train roared through Balcombe Tunnel and out into the open air and passed me on

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the line, but I took no more notice of it than I took of any of the scores of trains that went up and down in the course of a day.

By that time Lefroy had shut the door of the compartment and was speeding on to Preston Park, no doubt concocting the wonderful tale which he told when the train stopped for the collection of tickets. He had thrown his collar away, and his silk hat as well; doubtless also the revolver and the knife, for we found a knife in the tunnel near the body.

At Brighton he went to a shop to buy a collar, which proved to be the same size as the one I found; and he got a hat, also the same size as the one which was found on the line—and an uncommon size, because Lefroy was an uncommon-looking person. He had a receding forehead and a very receding chin, and his teeth and gums showed prominently when he smiled. I had many opportunities of studying him, and he seemed to be the last person in the world to commit a murder, least of all the murder of a man like Mr. Gold. I should think that Mr. Gold was almost twice the size, taking all round, of Lefroy, but I dare say that the awful peril of his position and his determination to see his business through gave Lefroy the strength of a madman while

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he was doing his work. He was only about twenty-two years old, and was about five feet eight inches in height, but weedy looking and not very fit.

The murder had been done and the whole country was more or less panic-stricken because Lefroy had escaped. There was a tremendous outcry, and all sorts of theories were set afoot to account for his disappearance. He had committed suicide, gone abroad, had been seen in many towns in England, and so forth; but, as a matter of fact, he had made his way to London and taken lodgings in a small house in a little mean street in Stepney, giving out that he was an engineer from Liverpool.

It was afterwards known that Lefroy hid in the house for nearly eight days, never leaving it, and almost starving, certainly looking so miserable and wretched that he was enough to arouse pity in the heart of anyone who saw him. There was never a suspicion that he was a murderer.

In those days there were not the wonderful means that exist now of publishing photographs and particulars of people who were wanted by the police. It was a rare thing for a newspaper to give a portrait, but the *Daily Telegraph* had a picture of Lefroy which

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aroused enormous interest and was remarkably like him. He was so uncommon looking that if he had been at large I think it is pretty certain he would have been taken much sooner than was actually the case.

Lefroy had neither money nor luggage, and it became urgently necessary to secure the means to pay his bill. He managed to send a telegram off in the name of Clarke to an office in Gresham Street asking for money to be sent to him that night without fail. That was on Friday, July 8th, eleven days after the murder. By that time the published portrait had been seen and studied by great numbers of persons, and when the telegram was handed in at the post office information was given that a man strongly resembling the picture was lodging at the house in Stepney.

The police were communicated with, and, instead of the money reaching Lefroy, when the door opened he saw two police officers. He knew why they wanted him, and made no resistance, nor did he say much, except that he was not guilty of the crime.

Lefroy was taken to Stepney Police Station, then to Scotland Yard, and having spent the night at King Street Police Station, Westminster, he was hurried off to Victoria Station

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early next morning and taken to East Grinstead. The bloodstained clothes which he was wearing when he reached Brighton, and which he had exchanged for another suit while in the charge of the police, were carried down at the same time.

At that preliminary hearing the magistrates at Cuckfield, in which district the body had been found, sat in the Talbot Hotel, Lefroy being kept in Lewes Gaol, sixteen miles away. The magistrates' inquiry lasted four days, and each morning Lefroy was driven in a two-horse fly from the prison to the court, and each afternoon he was driven back. I do not think he was ever seen in public without being hooted. Lefroy was committed for trial at the Maidstone Assizes, and had to wait four months in prison before he appeared in the dock before the Lord Chief Justice. The hearing occupied four days.

Enormous interest was taken in one of the most striking things in connection with the crime, and that was the railway carriage in which the terrible struggle took place. This carriage was seen time after time by jurymen and others concerned in the case, and I became familiar with it. In the actual compartment there were abundant signs of the fight, and

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even on the footboard were marks of blood, which showed that to the very end Mr. Gold had fought for his life. He had apparently made a last frantic clutch as he was hurled out of the train.

The state of the carriage and the condition of the body showed at a glance how long and fierce the fight had been. As for the appearance of Lefroy at Preston Park and Brighton I cannot say anything, as I did not see him then, but when I did see him, soon after his arrest, there were not many signs that he had gone through such a desperate struggle. He seemed to have had matters pretty much his own way, but having a loaded revolver and a knife against an unarmed man gave him tremendous odds.

It was on Gunpowder Plot Day that the trial before the Lord Chief Justice began. By that time Lefroy had improved very much in looks and had had time to pull himself together. Considering the nature of the evidence against him and the almost utter hopelessness of an acquittal, he was amazingly cool; in fact, he seemed to be about the most unaffected person in court. There was no doubt that he had a mania for attracting public attention, and he made the extraordinary request that he should

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be allowed to get a dress suit out of pawn and wear it in the dock. This fancy was not gratified, but the young man made the best of his chances and was particularly attentive to a silk hat which he wore. Each morning when he was brought up into the dock from the cells below he bowed ceremoniously to the judge and the court generally. It seemed as if the prisoner's great object was to attract attention, and I was astonished that a man who stood in such peril of his life could find time or inclination for such trifles. But the fact was that to the very last moment Lefroy believed that he would be acquitted, and there were other people who actually persuaded themselves that he would be found not guilty. It may have been that they credited the story of the third man in the compartment, the person who looked like a countryman. All I can say on that point is that if there really was a third party in the compartment it was the Devil himself.

I got weary of the whole business long before it was finished—though we had a day off in the course of the trial. That was on Lord Mayor's Day, when the judge had to go to London to take part in the ceremonies.

On the afternoon of the fourth day of the

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trial the judge had finished his long summing-up, and the jury retired to consider their verdict. That took them only a few minutes; they found Lefroy guilty, and he was sentenced to death. When he had been condemned he told the jury that some day they would learn that they had murdered an innocent man.

It was an odd circumstance that, after being so closely connected with the case for so long, I was not present in court when Lefroy was found guilty and sentenced. I had got tired of the oft-told story and the stuffy atmosphere, and when the summing up was going on I was wandering round the prison walls examining them. When I got back to the court all was over. Lefroy had been removed, and soon afterwards he was taken, handcuffed and under a strong police escort, to Lewes Gaol.

Even in the condemned cell Lefroy did not abandon hope, and he wrote a letter in which he asked for a file and a small saw to be sent to him concealed in the crust of a meat pie, his object evidently being to try and break out of prison, though how he expected to do that, when he was constantly guarded, is a mystery. He also tried to get poison sent in to him, but these attempts were fruitless.

A petition for a reprieve was signed, but

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no notice was taken of it. When, at the very last, Lefroy knew that his doom was certain he confessed to the murder. He said that he was so desperately in need of money that he was determined to go to any length to get it, even to the extent of murder. He walked up and down on the platform at London Bridge in the hope of finding a woman alone in a compartment. In that case he would have got in and demanded money from her, hoping that he would be able to escape and that it would not be necessary to do more than stun her. There was not, mercifully, any such solitary woman, and seeing Mr. Gold alone, and noticing that he looked prosperous, Lefroy jumped into the compartment just before the train started. The watch which he had in his shoe at Preston Park was Mr. Gold's. Before being arrested Lefroy threw the watch over Blackfriars Bridge.

Lefroy was hanged at Lewes by Marwood on November 29th, almost exactly five months after he murdered Mr. Gold.

I don't know what became of the collar. I saw it at the inquest and at the trial, but not afterwards; and I didn't wish to see it, for I had had enough of it.

As to the revolver, the police made a long

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and tiring search on the line and elsewhere, but they were not successful. After Lefroy was hanged a ganger found a revolver in a little hole at Earlswood, and that was supposed to be the weapon which was used. I dare say there are many relics of the terrible affair; but most of the people who were connected with the trial have died. Of all the local people, I think I am the only one left, though Jennings is, I believe, still alive somewhere in America.

Well, that's the story of the famous Brighton train murder. Here we are on the very spot where I found the collar. Now we can go on picking primroses on the embankment. They're beautiful, aren't they? Balcombe primroses are said to be the finest in England, and, being a Balcombe man for fifty years, I honestly believe it.

CHAPTER VIII

PALMER'S POISONINGS

[IN the whole of modern British criminology there is no more appalling character than Dr. William Palmer, the Rugeley poisoner. He was a notorious evil liver, an extensive forger, and a wholesale murderer. The late Mr. Justice Stephen said of him : "No more horrible villain than Palmer ever stood in a dock." Palmer was convicted of the murder of a man named Cook, and was hanged outside Stafford Gaol on June 14th, 1856; but he was indicted for two other murders, and it is known that he had committed at least eleven of these terrible crimes, his victims including his wife and four children, all the infants dying within a few weeks of birth, and suddenly. Practically a life study has been made of the Palmer case by Dr. George Fletcher, J.P., whose story is narrated.]

I paid my first visit to Rugeley when I was a schoolboy fourteen years old, and walk-

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ing from the station I passed a fine house with a garden fronting on the road. A number of trippers had come into Rugeley from the adjacent Black Country, and they stared hard at this particular building, for it was the house in which Dr. Palmer had been born.

As we looked at the house a woman, evidently the mistress, came out and walked to the garden gate near us, and, speaking with an extraordinary sort of pride, she said to us: "Well, I'm Mrs. Palmer, the mother of Dr. Palmer—and I'm not ashamed of it! The judges hanged *my saintly Bill*, and he was the best of my whole lot!"

It was a dramatic incident, and I have never forgotten it, nor have I forgotten seeing John Parsons Cook, for whose murder Palmer was hanged. Cook came to Bromsgrove, where I lived, shortly before he was murdered, and I remember him playing cricket for the town club. From those early and distant days I have maintained a constant interest in the case, which has no parallel in medical jurisprudence. My former partner, Dr. Forshall, soon after he qualified, went to Rugeley as assistant to old Dr. Bamford, who was so closely associated with the Palmer case. Palmer was then in practice at Rugeley, and my partner often saw

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him and said that he was clever at his work, but was an idle, loose character.

It is difficult to avoid exaggeration in speaking of Palmer; but Mr. Justice Stephen did not overstate his character. Palmer was a cool, callous, calculating poisoner of the most inhuman type, and his name will be handed down to posterity in legal and medical circles as the greatest and most cruel murderer that England has ever known, a man for whose blood all Britons clamoured and whose awful guilt not a soul doubted. His trial and condemnation caused an upheaval in the world of medical jurisprudence, and though more than half a century has passed since he was hanged, yet the small town of Rugeley in Staffordshire is still associated with the name of Palmer, who was born there, was educated at the grammar school there, and for eight years was in full practice in the town as a doctor. Owing to his profession he was able to carry on his murderous work free from suspicion until his victims numbered about eleven—then he overreached himself, and finally was led to his doom on the gallows outside Stafford Gaol, where a friend of mine saw him hanged.

Palmer was a marvellous man, and in order to estimate his character something must be said

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of his antecedents. His father, Joseph, was an entirely self-made man, first a woodcutter, then a sawyer. When earning a pound a week on the estate of the Marquis of Anglesey he came across Sarah Bentley, a young woman from a very low slum in Derby, where her drunken mother lived an idle life. The Marquis's agent was paying his addresses to Sarah, and she might have made an excellent match; but the coarse, low sawyer took her off to a local fair and married her before they returned home. The steward continued to pay attentions to Sarah notwithstanding her marriage, and while he was carrying on this intrigue Joseph set to work and robbed the estate very heavily of its best trees—plunder at which the steward connived. There was little cause for wonder, then, that when Joseph died suddenly in 1836 he left the large fortune of £80,000, a widow with a terrible character—the woman I saw at the gate of the fine house at Rugeley—and two daughters and five sons, of whom one, William, then not quite twelve years old, was to achieve lasting notoriety.

Coming from such a stock, Palmer was heavily handicapped at the very start, and an old schoolfellow of his, whom I saw not long before his death, told me that the lad was

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thoroughly bad. He had unlimited pocket-money, but squandered it all, and when he wanted more he got it by the simple process of rifling his sisters' dresses and purses at home.

From school Palmer was apprenticed to a Dr. Tylecote, of Haywood, where he met Annie Brooks Thornton, a loyal woman who was to endure many agonising experiences before she herself fell a victim to the poisoner. It was not long before Palmer was compelled to leave Haywood in deep disgrace. He was then only twenty years of age, but it is believed that already he had murdered his first victim, a man named Abley, whom he was treating to liquor. Abley died half an hour after drinking his last glass of brandy—and at the inquest it was shown that Palmer had evinced far too much admiration for Mrs. Abley.

After walking Stafford County Hospital for a few months Palmer went to London, and entered St. Bartholomew's Hospital as a student, taking his M.R.C.S. in 1846. In October, 1847, he married Annie Brooks Thornton, and in October, 1848, their first boy was born.

After qualifying Palmer returned to Rugeley, and there he practised for a few years, and could have done well, but his innate

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depravity made it impossible for him to go straight in any way, and his love for the turf drove him to the utmost extremity for want of money. By 1853 he owned sixteen race-horses, and had a regular stud two miles from home, on the edge of Cannock Chase.

The almost inevitable thing happened. Palmer got into serious financial difficulties, and very soon disposed of £8,000 drawn from his mother, left to him by his father to become due to him at her death, and nearly £2,000 more which he had obtained from her. He was so badly cornered by bills and acceptances that he was forced to go to the money-lenders. In 1853 he raised £2,000 on a bill which bore the acceptance of his mother. This acceptance was forged, and the unwilling instrument employed was the gentle wife, who was forced to sign the mother's name at Palmer's bidding. By means of forging his mother's name Palmer continued to raise money. In 1854 he owed one Birmingham money-lender £8,000; then he fell into the clutches of a notorious bill-discounting bloodsucker named Pratt, a London lawyer, and from that time began the downfall which ended with the ignominy of the gallows.

In due course Pratt gave evidence, and I was told by one who was in court that it

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was terrible to hear his testimony, given in a mercilessly cold voice, and to see how each letter read in court had driven Palmer to more and more awful steps to avoid utter ruin and detection of his forgeries and robberies, the latter now totalling the great sum of £20,000. Pratt admitted discounting the bills at sixty per cent. and insisted on interest being paid monthly.

This, then, was the state of things: A man of terribly vile character, with bills in the hands of discounters to the extent of £20,000—to all of which his mother's name was forged—drifting more and more into loose company and entirely neglecting his practice. Money, and plenty of it, was absolutely essential, and so Palmer proceeded to get it by the most infamous of all methods—the deliberate murder of his own family, relatives, and friends.

His first victim was his mother-in-law, Mary Thornton, a woman who had never married, but had been housekeeper for thirty years to Colonel Brooks, a member of one of the Staffordshire families. "Gentle" Annie, as Palmer's wife was called, was Mary Thornton's illegitimate daughter. The old colonel had left his housekeeper several good houses in Stafford and £3,000 in cash, all of which Palmer understood came to Annie on her mother's death.

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Annie, on her wedding day, received £500 from her mother, who, a year after, gave her £1,000. Palmer was then hard up, and he soon borrowed £500 more from his mother-in-law. Despite her strong objections, he persuaded her to come and live with them. The woman must have known something of the real nature of the monster, for she declared to friends in Stafford: "I know I shall not live a month." Nor did she, for Palmer poisoned her. A mysterious illness, with unaccountable symptoms, set in, and old Dr. Bamford was called in. The woman died, and was buried in Rugeley churchyard, where I copied from the tombstone: "Sacred to the memory of Mary Thornton, late of Stafford, who died 18th January, 1849, aged 50 years." She was the first known victim of Palmer to find a sepulchre there.

The next victim was a bookmaker named Bladen, who was with Palmer at Epsom. Bladen won £500 in bets, and Palmer lost heavily to him—£400 or £500. At Palmer's urgent invitation Bladen returned to Rugeley with him, and the doctor promised to drive Bladen to see a brother of the bookmaker at Ashley, twenty miles away. Writing to his wife, Bladen said that he had over £600 in his money-belt, and was going to Rugeley with

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Palmer, who must pay him over £400. "So expect me home in three or four days," wrote Bladen, "with £1,000 in hand."

The day after Bladen reached Rugeley Palmer's hateful evil genius, a disreputable lawyer named Jeremiah Smith, drove him over to Ashley and back. That was on a Wednesday, and on the evening of that day Bladen was taken ill—a circumstance which was attributed to the long drive. On the Friday Dr. Bamford was called in, and told Bladen his illness was due to too much port, this being the explanation given to him by Palmer and Smith. On the Saturday a friend, Mr. Merritt, on his way home from Chester races, found Bladen so ill that he summoned Mrs. Bladen. She hurried down on the Saturday, but only just in time to see him alive and unconscious. He died very soon after her arrival, and was screwed down without his wife having seen him again. The funeral was hurried, and Bladen was buried in Rugeley churchyard, where I copied from a slate tombstone on the right main path leading to the south door the inscription: "In memory of Leonard Bladen, of Ashby-de-la-Zouch, who died May 10th, 1850. Aged 49 years." Palmer offered to pay the funeral expenses, which the widow thought at the time was most generous

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of him. But she said she was anxious to have her husband's papers, and asked for the money-belt. This could not be found, nor could Bladen's betting book. Mrs. Bladen grew suspicious—and she was actually about to sign an acknowledgment that her husband owed Palmer £70 when by chance, reflected in a mirror, she saw an extraordinary expression on Palmer's face.

“No,” said Palmer, chatting pleasantly, “I never owed poor Bladen a penny!”

“What! Never?” she exclaimed. “Why, I saw a letter of yours last summer in which you asked for more time to repay £200 you had borrowed!”

She refused to sign and left the house.

Palmer had now started on that career of deliberate poisoning which is almost inconceivable and is certainly without parallel in modern times. According to the marriage settlement, if his wife should have a son the child was provided for. A boy was born. If there should be more children at the time of Mrs. Palmer's death they were to inherit the bulk of what she possessed. Others *were* born, and, of course, they must not live, for if they survived the wife Palmer would get so little.

And so it happened that a little girl and three little boys all died somewhat suddenly

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within a few weeks of birth, and I have copied their names and ages and dates of death from the register of burials at Rugeley Church. Later on the manner of the death of these children was fully known—and it was known also that three of Palmer's illegitimate children, by his servants, were poisoned by him.

Even then there were ugly rumours afloat, but for the gentle wife's sake no one stirred to take serious action. Soon this devoted, long-suffering soul, who was only twenty-seven years old, was to die a lingering death. Palmer insured her for the large sum of £15,000. He paid only one premium of £450, and then she died; yet the insurance company paid the £15,000 without question.

So successful was Palmer in this case that he tried to insure his brother Walter, a dissolute drunkard, for £85,000, the yearly premium to be £3,500. He did not succeed in this, but he did manage to carry through a policy for £15,000, and paid one premium. He gave his brother £100 to buy drink with, and hired a servant—in those days called a bottle-holder—to ply him with liquor, so that in a very few weeks Walter was a besotted imbecile. But even this was not quick enough, and Palmer poisoned his brother with prussic acid.

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But the doom which he so rightly merited was near at hand, and there was being built up against him a mass of evidence from which there was to be no earthly escape. The insurance offices became suspicious, a man dressed like a farmer, but in reality an astute detective, reached Rugley, and as the result of his and other inquiries the insurance office declined to pay the policy on Walter Palmer's death.

About this time Palmer met Cook, for whose murder he was subsequently hanged. Cook was intended for the law, but just as he was qualified he took to the turf, for at the age of twenty-one he had come into a fortune of £15,000. Cook was a splendid cricketer, a first-rate oar, and a good all-round man. When at Worcester races he stayed several times at Bromsgrove, where I was born and lived till I was nineteen years old. Many friends, my mother amongst them, begged Cook to give up the turf, and in his genial way he promised that he would. But he came across Palmer, who began at once to drag him down.

Palmer and Cook attended races together, and Cook had backed bills for the doctor. On November 13th the two went to Shrewsbury races, where Cook's horse, "Polestar," won the handicap, and Cook came into possession

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of a considerable sum of money. That sealed his doom, for Palmer, utterly cornered by the bloodsuckers into whose clutches he had fallen, was determined to have it.

When he got back home he found final threats from the money-lenders—threats which, if carried out, meant exposure of his forgeries of his mother's name for over £20,000. This exposure was kept off only so long as Palmer paid the monthly interest of sixty per cent. Failing in that, a long term of imprisonment stared him in the face.

There also awaited him a letter from a woman he had ruined—one of many—threatening to expose him if he did not send her £100, of which she was in the greatest need.

So we see that a few hundred pounds in ready money were wanted at once to keep off ruin a little longer—and Cook, by winning the Shrewsbury Handicap that day, had come into £1,100 in ready cash, while at Tattersall's, on the following Monday, he would receive £2,000 more.

Palmer's mind was now thoroughly made up as to what he would do, and that was, take Cook's life and get his money. Returning to Shrewsbury on the Wednesday, he rejoined Cook, and with others they were making merry

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in a sitting-room at "The Raven." On a pretext of ordering more brandy, Palmer left the room and went to a sort of pantry, lit by gas. This was about half-past ten o'clock at night.

A Mrs. Brooks, described as a lady who attended races and employed several jockeys, went to see Palmer about the morrow's races, and she saw him in the pantry, which was separated from the passage by a glass partition. He was holding up a tumbler to the gas, and was dropping something into it, then shaking the tumbler to see the something dissolve, and dropping a little more.

When Mrs. Brooks spoke Palmer must have been taken aback; but he kept his presence of mind and said: "I will be with you directly." He put the tumbler down and joined her, and after remaining in the passage a few minutes, talking, he returned to his boon companions.

Presently tumblers and more brandy were brought in, and Cook was persuaded to have more liquor. He took some and exclaimed: "Why, it's burning my throat!" He left the room, accompanied by a bookmaker named Fisher and George Herring, who became a famous millionaire philanthropist and died not long ago.

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Going to his bedroom, Cook said: "I believe Palmer has drugged me!" A doctor was sent for and prescribed, but Cook was so much alarmed that he took off his money-belt and gave his cash—£800 in notes and gold—to Herring. Next day Cook was on the course, looking very ill. Herring returned the money, and Palmer and Cook went back to Rugeley, Cook going to "The Talbot Arms," exactly opposite Palmer's house. Next day he dined with Palmer, and returned to his hotel very sick and ill.

No good purpose would be served by entering minutely into details of the few terrible days which followed, days during which Palmer, while being assiduous in his attentions to Cook, and apparently doing his utmost to preserve his life, was callously encompassing his death. Nearly everything that Cook took contained antimony, a mineral poison which was found in every tissue of the body when the post-mortem was made, showing that it had been administered over a long period.

As usual, poor old Dr. Bamford was called in—a practitioner now eighty-two years of age. He listened to all that Palmer had to say, and shook his head and prescribed; but there must by this time have come into his mind some

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suspicion of the dreadful truth. He must have gone back in his memory to many of the cases of death with which Palmer had been concerned, and surely there must have grown within him a strong suspicion that all was not well with the poor young fellow who was suffering so acutely in his bedroom at "The Talbot Arms."

On the following Monday Palmer went to London, and in some rooms which he frequented off the Strand he saw George Herring. He undoubtedly meant that Herring also should become a victim, and he asked him to take some wine; but Herring bluntly refused, and said afterwards that he suspected the man and never could tolerate him. Herring left, and there was no hope whatever of Palmer escaping arrest for forgery unless he got rid of Cook and obtained his money with which to pay the overdue and monstrous interest. By means of a forged letter he received through Herring all Cook's bets and stakes at Tattersall's; he had also stolen Cook's betting-book, and before leaving Rugeley for London he had managed to steal the £800 from Cook's money-belt.

Palmer hurried back to Rugeley, bought three grains of strychnine from Newton, a chemist in the place, and went home. The prosecution urged that Palmer made up two

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pills containing the strychnine, and hastened to "The Talbot Arms," where he met the villainous Jeremiah Smith in the hall, and went upstairs to see Cook, who was much better—as well he might be, his murderer having been away. Palmer gave him the pills which he said Dr. Bamford had sent; but, as a matter of fact, he had made up these strychnine pills and had substituted them for some pills which Bamford had actually prepared.

Palmer and Smith wished the doomed man good-night, and at about midnight Cook was left alone. Very soon he rang the bell, and the chambermaid, answering it, found him in agony, racked with pain and writhing and twisting his body about. He begged that Palmer should be sent for—and Palmer came. At four o'clock the house, which had been roused, settled down somewhat, for the patient was quieter. Palmer had given him some brown stuff, and was left in charge, sleeping in a chair near the fire.

Early next morning, as Cook had survived the strychnine, Palmer went to the other chemist in Rugeley, Roberts, and asked for three different poisons—strong laudanum, prussic acid, and six grains of strychnine. Whilst Roberts was putting these up, Newton came

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in, greatly to Palmer's consternation, and as soon as Palmer had gone he asked Roberts what he had bought; and though Newton did not then disclose the fact of the previous night's purchase, yet this became an important link in the chain of evidence.

At noon a great friend of Cook's, Dr. Jones, from Lutterworth, arrived, Palmer having asked him to come, saying that Cook had had a bilious attack. The three doctors, including Bamford, had a consultation, and Cook said: "Now, mind, Bamford, no more of those d——d pills to-night. They racked me with the pains of hell last night. No more pills for me!"

On going out on to the landing Palmer said: "Those pills are best for him," and it was agreed that Bamford should make up a couple of morphine pills. Palmer accompanied the old man and watched him make the pills up. At his urgent request Bamford wrote directions on the outside, so that when Cook refused to take any more pills Jones was able to say that the three doctors had agreed that the patient should have them—Jones, of course, never suspecting that Palmer substituted two strychnine pills for the morphine preparations.

"Very well! I'll swallow them," said Cook



Photograph by W. N. Woods, Rugeley

THE SHREWSBURY ARMS HOTEL, RUGELEY, WHERE COOK DIED

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resignedly, and, having done so, Palmer walked across the street to his house and Jones went to supper in the coffee-room. In half an hour he went back to the bedroom, having arranged to sleep in a second bed. Not more than a few minutes had passed when Jones was awakened by piercing shrieks and cries that Palmer should be summoned.

Palmer was sent for—and he answered the frantically pulled bell by appearing at the window of his bedroom. “I never dressed so quickly in my life,” he told the maid who fetched him, and he repeated the remark to Jones—who thought he must have slept in his clothes. The truth was that Palmer had neither undressed nor gone to bed; he was simply waiting for the summons, which he knew must swiftly come, to attend the death of Cook.

In less than a quarter of an hour all was over, and the contorted features and terribly twisted frame of the victim showed what a cruel death he had died.

With monstrous but understandable haste Palmer sent for a charwoman to lay the body out, and told Dr. Jones to go down and get a meal.

The housekeeper, unexpectedly entering the room of death, saw Palmer searching the

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pockets of Cook's coat, and when Dr. Jones went upstairs he saw Palmer hunting under the pillow where the dead man's head was resting.

"Ah, Jones!" said Palmer calmly; "I'm looking for his watch and purse—here they are; you'd better take possession." He handed over a sum of about £4 10s., but said nothing of the £800 which he had stolen from Cook's belt.

Later Jones went to London and told Cook's relatives what had happened, and the stepfather, Mr. Stevens, grief-stricken, for he dearly loved the young fellow, went to Rugeley. That love aroused suspicion in Stevens, a suspicion which refused to be satisfied with the lying explanations of Palmer, and a post-mortem examination was insisted on, and was made in the assembly room of the hotel.

And a strange examination it was, attended by, amongst others, Dr. Bamford, the landlord of the hotel, a solicitor named Savage Landor, a distant relation of mine, and about half a dozen townsmen. When the organs seemed healthy Palmer exclaimed: "I say, Bamford, they won't hang us yet!" But he was intensely anxious to destroy all evidence of his villainy.

The examination was made by a Dr. Devon-

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shire, who had only carried out two before, helped by Newton, the chemist who had sold Palmer some of the strychnine, and knew nothing whatever about post-mortem work. When the stomach was being examined Palmer deliberately pushed Devonshire's knife through it, so that nearly all the contents escaped, and later he cut a slit through the covering of the jar containing the organs to be sent to London for analysis, having managed to take the jar out of the room before the examination was finished. He offered the post-boy who was to take the jar to the station £10 to smash it, and persuaded the postmaster, an old school-fellow, to open the letter from Professor Taylor, the Government analyst, containing the result of the analysis. This the foolish postmaster did, and later received two years' imprisonment for his outrageous offence. Palmer also sent the coroner, when the inquest was opened, generous presents of game and fish and a ten-pound note. But all was in vain; the jury returned a verdict of wilful murder against him, and at last the noose, so well deserved, was round his neck.

It was fitting enough that this amazing case should culminate in an amazing trial. From first to last Palmer never had the opportunity to open his mouth, as he would have to-day,

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and give his own version of what had happened. He was committed for trial on the coroner's warrant, after repeated sittings by the jury at the inquest.

The police went to his bedroom, where he was ill, to arrest him, but it was three days before he could be removed; then, in the dead of a December night, he was hurried off to Stafford Gaol, just escaping the fury of a shouting crowd which had waited twenty-four hours under his window for his removal.

Later on, when Palmer had been taken to London for trial, a strong body of mounted troops was employed to escort him, such being the intensity of public feeling that ordinary police protection was considered insufficient.

Palmer was never taken before any bench of magistrates—a strange circumstance which brought upon me a polite contradiction when I was in Stafford working up details of the case.

I was told that this was most improbable, almost impossible; yet when we adjourned to the County Hall, where the old papers and documents are kept, I was proved correct, for the indictment had had the words, "committing magistrate" erased and the name of the coroner substituted.

So strong and hostile was the local feeling

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against Palmer that there could be no hope of an impartial trial in Stafford. He had been a genial boon companion and he was a hypocritical church-goer; but piece by piece his appalling crimes were revealed, and it is not too much to say that the whole country clamoured for his death even before he had been tried.

A special Act of Parliament was passed, known as the Palmer Act, to enable the trial to take place in London, and that Act has been used in other famous cases when it has been considered that local prejudice would bring about an unfair trial.

Palmer was accordingly tried at the Old Bailey by three judges—Lord Chief Justice Campbell, Baron Alderson, and Mr. Justice Cresswell—and after a trial extending over a fortnight, a trial during which other High Court judges actually went on to the Old Bailey to listen to the proceedings, so great was the universal interest in the case, the prisoner was found guilty and was sentenced to be hanged outside Stafford Gaol.

There is no doubt that the conviction was largely due to the skill and cleverness of the leading counsel for the Crown, Sir Alexander Cockburn, who afterwards became Lord Chief Justice; and Palmer himself realised this, for

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when he was being removed from the dock, after his conviction, he observed to a bystander, using a sporting phrase: "It's the riding that's done it!"

Palmer was taken to Euston Station, through the portals that still stand. He was handcuffed during the journey to Stafford, which was made in a first-class compartment; and, still further to lessen his chances of escape, one of his legs was manacled to the leg of one of the men who had charge of him.

An enormous crowd assembled on that fine June morning to see the man meet his doom. He was buried in the yard of the gaol, and, in accordance with a custom then prevailing at that particular prison, he was put into his grave naked and uncoffined.

I possess a letter written by Palmer while under sentence of death, and I have one of many letters sent to him after his condemnation, especially by ladies, urging him to repent and make his peace with God.

Pratt, the unspeakable scoundrel, died a raving madman not long after the execution, and the equally villainous lawyer, Jeremiah Smith, got his deserts pretty well, especially when he was under the ruthless cross-examination of Cockburn.

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That is a mere outline of the career of the most callous and notorious of modern English murderers.

Even a summary of such a life leaves the impression that the criminal, so old in vice and iniquity, must have been a man of mature age; yet when he met his shameful but most justly deserved death Palmer was only thirty-one years old.

CHAPTER IX

THE SOUTHEND MURDER

[JUST before Christmas, 1894, James Canham Read was hanged at Chelmsford Gaol for the murder of a young woman named Florence Dennis at Southend. Read was a married man with a large family, and occupied a respectable position in life, and these circumstances, amongst others, gave special interest to the crime. Read was a striking example of the dangerous men who lead a double life and lure so many women to destruction. He had become entangled with a married woman, and through her had made the acquaintance of her sister, Florence Dennis. This girl, very shortly expecting to become a mother, was taken by Read to a lonely spot and murdered. He fled, but was subsequently arrested, tried, and condemned. The case being one of circumstantial evidence, great importance was attached to the identification of Read as the murderer, and vital testimony on this point was given by Mr. Robert Dowthwaite, who was at that time carrying on his business as an

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umbrella manufacturer at Prittlewell. Mr. Dowthwaite's story of the mystery is told herewith.]

A midsummer Sunday evening, and a few minutes after ten o'clock. The day is over, and I have been down to the shore and have walked back towards my home at Prittlewell. I am now going back in memory for more than twenty years, and that means many and inevitable changes. We are on the spot where I first saw Read and his victim, not knowing or suspecting in the least who they were or what was so soon to happen when I observed them approaching me on the country highway. Twenty-one years ago this locality was quaint and rural. There were hedges and meadows and cornfields where terraces of houses are standing now, but I can still point out the places where I saw the pair walk briskly on towards me, arm in arm, and where, a few hours later, the body of a murdered expectant mother was discovered in a ditch or little brook.

Are they a courting couple? Not exactly. Married? Evidently not. Talking politics? Well—no. Something serious on hand? Yes—it looks like that.

They pass me—exactly here, so far as I can

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remember, though at that time this neighbourhood was quite countrified. The man's face is lowered and invisible, but there is something about him and his companion which makes me turn observingly. I look round and watch them as they continue their walk for a distance of about forty yards. I can see them quite clearly, and I notice that the man wheels the woman round to the right and that they go through some railings into a field. I do not quite know what it is that impels me to keep a sort of watch upon them; but I do so, and stroll to an adjacent gate to continue observation until the couple disappear down a slope that leads to a small brook in the hollow.

That is all for the present. I go home and to bed, and for the time being the matter is forgotten.

On the afternoon of the next day, from my shop, I saw a few of my neighbours intently watching something lower down the street. I stepped across to them to inquire as to the object of their curiosity, and soon heard that it was the dead body of a young woman on a stretcher. I went over to the "Spread Eagle" inn, where the body had been taken, and asked where it had been found. The information I received shocked me and

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strengthened a suspicion which had come into my mind. My feelings must have betrayed me, for within half an hour a policeman came into my shop to see me.

As the result of that visit I gave to the police, at their request, a description of the clothing of the young woman I had seen walking with the man, and this description proved to be so accurate that when I saw the actual clothing I had no difficulty whatever in identifying it as having been worn by the girl I had seen on the previous evening.

An inquest was held at the "Spread Eagle," and the fact was soon established that the girl had been murdered by the firing of a shot at her head, and that death must have been instantaneous. A glove had been found on the bank of the brook by a local minister, Mr. Chandler, and the body itself had been discovered by a boy named Rush. At an early stage the name of Read became associated with the mystery, and when I was called at the inquest a photograph of him was produced; but I declined to identify any photograph, and on that account the coroner declared that my evidence was valueless. At the suggestion of the police inspector, however, he allowed me to give evidence, and I stated that although I did

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not see the man's face I thought I could identify him in person. Subsequently, when Read had been arrested, I was able to carry out my identification in a remarkable manner. We can deal with the general facts later; meanwhile I may say that Read had been taken into custody at Mitcham, on suspicion, by Detective Marden, and brought to Southend, where I was called upon to identify him. I felt the responsibility of the task, which was not an easy one. Here was the life of a young man at stake, for Read was only in the early thirties, and I had met him at ten o'clock on a midsummer night without seeing his face; but I had no misgiving as to the result of my test.

We selected a room in the police station yard, and there I waited with a police officer. I was told that a number of men would be brought along past the room, and was asked to have a notebook and a pencil ready for use, and to number the men 1, 2, 3 and so on as they passed down the yard, my instruction being that if I identified any one man I was to put a ✱ to the number.

Six men passed the room and went down the yard, all duly numbered in my notebook. After they had passed the door of the room

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the police officer and I stepped to the doorway and had a back view only of each man.

I heard the footfall on the hard floor of No. 7 approaching me, and at once recognised it, for to my own surprise the tramp of No. 7's feet had been registered on my brain; but this peculiar fact was not brought out in evidence. I had accomplished what I had undertaken to do, which was that, while I would not swear that the man in custody was the one I had seen with the woman, I would pick him out, without seeing his face, from a thousand men arranged in any way they thought fit. This statement became fairly common knowledge at the time, and a writer in the now dead London *Echo*, who signed himself an ex-detective of twenty-five years' standing, characterised my confidence as ridiculous. But I knew better than he did, and I forgave him.

After the investigations by the coroner's jury and before the magistrates Read was sent for trial, which took place at Chelmsford, and lasted four days. A terrible story was unfolded by the Crown, represented by the Solicitor-General (Sir Frank Lockwood, Q.C.), Mr. Gill, and Mr. Guy Stephenson; the prisoner being defended by Mr. Cock, Q.C., and Mr. Warburton.

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There were two charges against Read, the first that of stealing £160 from his employers (the London and India Joint Docks Committee), and the second that of the wilful murder of Florence Dennis. To the charge of theft Read at once pleaded guilty; but that, though it concerned the main charge, was a mere trifle compared with the trial for his life, which began as soon as he had pleaded guilty to the lesser offence.

It is not easy to compress such a long story into short compass, yet it is not hard to give an outline of the main facts, which were these: The girl with whom I saw Read walking was Florence Dennis, and she was only twenty-three years old. In a few weeks she would have become a mother, owing to Read's conduct.

At the very moment when I saw them the man, as the evidence showed, had murder in his heart; it was all planned, and apparently had been carefully rehearsed. He had in his pocket a loaded revolver; he must have had previous knowledge of the scene of the crime and of this secluded bush-covered brook. He had taken, as he supposed, all possible precautions against discovery and identification, yet I myself, a mere casual Sunday evening stroller

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and a total stranger, was to become a strong link in the evidence that condemned him.

After I so carefully noticed them the pair walked down to the hedge and through the meadow; then it was that the murderer stealthily withdrew his weapon from its hiding-place, quickly put the muzzle to the poor girl's temple, and pulled the trigger, killing her instantly. Dreadful is the picture that comes into the imagination—the desecration of the glorious and peaceful Sunday evening, the deliberate ferocity of the man, his mad determination to try and hide the traces of his crime by forcing the corpse through the hedge and into the deep ditch. He carried out his principal purpose, but there fell upon the path the tell-tale glove which led to the discovery of the body, doubled up, showing the frenzied force with which it had been pushed or thrown through the hedge.

The body of the murdered girl was brought away, and it seemed as if the mystery of the crime might never be unravelled. But Florence Dennis had a married sister named Mrs. Ayriss, and with this woman Read had been for a long time conducting an illicit intercourse. It was through Mrs. Ayriss that he got to know the younger sister, with whom for a long time also

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he kept up a clandestine and immoral acquaintance. Florence Dennis had been living at Shoeburyness and in the Southend district, and Read had been corresponding with and visiting her. This Mrs. Ayriss knew, so that when Florence disappeared from her temporary home at Leigh she telegraphed to Read, who by that time had resumed his work at the Royal Albert Dock, though he had arrived late at the office. Read replied that he did not know the meaning of the extraordinary message, and that he had not seen and did not know anything of Florence; but he evidently realised that the hunt for the murderer had begun and that his life was in peril. To the credit of Mrs. Ayriss it should be stated that, however much she had gone astray, she sank everything in her determination to bring her sister's murderer to justice.

The police were communicated with, but it was not until July 7th that Read was arrested in a little house at Mitcham. The murder had been committed on June 25th. His arrest brought to light another of his amours, for he was maintaining at Mitcham a young woman named Kempton, whom he had casually met at Gloucester Road Station, and afterwards associated with her while still conducting his intrigues with Mrs. Ayriss and her sister.

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When the detective reached the Mitcham cottage Miss Kempton herself came to the door; but there was Read in the background, though he had done his best to disguise himself. The detective asked him if he was Read, and he denied the identity; but he was told that he would be arrested on the charge of murder, and he was taken into custody. A considerable sum of money was found hidden in the house, part of the proceeds of the £160 which he had stolen from the office when he knew that the hue and cry had started. In addition to the money there was found in Read's possession a report of the inquest on the murdered woman, giving the jury's verdict of "murder by some person or persons unknown."

It is a significant fact that this Mitcham address was not known to Mrs. Ayriss, and doubtless when Read fled to it for hiding he thought that he was pretty safe. In addition to this he had shaved and done his best to alter his appearance; amongst other things, changing his suit.

When I first saw him he was wearing a dark suit, but when he was arrested he was wearing a grey one. He was given the chance of donning the dark suit, but declined, for

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reasons well known to himself. In spite of this I had no difficulty in identifying him when that point arose, because he had a gait and bearing that were unmistakable.

The trial itself, which took place in November, had many painful elements, because it involved the calling as witnesses against him, among others, of the prisoner's brother and young daughter. The brother's testimony was important, because it related to the revolver with which undoubtedly the murder was committed. This unhappy man—he afterwards committed suicide—had been in a situation, but had been discharged for misconduct, and he had bought a revolver with the object, apparently, of taking his life and so putting an end to his troubles; but he had not carried out his purpose, and his brother, the prisoner, had got possession of the weapon and kept it at his house in Jamaica Road. One of the points in the daughter's evidence was that this revolver was kept in the house by her father, who had taken it from his brother with the object, doubtless, of preventing him from using it against himself.

This brother figured largely in the case, and, indeed, he seems to have been considerably involved, for he was a party to deep duplicity

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so far as one or two of the unhappy women were concerned. There was in the case a good deal of secret correspondence into which one cannot go, and in this the brother was involved. He allowed himself to figure under a false name to further the accused man's evil ends.

During four long days the sordid story of a man's debauchery and woman's frailty was unfolded in the assize court, and bit by bit the link of evidence was forged against the man in the dock, who seemed as calm and unconcerned as anyone in court.

At last the forging was complete; the Crown had done its work.

What would the prisoner's counsel do? What did they do? Nothing. No witnesses were called for the prisoner, so that the whole decision depended on what had been stated on behalf of the prosecution.

When I was called upon at the assizes to give evidence I was playing a game of draughts with Read's brother, whom I had close opportunities of observing. I was able also to get some knowledge of the accused man from his sister, a very pleasant and clever woman, who told me how greatly during the previous three years he had fallen off in his conduct. I gathered

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then that he was becoming something of the moral degenerate that he proved to be when standing his trial at the assizes.

After a long and most patient hearing the jury were only thirty minutes in finding their verdict. They retired, and came back into court with a verdict of guilty.

How well I remember that last scene! Just in front of me there was standing the husband of the woman who, like himself, had been so cruelly wronged, and it is not too much to say that he exulted in the verdict. On the other hand, one had to consider the wife and family of the doomed man in the dock, and try to realise what it all meant to them and their future.

Read was asked, in the usual manner, if he had anything to say why sentence of death should not be passed upon him. Quite calmly, confronting the judge and speaking deliberately, he declared that he was innocent. He said that he had not seen the murdered girl for two years, and that he had never handled a revolver in his life, and that at the time of the murder he was fifty miles from Southend—an amazing declaration in view of the evidence given. But no protest availed him, no word of his was credited, and the judge, in cold, calm tones,



Photograph by J. E. Gallely, Saffron Walden

THE MOAT FARM MURDER: TRENCH WHERE THE BODY WAS FOUND

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sentenced him to be hanged, and the judgment of the law was carried out at Springfield Prison, Chelmsford, on December 5th, 1894. Read seems to have died as he had lived—cool, collected, calm, and lying to the last—for to the very end he declared that he knew nothing of the murder.

In conclusion I should like to say that at the time of this thing happening I had not, nor have I had since, any fixed opinions about the crime. My duty as a citizen, though not pleasant, was easy and simple. I very carefully identified the prisoner, giving him every fair chance to save himself. That was my duty to the State, and I performed it.

My experience in this case was that the people who consider that they have the *only* right to express opinions, and, of course, know all about the matter, are those who have not heard a word of the evidence, legally given, and do not hesitate to put fancy before fact. The realisation of this state of things has been a lifelong lesson to me.

CHAPTER X

THE READING BABY-FARMER

[ON May 21st and 22nd, 1896, at the Central Criminal Court, before Mr. Justice Hawkins, a woman aged fifty-seven years, described as a nurse, was tried for the wilful murder of two infants named Doris Marmon and Henry Simmons. This woman was the notorious Amelia Elizabeth Dyer, the baby-farmer, who carried on her dreadful trade at Reading and elsewhere. She was condemned, and was hanged in Newgate Prison on June 10th, 1896. Her conviction was largely due to the efforts of ex-Detective Inspector J. B. Anderson, who was at that time a member of the detective branch of the Reading Borough Police. Inspector Anderson retired from the force in 1914, after more than thirty-three years' service—a fine record. In recognition of his very able work in connection with the Dyer case Mr. Anderson was specially thanked by the Watch Committee of the Reading Corporation, and he and Sergeant James, who was associated with

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him, received cheques, while later other presents were made to the inspector, whose story of the famous crime is told herewith.]

Early in the spring of 1896 a barge was coming up the river between Kennet's mouth and the Caversham lock, about four hundred yards from the Great Western Railway Station at Reading. As the craft proceeded slowly the bargeman saw a brown-paper parcel on the side, just above the water. At that particular place the greater part of the river bank is a public recreation ground, and there is also Messrs. Huntley and Palmer's cricket club ground and a field belonging to the same firm, so that the parcel was on a quite open area. At the side of the river is the towing-path, which is very much used by pedestrians. Just at this point also there was a shallow space, about four feet wide, between the towing-path and the deep water, and it was on this shallow space that the parcel, which had apparently been thrown by someone from the towing-path, was lying.

The bargeman put his punt-hook out and caught hold of the parcel. As he did so the wet paper tore, and he saw that a tiny baby's leg was sticking out. The parcel was at once

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drawn to the bank, and the police were promptly acquainted with its discovery.

Police-constable Barnett—he retired in 1915—was on duty in the district at the time, and the parcel was given to him. He took it to the police station on his back in a sack. I had entered the station just before Barnett arrived, and I accompanied him to the mortuary with the dead body of the baby.

The parcel was unpacked with great care, and it was seen that the contents had been wrapped up in many sheets of paper, napkins, and other things. It seemed as if the parcel would give no clue to lead to anyone's identity, but the very last sheet of paper, that nearest to the body, bore the name and address of "Mrs. Harding, 20 Wigott's Road, Caversham," and a Midland Railway label with the address, "Temple Mead Station, Bristol."

When the last sheet of paper had been removed there was revealed the corpse of a little child, a girl, with a piece of tape tied tightly round its neck, with the knot under the left ear, showing the case at once to be one of murder. I still have the tape, with other pieces like it used for the same purpose, and I keep as a relic, too, the addressed paper and label which did so much in solving the

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mystery and bringing the murderess to justice. I may say here that the parcel had been undoubtedly thrown from the towing-path in the expectation that it would fall into the deep channel, but it had dropped on the shallow patch, and, being in the water, it had not been easy or possible to reach it so as to cast it farther out.

I set to work at once to make inquiries, and on the evening of the day on which the parcel was found I learned that a Mrs. Harding had lived at 20 Pigott's Road—for there was no Wigott's Road at Caversham—but that she had removed to some address in the neighbourhood of Oxford Road, Reading. I discovered that there had been a Mrs. Harding in that locality, where she had lived with her daughter and son-in-law, a young man named Arthur Ernest Palmer, but that they had left, and were supposed to have gone to London. These somewhat fruitless inquiries, as they might seem to be, are only part of the day's work of a detective, and I was by no means discouraged.

I continued my investigations and found that Mrs. Harding had been living at 45 Kensington Road, Reading. And now I made what proved to be an important discovery, for I ascertained that the woman had been seen

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leaving Kensington Road carrying a carpet bag on the morning of the day after that on which the little body was found in the parcel by the bargeman.

I was able to learn a good deal about the movements of Mrs. Harding at Caversham, and to find out that she had been in the habit of adopting children. It was necessary to proceed with great care and caution and to take special steps to learn what had been done, and with this end in view I took into my confidence a young woman, whom I instructed to call at the house of Mrs. Harding with the purpose of getting acquainted with her movements. I posted up the young woman with the bogey excuse that she had been recommended to Mrs. Harding by a friend in London, whose name she was not allowed to mention, with the object of arranging that Mrs. Harding should adopt a baby and that the necessary arrangements should be made for the infant's removal.

The young woman went to the house, and was told that Mrs. Harding had not returned; but in her stead she saw an old lady of about seventy who was known as "Granny Smith." I shall have something to say about "Granny" later on.

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“Granny Smith” was told that the young woman had come from London to see Mrs. Harding, and that she was disappointed because she had not met her.

“If you’ll arrange to see Mrs. Harding,” said “Granny,” “I’ll have her sent for,” and an appointment was made for two days afterwards, because Mrs. Harding would be absent for that period of time.

So far so good. At the time agreed upon the young woman returned to Kensington Road and met Mrs. Harding, who was at once anxious to know who had recommended her. This inquiry was satisfactorily answered, and after some discussion it was agreed that Mrs. Harding should adopt a baby and receive with it the sum of £100. It was made clear to Mrs. Harding that the mother of the infant would not wish her name and address to be given.

“What time shall it be brought?” the young woman asked.

“You had better come to-morrow evening after dark,” was Mrs. Harding’s answer.

At the appointed time Sergeant James, who is now a retired inspector, and myself were waiting in the “New Inn,” Oxford Road, for developments, and in due course we were at the door of Mrs. Harding’s house.

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Now it was that Mrs. Harding revealed her real identity, for when we called and made ourselves known, and began to inquire as to the parcel which had been found on the towing-path bearing the name and address of Mrs. Harding, she said that her name was Mrs. Dyer, and not Harding.

With regard to the parcel, she could offer no explanation, except that no doubt she had put it into the dustbin in the usual way with other rubbish.

We began to make a close examination of the place, and in a cupboard under the stairs we found a very important clue—a quantity of baby's clothing, and we noticed a most unpleasant odour, as if some decomposing substance had been kept there. Doubtless, as subsequent events showed, the body of a little child had been concealed in this cupboard for some days before being taken out and disposed of.

As the result of these inquiries Mrs. Dyer was arrested and taken to the Reading Police Station, where, as soon as she got the opportunity to do so, she tried to strangle herself with her bootlaces; but the attempt did not succeed. After being brought before the magistrates Mrs. Dyer was remanded.

Meanwhile I went to London and traced the

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daughter and son-in-law to 76 Mayo Road, Willesden, while Sergeant James returned to Mrs. Dyer's house and interviewed "Granny Smith" again. He noticed that there was in the house a little lad named Thornton and a girl about twelve years old—children who had been taken charge of by Mrs. Dyer in the course of her business. Further search by him brought to light the vaccination papers of a child which had been born at Hammersmith; but it was clear that the child had not been vaccinated, because the papers had not been sent in. The child referred to was a little girl, and the body which had been taken from the parcel was that of a little girl; but as the ages of the children were not the same it was reasonable to suppose that there had been more than one case of murder.

The Palmers had become seriously involved, and the Chief Constable sent me and Sergeant James to London on the following day to arrest them; but I decided before doing so to trace the origin of the child which had been born at Hammersmith. Inquiry at the registrar's showed that the birth had taken place at a midwife's house, where the mother had been received for the accouchement. We discovered that the mother, who was a single woman, had

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handed the child over to Mrs. Harding in reply to an advertisement which Mrs. Harding had inserted in a newspaper. When the child was fetched by Mrs. Harding she was accompanied by a young man with auburn hair and moustache, who carried the baby's clothing and feeding-bottle. The description given of the young man corresponded with that which had been furnished of Palmer.

In the company of a London officer, Sergeant Bartley, we went to Mayo Road again, and there saw Mr. and Mrs. Palmer. The man denied all knowledge of the affair; but we had the mother of the child with us, and she immediately identified him as the man who had come with Mrs. Harding to take it away. For the purposes of our case we treated the child which had been found at Reading as the child in question, and I accordingly arrested Palmer and charged him with being an accomplice of Mrs. Harding, or, as she was now, and properly, known, Mrs. Dyer.

On the way to the police station Mrs. Palmer, who was a young woman in the early twenties, walked with me, and I pointed out to her the seriousness of her position. She then volunteered the statement that on the evening of the day after the body of the child

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was found at Reading her mother came to her house, bringing with her a baby. The Palmers were occupying only two rooms in Mayo Road, a sitting-room and a bedroom, and the sitting-room was given over to Mrs. Dyer. Mrs. Palmer put her own child to bed, and on returning to the sitting-room she found that the child which her mother had brought with her had been placed on the floor, under the couch, and that Mrs. Dyer was sleeping on the couch. On the following day they went together to Paddington Station, where, by appointment, they met a woman under the clock, and received from her another baby, which they took to Mayo Road. On that night she, Mrs. Palmer, was putting her own child to bed, her mother being again left in the sitting-room, with the baby that had been received at Paddington. Mrs. Palmer further said that again Mrs. Dyer slept on the couch, and the baby was placed under it, on the floor. The next evening the Palmers accompanied Mrs. Dyer to Paddington Station, the man helping his mother-in-law to carry a carpet bag, and they saw Mrs. Dyer safely into the 9.15 train for Reading, having the bag with her.

That bag, which was subsequently found in

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the river, contained the murdered bodies of the two infants who on two successive nights had been placed on the floor of the sitting-room under the couch on which Mrs. Dyer slept. Each had been murdered in the same way—by tying a piece of tape round the neck, and so producing strangulation.

Mrs. Palmer was taken to Westbourne Park Police Station, and Palmer was conveyed to Reading, where he was charged as an accomplice, and remanded. Further search at Mrs. Dyer's house brought to light numerous letters from mothers who had entrusted their little children to her, and these inquiries concerned, amongst others, a little boy named Henry Simmons and a little girl of the name of Doris Marmon. We were enabled to trace the parents of these two infants.

No trace of the carpet bag having been found on the railway, it was assumed that the bag had been thrown into the river. Dragging operations were undertaken, and resulted in the finding of the bag with the bodies in it, and these were afterwards the subject of the charge which ended in Mrs. Dyer's execution.

Little by little the case was completed. Palmer himself was discharged because there was not enough evidence to establish his complicity

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in the matter, and his wife, though committed for trial, on the coroner's inquisition, on the charge of murder in respect of another child, was acquitted at the Berkshire Assizes, the grand jury, on the judge's direction, having returned no true bill against her. This narrowed down the case to Mrs. Dyer, who was committed for trial at the Central Criminal Court for the murder of Doris Marmon and Henry Simmons.

By that time, of course, the whole of the case was completed. It had been a long and laborious matter, but little by little the woman's movements had been traced and her guilt established. One of the most important points that had been proved was that Mrs. Dyer was seen by a warder at Reading Prison coming from the direction of the River Thames about ten minutes to eleven o'clock on the night when she had been seen off by the 9.15 train from Paddington; and as this train was due at Reading soon after ten o'clock it was very suggestive to us that she had come off that train and had gone straight down to the river and thrown the bag in, after which she went home, and was returning from her errand when the warder saw her.

To get back to "Granny Smith." We

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discovered that Mrs. Dyer had lived at Bristol, where she had adopted a number of children. The Bristol police had had a considerable amount of correspondence in relation to her, and it was found that amongst the children who had been adopted was the illegitimate child of a woman who afterwards married the father.

After the wedding the parents became anxious about their child and wanted possession of it. But the child had disappeared, and Mrs. Dyer became so harassed because of the urgent nature of the inquiries that she feigned madness, and went into an asylum, and afterwards to the workhouse. It was while she was in the latter institution that she met "Granny Smith," and subsequently, when she left, she got "Granny" out of the workhouse and took her to Reading, where the two women lived together.

This was one of the many important circumstances which showed the deliberate nature of the dreadful trade that Mrs. Dyer had carried on for a long time. She had lived at several addresses, never staying long at any one of them, because people were constantly writing and making inquiries about children; and, to avoid discovery, Mrs. Dyer disappeared

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and, as a rule, was lost sight of. Eventually she reached Reading, the last of her scenes of operations.

During the progress of the inquiries we had received an enormous number of letters from persons all over the country who had entrusted children to the woman's care—they were mostly servants who wrote—but in many instances no trace of the children could be found.

No fewer than seven little bodies were found in the river at Reading, but only two could be properly identified, and it was for the murder of these that Mrs. Dyer was found guilty and paid the penalty. The jury were only five minutes in arriving at their verdict.

Mrs. Dyer's trial began just after the Muswell Hill murderers—Fowler and Milsom—had been condemned. I had been in court, and had gone out. In my absence the two men were found guilty, and there occurred that famous fight in the dock between them; but when I got back into the court the whole of the exciting scene was over. The Muswell Hill murderers and another man named Seaman were hanged together on the 9th of June, and on the following morning Mrs. Dyer was executed.

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About four years after Mrs. Dyer's execution digging operations were carried on in the garden of a house in which she had lived at Bristol, and human remains were found. Further excavations were made, and these resulted in the discovery of the remains of about four children's bodies. Inquests were held, but nothing definite could be established, though there was no doubt as to what had taken place, and the inquests were adjourned.

I do not know the exact number of murders which this woman had committed on the helpless infants who had been given into her care—in every case with cash payment in a lump sum, because she refused to take weekly or monthly amounts—but it was very large, and there was proof enough to show that she had carried on her dreadful trade in a wholesale fashion.

All the seven bodies which were found had tape tied round the neck in the same manner, with a knot under the left ear, and all seemed to be the work of the same person. It was significant, too, that when in Reading Prison Mrs. Dyer made the attempt to strangle herself with her bootlaces, they were tied in exactly the same manner as the tape had been

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fastened with which the murdered children had been strangled.

The extent of the baby-farming operations was indicated by the immense number of children's garments which were found. A great quantity of these had been pledged with various pawnbrokers at Reading, and many were identified by persons who had entrusted their children to Mrs. Dyer's care, but no trace of the children was ever found.

There was a significant sequel to the trial and execution of Mrs. Dyer. More than two years afterwards Palmer and his wife, who were living at an address in Oxfordshire, were charged at the Devon Quarter Sessions at Exeter with abandoning an infant girl, three weeks old, in a railway carriage at Newton Abbot.

It was proved that an advertisement had appeared in a Plymouth newspaper offering to adopt a child, and that, in answer to it, a woman who lived at Devonport arranged for her baby to be adopted by the two prisoners, who were paid £14. When Mrs. Palmer got the baby and the money she left Plymouth by train, and changed carriages at Newton Abbot. She put the baby under the seat of the carriage, which was shunted, and

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there the poor little mite, suffering greatly, remained until next morning, when its wails were heard by some shunters, and it was rescued. The child had been stripped of all its clothing, and was wrapped up in brown paper. The prisoners were found guilty, and, most deservedly, each of them was sent to two years' hard labour.

CHAPTER XI

THE MYSTERY OF YARMOUTH BEACH

[MR. JUSTICE WILLS, in writing of the Yarmouth beach murder case, described it as remarkable as showing how a small clue may lead not only to the identification of the culprit, but also to the detection of his motive and to the complete circumstantial proof of his crime. The body of a woman was discovered on the beach at Yarmouth. There was not the slightest doubt that she had been brutally murdered, for a mohair bootlace was tied tightly round the neck and had caused strangulation. The woman was a stranger to Yarmouth, and the only clue to her identity was a laundry mark, the number 599, on some of her linen. Eventually the murderer was arrested, tried, found guilty, and hanged. Photographic evidence was a very important feature of the trial, and Mr. Frank H. Sayers, artist and photographer, of Yarmouth, was one of the principal witnesses in this respect. This is Mr. Sayers's story.]

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Early on Sunday morning, September 23rd, 1900, I had been bathing in the sea, and had returned to my studio, when I was told that it was being watched by detectives, both in front and behind.

I had not the slightest idea that anything had happened, and it was not until the detectives saw me and asked me if I would go to the mortuary to photograph a corpse that I learned that the body of a woman had been found on the beach, and that there was not the slightest doubt that she had been murdered.

It is strange that I had not heard of the murder, for the body had been found at six o'clock, and in returning from the sea I had passed very near the place where it was discovered.

Intense excitement had been created, but that was only the beginning of an excitement which spread throughout the country, and was scarcely equalled by any other crime committed during a very long period.

The murder was so mysterious, the method of it was so exceptional, and there seemed so little possibility of ever capturing the murderer, that every necessary element was provided for an absorbing mystery.

I had been often called upon to do strange

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photographic work, but I had never undertaken anything of this sort, and I may say now that the whole affair completely knocked the nerve out of me and haunted me like a nightmare for many months.

I told the police that I would do as they wished me to do, and accordingly I went to the mortuary and took photographs of the body. It was perfectly clear that murder had been done. The face was disfigured, as if a heavy blow had been struck, and there was sand in the mouth and on the body.

But, most important of all, a mohair boot-lace was tied round the neck, so tightly that it was almost buried in the flesh. The merest examination showed that the woman herself could not possibly have tied the lace, and that it must have been done by someone else. Another significant circumstance was that the knot was a reef knot, which will not slip, and which is made, as a rule, only by those who have some knowledge of the sea and ships.

What the tying of the lace really meant will be understood when I say that the woman's neck measured nearly ten inches round, while the lace was only a little more than eight inches. Very great force and skill must have been used to get such a small

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length of lace into such a position. Once the reef knot was tied, there was no possibility of it slipping or becoming loose.

The body was that of a young and not unattractive woman, well dressed, and with four or five rings on the fingers. I learned that when she was found she was lying on her back on the South Beach, not actually on the sand, but on the coarse marram grass which grows near the sea. Her hair was loose and disordered, and her hands, with the fingers tightly clenched, were by her side. Such struggling as there was must have been short and fierce.

The mystery of the woman was as deep as the mystery of the crime. No one knew who she really was or where she came from. All that was known of her was that she called herself a widow, that her name was Mrs. Hood, that she was a visitor to Yarmouth, and that she had with her a little girl about two years old. She gave her own age as twenty-seven years. She had been lodging with some people named Rudrum in one of the "rows" for which Yarmouth is famous. No one came forward to claim or identify the body, which in due course was buried at Yarmouth as that of a practically unknown woman.

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The only thing which seemed likely to afford a clue to her identity was a laundry mark—the number 599; but for a long time nothing definite came to light, and at the end of about six weeks the coroner's jury were forced to return a verdict of murder by some person unknown.

Meanwhile I had become acquainted with pretty nearly all there was to know about the woman, and that was just enough to make one long to know more. She had come to Yarmouth with her baby on September 15th, and gone to her lodgings. A few days after her arrival a letter addressed to Mrs. Hood was received by her. It was written on bluish-grey note-paper, and the envelope bore the Woolwich postmark. You will see how that letter, which seemed an unimportant trifle, helped to prove the identity of the murderer; but for the time being nothing could be made of it.

Another trifle which became important was a photograph of the woman and her baby, taken on the beach—one of the familiar cheap type which is so common at some seaside places, but of its kind a very good thing. This photograph was discovered in the woman's room, and showed that she was wearing a

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long, old-fashioned chain. She was wearing this chain and a silver watch when she left her lodgings for the last time, but they were not on the body, and not a trace of them could be discovered. Mrs. Rudrum saw the woman near the Town Hall, after she had left her lodgings, and she spoke to her. At that time the woman appeared to be waiting for someone.

I necessarily became very closely acquainted with the circumstances of the case, and I saw that, so far as identifying the dead woman went, nearly everything would depend on the laundry mark.

The police took up this clue with great thoroughness, and after exhaustive inquiries they found that such a mark came from a laundry at Bexley Heath, and that the number had been used for the linen of a woman named Bennett, who lived at Bexley Heath—a woman who had a baby.

This customer of the name of Bennett proved to be the woman in the photograph which had been taken on the beach, and the woman whose body I had photographed at the mortuary.

Matters now began to move briskly, and the case became more absorbing than ever, owing to the arrest of a young man named

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Herbert John Bennett, who was employed at Woolwich Arsenal. He was arrested on the charge of murdering the woman, who was his wife. In answer to the charge he said that he had never been to Yarmouth; but that assertion proved to be only one of a long series of reckless lies.

Bennett was living in lodgings, and these were carefully searched. A great step towards the solution of the beach mystery was the finding of a long chain and a watch in a portmanteau. These were identified as the chain and watch which were worn by Mrs. Bennett on the night of the murder. I had the chain in my possession for some time, and took a photograph of it on a black background. In addition to this discovery it was found that Bennett had previously written to Yarmouth, and had used the same sort of bluish-grey note-paper which he employed when writing to Mrs. Hood, for he was the writer of the letter bearing the Woolwich postmark.

There was at last, after many weeks' patient investigation, following up one clue after another—often enough a clue of the slightest—something tangible to work on, and there was gradually unfolded a most remarkable and cruel case of murder.

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Bit by bit the links in the chain of evidence against the prisoner were forged, until at last something like forty witnesses had been got together to attend the trial at the Central Criminal Court.

In the ordinary way the trial should have taken place at the Norwich Assizes, but local feeling in the matter was so strong that it was considered desirable to hear the case in London, and there the trial began towards the end of February, 1901, before the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Alverstone.

The trial lasted for six days. Day after day that awful business went on, and the dreadful court, the atmosphere of which seemed positively poisonous, especially to a man living at the seaside, was packed by people who seemed to go just as they would have gone to a theatre. Queues were formed outside, so that when anyone left the court the vacant place was taken instantly. I was sick and tired of the thing long before the end came; and, as I have told you, the whole sorry business possessed me like a nightmare.

The story which was gradually unfolded showed that Bennett married the woman when he was only seventeen years old, she being about two years his senior. He had been taking

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music lessons from her. The marriage took place at a London registry office, and was, I believe, a secret one. Bennett began badly, and went on badly. He was soon ill-treating and threatening his wife, and began to lead a double life. In position he was nothing at all important, his occupation ranging from grocer's assistant to labourer—he was, I believe, a labourer at the Arsenal when he was arrested. Yet he had considerable ability in some directions, and managed to get hold of money by selling such things as sewing machines on commission. He cashed a cheque at Westgate once for more than £200, but how he got the cheque I cannot say.

For some time after the marriage the two lived with Mrs. Bennett's grandmother, and on the old lady's death the chain and watch passed to the prisoner's wife.

After the child was born Bennett and his wife, in the name of Hood—why they assumed a false name I don't know—went to South Africa; but after being there only a few days they returned to England, where he continued to ill-use and threaten the woman. They parted, and she went to live at Bexley Heath, while he had lodgings at Woolwich, where he was working, and where he passed as a single

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man, though he sometimes visited his wife at Bexley Heath.

Posing as a single man, Bennett became acquainted with a young woman named Alice Meadows, who was one of the witnesses, and whose evidence showed how deliberately he had lied in many ways. He arranged to go to Yarmouth with her, and wrote to Mrs. Rudrum asking for rooms for the August Bank Holiday, but she replied that she had no accommodation vacant. Bennett and the girl, however, went to Yarmouth, travelling first-class, and staying at an hotel, where they occupied separate rooms. Proof of this visit showed that he was acquainted with Yarmouth, despite his assertion that he had never been to the place. Afterwards he and the girl went to Ireland, where they stayed a fortnight, during which time Bennett spent money freely.

The girl had not the least idea that Bennett was married—this fact she did not learn till he was arrested—and she became engaged to him. He gave her a ring, and on the understanding that the wedding was to come off at an early date she left her situation as a parlourmaid. She was then employed in Bayswater.

There was now a very strong motive for Bennett to get rid of his wife, and he deliber-

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ately set to work to carry out his purpose. He planned and plotted with cool cunning, but with it all he made one or two of those fatal mistakes which have sent to the gallows so many murderers who might not otherwise have been discovered.

The deadliest piece of evidence against him, in my opinion, was the chain, and a great deal of the case for the Crown depended upon proving that the chain found in Bennett's portmanteau and that which the photograph showed the woman to be wearing were one and the same.

The main facts of this extraordinary crime were proved beyond all doubt.

The prisoner, having sent his wife to Yarmouth, went there himself on Saturday, September 22nd, and doubtless when his wife was seen outside the Town Hall she was waiting for him, that building being very near the station at which he would arrive. Bennett joined her, for they were seen in a public-house on the quay.

Afterwards, at about eleven o'clock, a man and a woman who were seated in a hollow on the South Beach observed another man and woman seat or lay themselves on the ground. Shortly afterwards the couple in the hollow

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heard cries of “Mercy! Mercy!” and groans, after which there was silence.

There is not the slightest doubt that these cries were uttered when the murder was being committed, and that it was Bennett who was strangling the woman. The actual circumstances attending the crime were evidenced by the appearance of the body when found—circumstances which cannot be detailed, but which went to prove the brutal character of the man who did the deed.

Having maltreated and strangled the woman, he hurried off, and at about midnight reached the hotel where he had previously stayed. He was out of breath and greatly excited, and said that he must catch the first train to London next morning. He spent the night at the hotel, and left Yarmouth on the Sunday morning by a train which started at about seven o'clock, so the murderer was still actually in the town when the terrible discovery had been made on the beach.

Almost as soon as Bennett got back to London he met Alice Meadows in Hyde Park, and later on he gave her things which had belonged to his wife. He urged the girl to marry him, and was doing this when he knew that all England was horrified and disturbed by

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the brutal and mysterious crime on Yarmouth beach; indeed, the very day before he was arrested Alice Meadows's sister said, in his and her presence, that it was strange that the Yarmouth murderer had never been heard of. This incident serves to show what a source of general conversation the beach murder mystery had become. Little did the two women realise that they were actually in the presence of the perpetrator of the crime!

But to return to the trial.

I was one of the earliest witnesses to be called. Before I entered the box I was not, of course, allowed in court, but after I had given my evidence I was at liberty to remain; and I did, following the case point by point and watching the prisoner carefully. He knew perfectly well how much depended on the testimony regarding the chain, and when I was in the box he looked at me malignantly. But my mind was quite at rest, and I steadily returned his gaze.

Great difficulty attended the explanation of certain technical points to those who knew nothing of photography. I had not the slightest doubt in my own mind that the chain shown in the photograph and that which was found in Bennett's possession were the same, yet I

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was so greatly upset by the warning that a human life might depend on what I was saying that I might almost have wavered. A great deal was made of the fact that some parts of the chain were blurred, and it was difficult to explain to the non-technical mind that the blurring was due to the movement caused by the breathing of the sitter during the exposure, which in this case was about three seconds. There was, however, part of the chain in the lap, and this, being still, was provable as being the chain found in the prisoner's bag, apart from the fact that the chain had been broken, and fastened with a piece of cotton.

Nothing had been left to chance, and in order that I might be better able to illustrate my meaning and prove my point I had to take the chain and photograph it while it was placed round girls' necks and was hanging down, so that it would show how the blurring occurred; and, by way of more fully indicating the effect of movement, electric light was used.

The prisoner was most ably defended by Mr. Marshall Hall and two other clever barristers, and in spite of the deadly case which the Crown presented against him there were some

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people who believed that the jury would return a verdict of not guilty.

On one occasion when I left the court I heard a man say: "He'll get off!"

"It's a million to one against it!" I answered impulsively.

I noticed that what I said was overheard by a man and a woman who were near me, and seemed to be terribly distressed—and well they might be, for they were the prisoner's parents. I was, of course, in absolute ignorance of this fact, but I have often deeply regretted that any involuntary remark of mine should have caused them pain.

I never had the slightest doubt as to the result of the trial, and I do not see how Bennett could have had any hope of an acquittal. But nothing could be told from his demeanour.

From first to last he never flinched and never showed any emotion, which was quite in keeping with his character as revealed at the trial. He was thoroughly bad from start to finish, and I do not suppose there was any disinterested outside person who was not relieved and thankful when the jury, after consulting for about thirty-five minutes, found him guilty.

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Bennett was apparently unmoved even at this dreadful stage, and when he was asked if he had anything to say why he should not be sentenced to death, he replied in that calm, grave voice of his, and quite firmly: "I say that I am not guilty, sir."

The Lord Chief Justice did not say much after he had assumed the black cap, but he made it clear to the condemned man that he could not hope for mercy.

I remember the Lord Chief Justice saying: "I will only say that after a career for which not much could be said, you deliberately planned the death of this poor woman."

In sending the murderer to the gallows his lordship had to order that the execution should be carried out at Norwich Prison, as the murder had been committed in Norfolk.

So Bennett was taken to the old cathedral city, travelling along the line which he had used as a man with a planned murder in his mind and as a murderer hurrying away from the scene of his brutal crime. He had not shown mercy, and he did not get it, for he was duly hanged. He was buried, of course, in the prison yard, so he is lying not many miles away from the cemetery where his wife was buried as a practically unknown woman.

The Mystery of Yarmouth Beach

I do not know that Bennett made any confession, but that was not necessary, in view of the strength of the circumstantial evidence against him; and there were other things, not generally known, which removed any trace of doubt that might have lingered in the minds of anyone who was concerned in the case.

The scene of the murder is more than a mile away from the railway station where Bennett took train after committing the crime; but the actual spot has been altered so much that you could not recognise it. There is no longer the rough marram grass in the sandy ground, for that particular part of the South Beach has been turned into a delightful public garden.

What of the reef knot and the baby?

Well, as to the reef knot, I believe Bennett had served in the marines, in which case he would doubtless know how to tie one.

As for the baby, she was adopted by the good and real friends who always come forward in the time of trouble.

CHAPTER XII

AN UNSOLVED MYSTERY: THE ARDLAMONT RIDDLE

[FOR ten days the Lord Justice-Clerk and a jury were occupied at Edinburgh in trying to unravel what was known as the Ardlamont Mystery, but their efforts failed, and the mystery remains unsolved and as impenetrable as ever. An army tutor named Alfred John Monson was tried on the double charge of attempting to murder and of murdering a young Militia officer named Windsor Dudley Cecil Hambrough at Ardlamont, Argyllshire, where Hambrough had taken a mansion for the shooting season. The trial began on December 12th, 1893, and finished on December 22nd, when the jury returned the Scottish verdict of "Not proven." A remarkable and mysterious figure in the case was a man named Scott, an alleged accomplice of Monson. Scott disappeared, and when the trial began he was called upon to present himself; failing to do so, the judge passed upon him the sentence of

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outlawry. This story of the trial is particularly interesting, because it is told from the narrative of Mrs. W. H. Keen, with whom, in Pimlico, Scott—or Davis, as he called himself—lived for two years.]

More than twenty years ago my husband and I occupied a house in Sutherland Street, Pimlico, part of which we let. The drawing-room floor was occupied by a family who called themselves Davis—father, mother, and son. The son was about thirty years of age, thin, and five feet eight or nine inches in height. He had a long, clean-shaven face, with a sallow complexion, dark blue eyes and dark hair. Altogether he was one of the nicest men you could meet. He lived with me for about two years, and I understood that he and his father were engaged in bookmaking, though it was given out that their actual occupation was picture-dealing. I say that the name was Davis, but apparently business was done in the name of Sweeney, because often enough letters and telegrams came to the house addressed to Sweeney, and these were, by arrangement and instructions, delivered to the Davises. There was a daughter, but she does not come into the story, and there was another brother named George, who went

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by the name of Sweeney and was a hall porter at the Westminster Palace Hotel.

The Davises had been with me for the long time I have named, and I had never any reason to suspect that anything was wrong—certainly not with Ted, as young Davis was called; but on the morning of September 5th, 1893, Mrs. Davis came down to me crying bitterly.

I said: "What's the matter, Mrs. Davis?"

"Oh, Mrs. Keen," she answered, "Ted's gone away, and we shall have to give up the rooms."

"Don't worry," I said; "he'll soon come back again." But I soon found that there was cause indeed for tears and trouble, and that Ted Davis had completely vanished. I learned that Mr. Wiggins, who had my top rooms, had carried Ted's boxes downstairs and put them in a little spring cart early in the morning.

I was upset and puzzled, but never suspected that anything was seriously wrong until one night about a fortnight after Ted Davis had disappeared.

A mysterious man came to see me and asked if I could tell him where Davis had gone.

I said "No," for I had not the least idea in the world.

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Then the visitor asked if he could see me privately, and when he had entered the house he began to talk about a matter that was then arousing intense public interest—the Ardlamont Mystery. To my amazement he told me that Ted Davis was wanted in connection with that strange affair.

Then I knew that my mysterious visitor was a detective from Scotland Yard.

He asked me what I thought about the case and if I considered it likely that Davis was mixed up in it.

“Never!” I declared. “He has been in my house for two years, and has always behaved as a perfect gentleman.”

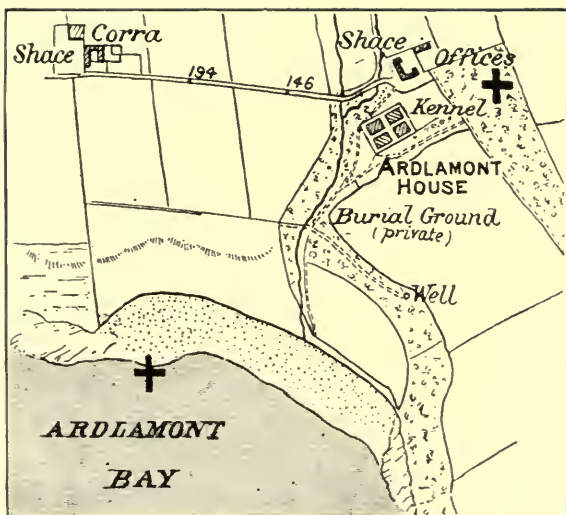
Then the detective told me the extraordinary story of Ardlamont. The newspapers had been full of it, but I am afraid I was too busy to read the newspapers, and therefore did not know the circumstances until the detective acquainted me with them. I was to become familiar enough with them later on. The detective told me that Mr. Monson and Mr. Hambrough had gone out in a boat in Ardlamont Bay to fish, Davis, who was known as Scott, staying ashore, and that Monson had tried to drown Mr. Hambrough by drawing a plug and letting the boat fill with water. He told me,

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too, that next day—August 10th, it was—the three men left Ardlamont House to shoot, two of them, Mr. Monson and Mr. Hambrough, each carrying a gun. The detective said that Mr. Hambrough had been shot dead in a wood near the house, and it was supposed that he had been murdered by Monson and Davis. Monson had been arrested, and Davis—as I shall call him—was wanted, but he had disappeared, and not a trace of him could be found.

That was the story which was told me by the detective from Scotland Yard. I was quite frightened, I can assure you, especially when the detective told me that my house had been watched for some time; but nothing had been seen of either the going of Ted Davis or his parents, for by this time the father and mother also had left. They must have known that the police were on the watch and that their son was wanted, and I saw then that there was good reason for the terrible distress which Mrs. Davis showed when she came and told me that they would have to give up the drawing-room floor.

I soon learned that my husband and myself would have to be associated with the case, much as we disliked being concerned with it;



PLAN OF THE GROUNDS OF ARDLAMONT



WHERE THE BODY WAS FOUND

The Ardlamont Riddle

but the police explained that our evidence was necessary, and that we had no option in the matter. So in due course a party of witnesses set out from London for Edinburgh, where Mr. Monson was to be tried; and I, for one, sat in court for ten full days and listened to the wonderful and patient attempts to unravel this terrible mystery, which remains a mystery still. They were very long and trying days, so that we were always thankful when we could get away to look round Edinburgh or rest quietly at the temperance hotel where we were staying.

It was not until the sixth day of the trial that my husband and I were called. By that time more than fifty witnesses had given evidence for the prosecution.

The story which was slowly told was very remarkable, and, naturally enough, I was deeply interested in it, as I knew so well one of the men who had become so singularly associated with it and had completely disappeared. The police searched for him, friend and foe alike did their best to get at him, and advertisements were put in the principal newspapers—but Ted Davis never turned up. He had vanished—that was all that was known.

I knew nothing about Mr. Monson person-

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ally, but once I had seen Mr. Hambrough. He was then talking with Davis in the street, near my house. I did not know who he was, but my husband explained his identity.

I will tell you the story as it was built up in court. No speeches were made in the beginning—the tale was told gradually by the witnesses; and when everything had been put before the jury counsel delivered their addresses and the Lord Justice-Clerk summed up. The trial was remarkable because of the appearance of a large number of witnesses of a class who are not as a rule associated with murder trials, and because of the revelations of many sordid details relating to a number of good-class people.

Mr. Cecil Hambrough was little more than a boy. He was the son of Major Hambrough, a retired military officer, and it was intended that he also should go into the Army, his mother hoping that he would join the Guards. It was through an ex-Army officer—Mr. Beresford L. Tottenham, who had been a lieutenant in the 10th Hussars—that Mr. Hambrough met Mr. Monson. That was in 1900, when Mr. Hambrough was only seventeen years old. Mr. Tottenham was a financial agent, and he had had dealings with the Major.

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Mr. Monson also became acquainted with the Major, and the result was that it was arranged that Mr. Monson should have charge of young Mr. Hambrough as tutor and train him until he passed into the Army. It was arranged that Mr. Monson was to be paid £300 a year for his services. The Major was in serious financial straits, and Mr. Monson made efforts to get him out of them; but trouble arose between the two men, and in consequence of the unpleasantness the Major did all he could to get his son away from Mr. Monson's care.

Mr. Monson at that time was living at Riseley Hall, near Ripley, Yorkshire. But these efforts were failures, and Mr. Hambrough continued to live at Riseley Hall with his tutor. There is no doubt that he was thoroughly enjoying life, that he had plenty of money, and that he had no wish to go and live with his father, who was in rooms and in constant financial embarrassment. The Major had got through a good deal of money, but there was a large sum which could not be touched, and to which Mr. Hambrough was entitled when he came of age.

Mr. Monson himself was undoubtedly in a very bad financial state, and, as a matter of fact, in 1892 he was declared a bankrupt. He

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seems to have set to work steadily to try and raise money on Mr. Hambrough's expectations, but he failed.

A great deal was said one way and another during the trial about financial matters, and some curious things were revealed. It was largely the object of the prosecution to prove, of course, that the prisoner would benefit greatly by Mr. Hambrough's death; but, so far as the prisoner was concerned, his counsel did his best to show that, so far from Mr. Monson benefiting by Mr. Hambrough's death, such a thing would be a real calamity to him, because it would stop his source of income.

Having failed in the direction named, Mr. Monson made successful efforts to lease the shooting at Ardlamont for Mr. Hambrough. A lease was prepared and entered into by which Mr. Hambrough became the temporary tenant of Ardlamont House, and there the young man went, with Mr. and Mrs. Monson and their children. By that time Mr. Hambrough had become a lieutenant in the West Yorkshire Militia, and it was expected that he would enter the regular Army.

As soon as Mr. Hambrough was comfortably in possession of Ardlamont House steps were taken to insure him, and two policies for

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£10,000 each were taken out on his life, and Mr. Hambrough promptly took steps for the payment of these large sums of money to Mrs. Monson in case anything happened to himself.

It was at about this time, entirely unknown to myself, of course, that Davis appeared at Ardlamont. He was taken to the house by Mr. Monson, who introduced him as Scott, explaining that he was an engineer who was going to inspect the boilers of a yacht which had been bought by Mr. Monson for Mr. Hambrough. Davis, as Scott, immediately became a member of the family party. He arrived at Ardlamont on August 8th, and from that time events moved swiftly towards their tragic close.

On the following night the three men started out on a fishing expedition in Ardlamont Bay. They had secured the use of a small ordinary fishing vessel, with a net, and Mr. Monson and Mr. Hambrough went out in her, but Davis remained ashore.

What actually happened in the boat will not, I suppose, ever be known, but it was declared that Monson deliberately tried to bring about the loss of the boat by drawing a plug and letting her fill with water, and in that way

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drown Mr. Hambrough, who could not swim, though he himself could. At any rate, the two men returned to Ardlamont House at midnight, and it was then seen that they were drenched. The story told was that the boat had upset, but that, luckily, both the occupants had escaped.

It was as a result of that sail in Ardlamont Bay that Mr. Monson was charged with attempted murder. But a heavier and far more serious charge was to be made, that of murder itself, arising from the strange happenings of the following day.

Soon after six o'clock on the morning of the 10th the party at Ardlamont House had begun what would in any case have been a long day. Mrs. Monson and the governess and the children went off to Glasgow for the day, and soon afterwards the three men went out to shoot, guns being carried by Mr. Monson and Mr. Hambrough, but not by Davis. They were seen walking away from the house, and passed out of sight and went into the wood, to all appearances carrying out a little shooting expedition in just the ordinary way.

Some time passed, and then the household was thrown into a state of terrible commotion, for Mr. Monson and Davis returned, and Mr.

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Monson told the butler that Mr. Hambrough had been killed.

The butler hurried away and tried to find the body, but he could not do so; then Mr. Monson went with him, and they came across poor Mr. Hambrough, lying on the top of a dyke, to which he had been lifted from a ditch. A rug was got, help was summoned, and the dead man was carried to the house, and a doctor sent for.

Mr. Monson was badly upset, and was crying, but he did not seem to trouble much about the body. The story he told was that Mr. Hambrough had shot himself. A doctor was summoned—he had to come some distance, for Ardlamont is a lonely place—and as the result of the information that was given to him he concluded that the affair was an accident. But a few days later he was satisfied that the death was not brought about in the manner he had been led to suppose.

Judging from the stories that were told in court by witnesses, it seems to have been a terrible and distressing time at Ardlamont House after Mr. Hambrough's body had been found and taken in. Davis was not long present, and soon after the doctor appeared he left the district.

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The dead lad's parents were telegraphed for, and they went to Ardlamont; and not long afterwards the body was taken all the way to Ventnor, in the Isle of Wight, for burial, Monson going with it and attending the funeral, after which he returned to Ardlamont.

It seemed as if the matter was now at an end, and that it would soon be forgotten; but inspectors came from the insurance company—and I suppose that very large sums are not paid without inquiry when only a single premium has been paid and when death is of a very suspicious nature.

Well, inquiries were made, and they were continued in many quarters, with the result that Mr. Monson was taken into custody on a charge of having murdered Mr. Hambrough. Mr. Hambrough's body was exhumed, and photographs were taken of the wound at the back of the head, and the doctors prepared minute details of the fatal injury.

There was a great hue and cry for Davis, and extraordinary efforts were made to find him; but not a trace of him could be discovered, and so the charge against Monson only could be proceeded with.

These trials are wonderful affairs to the ordinary mind, and it would be hard to find

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one more wonderful than this Ardlamont case, because of the efforts on the one side to show that death was caused by murder, and on the other side to prove that it was due to accident or suicide. There was not a circumstance, however small, connected with the affair which was not noted and made use of, and some astonishing details were given of the marks made by pellets at the spot where the body was found and of the condition of the ground in the neighbourhood. And every detail was given, too, of the condition of the skull and the injuries that had been received—ghastly evidence that one would much rather not have listened to; but in these cases justice alone has to be considered, and so everything must be gone into and nothing shirked.

I remember that evidence was given of experiments that had been carried out with guns on corpses, with the object of learning the effects of gunshot wounds on the head. There were also many experiments on newly killed horses, animals' skins, and models of men's heads; and, so far as I remember, some of these experiments were conducted with the guns that were in the possession of Mr. Monson and Mr. Hambrough when the tragedy occurred.

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When all the witnesses had been called—I remember that one of the last things stated was that a firm had been retained for the defence by the prisoner's mother, the Hon. Mrs. Monson—the Solicitor-General made a long speech which lasted nearly the whole of the ninth day. I do not remember most of it; all I know is that it seemed to cover every possible point in the case and, naturally, to be dead against the accused man. I was most interested in what the Solicitor-General had to say about Davis. He told the jury that from Ardlamont Davis had been traced to London, and that on August 15th or 16th he vanished; and he also said that Monson had deliberately misled people as to the real character and whereabouts of Davis.

Then there was another long speech, for the prisoner, by Mr. Comrie Thomson, who made a great point of the fact that if Mr. Monson had killed Mr. Hambrough he would have done away with the only fixed income he had, because the bounty of Mr. Tottenham, on which they were living, was dependent on the young officer's life. Mr. Thomson pointed out that Mr. Monson, Davis, and Mr. Hambrough were the only three persons who knew what happened in the wood at Ardlamont.

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He told the jury that Davis was a sick man, a dying man; a bookmaker—yes, but one of the quietest, most amiable and gentlest of men. He certainly was, judging from my long knowledge of him. Mr. Thomson scoffed at the idea that Mr. Monson should have lured on such a man as Davis to be a witness either to an attempt at murder or murder itself, and he declared that it was the greatest calamity in the world that Davis was not able to enter the witness-box. So there was nothing for it—one man being dead, one unable to speak because he was a prisoner, and the third having vanished—but to rely on circumstantial evidence.

The Lord Justice-Clerk also told the jury that the evidence was purely circumstantial, but he made it clear that he did not see any good ground for supposing that Davis had gone to Ardlamont as a party to a murder plot, and he told the jury that it had not been made out that Davis had disappeared at the instance of the prisoner. The case had to be considered quite apart from the disappearance of Davis.

The most terrible time of all came when the jury retired. It was bad enough for those who were waiting in court after all those

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wearisome days. How much more dreadful must it have been for the man whose very life was at stake and whose fate depended on the utterance of a single word!

The jury were absent for about an hour and a quarter; then they slowly returned into court, and the awful suspense was ended.

They returned a verdict of "Not proven" on both charges.

Monson was a free man again, and he briskly left the dock, in which he had been so long a prisoner and so closely guarded, and disappeared.

Some months after the trial a curious thing happened in Edinburgh, for Davis himself, who had been proclaimed an outlaw, appeared in a music-hall, as an assistant, I believe, to a conjurer. He had evidently taken to that sort of business as a means of making a living. I do not pretend to know what legal formalities had to be gone through by him to set himself entirely free, so to speak; but, as a matter of fact, he took steps to clear himself from the sentence which had been passed upon him, with the result that the punishment of outlawry was "recalled," as they put it, which means, I suppose, that the sentence was quashed. No steps were taken to bring him

The Ardlamont Riddle

to trial for the offence which had been preferred against him when the famous mystery became public property, and I take it that this meant that, so far as he was concerned, the affair was at an end.

That is the story of the Ardlamont Mystery, so far as the general public know it—and pretty nearly all there was to learn came out in that long trial at Edinburgh; but there is one very interesting fact which the general public does not know and with which very few people have become acquainted. It is this—that during all the time the hue and cry was raised after Davis, when frantic efforts were being made to discover his whereabouts, and when not a trace of him could be discovered, he was hiding in the East End of London. He told my husband that he was in the East End all the time, and never left it. If Davis had come out of hiding and left London, I do not think he could have escaped capture. He never came back to our house again, and I do not know what happened to him. I liked him very much, and it grieved me when I knew that he was mixed up in this awful mystery.

CHAPTER XIII

THE NEWCASTLE TRAIN MURDER

[MURDERS in English railway trains have been, and are, exceptional occurrences, so that when one is committed it arouses extraordinary interest, especially if the murderer remains undiscovered, or is found only after considerable trouble and delay. Six years ago an uncommonly deliberate murder was committed in a train on the North-Eastern Railway. The story is here retold from the narrative of Mr. J. Jamieson, who was professionally associated with the trial from start to finish.]

There is a train which leaves Newcastle every morning at 10.27 for Alnmouth, just under thirty-five miles away to the north. It is a slow train, and stops at all the stations until Alnmouth is reached—at three minutes past noon.

That train has been running for a long time, and it left the Central Station as usual on the morning of Friday, March 18th, 1910. It went

The Newcastle Train Murder

off in the ordinary way, and there was nothing whatever to distinguish its departure from the going of the train at any other time; yet the 10.27 of March 18th was to be the scene of a singularly deliberate and callous murder—a crime which was brought home to the perpetrator by the forging of a number of links of evidence which separately might seem slight and unsubstantial, but which, when put together, formed a chain of unbreakable strength.

The Newcastle train murder is an outstanding instance of the deadly nature of circumstantial evidence, and we shall see how, step by step, an unknown murderer was traced, brought to trial, convicted, and hanged.

The train reached Alnmouth Station up to time, and was being examined in the customary manner when the foreman porter, Charlton, made a terrible discovery, for on opening the door of the third compartment of the first coach behind the engine he saw three streams of blood oozing across the floor, and that under the seat facing the engine was the body of a man, lying face downward. The body was lying under the seat from end to end, and had been pushed right under it. Charlton did not move the body, but called the station-master, the guard, and a porter. The local

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policeman was sent for, and the body was removed to a waiting-room and the carriage taken to a siding.

I was on the platform at the time, and saw the body discovered and removed, and I was from that time connected with the case until the end.

It was soon seen that murder had been committed, for the dead man had been shot in five places in the head. Two bullets were still embedded in the head, and it was found that one of these was nickel-capped and the other lead, and that they were of different calibre, leading to the conclusion that two revolvers had been used; but no traces of the weapons themselves were found, though there were signs of a struggle. A pair of broken spectacles was found, and a soft felt hat was picked up from the carriage floor.

The murdered man was found to be John Innes Nisbet, a colliery cashier, living in Newcastle, and there had been stolen from him a black leather bag containing £370 9s. 6d. in money, mostly gold and silver. Nisbet was employed by the owners of the Stobswood Colliery, near Widdrington, about twenty-four miles from Newcastle. He was a married man, forty-four years of age, of slight build, and of

The Newcastle Train Murder

an inoffensive disposition; not the sort of man to make enemies who would be likely to murder him. It was his custom to travel on alternate Fridays by the 10.27 to Widdrington, carrying money from a Newcastle bank for the payment of the miners' wages. Sometimes he carried as much as a thousand pounds, but owing to a coal strike he had with him at the time of the murder only the sum mentioned, yet it was a very considerable amount of money.

Nisbet was a trusted and old servant of the colliery company, which promptly offered a reward of £100 for the discovery of the murderer. That discovery seemed likely to be an uncommonly difficult and baffling undertaking, because the murderer had completely escaped without leaving anything to identify him.

The announcement of the crime, its deliberate nature, its deep mystery, and the fact that it was committed in a railway train, aroused amazing interest throughout the country as well as locally, and instant steps were taken to try and trace the murder to its source. In little more than an hour the news had been received by the Newcastle police, and inquiries were being made. The public interest was extraordinarily keen, as it was bound to be, in view of the fact that there was so closely

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involved the question of the safety of the travelling public.

Let us see for the moment what Nisbet had been doing, and what had happened to him on that last fatal journey on a line which he knew so well and on which he was so well known. It was his duty on that day to go to Lloyds Bank at Newcastle to get a cheque cashed for the wages. He went to the bank, taking with him a black leather bag with a lock attached. At the bank he received gold in three canvas bags, silver in paper bags, and copper in brown paper parcels. One of these bags was marked "Lambton No. 1," Lambton's Bank having been amalgamated with Lloyds. It is important to bear this point in mind.

With the miners' wages in the bag Nisbet went to the Central Station, where he was seen by a commercial traveller in the company of another man. The two were going towards No. 5 platform, from which the train started. The traveller knew both men quite well and saw them clearly. It happened also that a local artist, Mr. Wilson Hepple, saw a man, whom he did not know, but who was Nisbet, go with a man whom he knew quite well and walk towards a third-class compartment close

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to the engine. Mr. Hepple saw the pair at the door of the compartment, and noticed that one of them put his hand on the door. Mr. Hepple then walked away, and when he turned round he found that the men had disappeared, and had evidently entered the train.

There was other evidence of Nisbet having been seen in the company of a man at the station, and it was clear that when the train started these two passengers were alone in the compartment near the engine.

A particularly remarkable thing happened at Heaton Station, which is two stations from Newcastle. Nisbet lived quite close to Heaton Station, and it was his wife's custom to meet him at the station every fortnight as he passed through to Widdrington for the purpose of having a little talk with him. Nisbet usually travelled in the rear of the train, but on this occasion she found that he was near the engine, and he put his head out of the window to attract her notice. The compartment was quite close to a tunnel, and a shadow fell on the seat of the carriage; but in spite of the shadow Mrs. Nisbet saw that another man was in the compartment—a man who never moved and had his coat collar turned up. He was at the far end of the compartment, facing the engine, and

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the profile was all that Mrs. Nisbet saw of the immovable figure. That brief sight became an incident of dramatic importance at a later stage.

Widdrington was the station at which Nisbet should have alighted, but he did not do so, and it was not until Alnmouth was reached that his murdered body was found. The body was alone, and the murderer had completely vanished. It was soon quite clear that the murder had been committed on the run between Stannington and Morpeth, a journey which occupies about six minutes, and is the longest that the 10.27 makes. Nisbet had been seen at Stannington by two colliery clerks who knew him. They spoke to him, and noticed that in the compartment was another man.

That was the last time Nisbet was seen alive by anyone except the murderer.

When the train reached Morpeth the compartment was empty, or seemed to be, for a man opened the door and saw that there was no one inside; but for some reason he did not enter that compartment, but travelled in another.

Further inquiries showed that when the train reached Morpeth a man left it and tendered 2½d. to the ticket collector, that amount being

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the fare between Stannington and Morpeth. Such description as the collector could give of the appearance of the man who had paid the 2½d. and left the train corresponded with the description of the man who had been seen by several persons in the company of Nisbet when he was on the platform and in the train.

All these descriptions pointed to the conclusion that the man in whose company Nisbet had been last seen was John Alexander Dickman, who lived at 1 Lily Avenue, Jesmond. Dickman was a married man with two children, and had lived in Newcastle all his life. He had occupied various posts and had undoubted ability, but for some time he had made his living on the turf.

It became the duty of an inspector of police to call on Dickman, and accordingly, on the Monday afternoon following the Friday of the murder, the officer went to his house and rang the bell.

Dickman himself answered the ring and came to the door. He was wearing slippers, and looked comfortable and perfectly calm.

“Are you Mr. Dickman?” said the inspector.

“Yes,” replied Dickman quietly.

“John Alexander Dickman?” the inspector asked; and he again said “Yes.”

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“Were you at one time employed as a book-keeper with a firm of shipbrokers in this city?”

“Yes,” said Dickman.

Then the officer told him his name and rank, and that the Northumberland County Police had been informed that he was in Nisbet’s company on the Friday morning, and that he had learned that he was an acquaintance of the murdered man. He said that the matter had been communicated by the county police to the city police, and that they were getting statements about the murder. The officer remarked that it was a terrible crime, and Dickman agreed, and they continued quite an ordinary general conversation for some little time, just like two disinterested persons discussing the affair that was claiming the attention of everybody.

“The county police,” said the inspector, “would like to know if you can throw any light on the affair.” Then Dickman made a statement which was of the greatest possible importance. He said he had known Nisbet for many years, and that he saw him on the Friday morning, and added: “I booked at the ticket window with him, and went by the same train, but I did not see him after the train

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left. I would have told the police if I had thought it would do any good."

"Will you come to the detective office and see Superintendent Weddell, and make a statement?" said the officer. And Dickman promptly answered "Certainly!"

They then went back into the room in which he had been sitting, and he took off his slippers and put on his boots, and they were talking together still in just an ordinary manner.

When he was ready they returned to the door, and just as they were about to leave the house his wife came.

"I shan't be long; I shall be back to tea," said Dickman to his wife. And they went away together. Dickman was quite free, not handcuffed or secured in any way. They walked along the streets chatting freely together about anything that came up. Dickman had been in the coal trade, and one of the things talked about was coal.

When they reached the detective office Dickman, after a few minutes, was introduced to Superintendent Weddell by the inspector, saying: "This is Mr. Dickman, and he will give you a statement respecting what he knows about the train murder on Friday."

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Dickman quite readily said that he would do so, and he voluntarily made a statement.

The inspector did not know Dickman personally, but had made inquiries in consequence of information which had been telephoned by the county police, and it was not until he revealed the fact that he had travelled by the same train as Nisbet at the time of the murder that he felt sure that he was talking with the man who had been described.

Dickman's statement was to the effect that he took a return ticket for Stannington, and that Nisbet, whom he knew, was in the booking-hall at the same time. Dickman bought a sporting newspaper at the bookstall, then went to the refreshment-room, and afterwards took a seat in a third-class compartment near the end of the train. He believed that people entered and left the compartment at different stations on the journey, but he had no clear recollection of this happening. He did not notice the train passing Stannington, and so he went on to Morpeth, got out, and handed his ticket, with the excess fare, $2\frac{1}{2}$ d., to the collector. He left Morpeth Station, and walked to Stannington by the main road. Being taken ill on the way, he had to return to Morpeth to catch the 1.12 p.m. train, but

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missed it. He then left the station, and spoke with a man, after which he returned to the station, and went back to Newcastle by the 1.40 p.m. slow train. He said the journey to Stannington was made to see a Mr. Hogg, at Dovecot, in connection with a new sinking operation there; and added that he had been unwell since the Friday, but was out on Saturday afternoon and evening.

That was the statement which was made voluntarily by Dickman in the presence of the superintendent and others. It was written down and handed to Dickman, who read it carefully and said that it was quite correct.

In consequence of that statement Dickman was detained and put up for identification, and his identity having been established to the satisfaction of the police, he was arrested by the superintendent and, after being cautioned, he was charged with the murder of Nisbet. Dickman quite collectedly said: "I don't understand the proceedings. It's absurd for me to deny the charge, because it is absurd to make it. I only say I absolutely deny it."

Dickman had said that he would be home to tea, but he never went home again.

After being charged Dickman was taken

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away by the county police, and next morning—Tuesday—he was brought up at Gosforth Police Court, just outside the city, and remanded. Subsequently he was brought up at the Moot Hall, in Newcastle, where, more than three months later, he was indicted on the capital charge.

During that long interval many links were forged in the chain of evidence. The identification had been established, and in the search that was made of Dickman immediately after he was formally charged by the superintendent there was found upon him the sum of £17 9s. 11d. in money, fifteen sovereigns being in gold in one of Lambton's small bank-bags—and the murdered man had carried some of his money in one of these bags. The discovery of such a sum in Dickman's possession was significant, because inquiries had shown that though he lived in a pretty good house in a good district, yet he was very hard up.

In a search which was made of Dickman's house there were found a life-preserver, some pawntickets, and two pass-books relating to accounts which Dickman had had at two banks. A thorough search was made, but no trace of a revolver was seen, nor has the weapon with which the murder was committed ever been

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found. I say weapon, because I may remark here that there is reason to believe that only one revolver was used, and that paper was wrapped round the smaller bullets to make them fit.

The profile view which Mrs. Nisbet had seen of the man who was in the compartment with her husband at Heaton Station enabled her to recognise Dickman in a very remarkable manner.

Just after she had given her evidence before the magistrate she fainted, and had to be taken from the witness-box—fainted because, on looking at Dickman in the dock, she had got a profile view of him which enabled her to swear that he was the man who was in her husband's company just before the murder, when the compartment was standing in the shadow of the tunnel. That was a most important help in proving the identification on which conviction must rest.

Another important discovery was that of the missing money-bag, which was found on June 9th at the Isabella Pit. That pit lies between Stannington and Morpeth, and it had got into disuse because of the accumulation of water. On June 9th the colliery manager went down early in the morning to examine the air-

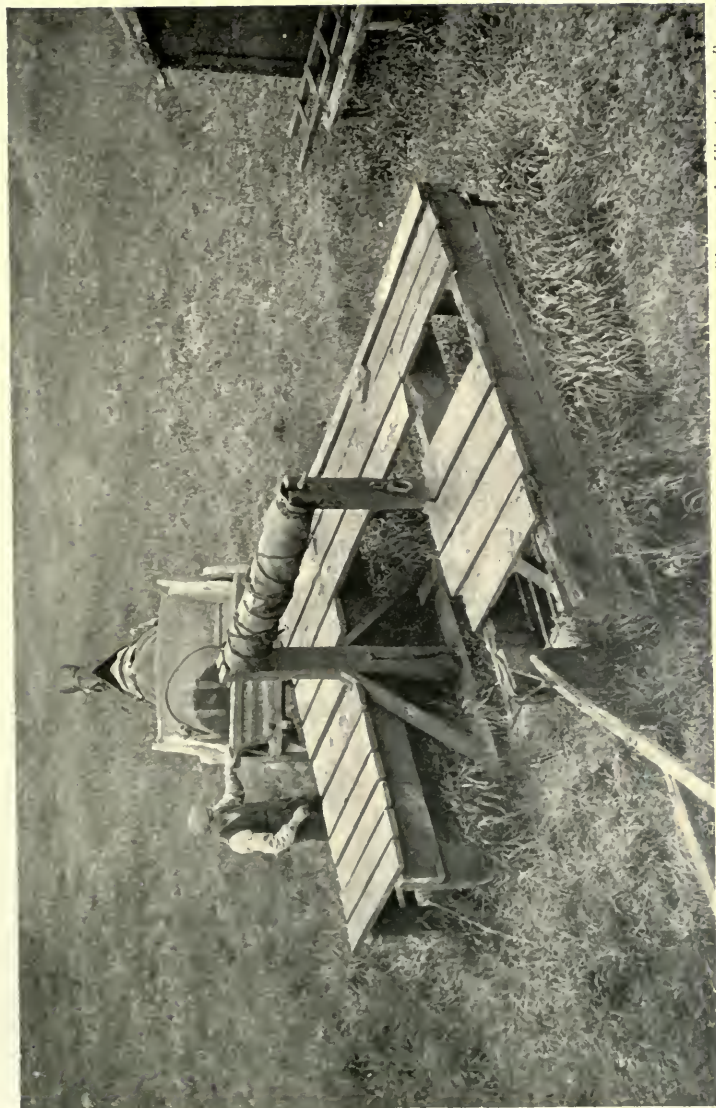
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shaft, and in doing so he found a leather bag with some coppers in it. There were also a considerable number of coppers lying around the spot at which the bag was found. On the following day other coppers were found, making a total of 19s. 3d.

This bag was proved to be the one in which Nisbet was carrying the money at the time of the murder. A large hole had been cut in one side of it, leaving the lock still secure. The collicry manager was able to say that Dickman knew of the existence of the Isabella Pit and of the collection of water in it, and that he knew Dickman personally, as nine years previously they had been fellow-workmen. Dickman at one time had been secretary of a small "land sale" colliery at Morpeth Moor, "land sale" collieries being so called because they sell the coal at the pit-head; so that he knew the district and its collieries well.

All these and other facts were proved when, at the Newcastle Summer Assizes, before Lord Coleridge, Dickman was tried for the murder of Nisbet.

The trial began on Monday, July 4th, and lasted for three days. The case for the Crown was presented by Mr. E. Tindal Atkinson, K.C., and Mr. C. F. Lowenthal, while Mr.



Photograph: Illustrations Bureau

THE NEWCASTLE MURDER: THE COLLIERY SHAFT WHERE THE STOLEN BAG
WAS FOUND

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Mitchell-Innes, K.C., and Lord William Percy were counsel for the defence.

For the prosecution it was shown that Dickman was in want of money, and it was suggested that robbery was the motive of his crime. It was also suggested that when he left Morpeth Station and tendered the 2½d. excess fare he had the stolen bag of money hidden under his overcoat, and that he cut the bag open, took from it the gold and silver, and threw the bag and the coppers down the Isabella Pit, which had an iron grating over the mouth; but the grating could be raised, and the bars were wide enough to admit the passage of a fair-sized article. It was shown that Dickman's story that he had gone to Dovecot on March 18th to keep an appointment with Mr. Hogg was false; Mr. Hogg had no appointment with him and did not know that he was coming. It was shown, too, that a fortnight before the murder was committed Dickman made the journey which he undertook on the 18th, and it was suggested that he did so with the object of rehearsing his crime.

As soon as the case for the prosecution was closed evidence for the defence was given—given by Dickman himself, who stepped from the dock and entered the witness-box. He had

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been calm and collected from the start, and he was apparently unmoved even now, when more than ever he was in peril of his life. He answered the questions of Lord William Percy quietly. One thing he said was that he had had an account at Lambton's Bank, and that "possibly" the bag which was found upon him was got from that bank.

The cross-examination was, of course, the deadly part of the period in the witness-box; but still Dickman never flinched. He particularly sought to discredit the evidence of Mr. Hepple, which was so fatal to him, by suggesting that Mr. Hepple's faculties had failed and that he had made a complete mistake, though the fact was that the two men had known each other for many years, and that on the 18th Mr. Hepple was only about eighteen feet away when he saw Dickman at the Central Station. Mr. Hepple received the greater part of the £100 reward.

Dickman was the only witness called on his own behalf. He had stood the terrible test amazingly well, and so calm was he at the finish that when his counsel said, "That is all I ask you," he said, alluding to two overcoats which had been produced, "Shall I take these coats or leave them?"

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“Leave them,” answered counsel quietly.
“That is my case.”

Then Dickman returned to the dock.

Mr. Tindal Atkinson addressed the jury for the Crown, and Mr. Mitchell-Innes made an earnest appeal for the prisoner, suggesting that two murderers killed Nisbet, and that, therefore, the whole of the case for the Crown failed.

After that address the court adjourned, and on the third day Lord Coleridge summed up in a wonderfully clear manner.

Just before one o'clock the jury retired to consider their verdict, and after an absence of rather more than two and a half hours they re-entered the court with a verdict of guilty, delivered in a tense and dreadful silence.

Even then Dickman protested that he was entirely innocent, and that he had had nothing to do with the crime.

A man who was just behind Dickman when the judge passed sentence of death stated that he well remembered that the veins behind the prisoner's ears seemed to swell and stand out in an extraordinary manner, showing that, though outwardly calm, he was deeply affected by the appalling position in which he found himself. He remembered, too, the judge say-

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ing, "In your hungry lust for gold you had no pity upon the victim whom you slew," and that when sentence had been passed Dickman once more declared in a firm voice, audible throughout the court, that he was innocent.

The condemned man unsuccessfully appealed, and on the morning of August 10th he was hanged in Newcastle Gaol.

On the night before he was executed the chaplain of the prison sat up late with him, and on the morning of the execution it is stated that he said: "Dickman, will you die with a lie on your lips?"

"I will say nothing," replied Dickman.

No trace of the revolver with which the murder was committed has been found, nor has most of the stolen money, but there are few who doubt that after the murder Dickman made his way to some woods near Morpeth, cut the bag open, and took out the gold and silver, and that he hid part, at least, of the plunder.

At the time of the trial and after Dickman's conviction there was a strong feeling in some quarters that he had been condemned on insufficient evidence; but, as a matter of fact, the evidence, though circumstantial, was such as to leave no shadow of doubt as to the

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accused man's guilt in the minds of his judges, either in Newcastle or London.

Then, as to any suggestion of harsh treatment or unfairness in any way by the police, let it be remembered that when Dickman was called upon at his house he was scarcely in the position of being even suspected; but the matter became different indeed when he confessed that he had seen the murdered man at the station and travelled by the same train. That voluntary revelation was of the greatest importance and formed one of the strongest links in the chain of evidence which sent John Alexander Dickman to the gallows.

CHAPTER XIV

THE LAMSON CASE

[THIRTY-FIVE years ago Wimbledon was the scene of an exceptionally cruel and deliberate murder. At Blenheim House School one of the students, Percy Malcolm John, died suddenly on December 3rd, 1881. It was suspected that his decease was due to the administration of aconitine, a very swift and deadly poison, and this suspicion proved correct. It was shown that John, a cripple, had been poisoned for the sake of his money by his brother-in-law, Dr. George Henry Lamson, who was found guilty, ultimately confessed, and was hanged. This crime aroused intense interest at the time, largely because the doctor afforded a remarkable psychological study. This is the narrative of Mr. Charles A. Smith, of the Medical Hall, Ventnor, Isle of Wight, who was an important witness for the Crown.]

I knew Dr. Lamson well, for I had had many interviews with him in the way of

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business. My personal knowledge of him extended over a period of eighteen months, because he spent much of his time in this part of the Isle of Wight, where his father was living.

The doctor was a slim young fellow, a little under thirty years of age, with a very pleasant manner, and he had the knack of making you feel at home with him directly. He was one of the last men in the world you would suspect of committing such a cruel and premeditated murder as that for which he was hanged.

Dr. Lamson was a mystery. There is not the slightest doubt that he was possessed of great capacity for good—as an army surgeon in Serbia and Roumania he had done fine and humane work, and there were not a few who spoke from personal experience of him as a kind and gentle person.

It is not easy in these cases to form a correct judgment; but such a consideration need not weigh, because all that one desires to do is to deal with questions of fact. One thing is certain, and it is that the doctor was condemned only after a scrupulously fair trial, when his guilt had been fully proved by the prosecution, and he had had every opportunity to establish his innocence.

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In the late summer and the beginning of the autumn of 1881 I made up various prescriptions for the doctor, and some of these I have preserved as curiosities. Here is one, just as I received it more than thirty years ago. Many are on odd pieces of note-paper, and this one is written on an envelope.

A date I particularly remember is August 28th, 1881. Between eight and nine o'clock on the evening of that day Lamson, who was alone, came to my shop. I was then in business at 76 High Street, Ventnor, a little distance from the Medical Hall, where I am now established. The door was shut, and the doctor opened it and entered the shop in just the ordinary way, precisely as he had come in on many previous occasions, either for a chat or to do business. He was quite normal—I did not notice the slightest difference in him—yet events showed that he was then obtaining a particularly deadly poison with which he meant to take the life of his young and helpless brother-in-law.

If I remember rightly, Lamson picked up a cake of Pears' soap and something else, and, having bought these, he said that he wanted three grains of sulphate of atropine and one grain of aconitine. Knowing him as a medical

R

Podophyllin gr

Rt. Belladonna. gr $\frac{ij}{ss}$

Ext. Hyoscyami gr $\frac{ij}{ss}$

Mf. Mas - ~~all~~ in pil No. 4

S. One to two pills at night

Send also in separate packet
atropiae Sulph. - gr $\frac{ij}{ss}$

Oct 20/61 J. H. Lamson



for personal use

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man, he was served without question and without suspicion, and the poisons were not entered in the poisons book. But I made an entry of the sales in what I called my waste-book, a sort of rough day-book, and this proceeding absolutely fixed the date of the purchase, and by doing so helped largely, I believe, in the conviction of the doctor. The small bottle from which the aconitine was taken that day is still preserved, but it is no longer used. There is still in it some of the identical poison from which the grain was sold.

Aconitine is one of the swiftest and most deadly poisons known. An infinitesimal dose will cause agonising suffering, and death in a few hours. To show the powerful action of aconitine, I may say that the "British Pharmacopœia" gives no dose, while "Martindale's Pharmacopœia" gives $\frac{1}{600}$ to $\frac{1}{200}$ of a grain. To get the dose properly distributed it is necessary to triturate it well with a gritty powder, such as sugar of milk. The doctor had got an entire grain, and three grains of atropine, another intensely poisonous substance, of which the usual dose is a hundredth part of a grain.

I had supplied these things in the usual way, without so much as the remotest suspicion

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of anything being wrong entering my mind; nor had I any misgiving whatsoever until a well-known local practitioner came into my shop and said: "You know the name of Lamson?"

Of course I replied that I did.

"Well," he continued, "do you know that the police are after him? It is said that he has poisoned his brother-in-law at Wimbledon, and that the poison used was aconitine."

I was utterly taken aback, and exclaimed: "Why, I supplied him with some aconitine a few weeks ago!"

I instantly hunted up my waste-book, and there the entry was. The doctor advised me to communicate with the Treasury, and I did so, stating that I had supplied aconitine to Lamson. The result was that without the slightest delay Inspector Butcher, of Scotland Yard, came to see me; and that began an unwilling association with the case, which ended only with the truly dreadful day when I saw Lamson condemned to the death from which no effort succeeded in saving him.

Naturally enough, I became acquainted with every detail of this famous case, from the opening of the inquest at Wimbledon to the time when Mr. Justice Hawkins sentenced Lamson

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to death. They talk of his lordship as the "hanging judge," but my own impression, gained from two famous trials with which I have been connected—one relating to a member of the Bonaparte family—is that he was a very kind and amiable gentleman.

The facts of the case, as they were slowly ascertained, showed that the day after Lamson obtained the aconitine from me he administered some of it to his brother-in-law, Percy Malcolm John, who was then staying with his sister and her husband at Shanklin. The lad was taken violently ill, but the illness passed off. On that occasion no doctor was summoned, and in due course the lad was taken back to the school at Wimbledon. There is little doubt that after obtaining the aconitine from me Lamson went to another chemist in Ventnor, Mr. Littlefield, and bought from him some quinine powders, into several of which, and into some quinine pills, he introduced the poison. Mr. Littlefield, who was called as a witness, was able to swear that he did not keep aconitine and had never had any in his shop.

Though paralysed in the lower limbs and suffering from curvature of the spine, yet Percy Malcolm John was free from actual disease, and was able to wheel himself about in specially

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made chairs. He had, however, to be carried both up and down stairs, a task which was frequently and, we may be sure, kindly performed by his fellow-students.

Two or three days after visiting me on August 28th Lamson crossed to America, and from that country he sent to his brother-in-law at Wimbledon a box of pills, of which the lad took one, and, having done so, declared that he felt ill, just as he had felt at Shanklin after taking a quinine pill which Lamson had prepared for him. These pills, it was proved, contained poison.

After staying a few weeks in America, Lamson returned to Ventnor, and it was soon obvious that he was reduced to the last extremity to obtain money. On the voyage home on the *City of Berlin* he borrowed five pounds from the ship's surgeon. Executions and writs were out against him, his household furniture had been sold, he had pawned personal belongings, and had cashed worthless cheques, drawn on banks where he had no accounts. It was quite clear that he meant to spare no effort to get his brother-in-law out of the way, and so become possessed of a sum of about £1,500 which would revert to him on the lad's death.

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Towards the end of November Lamson bought two grains of aconitine from a firm of London chemists, having without success tried to get a quantity of the poison from another firm. He also bought a Dundee cake, which figured prominently in the development of the case.

On the evening of Saturday, December 3rd, Lamson went to Blenheim House.

Percy Malcolm John was expecting him, for Lamson had sent a letter saying that he meant to call and see him before leaving for Paris and Florence.

When Lamson called, just after seven o'clock, he was shown into the dining-room, and the crippled lad was carried up from the basement by a fellow-pupil and placed in a chair.

The pupil left the room, and Lamson, the lad, and Mr. Bedbrook, the proprietor of the school, were together.

At Mr. Bedbrook's invitation Lamson took a glass of sherry, into which he put some caster sugar, to counteract, he said, the effects of the alcohol. He had asked for the sugar, and the housekeeper had brought it into the room.

From a bag which he carried Lamson took

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some cake and sweetmeats. He also produced a box of capsules, saying that he had brought them from America, and that they would be found very useful for the purpose of giving medicine to the boys. A capsule, of course, is a gummy envelope for a nauseous drug. He gave one to Mr. Bedbrook to try, and Mr. Bedbrook took it, noticing meanwhile that Lamson was putting some of the caster sugar into another capsule.

Shaking this capsule, Lamson told the lad that he was a swell pill-taker, and asked him to swallow it, which Percy, unsuspecting, immediately did.

Meanwhile Lamson had been eating the cake, and Mr. Bedbrook and Percy also took some, as well as some sweets which Lamson had produced.

Almost as soon as the lad had swallowed the capsule Lamson hurried away from the house, saying that he had to catch a train for the Continent. It is interesting to remember that when he had tried to poison his brother-in-law at Shanklin Lamson lost no time in escaping to America. It is reasonable to suppose that he calculated that by the time he returned the death of his brother-in-law, if it had taken place, would have been completely

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forgotten, and the burial having taken place, there would be little or no probability of suspicion falling on the doctor.

About four hours after Lamson hastily departed from the house at Wimbledon Percy Malcolm John was dead. Within a few minutes of taking the cake and capsule the lad was in agony, and despite the prompt attention of two doctors, one of whom was in the house at the time, nothing could be done to save him.

Next day, Sunday, Mr. Bedbrook reported the matter to the police, and grave suspicion instantly attached to Lamson.

The crippled student had died on December 3rd, and so early as the morning of December 8th Scotland Yard had sent a police sergeant to Paris to make inquiries concerning the whereabouts of Lamson; but on that very morning a haggard and distressed man, accompanied by a woman, presented himself at the Yard and said to Inspector Butcher, who saw him in a room there: "I am Dr. Lamson, whose name has been mentioned in connection with the death at Wimbledon." He said that he had come from Paris by way of Havre and Southampton, though he was unfit to travel, being unwell and much upset by this affair.

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Lamson evidently expected to be allowed to go after reporting himself; but he was detained at Scotland Yard, and after being formally charged with causing the death of Percy Malcolm John, he was taken to Wandsworth Police Court in a cab.

Bail was applied for and refused, and from the moment Lamson surrendered himself at Scotland Yard, though there was no actual warrant or charge against him, he was a prisoner—and in his heart of hearts he must have known that he was doomed.

There were the preliminaries of the inquest and magisterial inquiry to be gone through before the trial came on at the Old Bailey which meant life or death to the unhappy prisoner.

On March 8th, 1882, just three months after Lamson surrendered at Scotland Yard, his trial began, and ended after five long days. His leading counsel was Mr. Montagu Williams, and if mortal man could have secured an acquittal I am certain that that famous barrister would have done it, for he made a powerful and almost irresistible speech on behalf of the accused man, whose interests he had watched throughout since the preliminary inquiry.

Extraordinary public interest was shown in

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the case, especially in relation to the effect of such a deadly poison as aconitine and the tests that were made to establish the cause of the death of the crippled lad as being due to the administration of this particular alkaloid. Aconitine which had been taken from the body of the murdered lad was administered to mice, which died very quickly. That was one experiment which was carefully carried out to prove the deadly nature of the poison; but the principal test was that of taste—that is to say, the expert witnesses had to place a minute quantity of the aconitine on the tongue, and in that dangerous and unpleasant manner ascertain its real character. That the poison extracted from the lad was aconitine was established beyond any possible doubt.

The case for the prosecution rested on the assumption that the prisoner had given the poison through the medium of the capsule, which he had prepared either before going to see his brother-in-law or while actually in the lad's presence and that of Mr. Bedbrook.

There was, I believe, another theory that the aconitine had been introduced into a piece of the cake, and that the prisoner saw to it that this particular piece was eaten by his brother-in-law.

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Mr. Williams, in his speech for the defence, did his best to destroy the theory of the prosecution and discredit the case for the Crown, but he did not succeed. Nor was any evidence offered on the prisoner's behalf, in itself a significant proceeding.

The closing hours of the trial were extremely painful, largely owing to the impression created by the speech for the defence, and more so because of the presence in court of the prisoner's wife—the "thin, spare figure," as Mr. Williams called her—who had gone up to the dock and taken her husband by the hand to encourage him and show that she at least believed him to be innocent, however guilty he might be reckoned by the world.

It was six o'clock at night when the judge finished his summing-up and the jury retired to consider their verdict. They were absent for only half an hour, then they returned a verdict of guilty.

What followed was not, mercifully, witnessed by the "thin, spare figure," for she had been gently taken away by friends from the crowded court.

Few words were spoken by Mr. Justice Hawkins in passing sentence of death—he merely alluded to the crime as being cruel,

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base and treacherous, and as soon as the final words of doom had been uttered and the chaplain had exclaimed "Amen," Lamson was removed from the dock.

He had been, it seems, confident of an acquittal, and was terribly dejected at the finding of the verdict of guilty.

My own recollection of the doctor's appearance at the finish of the trial is that he would have collapsed in the dock while being sentenced if the warders had not stood very close to him and supported him. Before being removed, Lamson said nothing except to declare solemnly that he was innocent.

In the ordinary course of things he would have been hanged on April 2nd, but the execution was twice postponed and the prisoner was respited to give every opportunity of affidavits coming from the United States to prove his insanity and for testimony to be obtained in England that he was not capable of knowing what he was doing because of his habit of taking drugs.

Numerous affidavits were sworn that the condemned man was an opium-taker, and that, owing to the influence of this drug, he was not responsible for his actions.

Lamson had been taken to Wandsworth

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Prison, and there, on April 28th, he was hanged, all efforts to save him having failed. There were those who believed in his innocence and were very sorry for him, and I believe that sympathetic women actually took flowers to the prison and left them for him. The vast majority of people, however, were satisfied that he suffered very justly for an uncommonly cruel and premeditated crime, even before he confessed that he had committed the murder. He did not, however, explain how he had done it.

Most of us have read Mr. Montagu Williams's "Leaves of a Life."

In that book the famous counsel dealt, of course, with the Lamson case, and made some remarks which must have set finally at rest any lingering doubts as to the murderer's guilt.

From the circumstances which came to his knowledge after the trial, Mr. Williams said that Mrs. Lamson full well knew her husband to be guilty, and knew more than was proved before the legal tribunal. This meant that she was probably aware that her other brother, by whose death Lamson came into a considerable sum of money, was also murdered by him.

What happened to Mrs. Lamson?

I cannot say what her ultimate fortune was,

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but I believe that, after the dreadful tragedy with which she had been so closely and unhappily associated, she started a boarding-house.

That was the last I heard of her.

CHAPTER XV

CRIPPEN'S CALLOUS CRIME

[WITH the possible exception of the Palmer case, no crime that has been committed within living memory has aroused such excitement and interest as the murder of Mrs. Crippen by her husband, "Doctor" Hawley Harvey Crippen. Mrs. Crippen was a well-known music-hall artiste, whose professional name was Miss Belle Elmore, and she was poisoned, cut up, and buried in the house in which she had been living with her husband. In that house he continued to live with his wife's supplanter, his typist, with whom he had for a long time conducted a *liaison*. Miss Elmore was closely associated with the Music Hall Ladies' Guild, and it was through the exertions of that society that suspicion of Crippen was aroused—a suspicion which ended in his thoroughly well-deserved death on the gallows. At the time of the crime Miss Melinda May was secretary of the guild. She was a witness at the trial of Crippen, and also of Ethel Le Neve, and it is her story which is told.]

Crippen's Callous Crime

I was one of a small party of visitors at Crippen's house on New Year's Eve, 1909. I had been invited to go to see the Old Year out and the New Year in, but I had excused myself on the ground that I was untidy. The doctor and his wife—Belle Elmore—however, must have telephoned to Miss Hawthorne and her husband, Mr. Nash, to call for me, for they came round in Miss Hawthorne's car and took me to 39 Hildrop Crescent, Holloway. We reached the house at about eleven o'clock, and Miss Elmore went downstairs and made an American cocktail. Time passed quickly, and midnight was soon with us—the Old Year was nearly dead and the New Year almost born.

At midnight the street door was opened, and there, at the top of the flight of steps which led up to the entrance from the garden path, we stood—the doctor, his wife, Miss Hawthorne and her husband, and myself—to listen to the hooting of sirens, the ringing of church bells, the hammering of trays, and the rest of the strangely moving noises that are made by the watchers who hail the New Year.

Miss Elmore had handed round the cocktail, and we had taken it and had expressed the usual good wishes for the New Year.

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“I’m so glad you’re here, Miss May,” Miss Elmore said, turning to me. “I’m so glad that we’re together now, and I do hope that we shall all be together again this time next year.”

Poor soul! She uttered those kind and friendly words while she was standing over the very spot where her mutilated remains were buried a month later by the cold-blooded murderer, her husband.

Belle Elmore was at all times kindness and generosity itself; she was a large-hearted woman, and she showed her kindness while we were standing on the top of the steps, for she called up the chauffeur and a constable, who happened to be outside, and invited them to take some refreshment, which they did, joining in the good wishes for the year 1910.

After letting in the New Year we went downstairs to supper; then, at about half-past one in the morning, we left the house, Miss Hawthorne taking me in the car to my residence and afterwards going home.

So the New Year was ushered in, and we settled down to continue and extend our Music Hall Ladies’ Guild work, in which Miss Elmore was greatly interested. The guild had been founded in the autumn of 1906, and for eighteen months she had acted as honorary

Crippen's Callous Crime

treasurer, and had regularly attended our committee meetings—here in this book are the pages on which she signed her name for the last time as a worker with us.

The head-quarters of the guild at that time were at Albion House, New Oxford Street, London, where also Crippen had his place of business. The guild has one very special object, and that is to help the poorer women and children of the music-hall profession, so that it is particularly a work for women.

Miss Elmore was devoted to the work, and on that first day of the New Year she came to the office at Albion House. I remember that visit so well, because it threw such a clear light on one phase of her character. We had a little talk about a man who had just been to see me, and whom I had sent on to the Variety Artists' Benevolent Fund, because we do not deal with the cases of men—only those of women and children.

After we had discussed this matter Miss Elmore said: "I have just been round to the little church in Soho Square." That was the Catholic church, for she was a Roman Catholic. "Have *you* been?"

I smiled and said: "No; I haven't had time. Besides, you know, I'm not a Catholic."

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“What does the church matter,” she answered quickly, “so long as it is the House of God?”

I often think of that remark, which indicates the religious side of Belle Elmore, just as her interest in the guild showed her kindness of disposition. It is important to bear that kindness in mind, and to remember that Miss Elmore was in the prime of life, and an attractive woman. She was always well dressed and wore very good jewellery, and with it all had an exceedingly pleasant manner. It is strange indeed that such a woman should have been usurped in any man's mind by such a person as Ethel Neave, to give her her real name.

About a fortnight after that visit to Albion House Miss Elmore came again. That was about twelve o'clock noon, and I noticed that she looked very unwell. Almost before there was a chance of saying anything she exclaimed: “I am so ill! I do feel so bad!”

“I am very sorry,” I replied. “Is there anything I can get you? What's the matter?”

“No, thanks,” she said. “I daren't touch anything. I awoke in the night and roused Peter”—as she always called Crippen—“and

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said: 'Get up and fetch the priest. I'm going to die!'"

Nothing, however, was done; but as to the cause of that illness and the excruciating pain she felt, there is no doubt that it was the result of an attempt which Crippen had then made to murder her by administering poison. How the truly deadly poison which did soon afterwards cause Belle Elmore's death was given no one knows, and Crippen took that awful secret to the scaffold with him.

On the last day of that month of January Crippen ceased to have any association with the business at Albion House—a patent medicine business it was—but he continued to have an interest in a dental concern. And on the day that he finished with the patent medicine business his wife disappeared, and was never again seen alive. The last persons to see her were Mr. Paul Martinetti and Mrs. Martinetti, the latter a member of the committee of the guild. They were invited to dine with the Crippens, and they went to the house, and were there till half-past one in the morning. There was no one else present—just the Crippens and the Martinettis. The party attended to their own wants, and then quietly played whist.

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During the evening Mr. Martinetti, who had not been well, was taken ill, and Crippen went out to get a cab; but he was absent an unnecessarily long time, and there seems to be little doubt that he was hoping to return and find his wife dead from the effects of the poison which must have been then given to her, and that, finding her dead, he would be able either to avert suspicion from himself or to attach it to someone else. Certain it is that he was capable of any diabolical act that would conceal his guilt, just as he proved to be a deliberate and cunning liar when the police had got him and he knew that day by day his doom was being surely sealed.

A meeting of the guild was held on February 2nd, and it was expected that Miss Elmore would attend; but she did not appear.

Just before one o'clock Ethel Neave came to the office and gave me a pass-book and a paying-in book which Miss Elmore had charge of as treasurer, saying: "I think these are yours."

Ethel Neave also gave me two letters, one for myself and one for the guild. In the letter to myself, which was signed, "Hastily yours, Belle Elmore, p.p. H.H.C.," it was stated that Belle Elmore had been called to America

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at a few hours' notice owing to the death of a near relative. She asked that her resignation should be brought before the committee, so that the new treasurer could be elected without delay.

"You will appreciate my haste," the letter added, "when I tell you that I have not been to bed all night, packing and getting ready to go. I shall hope to see you again in a few months later, but cannot spare a moment to come to you before I go."

The letter to the committee was to the same effect, and stated that the cheque-book and the deposit-book were enclosed for the use of the writer's successor. A suggestion was made that a new treasurer should be elected at once.

That letter bore the signature, "Belle Elmore," but neither it nor the letter to myself was in her handwriting, which I knew quite well.

The two communications were, as a matter of fact, forgeries by Crippen, and were foisted off upon us for the time being with the help of Ethel Neave.

The matter was puzzling and terribly suspicious, because Miss Elmore had not given a hint of going to America, and she would

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hardly have left in such a hurry and with practically no clothes—for she had a very large wardrobe. But there was the explanation of her absence, and for the time being we had to be content with it.

I saw Crippen practically every day, and time after time I asked him for news of his wife. At first he told me she was in California, in the hills, then he said she was very ill, and warned me that we must expect worse news of her.

Terrible indeed was all this lying and hypocrisy, in view of what had actually happened and what he really knew.

“Do let us know all you can,” I said. “It is an awful suspense for us.”

“Yes,” he answered; “and, being that to you, you can understand what it is to me.”

Then the time came when, in answer to a question, Crippen said: “Cora is dead—she died in my son’s arms”—meaning his son by his first wife.

I had already asked Crippen what had become of two beautiful cats which Belle Elmore had, and of which she was very fond; and he replied that it was strange, but that they had disappeared at about the same time as their mistress left for America. So they

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had, for the brute had done away with them.

We were now determined to see what had really happened, to solve, if we could, the mystery of Belle Elmore's disappearance; and, amongst other things, we wrote to the son of the first wife in America, and to our amazement he answered and said that he had neither seen nor heard of Mrs. Crippen.

Meanwhile the committee were not letting the matter rest. At that time the president of the guild was Mrs. G. H. Smythson, and on March 31st she went to the Scotland Yard authorities and asked them to help in tracing Miss Elmore and have Crippen watched; but Scotland Yard said that they could do nothing unless a charge was made against Crippen. There was not then, however, any conclusive evidence, and all the committee could do was to go on observing and making inquiries.

By this time Ethel Neave had taken up her residence at Hilldrop Crescent, and she was working with Crippen. Once I asked at the office if she was there, and he promptly answered "No," though I actually saw that she was; but that was a trivial lie for him to tell.

Almost daily I saw Crippen, and he feigned

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grief at the loss of his wife and constantly wore a black hat-band and a black armlet. He still had the quiet, studious manner that always characterised him; he was never taken off his guard, and was always ready with satisfactory answers.

Though he well knew what had been done to Belle Elmore, and knew that there was a strong and growing suspicion against him, yet he never faltered, and went about as if nothing had happened except in the ordinary way. His wife had gone to America, and had died there—that was the tale he told, and people must accept it. He discharged ordinary obligations in the ordinary way, and I well remember that he paid me an amount which was owing with a ten-pound note, taking the change quite placidly.

At that time—summer had come—Crippen was wearing a white linen suit. He remained just the same as ever, quiet, studious and calm, and never gave one the impression of being the cold-blooded murderer he really was.

Occasionally I went to the house to make inquiries, and saw Ethel Neave there; but whenever Crippen was present he always remained downstairs until I had gone. He never joined us.

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It must be remembered that even now there was no suspicion of the real, terrible truth, for Crippen, to all outward appearances, had been at all times particularly kind to his wife.

By the end of June matters had gone further, and the story that was now told by Crippen was that his wife had died at Los Angeles, that she had been cremated, and that her ashes had been brought over—that was the story he told to Mrs. Martinetti and Mrs. Smythson; but when they wanted details he could not give them, not even the name of the ship in which his wife had sailed for America.

By the last day of June so strong had the suspicion grown that Mr. Nash went to Scotland Yard, with the result that on July 8th Inspector Dew went to Hilldrop Crescent, where the door was opened by Ethel Neave, who was actually wearing a brooch, in the form of a rising sun, which had belonged to Belle Elmore.

The inspector persuaded the girl to go with him to Albion House, and there they saw Crippen—and who can tell what his feelings were when he knew that at last the police were after him, and that the house at Hilldrop Crescent was to reveal its ghastly secret?

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Calm, consummate liar that he was, Crippen now boldly admitted that he had given a false account of his wife's disappearance. She was not dead, he said. "So far as I know, she is alive." Then he told a long story which was at variance with all that he had previously said. According to this new account, his wife had gone to join an old friend of hers in America, Mr. Bruce Miller. But this statement, with many more, proved a deliberate lie. The main feature of the story was that Belle Elmore had disappeared in consequence of quarrels, and her husband had tried to hush up the matter so as to avoid a scandal.

With that long explanation the police for the moment had to be satisfied; but now things moved with amazing and dramatic swiftness.

The very day after that memorable visit to Albion House the police circulated a description of the missing woman, and two days later they went again to Hilldrop Crescent, but neither there nor at Albion House was there a sign of Crippen and his typist—both had fled.

The moment the police appeared Crippen saw that his desperate game was up, and that only by prompt and uncommon action could he

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escape. He was equal to the terrible emergency—he must have prepared for it long in advance to be able to carry it out as he did. When the police had left he sent his clerk to buy a suit of boy's clothes and other things; his typist put the suit on, and, disguised as a boy, she left Albion House, going down more than eighty steps and getting away without exciting suspicion, though how she managed to do so passes my comprehension. Crippen left a letter telling his clerk to settle up the household affairs, and he wrote another letter to his partner saying that he found it necessary to disappear for a time.

Then there came upon me one of the most severe shocks I have ever known—the revelation that not only was Belle Elmore dead, but that she had been murdered in the most monstrous fashion.

I happened to be travelling by a tramcar, making a journey in connection with a change of rooms, and a stoppage was made in Kennington Road. The conductor bought an early edition of an evening paper. He eagerly glanced at the main contents, which briefly told of an awful discovery in the cellar of a house at Hilldrop Crescent.

I got a paper myself, and as soon as I

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realised what the dreadful news implied I fainted in the car. That was the effect of the shock upon me, the realisation of the tragic end of one we knew and loved so well. When I recovered I had just to explain to the conductor why I had been so overcome; then I hurried to Albion House, to find it completely packed with an excited crowd of newspaper representatives and other people—a crowd so dense, indeed, that the building had to be cleared. The excitement over the discovery was indescribable, and it never died down, either here or in America, because of the dramatic developments in the case and the possibility that the guilt of Crippen might never be brought home to him; for there *was* such a possibility, and the mere thought of it to some of us was unendurable.

I cannot, and will not, dwell on the discovery at Hildrop Crescent. It is too dreadful a subject. All I will say is that, buried in the cellar of the house were found the mutilated remains of Belle Elmore, who had been murdered by the administration of hyoscine, a rare and deadly poison.

There is no doubt that after the visit of the Martinettis on January 31st she died in great agony, that she was cut to pieces in the



"DR." HAWLEY CRIPPEN



ETHEL "LE NEVE" IN HER DISGUISE

Photographs: Illustrations Bureau

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bath-room, and buried in the cellar—a horrible night's work; after which the monster who had done it went about his business and lived with his typist as if nothing had happened, and she had taken the murdered woman's place and was wearing her clothes and jewellery!

Time after time I and my friends had the truly painful task of trying to identify some pitiful relic of the murdered woman; but let that be forgotten. The very sight of those bits of clothing and personal fragments made me positively ill; my nerves were shattered, and I have never been the same since.

What happened after the flight was made known in various ways at later stages, and Ethel Neave herself told the story of her association with Crippen. The change at Albion House from her own clothing to the complete boy's outfit—shirt, braces, waistcoat, trousers, jacket, collar and tie, boots, and bowler hat—seemed a “merry joke” to Crippen, and the joke was crowned when Crippen said: “Now for the hair,” and with one or two snips of the scissors the typist's “mop,” as she called it, fell to the floor. She herself confessed that it was extraordinary that she went down all those steps at Albion House, where she had been known for years, without being

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recognised, and that she should pass along the streets without a soul suspecting that she was a girl in disguise. They went separately to Chancery Lane Tube Station, where Crippen joined her, and she then noticed that he had shaved off his moustache. From Chancery Lane they went to the Bank, and then to Liverpool Street Station, where they meant to take train via Harwich for the Hook of Holland; but they had three hours to spare, and this was spent in a bus ride, apparently to and from Hackney. The two went to the Hook, then to Rotterdam, and on to Brussels, where they thoroughly enjoyed themselves; then, from Antwerp, they sailed in the liner *Montrose* for Canada.

The description of Crippen and his typist had been sent all over the world; the discovery at Hilldrop Crescent was the topic of the day; and so it happened that Captain Kendall, of the *Montrose*, knew of the crime, suspected Crippen, and got the wireless to work. That resulted in Inspector Dew, armed with warrants, hurrying across the Atlantic in a faster steamer than the *Montrose*, and being able, on July 31st, to board that steamer, disguised as a pilot.

It was a Sunday, and the murderer and his

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companion were expecting to land and seek safety in the New World, which had been reached with the proceeds of the sale of Belle Elmore's jewellery and clothing, and the money she had had in the bank.

Crippen, as he told in his evidence at the trial, saw through the inspector's disguise at once, and he was amazed to find that he had been discovered by the police.

What must his feelings have been when he felt the handcuffs on him and knew that both he and his companion were to go back to England to be tried?

After some delay the two were brought back, and then began the long and awful association with the trial—the preliminary hearing at Bow Street, then the trial at the Central Criminal Court before the Lord Chief Justice.

Crippen fought desperately for his life; he and Ethel Neave had been in the dock together at the police court, but now he was tried alone, and his solicitor and counsel did their best. The solicitor, Newton, did all he could before the trial to damage the evidence of members of the guild; but we knew exactly what we were saying—we had nothing to tell but the truth—and Newton failed.

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One of the most tense periods of the trial was the cross-examination of Crippen.

He had dared everything in going into the box, though he knew that it must have been a forlorn hope indeed; but throughout that terrible ordeal, when the slip of a word might have put the rope round his neck, he never flinched; he was as cool and as calculating as ever.

He told lie after lie in the hope of nullifying other lies that he had told, but the very untruth only served to make his position more fatal.

A deadly bit of evidence against Crippen was the finding, with the mutilated remains, of some pieces of pyjamas, which it was proved belonged to him. Strangely enough, Belle Elmore, who had bought these garments for her husband, asked me to go with her when she made the purchase; but, as it happened, I was not able, owing to other engagements, to accompany her.

I was not present in court during the whole of the hearing, and I was thankful to be out of it; but I was there when Crippen was found guilty, and I heard him sentenced to death. So far as I could tell, even then he was as callous as ever; but in his heart of hearts he

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must have felt the unutterable horror of his position—he must have known, from the Lord Chief Justice's solemn, measured tones, that for him in this world there was no more hope, and that when he stepped down from the dock he had almost done with life.

Crippen appealed, and was present at the Law Courts when the judges refused to interfere with the sentence; then, on the morning of November 22nd, he was hanged at Pentonville Prison. That was ten months after the murder. He made no confession, and was a liar to the last, for in a "farewell letter to the world" he solemnly stated that he knew nothing whatever of the remains until he was told of their discovery by his solicitor on the day after his arrival at Bow Street.

Two days after Crippen was condemned Ethel Neave was tried at the Old Bailey, before the Lord Chief Justice, with being accessory after the fact in the murder of Belle Elmore. I was again called as a witness, repeating what I had said at Crippen's trial. The prisoner was found not guilty, and was discharged.

It was very widely stated at the time that she had left the country and was making a fresh start far away; but I believe that, as a

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matter of fact, she remained in London and was engaged in a dressmaking business. This I do know, however—that I saw her myself on Easter Monday, 1913. And I saw her in an extraordinary manner.

I had been staying at Eastbourne, and had entered a compartment in a train for London Bridge. A young woman was sitting opposite to me, and to my amazement I recognised her as Ethel Neave. She saw me, too, and knew who I was, and she hung her head. I could not take my eyes off her all the time we were on the journey.

CHAPTER XVI

SEDDON'S GREED OF GOLD

[THE most sinister, deliberate, and cruel of all murders are those which are due to the administration of poison. In many cases the motive for such crimes is avarice, and what the judge called "greed of gold" sent Frederick Henry Seddon to the scaffold for the murder of Miss Eliza M. Barrow. Seddon's wife was tried with him, but she was found not guilty, and was acquitted. Miss Barrow, with a comfortable and assured private income, went to lodge with the Seddons. Seddon, an insurance superintendent of a grasping and bombastic nature, did not rest until he had had the whole of Miss Barrow's fortune made over to him, by his own craft and cunning, in return for an annuity; then, having secured her money, he took prompt and successful steps to poison her. The trial, which took place before Mr. Justice Bucknill, lasted ten days, and aroused deep and widespread interest. One of the most important witnesses was Mr. Frank Ernest

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Vonderahe, Miss Barrow's cousin, who was largely instrumental in bringing the murderer to justice, and whose story is here retold.]

Miss E. M. Barrow, who was murdered by Frederick Henry Seddon, was my cousin, and was nearly fifty years old at the time of her death. She was very comfortably circumstanced, as she always had been, for she had never in her life found it necessary to work. She had a great regard for money, and in the ordinary course of things would not give four farthings for a penny. She lived with us at one period, but left us to take up her residence with Seddon and his wife, who had a large house at 63 Tollington Park, and had advertised the upper part to let. There was a little boy named Ernie Grant who lived with Miss Barrow when she was with us, and he went and lived with her at the Seddons'. My cousin was very much attached to the little fellow, and his association with the case became of much importance when it was a matter of finding a motive for what had been done.

Miss Barrow had a public-house called "The Buck's Head" which brought her in £105 a year, she had a barber's shop adjoining "The Buck's Head" which gave her another £50

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yearly, and she always had plenty of ready cash and money in the bank. It is, perhaps, a singular coincidence that both my cousin and Seddon had a very great regard for money, and I have no doubt that she was impressed by seeing him handle considerable sums of gold in the ordinary way of his business as an insurance superintendent.

I never knew a meaner or more avaricious man than Seddon. Money was his god, and it was his greed of gold which sent him to the gallows. If he had not been so hungry for money, if he had not been determined at all costs to get every penny that Miss Barrow had, it is possible—in fact, probable—that his crime would never have been found out.

If he had had the worldly wisdom to remember the poor little lad, and put aside for him even two or three hundred pounds out of the money that he got from the murdered woman, I think it is likely that no suspicion of foul play would have been aroused, and that Miss Barrow's relatives would have been content to assume that, for reasons of her own, she had parted with everything she possessed to Seddon. As it was, the case from the outset was one of the gravest possible suspicion, and once we had begun to move in the matter

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it was obvious that we could not rest until the very strictest inquiry had been made.

We had been in the habit of seeing my cousin about three times a week, but for some days we had not seen either her or Ernie Grant, and my wife said: "Why don't you go round and find out how they are getting on?" So I went down to 63 Tollington Park, which was only a few minutes' walk from where I lived. I knocked at the door, and it was opened by a young woman named Mary Chater, who was general servant at the house.

I asked if Miss Barrow was in, and to my amazement the girl replied: "Miss Barrow is dead and buried! Didn't you know?"

"No," I told her. "When was she buried?"

"Last Saturday," Mary Chater answered—and it was now Wednesday. I asked her: "When did she die?" and she said: "Last Thursday." I was, of course, completely taken aback, and I asked to see Seddon; but the girl said he was out, and would not be back for about an hour.

I came home and saw my wife and told her what I had heard, and an hour later we both went on to No. 63, arriving there about nine o'clock. This time we saw Maggie Seddon, the

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daughter, who told us that her father had not returned, and that he had gone to the Finsbury Park Empire, and would not be back till late.

We came away, and I went and communicated with my brother—who is now here with us as we talk—and we discussed the matter and decided that our wives should go to Tollington Park and see Seddon, and try and learn something from him.

Next morning they went, and Maggie Seddon opened the door to them, and they were shown into a sitting-room, where they were kept waiting for some time. Then Seddon and his wife entered the room, and Seddon at once announced that he had not much time to spare. He took out a watch and looked at it—a watch which was subsequently proved to have belonged to Miss Barrow.

At that interview Seddon was cool and calculating, but his wife was on the point of breaking down. He took care to do all the talking, and said to her: "Sit still, my dear. Don't upset yourself. I can say all there is to say." She would have given everything away. After demanding to know who the visitors were, and being told, he handed to them a copy of a letter addressed to me, but

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which I had never received. This letter was to the effect that Miss Barrow had died, and that the funeral would take place on the following Saturday; it gave invitations to the funeral, and added that Miss Barrow had made a will three days before her death leaving "what she died possessed of" to Hilda and Ernest Grant, and appointing Seddon sole executor.

That letter, I may say now, was never really sent to me, but was written by Seddon with the object of helping to conceal his crime and make everything appear to be in order. It was a black-edged letter, and in addition to it Seddon gave to the wives a letter addressed "To the relatives," a copy of the will, and a memorial card. In quite a businesslike way he put these letters into a large envelope and handed them to my sister-in-law.

At the end of the interview they asked him if he would see me, but he answered: "Oh, I've wasted enough time on you. I'm a business man, and can't be troubled by people asking questions."

My wife and sister-in-law had expected to take possession of Miss Barrow's effects, but nothing of this kind happened, and when they came away from Tollington Park they were so

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satisfied that Seddon's manner was suspicious that, after carefully considering the matter together, we decided that it was necessary to go farther with it. Very grave doubts had entered our minds.

It was not until October 9th that I saw Seddon for the first time. He had gone to Southend for a holiday, as he said he felt run down. Before calling again at his house I had various inquiries to make concerning the property and investments which Miss Barrow had possessed. While these were being made Ernie Grant called round to see us—about a week after the visit of my wife and sister-in-law at Tollington Park; but I saw at once that precautions had been taken to prevent the boy from being questioned, because he was accompanied by one of Seddon's sons.

I did not ask any questions, but said to the boy Seddon: "Tell your father that I will call and see him in about a week's time." When, on October 9th, I went round to 63 I was accompanied by a friend of mine named Mr. Thomas Walker. We were admitted to the house, and kept waiting for about twenty minutes. At the end of that time Seddon and his wife came into the room, and with all the assurance in the world Seddon came up to me

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and said questioningly: "Mr. Frank Ernest Vonderahe?" I answered "Yes," and he turned to my friend and said: "Mr. Albert Edward Vonderahe?" but I explained that it was not my brother, who was not well enough to accompany me, but a friend.

Seddon was in what I might call fine fighting form. He was smoking a cigar, and I am sure that while we were kept waiting he was taking a drink or two to get himself up to the mark. At any rate, he at once asked: "What do you want?" and began to ride the high horse.

I let him run on a bit. Then he said: "I see you've been making inquiries." And, of course, I had. I told him that I wished to see my cousin's will, and he replied that he did not see why he should give me any information. He began to talk glibly about my going to see a solicitor and swearing an affidavit, and when I asked who was the owner of "The Buck's Head" now, he promptly said: "I am—and I own the shop next door. I'm always open to buy property. This house I live in—it has fourteen rooms—is my own, and I have seventeen other properties. I'm always open to buy property at a price."

As he stood there smoking his cigar he

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looked thoroughly prosperous and well pleased with himself, and did not show a sign of suspecting what a hideous fate was soon to overtake him. His manner and speech indicated perfect self-confidence and assurance, and I could quite well believe the stories I had heard of him, which showed him to be a man of great resource, very ready in speech, and plausible to a degree. His business as an insurance superintendent gave him that confidence to a large extent. I understood that he was excellent company, and, amongst other things, he was, or had been, a local preacher. This fluency of speech and readiness to explain things away might easily have put one off the track, but I had learned too much from my inquiries to be readily disposed of, and I persisted in my questions.

I felt very much concerned that my cousin should have been buried in a common grave at Finchley, as she had been, when there was a family vault available at Highgate, and I asked for enlightenment on this point. Seddon was ready with his answer, which was: "I thought the vault was full up."

As for the property, he declared that he had bought it in the open market, and when I got to the matter of the annuity and asked

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what Miss Barrow paid for it, Seddon at once replied: "That is for the proper authorities to find out. I am perfectly willing to meet any solicitor. I'm prepared to spend a thousand pounds to prove that all I have done in regard to Miss Barrow is perfectly in order."

That was about as far as I could get with Seddon at that time; but matters were advancing, for, amongst other things, I knew quite well that "The Buck's Head" had not been bought in the open market, and that my cousin would never have parted with the property in that way.

Again we talked the matter over amongst ourselves, and decided that it was best to communicate with the police. Accordingly, we wrote to the Public Prosecutor, Sir Charles Mathews, and the next development in the case was the exhumation of my cousin's body. This took place in the middle of November, and I and my brother had the very unwelcome and painful task of attending the mortuary at the cemetery for the purpose of identifying the remains.

I will not dwell on that dreadful experience beyond saying that we identified the body, which had been taken out of the coffin and placed on a slab; and we had an opportunity

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of seeing how shamefully the burial had been carried out, owing to Seddon's greed, for he had provided only the cheapest possible funeral, and had actually got a commission from the undertaker on even this mean expenditure.

The post-mortem examination, which was carried out by Doctors Spilsbury and Willcox, showed that death was due to acute arsenical poisoning, and was not caused, as the certificate stated and Seddon declared, by epidemic diarrhoea.

Of this grim and terrible examination and discovery Seddon knew nothing, and no doubt he thought that he was perfectly safe. After Miss Barrow's death he seemed to enter upon a period of fresh prosperity, and was constantly seen in the neighbourhood tearing about in a yellow motor-car. He must have thoroughly enjoyed this experience, for he loved display, but it was not to last long.

One night, pretty late, the coroner's officer appeared at the door of the house in Tollington Park and served upon Seddon a summons to attend an inquest on the body of Miss Barrow. That was the first intimation he had received of the exhumation, and the document must have been taken by him in the light of a death-warrant. Next morning it was noticed

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that he seemed to be twenty years older. He had been sitting up all night making notes and getting ready for replies to any questions that might be put.

It is singular that the inquest opened on Miss Barrow's birthday, which was November 23rd. The inquest itself was likely to prove deadly enough, but even before it was concluded, after being adjourned, Seddon was arrested on a charge of wilfully murdering Miss Barrow. That was on December 4th, 1911. Ten days later the adjourned inquest was held, and a verdict of murder by some person or persons unknown given by the coroner's jury. On January 15th, 1912, Mrs. Seddon was arrested on a charge of being concerned with Seddon in the murder, and on February 12th both the prisoners were committed for trial.

The extraordinary confidence which I had noticed in Seddon was maintained, and outwardly he gave the impression of feeling certain that in the end he would regain his freedom. Even when in custody he willingly posed for the newspaper photographers, and carefully arranged himself at a window for their convenience. I saw him doing this, and noticed his appearance. He looked smiling and full of health and spirits—a contrast indeed with the

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picture he presented at the trial, when he seemed literally to have shrunk and suddenly grown years older. It was almost impossible to recognise him as the bombastic person who had been so ready with his answers to my questions about the death of Miss Barrow and the disposal of her property.

During the preliminary hearing he was continually taking notes and leaning over to consult his solicitor. He laughed and smiled a good deal, but there was no heartiness in the laughter, and I feel sure that all this cheerfulness was put on.

It was not until Monday, March 4th, that the trial began at the Central Criminal Court, and then a wonderfully detailed and constructed story of the crime was told by the Attorney-General, Sir Rufus Isaacs, who is now the Lord Chief Justice.

By this time I knew almost every circumstance of the case, and I was particularly struck by the astonishing fairness of the prosecution. The prisoners had every human chance of being acquitted, because of this fairness and the care and skill of Mr. Marshall Hall, who defended Seddon, Mrs. Seddon being defended by Mr. Rentoul. For ten days that calm and patient trial went on, for a great

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number of witnesses were called, there were some very long and exhaustive speeches, and Seddon himself was in the witness-box a whole day and part of two days.

Of course the chief interest of the trial centred in the efforts to prove the poisoning of Miss Barrow, though there was a good deal of time spent in showing that Seddon had a powerful motive in getting rid of her, so that he could fully enjoy the benefit of the money which he had secured.

It was shown that Miss Barrow lived with the Seddons for fourteen months, and in that period she made over to Seddon £1,600 of India stock, for which he arranged to give her an annuity of £103 4s. 9d.—just under £2 a week—and she also made over “The Buck’s Head” and the barber’s shop for a further annuity of £52, so that for what he had got out of Miss Barrow Seddon was paying £3 weekly. This in any case represented a first-rate investment for him, whereas if anything went wrong with him Miss Barrow was utterly ruined. She had given up Government stock and sound leasehold property, and put her trust in a man of no great standing, for Seddon had a wife and five children dependent on him and supported an old father. An

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important feature of the case was that no fewer than thirty-three five-pound notes, which Miss Barrow had had, were proved to have been in the possession of the Seddons.

The theory of the prosecution was that Miss Barrow had been poisoned by arsenic, which had been extracted from fly-papers, and Mrs. Seddon admitted that she had bought such papers and put them in Miss Barrow's room. When, too, Seddon was arrested, and told that he would be charged with poisoning Miss Barrow by administering arsenic, he said: "Absurd! What a terrible charge—wilful murder. It is the first of our family that has ever been charged with such a crime. Are you going to arrest my wife as well? If not, I would like you to give her a message from me. Have they found arsenic in her body? She has not done this herself. It was not carbolic acid, was it? as there was some in her room. And Sanitas is not poison, is it?" Perhaps those were not the exact words he uttered, but it is significant that Seddon even at that time should have said anything about arsenic.

It is strange, too, that two days after he was arrested he suggested that his daughter Maggie should be sent to buy some fly-papers,

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because he remembered that there had been fly-papers in the sick-room, and it had struck him that some such papers might be bought and analysed, so that the quantity of poison in them could be discovered.

It was clearly established in the course of the evidence that as Miss Barrow's meals were prepared for her in a kitchen adjoining her bedroom, there was every opportunity for the Seddons to administer arsenic in her food; and it was proved that death was due to this poison, which must have been taken forty-eight hours before death. It was also shown that Miss Barrow did not take any medicine which contained arsenic.

Day by day the trial went on, wearily enough at times; but there were breaks in the monotony when Seddon went into the witness-box and also when his wife gave evidence. The Attorney-General was wonderful in his calmness, but I think he was well matched in Seddon, who, with judge and counsel, as he had been with me, was instantly ready with a pat reply. There seemed to be no chance of tripping him up or trapping him, yet it seems to be the fact that if he had not given evidence on his own behalf he might well have been found not guilty and escaped the scaffold.

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In her own evidence Mrs. Seddon positively swore that she had never given arsenic to Miss Barrow in any shape or form, and her husband became indignant at the suggestions of greed and inhumanity made against him. Once or twice, when he was under cross-examination, he showed his anger at being taken for what he called a "degenerate," but on the whole he kept amazingly cool, and it was hard to realise that either he or his wife was being tried for life. I think, generally speaking, that most people who heard the trial from start to finish imagined that, whatever happened to the man, the woman would be set free.

On the tenth day of the trial, which was Thursday, March 12th, the judge summed up, and finished just before four o'clock in the afternoon. I had been specially struck by the final scene: the huge dock, with about eight people in it—the Seddons, two warders, two wardresses, and, I think, two doctors—and the two prisoners looking almost as if they might have been spectators instead of the most important persons present. There had been a long and intense strain on everybody.

The jury were absent for an hour; then they came back, and, after due formalities, were

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asked for their verdict. First of all, in a terrible silence, they said they found Seddon guilty. Instantly the warders were standing by him like soldiers, and it seemed somehow as if even then he had become the special property of the law. Within a few seconds the jury had announced that they found Mrs. Seddon not guilty, and I think that most people in court breathed the easier for the statement.

Instantly Seddon turned and passionately kissed his wife, who, being a free woman, was allowed to leave the dock immediately. She was in a state of collapse, though I believe that while she was in her cell during the police-court proceedings she was quite cheerful and sang audibly, to the astonishment even of the gaolers, accustomed though they are to amazing things.

Now came the most astounding and dramatic feature of the trial. Seddon was asked, according to form, if he had anything to say why sentence of death should not be passed upon him.

Anything to say? Indeed he had! Plenty. And he began at once to say it. Already he had made unmistakable signs to the jury, to try and influence such of them as might be Freemasons; now, with a coolness and assurance

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which were nothing short of marvellous, he arranged himself in front of the dock, put some papers down, placed his hands on the rail, and, just as Lloyd George or anybody else might begin to address a meeting, he started a speech to the judge.

It was perfectly wonderful to listen to him, and it seemed as if he would never stop. He went on declaring his innocence, but in the same breath admitting that he did not think that anyone believed it. He spoke of the crime as being diabolical—which it was—and said: "I declare before the Great Architect of the Universe I am not guilty, my lord."

It was truly distressing to see the end of the dreadful drama, for the judge was one of the kindest of men and himself a Freemason, so that he must have felt the position acutely.

Three times Seddon interrupted the judge while sentence was being passed, protesting perfectly calmly that he had a clear conscience, that he was at peace, and that his wife had done nothing wrong; and when he had been condemned he turned quietly round and went below from the dock where he had spent so many dreadful hours, to know the world no more.

He appealed, of course, but his appeal

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failed, and on April 18th, 1912, Seddon was hanged at Pentonville Prison, an enormous crowd having assembled outside the gaol, though nothing was to be seen.

That there was a vast number of people who believed either in his innocence or that his guilt had not been proved was shown by the fact that more than 300,000 persons signed a petition for a reprieve. I myself, speaking, I hope, calmly and fairly, have no doubt whatever that he was most justly and properly condemned and hanged.

CHAPTER XVII

THE HOODED MAN

[ON the night of Wednesday, October 9th, 1912, Inspector Arthur Walls, an old and well-known member of the Eastbourne Borough Police, was shot dead by a man who was known as John Williams, and also, because of the steps that were taken to prevent mistaken identity, as "The Hooded Man." The murder was of a very cruel and deliberate nature, but in spite of this fact a great deal of sympathy for the prisoner was aroused. Before he was hanged, however, it was realised that this sympathy was entirely misplaced, and that a hardened criminal had been most justly condemned. The crime, this story of which is told by Chief Detective-Inspector Leonard Parker, of the Eastbourne Borough Police, who was associated with the case from start to finish, forcibly illustrates the peril to which the police are constantly exposed in dealing with dangerous characters.]

If, first of all, we go to South Cliff Avenue we can see the house which, in October, 1912, was

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occupied by a Hungarian lady named the Countess Sztary, and from the doorway canopy of which the young man who had assumed the name of John Williams fired two revolver shots at Inspector Walls, one of which killed him almost instantly. Walls was an uncommonly fine man physically, and he was a universal favourite. We all felt his loss deeply, myself particularly, for we had been colleagues many years, having been in the East Sussex Constabulary, stationed at Eastbourne, and being transferred to the Eastbourne Borough Police Force on the formation of that body in 1891. Walls was known as Parade Inspector, and much of his duty was done on the front and in the beautiful and extensive gardens which are such a famous feature of Eastbourne. South Cliff Avenue is steep and short, and leads to the sea front, from which the house can be reached in a few moments.

On the day of the murder I had seen Walls at the Town Hall, at my office. He had left me laughingly, and was his own fine cheerful self. When next I saw him he was lying dead on a stretcher, and all that was then known as to the manner of his death was that it had been caused by a revolver fired by a man who had vanished in the darkness, and of whom the only description was that he was hatless, and the only clue to his

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identity was a Trilby hat which he was supposed to have left behind him in his flight.

Here is the house. Later we will go and look at other places which are connected with the crime, which, without much difficulty, we shall be able to reconstruct. Over the doorway is a wooden canopy or coping—it is covered over now with sloping glass—which is just long and wide enough to allow a man to lie down or crouch upon it, and which at that time could be reached by an active man clambering up the spout at the side of the doorway.

On this October night Williams, who for reasons of his own wanted to get into the house, had climbed on to the canopy, and he was hiding there in the darkness, at about seven o'clock. The Countess was dining out, and probably he knew of this and had laid his plans accordingly. From his hiding-place it would have been an easy matter for him to enter the Countess's dressing-room and carry out whatever purpose he had in mind.

A brougham drove up to the house, and into this the Countess and a lady friend got, and were driven off towards an hotel; but it had happened that the coachman, Daniel Potter, had seen the crouching figure on the canopy. He made no sign of his discovery, but after driving away a

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short distance he stopped and told the Countess what he had seen. She directed him to return to the house, which she entered, and at once telephoned to the police station, urgently asking for help, as a man, who was supposed to be a burglar, was crouching on the canopy. The message was repeated, with a request that a constable should be dispatched on a bicycle.

The Town Hall is some distance from the avenue, and as Inspector Walls was on duty on the parade, and near at hand, he was rung up and told of the Countess's appeal for help. Walls instantly hurried to South Cliff Avenue, and ten minutes after the first message was received he was standing only a few feet away from the man who was lying on the canopy. There is a little garden at the front of the house, with a short pathway, and Walls had entered the gate, so that he should be ready to receive the man when he came down, as he was expected to do.

Walls looked up in the darkness, and, being so close to the burglar, he must have seen him pretty clearly, and undoubtedly the burglar had a very clear view of the fine figure which was just below him.

"Now then, my man," said Walls, "just you come down."

That was all. There was no threat or any-

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thing of that sort about it; there was just a plain request from a police inspector to a man who was found in a very suspicious situation to give himself up.

The man on the canopy said nothing—he settled himself deliberately on his little flat platform, rested a loaded revolver, which he carried, so that he could take careful aim, and then fired at the big figure which was only a few feet away. There was a flash and a sharp report, and poor Walls was shot. Whether it was the first bullet or a second which was fired that killed the inspector is not known; but, at any rate, he managed to reach the doorway, and even then he tried to warn the terrified women inside to close the door and so protect themselves. Then he left the doorway, and was again a defenceless target for the crouching murderer.

A second shot was fired and struck the inspector. The whole of the firing took place in a few seconds, so that even if the first bullet was fatal there was, according to the medical opinion, just time for Walls to stagger to the doorway and warn the women, for he was a man of uncommonly fine physique and perfectly healthy. Walls fell dead in the roadway, and instantly the murderer got down from the canopy and fled.

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At that time the avenue was very quiet. The first shot had made the horse restive, and the coachman had been forced to drive him off up the avenue; but a parlourmaid on the opposite side of the avenue had been alarmed, and she and a man who was passing hurried up, and the two attended to the fallen inspector.

The alarm spread swiftly. The Chief Constable, Major E. J. J. Teale, who was at dinner not far from the avenue, hurried to the house, and at once took every possible step to trace the vanished murderer.

There is now in force an arrangement by which in case help is needed from Scotland Yard it can be had, if asked for, in such cases as this; and, after many preliminary inquiries had been made and a good deal of information secured, I telephoned, in the presence of the Chief Constable, to the Yard.

I said: "One of our inspectors has been shot dead by a burglar, but the only description we can give is that he was a man without a hat." The help of an experienced officer was requested, and next morning, by the first train, Chief Detective-Inspector Bower and Detective-Sergeant Hayman arrived at Eastbourne from the Yard, and I met them. After a short conference we started off without delay to the house, secur-

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ing statements from the Countess and her lady friend, and making many other inquiries which proved of very great value.

I may say here that in the end no fewer than forty-nine witnesses were called for the Crown, their evidence involving an enormous amount of patient preliminary inquiry and hard work.

Amongst the first of the important facts to be discovered was that on the afternoon of the day of the murder a man and a young woman had been seen in South Cliff Avenue. The woman remained at the top, while the man apparently was making himself familiar with the avenue and the arrangement of the houses. Undoubtedly this man was Williams, and the woman was Florence Seymour—her name, like his, being an assumed one. At that time, as developments proved, Williams was prepared in every way for the burglarious entry of the Countess's house.

Events now moved rapidly. There came upon the scene a young man named Edgar Power, who had been a medical student, and lived at Harringay. He had known Williams for two or three months, and was also acquainted with Florence Seymour and Williams's brother. To this brother, from Eastbourne, Williams, after the murder, sent a letter-card, saying :

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“If you would save my life, come here at once. Come to 4 Tideswell Road. Bring some money with you. Urgent! Urgent!”

In consequence of what he learned, Power came to Eastbourne and called on Major Teale, and said his name was well known in the medical profession, and he felt that whatever he said would be treated with discretion; and he told Major Teale that the brother and Florence Seymour were going to London by the 7.45 train that night. Chief-Inspector Bower, I, and Sergeant Hayman decided to go by the same train, taking Power with us, so that we could keep the brother and the young woman under observation. We travelled in a compartment by ourselves, having seen that the pair had entered another part of the train. It was reasonable to assume that they would join Williams, and our plan was to see him and invite him to give an explanation of his movements at the time of the murder; but subsequently, on the strength of information which was in our possession, we resolved to arrest him and charge him with the murder.

It was a densely foggy night, and when we reached Victoria Station we had the greatest difficulty in making anything out with certainty; but we saw the brother and the young woman,

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and saw that they took the only taxi that was available and drove off. They quickly disappeared in the fog, leaving us quite helpless for that night, at any rate. But Williams's haunts were known to Power, and it was arranged that next morning we should visit some of them in the hope of meeting the man we wanted to get. Accordingly we went to various places, but had no luck until lunch-time, when we entered the buffet at Moorgate Street Metropolitan Railway Station. It was about a quarter-past one o'clock, and there were a good many people in the place, amongst them Williams, who was at the bar drinking. Power joined him and engaged him in talk.

Inspector Bower and I did not hesitate a moment—we just rushed up and collared Williams, put a word or two in his ear, and at the same time made a pretence of arresting Power.

There was a tremendous commotion, of course, but we got Williams into a taxi and took him to Cannon Row Police Station. On the way Williams said: "I'm perfectly innocent of this. I wouldn't do such a thing." Bower asked him if he would care to say anything about his movements on the Wednesday evening, but Williams replied: "I say nothing." Soon after-

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wards he said : “ Whoever did that did it to get the Countess’s papers for political purposes—that’s what I think, anyway. No doubt she’s mixed up in some political business.” At the police station Power was released, and I formally charged Williams with the murder of Inspector Walls. His only answer then was : “ Very well,” and he was locked up for the time being.

On the following day, Saturday, when we were driving to Victoria Station, Williams said : “ If you inquire at Eastbourne Station you’ll find that I went there to catch a train just after five o’clock on Thursday. I just missed it, and got one twenty minutes afterwards. I paid excess fare on a third-class ticket. It was a big chap, the collector—he must remember.” On other occasions Williams made statements which left no doubt whatever that he was at Eastbourne at the time of the murder, and it became less and less difficult to establish his direct association with the crime.

At the time of the arrest none of us had any idea who this man was that we had in custody, and we knew nothing whatever about his past—all we had to go upon was the word of Power ; but very soon we began to learn something of Williams’s antecedents, for in

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reply to a message sent to Scotland Yard an officer from the Finger-Print Department visited Cannon Row and took the prisoner's fingerprints. A very short time after that had been done this officer, who had gone back to the Yard to make inquiries, returned with two or three photographs which showed the sort of man we had got, and showed that he was a very well-known, skilful and dangerous burglar. This revelation strengthened our arm a great deal, as it was pretty certain that the object of the man who was hiding on the canopy was burglary.

Having been kept at Cannon Row for the night, we took Williams to Eastbourne on the following day. He was securely handcuffed, and when we got to the end of our journey Inspector Bower made a suggestion which caused the prisoner to be known as "The Hooded Man," and doubtless increased the enormous public interest which was shown in the case. In affairs like this the question of identification is, of course, of the most vital importance, and there are always excitable people who are wanting to come forward and make statements. The police were particularly anxious that there should be no unfairness done to the prisoner, and so it was that Inspector Bower suggested that his face and head should be completely covered. This was

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done by putting over him a blue apron with spots, and when we reached Eastbourne Station it was impossible for anyone to see his face, nor was it publicly seen until he was brought up in due course at the police court.

There was an enormous crowd of people in the neighbourhood of the station, and a great many photographers; but no photograph was taken of Williams's face, and the Chief Constable issued strict orders against any photographing in court. By means of these precautions, which were adopted time after time, there was no possibility of unfair identification.

From the very beginning this case excited uncommon public interest, and very large numbers of people were unable to get into the police court to hear the preliminary proceedings. Amongst the visitors were many ladies, some of whom brought lunch with them, so that they should not have to lose time in getting refreshment outside.

I must go back a little, to the time just after the arrest, to tell of what happened then. When Williams was in custody Hayman went to Victoria Station to get the luggage, and Bower and I went to Scotland Yard, where we decided to go to Victoria and see if we could find out anything of the movements of Florence Seymour. We got a taxi, and on the journey, while we were

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looking out of the window, I spotted her. We stopped the taxi, jumped out, and followed her as she was going into a tea-shop. Just as she was entering the doorway Bower spoke to her, and, though she was quite taken aback, she stared steadily and tried to bluff it through; but he persuaded her to accompany us to the Yard. She there made a statement, which proved to be quite untrue. For one thing, she declared that she had not been in the neighbourhood of the crime, though very soon after his arrest Williams had declared that at the time of the murder she and he were at a picture-palace performance in Eastbourne. Subsequently she made other statements which varied a great deal, and several of which she withdrew, alleging that they had been obtained under pressure, which was not the case.

From time to time Williams volunteered statements as to his doings, and some of these were very significant. On the way to Eastbourne he asked us if we thought, supposing that he had done such a thing as the murder, he would have left Eastbourne quite openly, knowing full well that the station would be closely watched. He declared that he was wearing a frock coat and silk hat at Eastbourne, and asked if he would "have had the cheek to lie on that small piece of board" while the Countess was

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dressing for dinner. "Wouldn't it have been easier," he went on, "to watch the lights go down and the lady leave, and then go in?" As a matter of fact, Williams *had* been wearing a frock coat and silk hat at Eastbourne on the day of the murder, but he had changed these for a lounge suit and a Trilby hat before leaving his lodgings in Tideswell Road to go to South Cliff Avenue. During the journey he also declared that he went to a picture palace with his "wife," and saw "Dante," and that a man sang at the performance, but he did not remember his name.

On the very morning after the murder an important discovery was made on the parade, not far from the scene of the murder, by a Corporation employee. While walking along he saw, lying on the sea-wall, a long, new rope, and on picking it up and examining it he found that there was a strong hook at one end. He took his find to the police station, and there was little difficulty in assuming that this was just the sort of thing a burglar would use in helping him to climb to such a height as the canopy—he would throw the hooked end up, and when it caught something and became secure he would climb up it. Before very long we knew that Williams was an expert climber, that he had been to sea for a time, and that his special ability in this respect

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had earned for him the nickname of the "Monkey Man."

Well, that rope was found in the immediate neighbourhood of the murder, and it became one of the many important links which were forged from time to time during the long period in which Williams was brought on various occasions before the magistrates and finally committed for trial on the capital charge. The evidence, it is true, was circumstantial, but it was of the strongest possible nature.

Very soon after the discovery of the rope there was found a revolver which was proved to be Williams's, and with which undoubtedly the murder was committed. Power and Florence Seymour had returned to Eastbourne, and he had heard from her about the revolver. In the course of a walk she showed him where the weapon was—it was buried in the shingle on the beach, just by the Redoubt Gardens. Two young officers from Scotland Yard had the pair under observation, and they made a careful note of the spot where the revolver had been buried. To that place, late at night, we went in a taxi, and, having stopped it some distance away, we went to the Redoubt Gardens, and after hard digging in the shingle with a shovel we came across the revolver, which was in two pieces. It

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had been buried about a mile from South Cliff Avenue.

Careful tests by experts showed that the bullets which had been fired at Walls were just such as could be discharged from the revolver, and there was not a vestige of doubt that the weapon belonged to Williams.

A significant circumstance which came out was that when Williams and Power met, Power chaffed him about his inability to shoot. "*Well, that was a good shot, anyway,*" said Williams. On Power asking him which shot he meant, Williams answered: "The shot that all this disturbance is about." This statement, when he was in the witness-box at the assizes, Williams denied; but at the same time he readily admitted that he had told "a fair lot of fairy tales to the police." He certainly had. As to the rope, which he had so carelessly disposed of, and the revolver, which, after breaking into two pieces, he had buried in the shingle just by the parade, where so many people passed, one can hardly pretend to understand Williams's conduct, especially when he could, by going down the beach to the edge of the water, have thrown the things into the sea, and at least have had a much better chance of their non-discovery.

Little by little it was shown that Williams

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had come to Eastbourne from London with Florence Seymour; but he had been previously at Bournemouth, where he had bought a soft Trilby hat. In his haste to escape he had left this hat in South Cliff Avenue; but it was characteristic of his record that he was prepared for such an emergency as this, and, having lost his ordinary headdress, he had in his pocket a cap, so that he could put it on his head and thus throw off the scent any person who might have been prepared to say that he or she had seen a hatless man. The ownership by Williams of this particular hat was proved beyond all possible doubt, and it became, therefore, a valuable link in the chain of evidence.

Williams and Florence Seymour passed as man and wife, and the young woman was expecting to become a mother. Williams, who was constantly needing money, got it by systematic theft and burglary, and it was in carrying out this object that he came to Eastbourne and planned the visit to South Cliff Avenue which ended in the murder of Inspector Walls.

When the luggage which Florence Seymour deposited at Victoria Station was examined, it was found to contain a leather belt with a holster attached, a false moustache, and photographs of Williams and Florence Seymour, as well as a

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large number of tools such as a skilful burglar would use. In Williams's luggage were found a number of pawntickets which clearly connected him with big jewel robberies.

The trial took place at the Assizes at Lewes, before Mr. Justice Channell, on December 12th, 13th, and 14th, 1912. On the 14th, which was Saturday, Williams, who had given evidence on his own behalf, and was in the witness-box for three hours, was found guilty, the jury being only a few minutes in arriving at their verdict, and he was sentenced to death. Williams had tried hard to put the murder on to a Continental thief who was known as Mike, but in this and other directions he quite failed to convince the jury. He immediately lodged an appeal, and this was heard in London, before the Lord Chief Justice (Lord Alverstone), Mr. Justice Ridley, and Mr. Justice Phillimore, with the result that the sentence was confirmed and carried out. Williams, who was wearing a frock coat, walked firmly to the scaffold. Great efforts had been made to obtain a reprieve and to get permission for him to marry Florence Seymour, who had given birth to a child, and the question was raised in Parliament; but these attempts failed. Amongst those who thought that there was ground for a reprieve was a well-known London

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clergyman, but subsequently this gentleman wrote a letter to the Press in which he said: "Being now in full possession of the facts, I wish to bear witness to the justice and humane-ness of the Home Secretary and of the police throughout the whole matter."

Williams had a consistently bad record. He began stealing at the age of nine years, and committed offence after offence, finally becoming a confirmed burglar and serving various terms of imprisonment. He fought in the South African War, but was afterwards deported as an undesirable. His real name was made public at the time of his execution, and it was widely stated that he was the son of a Scottish minister of religion; but, as a matter of fact, his father was a lay preacher, a respectable man of, I think, the gardening class. Williams himself, who had crowded so much wrong-doing into his career, was only twenty-nine years of age when he was hanged for the murder of Inspector Walls.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE VAUXHALL TRAIN TRAGEDY

[WHAT was described at the time as one of the most cold-blooded murders in the history of railway travelling was committed on Thursday, January 17th, 1901, on the London and South Western Railway, in the London district. A gentleman farmer named Mr. William Pearson, of Winchester, was shot dead in a third-class compartment by a man named George H. Parker, twenty-three years of age, who had been in the Royal Marine Artillery. At the same time Parker tried to murder another passenger in the compartment, Mrs. Rhoda King, of Southampton. The crime was remarkable because of the coolness and deliberation of the murderer and the practical impossibility of his escape from detection and capture. Parker, after trial and conviction, was hanged at Wandsworth Prison on March 19th, 1901. This is the narrative of the crime by Head Ticket Collector S. Rose.]

I was on duty at Vauxhall Station when the Southampton train came in at one-twenty, and

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was collecting tickets from the train when I was startled by hearing a lot of shouting and seeing a man running at a great speed towards the exit gate, where he dashed past the ticket collector who was stationed there and rushed down the staircase leading to the street, Vauxhall being an elevated station. Alterations have been made at the station since then, and it would not be so easy now to get away as this man did, for the time being.

I saw the man dash to the barrier and jump down the stairs, a porter tearing after him, and I heard the shouting and commotion ; but for some moments I did not know the cause of all the trouble. Then I noticed a terribly excited lady who was on the platform, with blood running down her face. She had left a third-class compartment, the door of which was open, and was pointing towards the barrier. At first she could not speak, but soon she managed to cry out : “ That man has shot a man in the train ! ”

I joined the lady and went to the open door of the compartment—it was a third-class lavatory compartment—and looked in, and there, in a corner, I saw a gentleman sitting who seemed to be asleep. I entered the compartment and looked closely at him, and saw that blood was running down his cheek. That was all, and it did not seem

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very terrible ; but when I caught hold of him I found that he was dead.

Other railway officials came up, and I assisted in removing the dead man out of the carriage and into a waiting-room, where a doctor who had been hurriedly summoned examined him and found that he had been killed by being shot through the head, the bullet having entered the eye.

The lady, who had joined us, was still labouring under intense excitement, and she told us in broken sentences that the man who had run away had shot the gentleman in the corner just before Nine Elms was reached. "He threatened to shoot me also," she added, "but I begged him, for the sake of my husband and children, to spare my life. The man said : 'Give me a shilling, then, and don't say a word till I've got away.' " This, the poor woman said, she promised to do ; but, of course, as soon as she saw the murderer bolting she made a great effort to pull herself together and raise the alarm. I thought then, and I think still, that this lady, who proved to be Mrs. King, of Southampton, showed great presence of mind and courage, for we soon learned that the murderer had fired at her also and tried to kill her. The bullet had entered her face, and she had narrowly escaped a fatal injury. She was removed as quickly as possible to St. Thomas's Hospital.

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This was all that happened on the platform, from which, after considerable delay, the train proceeded to Waterloo. Information was at once sent to headquarters, and a principal official came to Vauxhall, and the railway police took charge of the affair.

There was now an opportunity to learn what had happened to the runaway.

We soon found that after dashing down the staircase, taking three steps at a time, and reaching the bottom, he rushed into the road and made towards old Vauxhall Bridge. He was closely followed by a porter named Brewer, who was a champion runner—he is now in Canada—but the murderer went so swiftly that even Brewer could not get up with him. Other railway officials and people outside the station, amongst them a policeman who was on point duty at Vauxhall Cross, joined in the chase, and there was a tremendous hue and cry.

The murderer tore along towards the old bridge, and I believe that he would have escaped altogether for the time had it not happened that the road was up and the bridge was under repair. The collector at the barrier had not had a chance of doing anything—the murderer had just thrust a ticket into his hand and bolted; he was too flabbergasted to try and stop him, and, as for myself, I

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could do nothing, because I was about eighty yards away. I did the best I could with the things that came under my own particular notice just then, especially so far as the look of the compartment went, and, of course, I paid special attention to the tickets which had been used for the journey. It was in connection with these that my evidence was chiefly of value at the preliminary inquiries and the subsequent trial at the Central Criminal Court.

When the murderer found that there was no chance of escape by way of the old Vauxhall Bridge, and that if he held on in that direction he was sure to be overtaken and caught, he doubled and made a dash for the Vauxhall Gasworks. He rushed into them at such a breakneck rate that he almost knocked the doorkeeper down. He ran into the yard, and crossed a small bridge which ran over a little creek, a large and excited crowd being now at his heels. When he got into the yard he must have seen that he was fairly trapped, and he made for anything that was likely to give him shelter and a chance of escape. After dodging about the yard, the man suddenly dived into a tunnel which led to one of the retort-houses, and as soon as he had got into it policemen and other pursuers were at the mouth of the tunnel and were calling upon him to come out and give

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himself up. He refused to do anything of the sort, and steps were taken to make his capture certain.

It was seen that the murderer had hidden himself in a coke truck which was in the tunnel, and, while a watch was kept on all points so as to be ready to seize him if he showed himself, the engineer who was in charge of the gasworks ordered the gates which led into Wandsworth Road to be closed. This was done, and as both entrances to the gasworks were now shut there was no chance of the murderer getting away.

This part of the chase proved uncommonly exciting, because it was known that the runaway was a fine, powerful fellow, and there was every reason to suppose that he would offer a desperate resistance, though Mrs. King had explained that the revolver with which the murder had been committed had been thrown out of the train, and she believed it had fallen on the line.

The tunnel was a dark place, and while a watch was kept on it lanterns were obtained and preparations made to enter the tunnel, and either seize the man or drive him out. Several policemen by this time were engaged in the operations, and, having posted themselves at the tunnel mouth, they called on the murderer to come out. It was not necessary to call for long, because the tunnel

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was very hot and the man could not remain in it, so he left his hiding-place in the coke truck and came to the tunnel entrance, where he was instantly seized. But he made no attempt to struggle—he practically gave himself up to a constable, saying : “ It’s all right ; I’ll come quietly.” He was handcuffed and taken to Larkhall Police Station, and kept there. He was never taken back to Vauxhall Station.

It was very soon proved that the captured man’s name was Parker, and that he had been in the Royal Marine Artillery, but had been discharged for theft—at the very time of his arrest for murder he was wanted by the police for a theft at the Lyceum Theatre in London. He was quite a young man, and one of the finest-looking fellows you could meet in a day’s walk. He was certainly, so far as looks went, the last man in the world you would expect to turn murderer, though you could see at once that he did not know the meaning of fear. Throughout the long proceedings at the inquest and the police court he never turned a hair ; he was quite cheerful and cool, although he must have known that he had not the slightest chance of escaping the capital penalty.

At a very early stage Parker confessed that he had committed the murder, though he did not quite know why he had done it, as the victim was

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a complete stranger to him and he had never before set eyes on him. But, as a matter of fact, Parker was desperately hard up and wanted money very badly, and there is no doubt that he suddenly resolved to buy a revolver and try his luck with some passenger, perhaps expecting to frighten someone into giving him what he wanted.

The case was as clear as possible right through, but, so that it should be easily understood, a fine large model was made of the carriage in which the murder had been committed, and this proved very helpful in showing just what had occurred. The model, which is now, I fancy, in the company's museum, was for some time at the Lambeth Mortuary, where there was also a model of the carriage in which Miss Camp was found murdered.

It was about a fortnight before Mrs. King was able to leave the hospital and give evidence; then an experience was related such as few women have had to undergo.

Mrs. King got into the train at Southampton, on her way to Battersea to see a relative. She was the only occupant of the compartment until Eastleigh was reached; then Parker got in, and the two were alone as far as Winchester. At that station Mr. Pearson entered the compartment, and seated himself opposite to Mrs. King, facing the engine, on the right-hand side of the carriage.

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As soon as he had settled down, Mr. Pearson began to read a newspaper, and having read for some time, he put the paper down on the seat and went to sleep—a sleep from which he never woke.

The train travelled on, and matters went as usual until Surbiton was reached; then Parker entered the lavatory, and there is no doubt that while there he made his preparations for the terrible crime which he soon afterwards committed. He re-entered the compartment where the other two passengers were, entirely unsuspecting, for there does not seem to have been anything in the conduct of Parker to create alarm.

Surbiton Station was left behind, and the train was speeding towards Vauxhall—a short run. Mrs. King was looking out of the window, with her back to Parker, having previously moved her seat to face the engine. While looking out of the window she heard a bang, which she likened to a pop-gun. Then there was another report, and she felt blood running down her face. Startled and terrified, she turned to Parker and cried: “My God! What have you done? What did you do it for?” At that time she had not looked at Mr. Pearson, and did not know that he also had been shot.

“I did it for money,” answered Parker. “I want some money. Have you got any?”

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Mrs. King replied that she had a little, and she produced her purse and took out a shilling, which she gave to Parker. Then, for the first time, she looked at Mr. Pearson, and saw that he was still in his seat, as if sleeping, but that blood was running down his face from the eye, and that he never moved.

Parker now lost no time in completing his task. He straightway began to rifle the dead man's pockets, and, having done that, he seated himself and counted out some gold. Offering a sovereign to Mrs. King, he said: "Is that any use to you?"

Stretching out her hands, which were covered with blood, Mrs. King told the man that she did not want the money. Then it was that she implored him to spare her life for the sake of her family.

"Don't touch me!" Parker exclaimed, when he saw the reddened hands; then he told her that he was sorry for what he had done. But he saw how terribly desperate his situation was and how speedily he must act if he meant to have the slightest chance of saving himself by escape.

"What shall I do with the —— thing?" he exclaimed, meaning the revolver with which he had shot his fellow-passengers. "I've a good mind to put it in his hand; then they'll think he

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shot himself!" Some rapid talk then followed between the murderer and the passenger who was in such dreadful peril still, and no one can wonder that she suggested that he should throw the revolver out of the window.

Parker quickly acted on this suggestion. He hurled the revolver out of the window. But even at a time like that Mrs. King was calm and brave enough to notice approximately the spot where it fell, and it was found at Nine Elms, near a shed which has now been removed.

This having been done, Mrs. King suggested that the dead man's face should be covered, and Parker put a handkerchief or newspaper over it.

Every second was now precious, as the train was slowing down for the stop at Vauxhall. Parker made careful preparations for a bolt—he got the door of the compartment partly open and stood on the footboard, and as soon as No. 2 platform was reached he sprang off the footboard and ran down towards the barrier with a doubled-up ticket in his hand. He reckoned on getting clear of the station before an alarm could be raised, and no doubt he calculated, reasonably enough, that Mrs. King would be too much terrified and exhausted to be able to give warning; but she managed by the most tremendous effort to pull herself together and to act as I have

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described, with the result that Parker was chased at once and run down. No wonder he declared that he was sorry he had not killed her as well as Mr. Pearson, as then he would have had a far better chance of escaping.

When the case came on for trial at the Central Criminal Court there was not a shadow of doubt as to what the result would be, the only question being whether the prisoner was responsible or not for his actions. A plea of temporary insanity was put in on his behalf ; but this did not influence the jury, who, after a short consultation, found Parker guilty, and Mr. Justice Phillimore, who was the judge, sentenced him to death, remarking that he seemed to have wasted his life, and warning him not to entertain the slightest hope that the sentence would not be carried out. Even then Parker was just as cool and careless as he had been from the very start, and left the dock quite cheerfully and buoyantly. I do not think that this was mere bravado ; I believe that he was a young man of great natural courage, and took his inevitable fate bravely. It was certainly to his credit that soon after the murder he wrote to the widow and did his best to comfort her by expressing his sorrow for his act.

It was shown at the trial that Parker was one of a family of eight, that at an early age he had

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been sent to a reformatory, that he had been dismissed the Royal Marine Artillery as a bad character, and that he had stolen considerable sums of money and squandered them in fast living. Parker himself declared that he bought the revolver with the intention of shooting himself and a young woman, the wife of a soldier, with whom he was associated. She was living at Portsmouth, and on the day before the murder the two went to Southampton, where they spent the night. At Southampton, while she was in a public-house bar, Parker bought the revolver. Then they travelled to Eastleigh. At that place they separated, Parker saying that he was going to Birmingham. He entered the train from Southampton, and, when Winchester had been left, one of the things that may have prompted him to commit the crime was that he had not money enough to pay the excess fare which would have been demanded on his ticket. As a matter of fact, he had helped himself to Mr. Pearson's ticket, and it was this, doubled up, which he had thrust into the hand of the collector at the barrier as he dashed down the staircase at Vauxhall Station.

The revolver, which was found and proved to be the one that Parker used, was very small. It was six-chambered, and four of the chambers

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were still loaded. Two of the cartridges had been fired, one of them killing Mr. Pearson by entering his brain through the eye, and the other entering Mrs. King's face. In addition to being charged with the murder, Parker was charged with the attempted murder of Mrs. King, but, of course, it was not necessary to proceed with that part of the case.

I was greatly interested all through the trial in the demeanour of the prisoner. When he was sentenced to death he simply shrugged his left shoulder and looked round defiantly, and he actually smiled at the warders who escorted him away. I watched him at the time of the inquest, and also at the trial, and never saw a sign of fear in him. I think that from the moment he was caught at the gasworks and handcuffed he took everything as a matter of course. He was quite alone throughout the whole trial; no one seemed to trouble about him, and he certainly did not appear to bother his head about anybody. The young woman whose name was associated with his in the awful tragedy had, of course, to give evidence; and very miserable she seemed to be, hiding in corners and crying, lonely and neglected, and I never saw Parker look her way or take the slightest notice of her.

An interesting feature of the affair was that

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the trial took place at the same time as the trial of the young man Bennett for the Yarmouth Beach murder, the Lord Chief Justice presiding over that case in another court.

I am a Hampshire man, and afterwards discovered that my father, who lived only about eight miles from Mr. Pearson, had known him quite well; but I myself had never met the murdered man.

Railway murders are so very rare that when one is committed it arouses intense interest; and this was so with the death of Mr. Pearson. There was the usual commotion, too, in some quarters, about the danger of railway travelling, nervous people forgetting that almost unnumbered millions of passengers are carried without mishap. The crime took place fifteen years ago, and even during that period a great deal has been done to add to the safety of the public—for example, corridor coaches are now used for anything like a long journey. As for the murder itself, it could easily have happened anywhere, the only strange thing being that Parker stopped where he did, and did not kill Mrs. King as well as Mr. Pearson.

CHAPTER XIX

THE TOTTENHAM OUTRAGE

[WE have to go back to the most lurid episodes of life in the Wild West to find a parallel to the Anarchist outrage at Tottenham on Saturday, January 23rd, 1909. Two Russian desperadoes, armed with revolvers, attacked and robbed a clerk and chauffeur who had received a bag of money at a bank for wages; they fled, pursued by police and public, seeking safety in Epping Forest. For two hours, over a distance of six miles, a running fight was maintained between the robbers and the crowd. In the end the two scoundrels died from bullet wounds, but not before they had killed a boy and a policeman and wounded more than a score of persons. Very great resource and courage were shown by the police in the pursuit, and subsequently, in recognition of their conduct, Détective-Sergeant Charles Dixon and Police-Sergeants W. Cater and Charles Eagles were decorated by the King with the King's Police Medal, which is the reward of conspicuous bravery. This story of the amazing outrage is

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told by Sergeant Dixon, who, on retiring from the Metropolitan Police Force after twenty-nine years' service, had a high tribute to his skill and courage paid by the magistrate at the Tottenham Police Court.]

Just on the other side of Chestnut Road, at Tottenham, opposite the police station, is Schnurmann's Rubber Factory, where, in 1909, a number of aliens were employed at a very low wage. Amongst them was a Russian named Paul Hefeld, who was about twenty-six years old, and who soon learned that it was the habit of the firm to send one of their clerks to the bank in a motor-car every Saturday morning at about eleven o'clock to fetch money to pay the weekly wages. There was another Russian, called Jacob Meyer, who worked in Tottenham. Both had lived in the town for some time and knew their way about quite well. At the time of the outrage both men were out of employment.

On this particular Saturday morning I had seen both Jacob and Hefeld. They were standing just outside the police station; in fact, I passed them, little suspecting what they were about to do. Jacob actually nodded to me as I passed. There was nothing unusual in the presence of these men, and often a number of aliens were to be

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seen loitering about the rubber works, where some of them had been employed.

I was well known to a great number of these foreigners by being brought into contact with them through wounding each other. These fights mostly happened on a Saturday night, after the men had received their wages and they had had a lot of drink.

What happened just at the beginning I did not see; but it was this. The car had been to the bank, where a clerk named Keyworth had got eighty pounds for wages. He had stepped out of the car, and was about to enter the works when the two robbers snatched the money-bag and tried to make off with it. Instantly the chauffeur, Wilson, sprang at one of them, on which the other peppered him with shots from his revolver. One bullet pierced his cap, and others made holes in his coat; but, luckily, the chauffeur escaped injury. Keyworth, too, had gallantly thrown himself on his assailant, who did his best to kill him with his revolver, and failed, though he fired several shots.

After a short, furious struggle, in which all the advantage was with the robbers, who had taken the other two completely by surprise, Jacob and Hefeld bolted, and then the chase began.

A big burly chap named George Smith, who

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was passing, seized Hefeld, and they both fell to the ground. Instantly Jacob fired at Smith, and a bullet went through his cap, cutting his head and causing blood to flow. Hefeld managed to wriggle clear and get on his feet, and off he went with Jacob.

The thieves still had the bag of money, and they bolted with it down Chestnut Road, pursued by the chauffeur and the clerk, as well as others. Wilson was still driving, and in the car was also Mr. Powell, the works manager at the rubber factory.

The police heard the alarm at once, and instantly P.C. Tyler and P.C. Newman rushed out and jumped into the car. Tyler was not fully dressed, and was without his helmet, and Newman, who was on reserve duty, was also without a helmet. They did not lose a second in driving after the runaways, who had already settled down to a defence which must have been well thought out and carefully planned, for Hefeld deliberately stopped to fire on his pursuers, using his left arm as a rest and firing with his right hand after taking aim, Jacob doing the loading for him.

This deliberation enabled the robbers to do immense mischief even at the start, and very soon the car was made useless through bullets striking it.

The firing and commotion made people turn

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out of their houses in swarms and caused a growing crowd to join in the chase. As soon as the car was out of action Tyler and Newman jumped out, and dashed on foot after the runaways, who were making for Tottenham Marshes. After leaving Chestnut Road, Jacob and Hefeld had turned into Stonely Road, and dashed on to the corner of Mitchley Road, where a little chap named Ralph Jocelyn, about ten years old, was playing.

This child, out of sheer curiosity, stopped his play and looked at the two villains who were tearing madly towards him, only a few yards away. The next thing that happened was that the poor innocent little chap was fired on and shot dead in the street where he had been playing.

By this time the runaways had gone fairly amok, and were firing at anything and anybody, and doing a lot of harm. They tore on till they reached Downs Lane, which is near the marshes, the pursuers including Tyler, Newman, and the chauffeur.

Tyler was a splendid officer, plucky and resourceful, and just now he found his previous experience in the army very useful; but, unfortunately, he was at a hopeless disadvantage. Dashing round the buildings, he succeeded so far that he was only about sixty yards away from the two men, and he shouted :

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“ Give it up—the game’s over ! ”

Hefeld did not hesitate a second. He stopped for a moment, rested his revolver on his arm and fired, and poor Tyler, mortally wounded in the head, fell to the ground. Newman, who was standing at Tyler’s side, got a second shot for himself, and had a most narrow escape, for the bullet grazed his cheek and took a small piece off his ear. The effect of these two shots will show how close the constables were to their men and the coolness and deliberation of the murderers’ aim, for the pair of villains had now become murderers.

By this time a large number of private individuals had taken up the chase, as well as the police, amongst the latter being Inspector Gold and Sergeant Hale. The telephone and telegraph had been at work, and from all the surrounding stations officers had been sent on cycle and on foot to cut off the retreat of the runaways and capture them if possible.

Having killed Tyler and shot down other pursuers, the murderers managed to cross Tottenham Marshes and reach a footpath that goes to Higham’s Hill, where they came across a number of men who were pulling down some disused rifle butts. Without a moment’s hesitation the fugitives fired on these men, who promptly

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dropped their tools and ran away to seek cover. The two men then crossed a footbridge over the River Lea.

This was the stage at which I came on the scene.

After I had seen the two men standing near the police station, I rode away on my bicycle, and I was in the High Road, talking to my colleague, Sergeant Backhurst, when I received a communication from Sub-Divisional Inspector Large, who had sent out P.C. Squires—he is now dead—on a bicycle to inform every policeman within reach to hurry to the marshes to cut off the retreat of two men who were firing at everyone they could get.

We both obtained some refreshment to buck us up, and then rode as hard as we could towards the marshes, and the first sign I saw of the affair was the men running away from the rifle butts.

Some revolvers and ammunition had been served out from the police armoury, and several of us were lucky enough to be armed. When I joined in the chase, however, I had no firearm, and so I was at a great disadvantage, and I felt this particularly when, in trying to cut off their escape, I saw the two men approaching me.

I am not a very nervous person, but when the murderers actually began firing at me I beat a hasty retreat, and was lucky enough to be able to

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hide myself to some extent behind a haystack; then, as they were making for me, I had to rush for the Chingford Road. I had to get across a field, and as the murderers were following me, and their firing was in full swing, it was as exciting a dash across the open as any man could wish to have.

At this time the murderers had fairly settled into their work, and were getting over the ground partly at a trot and partly at a sharp walk, with a big mixed crowd after them. They were utterly desperate, and they had a great deal of staying power too. Nothing could have been more deliberate than their plan of campaign, for Hefeld did most of the firing, and Jacob did the loading for him. Hefeld kept halting and using his left arm as a rest for the revolver, which he deliberately fired after taking aim. It was this coolness which enabled them to do so much execution, for they killed two persons and in all wounded more than twenty, some seriously.

The excitement was now intense, and it grew as the chase went on. In crossing the field the two men came to some caravans, a little gipsy encampment. One of the gipsies, a man named Bird, hearing the commotion, looked out to see what was happening. By that time the pair were just upon him.

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“ You have some too ! ” shouted Hefeld ; and as he spoke he fired several shots at Bird, who had a marvellous escape, and promptly hid himself in his van.

The ruffians hurried on, and eventually got into the Chingford Road. They must have seen that they were being headed off, and that in time they would be run to earth ; but they were making a desperate bid for liberty, and they stuck at nothing.

It happened that an electric tramcar was passing, carrying only a few passengers. Instantly the pair fired at the driver and ordered him to stop, which he did. Then he made a dash for the top, which he reached, and lay down. The run-aways, who had sent several bullets through the windows of the car, boarded it. Hefeld seized the conductor, dragged him through the car to the front, held the revolver at his head, and ordered him to drive away as hard as he could go, Jacob meanwhile standing on the rear platform and firing at the pursuers.

By this time the crowd had grown very much, and it had been very unexpectedly strengthened, for some sportsmen, who were shooting at the New River Reservoirs, near Lock Bridge, saw the run-aways, and they joined in the chase, as also did other gentlemen in motor-cars ; while P.C.

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Hawkins, who had got a gun at the "Crooked Billet" public-house, and had commandeered a horse and cart, was in hot chase too. But Hawkins had ill-luck, for his horse was shot, and so he had to take up the chase on foot. Inspector Gold and Sergeant Hale and others were following.

Holding the muzzle of the revolver to the conductor's head, Hefeld forced him to get the car along; and this the conductor managed to do, though he was not used to driving. The car went at a great pace until it came to a passing-loop, where it was forced to stop to let another car pass. While the car was tearing along a woman and a child who were inside were screaming, and an old man, who was also a passenger, made a gallant attempt to grapple with Jacob. He sprang at the ruffian, who, however, was too quick for him, and shot him in the neck, and so put him out of action.

At this moment, when it really seemed as if the murderers had no chance of escaping further, especially as a police station would soon be passed, Hefeld saw a greengrocer's cart at the side of the road, and he shouted to Jacob to jump down and rush for the cart. This the two men did. Springing into the cart, one of the men took the reins and lashed the horse into a gallop, the other man standing at the back of the cart and firing at the

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crowd of pursuers, who were on foot, on bicycles, in motors, and other conveyances. They got into Forest Road, making for Epping Forest. Several shots were fired at them as they bolted, but no harm was done.

At this point the two men were only about two hundred yards from the forest, and they would probably have evaded their pursuers, but, as luck would have it, a constable was standing in Forest Road on point duty, and this caused them to turn up Fulbourne Road, which runs parallel with the Great Eastern Railway.

It should be borne in mind that the party of sportsmen were totally ignorant of the fact that a boy and a policeman had been killed, and did not deliberately fire at the heads and faces of the run-aways. If they had done this, the pellets from their fowling-pieces would doubtless have damaged the murderers just enough to enable them to be captured, for it was found afterwards that, though their clothing had been peppered by the pellets, their flesh had not been injured.

So far the murderers had done amazingly well, but the luck was turning against them, and the first ugly fact they discovered was that the chain-brake was on the cart, so that one of the wheels was running dead, and this meant that the horse, in spite of the savage lashing, was soon spent and

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unable to get along quickly, especially as the road just there was steep.

When they saw that the cart was of no further use, the men stopped the horse and sprang out, and made a dash for the fields near Higham's Park and Hale End Station on the Great Eastern Railway.

By this time I had become possessed of a revolver, one of a pair which P.C. Cater had been dispatched with from Tottenham Police Station, with a number of rounds of ammunition, and I was so close to the men that I could easily have shot at least one of them, but, unfortunately, my revolver was not loaded.

The men, who were now exhausted, were making towards the railway bridge which crosses Ching Brook. The bank at that place was enclosed with barbed wire, and there is a big fence, so that there were serious obstacles to overcome; besides, the pursuers were now very close on the heels of the fugitives, who must have seen that the game was pretty nearly up.

Hefeld made a desperate attempt to climb the fence, but the sportsmen with the fowling-pieces had him under fire from their motor-car, and he failed and fell to the ground, which was the bank of the brook. Jacob had been luckier, for he had scaled the fence and was still on the run.

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Hefeld saw at once that his murderous game was up. He had only one cartridge left, and this he turned on himself, holding the muzzle of the pistol to his head and firing. His obvious intention to kill himself on the spot did not succeed, for the bullet went round the skull, though it inflicted a dangerous wound.

Sergeant McKay, who had kept up the pursuit on his bicycle, rushed up to Hefeld and made him a prisoner, steps being taken instantly to have him conveyed to a doctor. This was done, and it seemed as if the man would live, but he did not survive a second operation which became necessary at the Prince of Wales's Hospital, Tottenham.

While Hefeld was lying mortally wounded, Jacob was trying desperately to reach the shelter of the forest, where he might well have hoped to hide for a long time, if not escape altogether. The care and cunning with which the two men had mapped out the whole of their performance was shown by the fact that in all their running away, from the moment of the robbery, they had kept to the valleys, and had not taken to the hilly roads and tracks, and they had gone over rough and enclosed ground, which made it hard for motors and cycles to follow. For this reason I, on my cycle, in keeping up the pursuit of Jacob, lost

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some hundreds of yards of ground before I was well up with him again, for I was forced to keep to the roads, while he was able to take a short cut across country.

Jacob was making towards an unfinished building where some men were at work, and one of these, a plasterer, pretty well understanding what was happening, shouted "Stop him! Stop him!" In his excitement, and hoping to bring the runaway down, he aimed two bricks at him, but they did not hurt him. On the other hand, Jacob was luckier, for he turned round and fired two shots at the plasterer, both of which took effect. I do not know how he got on.

Jacob was now fairly at the end of his tether. He must have known that his companion was probably dead or captured, and that his own hope of escape was of the slightest; but no doubt he had absolutely made up his mind not to be taken alive and to sell his life as dearly as possible.

There was in the line of his retreat a little old-fashioned detached cottage, a quaint-looking building on the roadside, with a bit of garden in front, fenced in by wooden palisadings. Before he could get to the road and the cottage, Jacob had to crawl through a fence along a ditch, but he managed to do this, pretty well ahead of his

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nearest pursuers, including myself, and he ran round to the back door of the cottage and burst into the place.

The occupant of the house appears to have been out at the time, talking to a neighbour, having left her two little boys in the cottage.

Jacob was undoubtedly very much exhausted by his long run and the excitement of the chase, and, having locked the kitchen door behind him, he seized a mug or tin and took a long draught of water from the tap.

The little boys, terrified at the sight of this wild, dusty, blood-stained ruffian, started screaming, whereupon he turned on them savagely and threatened to kill them if they made a noise. They were soon able to get out by the front door, for the cottage was quickly surrounded by people who had come up, including armed policemen and the sportsmen with the fowling-pieces.

At last the second murderer was trapped; but the thing to do now was to get at him. By this time Sergeant Bunn and Sergeant Hart had arrived from Edmonton.

Acting very warily, Cater and myself managed to enter the cottage through a lower window, and the first thing we learned was that Jacob had bolted upstairs, for he had shown his face at the front bedroom window, and instantly several volleys

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were fired, one result being that all the glass was knocked out of the frames.

Previously to this a very courageous attempt had been made to enter the cottage by P.C. Eagles, who was in plain clothes, but I did not at the time know that he was a member of the force. He had heard the alarm, and rushed up and got a ladder, by means of which he had tried to enter the house through the back bedroom window. Failing in this, he got in through the back door, which Cater and myself had managed to open.

As soon as we had got inside the cottage we saw a number of sooty handmarks on the furniture and walls. These led us to think that the murderer had tried to get up the chimney, so I directed Cater to fire up the chimney with his revolver. This he did, but nothing seemed to be struck except soot and bricks.

Finding that Jacob was not in the lower part of the house, I opened the door which led to the little old-fashioned staircase. From this staircase a small landing, such as you often see in old cottages, led to the front bedroom. I got to this landing and opened the bedroom door—not too quickly and not too widely—and the first thing I knew was that Jacob was standing on the stairs with his pistol pointed at me. He instantly fired,

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but I had sprung back before he could get at me. I swiftly closed the door again, and called on him to surrender.

“If you surrender,” I shouted through the doorway, “throw down the revolver. We won’t hurt you.”

Jacob muttered something which I did not understand—he did not speak good English; but I saw that he did not mean to surrender, so I suggested to Sergeant Bunn and others that, as there was a mongrel dog tied up near the back door, it should be released and taken inside and told to go upstairs, to see if it could drive Jacob out of the bedroom, or, at least, take his attention off us and give us a better chance of getting him. I pointed out that its life was not of such value as our own, and that it would be better for the dog to draw the murderer’s fire than for us to take the further risk at present. So it was agreed that the dog should have a chance, and accordingly it was untied—I believe by Sergeant Bunn—and it went into the cottage. It was not an easy matter to deal with the animal, which appeared to be very ferocious.

The dog sprang up the staircase, and promptly did what we had not been quite able to do; it frightened Jacob so much that he bolted away from the door, after shutting it.

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At this stage someone entered the cottage with a double-barrelled fowling-piece, and, taking this weapon, I fired one of the barrels at the closed door with it; but the pellets had little or no effect, and only slightly damaged the wood. I pulled the other trigger, but that barrel would not go off, so the fowling-piece was a failure.

In the meantime Cater and I had got our revolvers loaded, and we set to work. The door was very thin deal, so that our bullets went through with ease, making holes which enabled us to see into the room. It was a dangerous thing to peep through the holes, but we did so, and saw that Jacob was tearing about the room in a terribly excited state, and was literally at bay.

Eagles, who did not seem to value his life as much as I valued mine, pushed up and said :

“ Let me have a pop at him ! ”

I said : “ No ; I want the revolver to defend myself with.” But he begged again, and after a lot of persuasion I allowed him to take it.

Then Eagles, without the slightest hesitation, hurled himself against the door, burst it open, thrust his arm round until it was well inside the room, and fired two shots. What the result of them was I cannot say, for it was never ascertained whether one or both struck Jacob or whether he killed himself at last with his own revolver.

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When Eagles could see into the room he saw that Jacob was leaping about and laughing wildly. He shouted to us: "Come on, now!" Whereupon the man sprang on to a child's bed which was in the room, and instantly tried to pull the clothes over his head. He still had the revolver in one hand.

As soon as the cry, "Come on, now!" went up, Eagles rushed into the room and up to the bed, and I went after him.

Like a flash Eagles snatched the pistol from Jacob's hand, and I seized him by the throat and dragged him on to the floor and down the staircase, pulling him backward. The blood was oozing from his forehead, and it was clear that he was dangerously wounded by one or more bullets.

I dragged him down the stairs into the yard, where he was left lying on his back. A crowd came round him instantly. Jacob was between life and death, and there was a horrible grin on his face. He never stopped grinning, and that awful look was on his face when he died, which was soon, with the crowd round him and his eyes staring.

The crowd was terribly wrought up, and so intense was the feeling against the man that if it had not been for the police I believe they would have poured paraffin on him and burnt him where he lay. He was a dreadful sight, covered with

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blood and smothered with soot, showing that, as we had suspected, he had tried to escape by climbing up the chimney. The inside of the cottage, especially the bedroom where we had got Jacob, presented a sight that was horrible to see. The pictures were all broken, the wall-paper torn and spattered with blood, and every particle of furniture damaged. The bed was the worst sight of all.

I had done my share, and I stood by and looked on at what was happening. Sergeant Bunn searched the body, and found five pounds' worth of silver upon him in one of the bags which had contained the eighty pounds the clerk had got at the bank, and which these robbers had snatched from him. The rest of the money was never found, but it was thought that they had thrown it into the River Lea and other places.

A most thorough search was made for days and days, the cottage was almost pulled to pieces, because it was thought that Jacob might have hidden the money up the chimney; but, as I say, the balance was never found. It is my impression that the two men had an accomplice, who during the chase received the bulk of the cash, leaving five pounds with Jacob to carry them on for the time being. Eighty pounds, in silver and copper, was too heavy and bulky to run off with for a long distance.

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These two men must have had at least two hundred rounds of ammunition with them before starting their desperate game. Most of the firing was done by Hefeld.

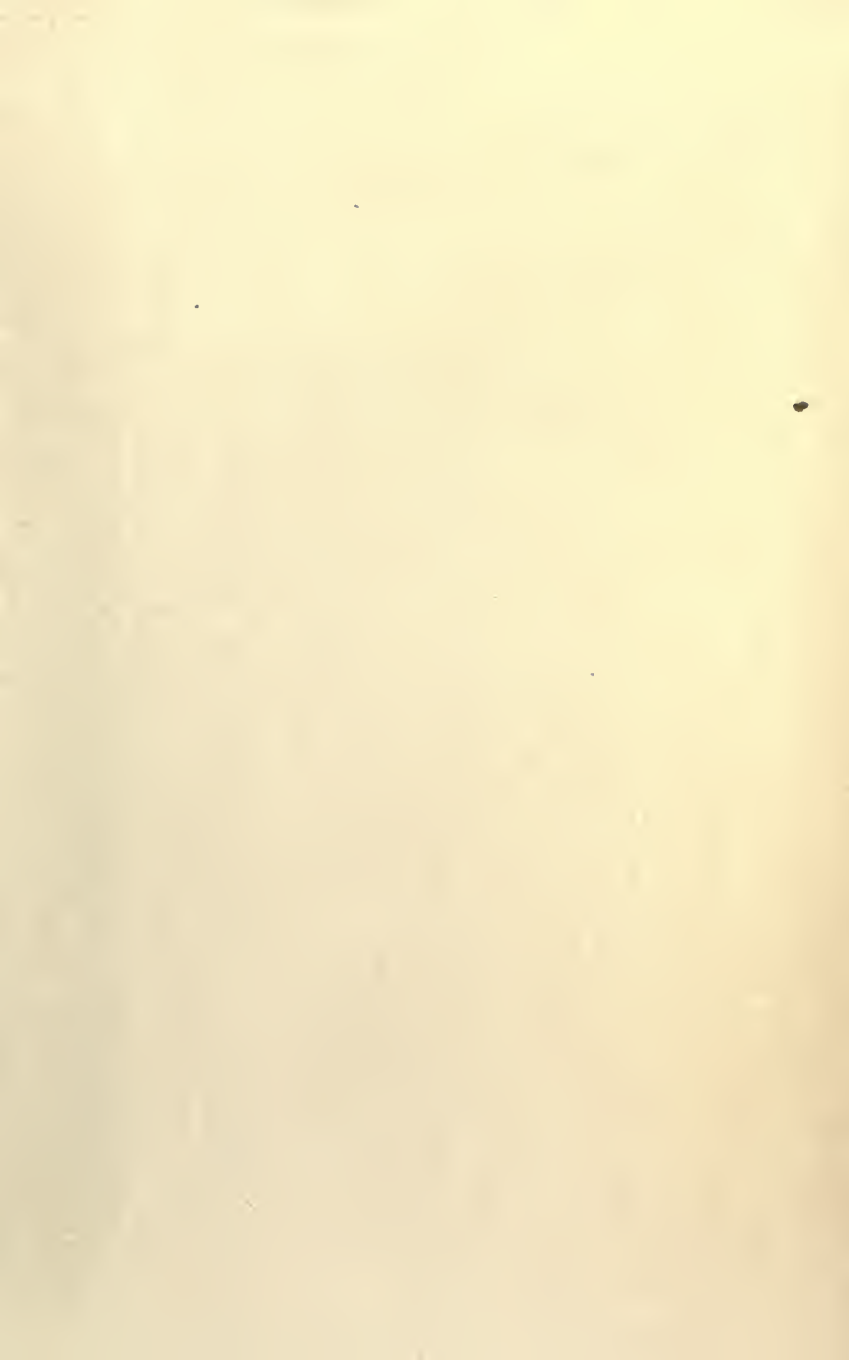
Undoubtedly the capture of the pair was greatly due to the smartness and resourcefulness of Sub-Divisional Inspector Large, who was in charge of the Tottenham Division. He had been in the army, and took prompt measures to round up the police from all the surrounding districts to spoil the runaways' plan and prevent them from reaching Epping Forest. So it happened that as the murderers ran away they were intercepted in every direction by police who had received the emergency call, and it was in this way that Eagles came on. Inspector Large was a mounted officer, and he was present at the cottage within a few seconds of Jacob being pulled out of the bedroom.

Poor Tyler's loss was a great grief to us, for he was a fine, smart young fellow, and we were very sorry because of the death of the little boy and the wounding of Newman and so many other people.

It was, of course, a matter of very great pride to me when I received from His Majesty, at Marlborough House, the King's Police Medal—I had been previously presented with the Carnegie Medal. I well remember that when I and my

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comrades were honoured by the King the medal was also bestowed on a fine young detective, named Alfred Young, for his courage in arresting two armed burglars who tried to shoot him. Not long ago he was shot dead while doing his duty in arresting an ex-army officer, who was tried for murder, but was found guilty of manslaughter, and sentenced to twelve years' penal servitude.



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