

The Trail of the Dead:

THE STRANGE EXPERIENCE
OF DR. ROBERT HARLAND

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CHAPTER XXII.

In my narrative, now drawing to its conclusion, I have endeavored to avoid emotion or exaggeration. Yet as I glance over its pages, I cannot proclaim myself as satisfied. On such an evening as this, with the summer woodlands beneath the cottage basking in the tender glory of the sun's farewell, with the silence of the day that is ending holding the quiet fields—on such an evening, I say, my story, even to myself, appears impossible, a nightmare born in the land of evil dreams. Yet I have but to turn my eyes to where my dearest wife sits at her work, to know that it is true; for it was in that time of danger that Providence gave me the most generous of the gifts that can be bestowed upon man.

Two days after Marnac escaped from our pursuit at Southampton, a little council was gathered in the parlor of Dr. Weston's cottage at Cornish Polleven. In his great arm-chair by the fire sat the old scholar, with the lamplight exposing the delicate fragility of a face whereon consumption had set its warning. In odd contrast was my cousin, Sir Henry Graden, who confronted him. Great-statured, stern, keen-eyed, he was of that type that can fearlessly execute, as well as intelligently conceive, a plan. Mary Weston was on a cushion at her father's knee, his hand in hers; and it was more often to that noble girl that my glance wandered than to my cousin, though, indeed it was he who now set before us the position of affairs.

It was right, he said, that Dr. Weston should know, even as his daughter knew, the danger that hung over us. And so, from its commencement, he told that terrible story; how Marnac, the celebrated Heidelberg professor, had been seized with a partial mania born of heredity, nurtured by overwork, brought suddenly to the light of the violent attacks delivered against a book on which he had spent half his life; how he had planned to destroy his more bitter adversaries, and how, by his insane cunning, he had brought about the deaths of Von Stockmar and Mechersky; how, in his desperate flight from our pursuit, he had killed the son of Reski, the Polish innkeeper; how he had come to England to end his vengeance upon Dr. Weston; and how he had been led to believe that Mary was the writer of the attack which had incensed him. All this he explained; and while he spoke, the shadow of the terror seemed to creep over our very souls, so that we drew together like sheep that hear the cry of wolves in the snow-clad hills.

It was Dr. Weston who first broke the silence that followed Graden's conclusion.

"You have referred to a certain book or diary belonging to this Marnac," said he, for indeed my cousin had mentioned that discovery at Heidelberg. "And I gather that from it you first learned the names of the scientific enemies against whom an attack might be directed. Did this madman include in his butcher's list any persons besides Von Stockmar, Mechersky, and myself?"

"There were several other names," replied my cousin; "but I do not think their criticisms were sufficiently severe to place them in serious danger. I have, however communicated with them all. On the least suspicion they will inform the police and also telegraph to me at my London house. My servant there is kept informed of my address from day to day."

"And the police?"

"In international matters they move slowly. It has been a chase across Europe, remember. Months have often elapsed before very ordinary criminals have been arrested. But this man is a remarkable linguist; he has some five hundred pounds yet in his possession, and he has the cunning common to the partially insane. The English police have full information, but by this time he may be in France or Belgium."

"What, then, do you propose, Sir Henry?"

"For the moment we have no definite objective. It would be useless for us to start for the continent without further information. Until it reaches us, we shall stay in this country."

"I quite understand. I trust that for the ten days that we still have at Polleven, you will consider yourselves my guests—though I fear that the size of my cottage forbids me asking you to leave your quarters at the inn."

"Are you, then, returning to Cambridge, Dr. Weston? I thought you had settled here for the winter?" asked my cousin.

"It was so intended, but my doctors have ordered me to the Engadine. They say—it is my only chance, Sir Henry."

Mary Weston's eyes rose to her father's face in one brief, pitiful glance, and then her head dropped forward. Poor girl! she knew that he had spoken truly.

"The Engadine?"

Graden rose in his ponderous fashion and stood with his back to the fire. I could see that the intelligence concerned him—concerned him, indeed, too nearly for immediate comment. It was some moments before he spoke again.

"Forgive me, Dr. Weston," he said, "but is this a sudden resolution?"

"We decided yesterday."

"Is it common property? Do the villagers know?"

"Really, Sir Henry, I have no idea. I should not think they know."

"I will be quite plain with you, Dr.

Weston, for that is always the best. Until this madman is secured, you and your daughter go in some danger. You should be safe enough in Switzerland, if you keep your address a secret. But even then we must arrange that you have a traveling companion that can be trusted."

"I shall be very glad to go," I interjected.

"No, Robert, that will never do," he said. "To divide our forces would be the worst generalship. Our duty is plain. We must be prepared to strike at the enemy wherever he may be found. Otherwise, there will be weeks of anxiety for us all, and heaven knows what devilish work going forward! Whom can we send? That we must first decide."

"There is Mossel," I suggested, recalling the aid that stubborn German policeman had already rendered us.

"He would come gladly enough. But I do not think the Heidelberg authorities would sanction his departure on so vague a journey. No! I am afraid Mossel is out of the question."

"What of Reski? I saw him find the body of his son; he would travel to the world's end if it brought a chance to meet the murderer."

"The very man. I thank you, Cousin Robert."

And so it was settled. We were to send a telegram to the Polish innkeeper next morning. If he agreed to our request, money could be forwarded in time for him to meet us in London, where he would take up his duty as escort to Dr. Weston and his daughter.

"Remember, please, that your destination is a secret," said Graden, as we made our adieus. "There must be no leaving of indiscreet addresses, Dr. Weston; no explanatory letters to old friends, Miss Mary."

"My father and I—we understand," she said, looking him gravely in the eyes. And so we passed out into the starlight.

They were pleasant days that followed—days that seemed to me the happiest in my life. Was it the contrast with the events of that terrible pursuit which gave them their perfection? So I argued at the time. Yet each hour I knew more clearly that it was Mary's bright eyes that warmed the winter sunshine, and Mary's presence that gave the beauty to that wild, inhospitable coast. Of mornings we walked together on the cliffs; and as night drew in, blotting out the grey wastes of the Channel seas, we joined Graden and her father in the little parlor, listening to the talk of those two great-hearted, simple men. On the second day Reski's answer came, accepting the trust we offered. Then for a week there was no news from the outside world to trouble us, and no incident at Polleven to remind us of our danger save one, which, insignificant though it seemed, I do right to set it before you.

As I have mentioned, a narrow dell or "goyle," as the West-country folk would have it, ran between the cottage and the sea. It was a ruinous place in the winter-time, sprinkled with trees knotted and bent under years of conflict with the winds, and floored with dead bracken and patches of gorse. In the summer it was, doubtless, pleasing enough; but in that December weather it seemed shrivelled and forlorn. Indeed, it was not a spot we greatly favored.

CHAPTER XXIII.

It was about four o'clock on a Saturday afternoon, the fifth day of our visit, that Miss Weston and I entered it from the seaward side. We had taken a sharp walk to the Bredairs Strand, where the famous caves are situated, and were returning to tea. We came upon them at an angle of the thicket—a man and a woman seated on a fallen log in eager conversation. Miss Weston held up a warning hand to me, with amusement twinkling in her eyes.

"Oh, Mr. Harland!" she whispered, "and at her age, too!"

"Why, who was it?" I asked, for their backs were turned towards us.

"Don't you see? It is Martha, our housekeeper. She is five and forty if she is a day. Fancy Martha with a young man of her own! I wonder who it can be?"

Whereupon she fairly gave way to her merriment in a low ripple of laughter. It was loud enough to reach the ears of the pair before us, for they started to their feet, the woman facing round boldly with flaming cheeks, while the man, after one swift glance, dropped back a step and stood shamefacedly, with downcast eyes. Miss Weston nodded to Martha and we passed on up the track.

"Oh! I am very, very sorry!" she cried to me when we were out of earshot. "I am certain that wretched man is only after her savings. What a silly old dear she is!"

"He seemed about the average in bashful rustics," I answered her. "He is one of the worst men in the village—a drunken loafer, who never leaves the inn bar until he is almost starving. I wonder at Martha, for, besides his reputation, she knows—"

"What?" I asked, for she had stopped with a little shiver.

"They say in the village that Penruman—that is his name—acted as a sort of servant to Professor Marnac while he was at Polleven. At least I know that Penruman brought us messages from him twice, and once he came with a book that had been lent to father."

"Was Penruman courting Martha then?"

"I don't know, Mr. Harland; but this is the first time I've seen them together. Please don't say anything more about it. I will have a talk to Martha privately, and see if I can put some sense into her silly head."

As I was walking back to the inn before dinner I caught sight of Penruman coming out of the village postoffice. He slouched away up a side street at sight of me. You may think me dull, but I had no suspicion of the truth.

If I had only known.

We all traveled to London together, taking rooms for the night at the Charing Cross Hotel; for though Graden had chambers in the Albany, he preferred that we should not be separated. It was here that Reski joined us. Sorrow had burnt its mark upon the Polish innkeeper. His thin, handsome features were yet more drawn; and though his courtly manner was unchanged, an alien ferocity lurked in his dark, reflective eyes. It would not go well with the murderer of his only son if he should meet him face to face. So I thought as he stood before us, his hat raised, bowing us a welcome.

At nine-forty on the following morning, we were gathered in a little group on the departure platform. Graden, who had talked with Reski far into the night, repeated his orders. To preserve the secret of Dr. Weston's residence was of first importance. He would register himself and his daughter in the name of Jackson. All letters, whether from or to the travelers, were to be forwarded under cover to Graden's chambers, where a servant in whom he had absolute trust would despatch them to their respective addresses. On the slightest suspicion of danger, a telegram would bring our assistance from whatever spot our quest had drawn us. Neither Dr. Weston nor his daughter were to leave their hotel at Prontresina, even for a walk, without the escort of the Pole.

"I do not wish to alarm you with absurd rules, Miss Mary," concluded my cousin; "but 'it is well to be cautious.' Besides, it should be only for a few days. I have found means of awakening the continental police to interest in his capture, and we may hear of his arrest at any moment. Ah! there goes the whistle. Good-bye, Dr. Weston. Good-bye, my dear girl. God keep you!"

He was old enough to be her father; yet I did not consider his age was sufficient excuse for the kiss that he touched on her forehead.

We saw her handkerchief fluttering from the carriage window as the train drew out of the station. I watched it fade into the muddy grey of the morning; and as it disappeared, the love I had hidden from myself rushed over me, so that I stood with staring eyes, perhaps as foolish and woe-begone a figure as humanity has ever smiled to witness. And for this I shall always thank my cousin, Harry Graden, that he slipped his arm in mine, leading me down the platform as if he had noticed nothing out of the ordinary in my manner.

(To be continued.)

LINCOLN'S FAIRNESS.

It Was One of His Strongest Traits, Governing Every Action of Life.

General Taylor was triumphantly elected, and it then became Lincoln's duty, as Whig member of Congress from Illinois, to recommend certain persons to fill government offices in that State. He did this after he returned to Springfield, for his term in Congress ended on March 4, 1849, the day that General Taylor became President. The letters that he sent to Washington when forwarding the papers and applications of people who wished appointment were both characteristic and amusing; for in his desire not to mislead or to do injustice to any man, they were very apt to say more in favor of the men he did not wish to see appointed than in recommendation of his own particular candidates.

This absolute and impartial fairness to friend and foe alike was one of his strongest traits, governing every action of his life. If it had not been for this, he might possibly have enjoyed another term in Congress, for there had been talk of re-electing him. In spite of his confession to Speed that "being elected to Congress, though I am very grateful to our friends for having done it, has not pleased me as much as I expected," this must have been flattering. But there were many able young men in Springfield who coveted the honor, and they had entered into an agreement among themselves that each would be content with a single term. Lincoln of course remained faithful to his promise. His strict keeping of promises caused him also to lose an appointment from President Taylor as Commissioner of the General Land Office, which might easily have been his, but for which he had agreed to recommend some other Illinois man. A few weeks later the President offered to make him Governor of the new Territory of Oregon. This attracted him much more than the other office, but he declined because his wife was unwilling to live in a place so far away.

His career in Congress proved of great advantage to him in after life, having given him a close knowledge of the workings of the Federal Government, and brought him into contact with political leaders from all parts of the Union.—St. Nicholas.

Sufficient Reason.

Blox—What is your reason for thinking Hawker isn't a gentleman?

Knox—His persistency in declaring that he is.



"You look uncommonly cheerful," remarked the junior partner to the senior, as the latter threw back the cover of his desk and prepared to attack the mail.

"Do I?" asked the senior, smiling. "I didn't know it."

"You look as if somebody had left you money," pursued the junior. "You want to take care how you come into the office beaming like that or the office boy will be asking you for a raise."

The senior composed his features to an expression of gravity for a moment, but the smile came out again, broadened and broke into a laugh. "That's not so bad either, considering," he said. "But I give you my word I never thought of it before."

"Of the boy?"

"Of—ha, ha! Say, do you know things have been going wrong with me this morning? I don't know when I ever got up feeling uglier. See my chin?"

"Cut yourself, didn't you?"

"Yes, I cut myself, but that wasn't the only thing. I got up late to begin with and that nearly always makes me mad when I want to get up early for any reason. I figured on finishing raking up the leaves on the lawn and burning them in the back lot before breakfast. I worked like a nigger last evening on the job and I had quite a pile raked up. Well, when I looked out of the window I saw that the wind had come up and scattered them all over where I'd raked. That was enough to make a man mad, wasn't it?"

"Certainly," said the junior sympathetically.

"Then, when I took up my trousers the change fell out of my pockets and one coin rolled under the bed. I struck a match to see where it was and the flame caught the fringe of the counterpane and it got scorched pretty badly. It was a counterpane that my wife thought a great deal of, too. I burned my hand a little beating it out—not enough to hurt a great deal, but

enough to make me feel like saying things best left unsaid. I just caught a glimpse of the coin and I took it for a \$5 gold piece. I had a couple of them in my pocket and I'd only picked up one, so I crawled under the bed after it. I'm a pretty tight fit for the space, by the way."

"You're not as slim as you used to be," said the junior. "Go on; my heart aches for you."

"I got a lock of hair tangled in the wire springs. You needn't laugh. I haven't much hair, but I had enough for that. I promptly extracted part of it and part of it I left there. Then I got my penny and backed out, knocking my head against the side rail as I did so. As I rose to my feet I saw the \$5 gold piece nestling cozily against the foot of the bureau. So it's no wonder I cut myself when I shaved or that I was not exactly pleasant to my wife at the breakfast table when I blistered my throat with the coffee and she told me I usually made such a fuss if it wasn't hot."

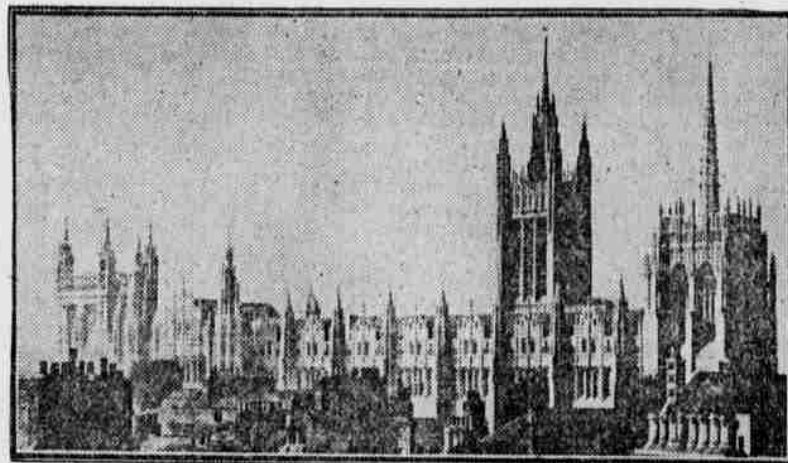
"I don't blame you," said the junior. "But that hardly explains your pleasant humor now."

"Well," said the senior partner, "I started for the train full of gall and bitterness, and with four minutes to make it. Wisner was ahead of me. You know Wisner, don't you? That puffy, dignified chump we met in the drug store last time you were down. Well, here came the train in and I was still 200 yards from the station and Wisner was a hundred yards ahead of me, when he stubbed his toe and went rolling and sprawling right into the middle of the worst puddle of mud you ever saw, his hat under him."

"I didn't stop. I made a spurt and I just got on as the train pulled out. I looked back then and saw Wisner scramble up, covered with mud. He grabbed his hat, made a short run and then, seeing it was no good, stopped and shook his fist at the train. If you could have seen him!

"I'd been having hard luck myself, but—well, I've been feeling happy ever since."—Chicago Daily News.

NEW MARISCHAL COLLEGE AT ABERDEEN.



The new Marischal College at Aberdeen, Scotland, which has just been completed, is shown in the illustration. It was dedicated recently by King Edward during the quarter-centenary celebrations of the University of Aberdeen, of which Marischal College and King's College now form a part. The new Marischal College is said to be one of the most beautiful college buildings in the world. Practically the whole side of one street was razed to make room for it, and among the houses demolished was the once handsome mansion in which Lord Byron and his mother spent some years of poverty while the poet was attending the Aberdeen grammar school. Marischal College was founded in 1593 by George Keith, fifth Earl Marischal of Scotland, who was born in 1553, and who died in Dunnotar Castle in 1623. Dr. George Campbell, the celebrated author of "The Philosophy of Rhetoric," was at one time at the head of Marischal College. As a memento of Byron's residence on the site of the school, it is suggested that a statue of the poet, preferably in granite, be erected at the new college.

First Auto in Bogota.

A. G. Snyder, consul-general at Bogota, reports as follows, says the New York Times:

"Last week the first automobile made its appearance upon the streets of Bogota and the excitement was unparalleled. Crowds have blocked the highways for squares, rendering traffic almost impossible, and great interest has been aroused as to the possibilities that this mode of transportation may offer in the future."

"This automobile is an American machine, and some business may result from the present enthusiasm. I shall be pleased to receive catalogues from automobile manufacturers of the United States for filing in the reading room here."

"It is rumored that a concession is shortly to be given to a transportation company for the exclusive use of the Camboia road, which leads from the upper Magdalena River to Bogota. Automobiles are to be used exclusively by this company."

Practical Girlhood.

"Whatever else may be laid at the door of the school girl of to-day, she can't be said to be impractical," said a Virginia matron who has been visiting

friends in the city. "My friend has a 17-year-old daughter who has been spending a vacation with her parents. For sophistication she is ahead of anyone I know. I felt myself a child in worldly wisdom beside her."

"She is as pretty as a picture, and when she sat on the front steps in the evening admiring glances were cast in her direction every time a man passed the house."

"One young fellow was evidently hard hit. It got so he would walk half the evening and almost fall off the curbstone in his efforts to look at the girl. Finally I asked her if she had noticed him and if she knew his name."

"Know his name? Well, I should say," she replied. "I've found out his name and where he lives and where he borrows his money."—Washington Post.

Confirmation.

Blotbs—Poor old BJones! The doctor says he won't live six months. Slobbs—I've been telling him that for the last two years.—Philadelphia Record.

It is safer to do business with a crippled mule than an unloaded gun.