The Roupell Mystery

By Austyn Granville

CHAPTER VI.—(Continued.)

The doctor and Emily Weldon continued to slowly promenade up and down the terrace. United by that secret bond of sympathy which ofttimes brings two natures together unconsciously, they experienced an indefinable comfort in each other's society.

A solitary figure, that of some worthy burgher of Paris, attracted, doubtless, to Villeneuve by the sensational reports in the newspapers, was the only living object that was in view. Looking at him the doctor observed:

"There is no gauging the depth of human curiosity."

"That is so. There have been several here since—" and she glanced up to the darkened chamber above, with a shudder. "They walk in and out as if they owned the place. He looks like a retired tradesman of some kind. He is pretty cool for a trespasser. See, he has seated himself on the turf, and is throwing bread to the swans."

"Don't disturb him," said the doctor. "See with what care he spreads that red handkerchief over his knees. He has taken out some sandwiches, and is evidently enjoying them."

Miss Weldon again smiled. It was really quite ludicrous to watch the old gentleman from Paris. He appeared to be totally oblivious of the presence of the people on the terrace. Having eaten his sandwich, he presently arose and threw the crumbs adhering to his handkerchief to the expectant swans. The doctor laughed outright; so loudly, indeed, as to apparently attract the attention of the old gentleman who, glancing but once in their direction with an indignant air, walked away and disappeared among the trees.

A half hour more elapsed and still M. Cassagne did not some. Hardly able to conceal his irritation at the delay, Dr. Mason at length retired to the library, where he busied himself in some scientific calculations in which he had been abruptly interrupted by the startling news of the murder of Mme. Roupell. For an hour he remained oblivious to all else save sines, cosines, tangents, secants and cosecants. An abtruse trigonometrical problem was before him, and to its solution he was devoting himself heart and soul, when suddenly he became aware of an obstruction of the light from the window. Looking up, to his intense annoyance he perceived the inquisitive burgher from Paris, his nose flattened against the glass, staring vacuously into the apartment.

Anger was expressed in every feature of the physician's countenance as he threw the French window wide open; but the worthy burgher did not seem to be at all disconcerted. On the contrary, availing himself of the opportunity, before the doctor could stop him, he stepped over the low sill and entered the library.

"Sir, this unwarrantable intrusion at such a moment—" began the physician.

"May perhaps surprise you," interrupted the burgher; "but have you given orders about the truffles?"

The doctor stared with astonishment and stepped back two or three paces.

"You are," he gasped, "you cannot be Monsieur——"

"I am," replied the burgher, an indescribable twinkle in his eye, as he noted the doctor's amazement. "I am the person you are about to mention—Alfred Cassagne, the detective," and with a profound bow, he handed Dr. Mason his card.

CHAPTER VII.

Alfred Cassagne was the son of a large contractor, who had accumulated a considerable fortune in the construction of those remarkable docks in the city of Havre, which have helped to make that place the most important harbor of France. He lost his father when a mere child. His mother, dying when he was but twenty-two years of age, had left him amply provided for. But he had never married. Of quite a studious turn of mind, he had devoted himself to books, and might possibly have degenerated into a book worm, or have sunk so low as to become an author, if an event had not transpired which changed the whole current of his existence.

He awoke one morning to find that the cashier of a bank where he usually had a large balance, had absconded with the funds of that institution. Where he had gone, was equally a mystery to the police and the officers of the concern. Having considerable interest in the capture of the fugitive, Cassagne set about making inquiries on his own account. From these inquiries he quietly deduced his own theories, and one morning, to the intense astonishment of the chief of police, he entered the presence of that functionary and stated his opinion on the case very briefly. It was to the effect that the president of the bank and the cashier were in collusion, and that the cashier, whom most people believed to be by that time safely in America, that Mecca for European rogues, would be found hiding in the president's own private residence.

The chief of police had laughed at first; but Alfred Cassagne was permitted to proceed. It was known he was a gentleman of fortune; and men of means are never snubbed very badly anywhere. Very soon, moreover, the official grew serious. By a system of logical deduction from circumstances already known, Cassagne established his theory on a basis so ingenious as to excite the chief's warmest admiration. Subsequent search discovered that the state of things Cassagne had believed to exist in theory, was really true.

Alfred Cassagne might now possibly have been forty years of age, though when not disguised, owing to his smoothly shaven face, he appeared to be younger. He was rather above the middle height, and though somewhat narrow across the shoulders, the great depth of his chest made ample amends for this deficiency. His hair was cut very short to permit of his more readily wearing the various wigs by which he frequently concealed his identity. His mouth was well cut, the lips thin and somewhat pursed together, as is often the habit with men who pass much time in thinking. His nose was large and very prominent. His hands and feet small and rather delicate. His voice singularly soft and gentle; his manner that of a man entirely at ease, and of one who thoroughly understands his business.

He sat quite still in the easy chair to which Dr. Mason had motioned him on his arrival. It was not until the latter had given him the outlines of the case that he spoke at all, and then he said:

"We will begin by premising a certain state of facts. Madame Roupell has been murdered. Who did it? Public opinion says your friend Van Lith. I always mistrust public opinion. The prefect of police is not at all sure but Monsieur Chabot had a hand in it. I sometimes mistrust the prefect of police."

"You mean to imply that both may be wrong?" inquired the doctor.

"Yes, and if I am right, it leaves us confronting two alternatives."

"And they are?"

"Either that the unfortunate woman committed suicide while of unsound mind, or that the crime is the act of a third party to us at present unknown.'

"I can dispose of the first of those suppositions immediately," said the doctor. "Madame Roupell's mind was as sound as yours or mine is at the present moment."

"Let us proceed to an examination of the body. I have provided myself with a written permit to break the seals," said the detective. "Lead the way, please."

They entered the chamber of death. Nothing had been disturbed since the visit of the prefect. Alfred Cassagne took a rapid survey of the room. He advanced to the bedside, and commenced a minute inspection of the body of the murdered woman.

He carefully removed the bandages from the wound in the head; he turned the body over so that the light from the window fell full upon the face of the dead woman, revealing in the strong sunlight each line and shadow already showing in their marked change of the lineaments the inevitable approach of decay. Taking out his penknife, Cassagne carefully removed one of the clots of blood which had accumulated near the entrance of the wound, and walking to the window examined it through a small magnifying glass which he took from his pocket. Presently he said:

"Doctor, look at that blood!"

Dr. Mason took the magnifying glass and the penknife and gazed steadfastly upon the little red gout.

"Do you see anything peculiar about it?" asked Cassagne. "Do you not notice an entire absence of natural crystallization?"

The doctor's face turned pale as a sheet; his lips twitched nervously.

"This crime grows more horrible and more mysterious than ever. It is impossible to mistake your meaning. This wound was inflicted after death," he exclaimed. "The blood is certainly what we call in the profession 'dead blood.'"

"And is that not often the case where a wound is inflicted when a person is in a comatose condition?"

"It might be," replied the physician. "I have known the phenomenon of total suspension of the circulation in comatose bodies."

"And in such case, would blood flowing from a wound crystallize or not?"

"It is possible that it might crystallize somewhat, if the person wounded, while in a comatose condition, was young and healthy. In the case of an old and feeble woman, like Madame Roupell, I should consider it extremely doubtful. In the present instance, by means of the glass, one can plainly discern that no crystallization has taken place."

"In fact, that this wound was inflicted after the wound which produced either death or insensibility?" said the detective.

"Exactly so," replied the physician. "The question now is, where is that wound?"

"We will find it," said Cassagne. "Give me your help here."

"We had better look for a contusion of some sort. Insensibility could be produced by a sharp blow on the back of the head, or under the ear," remarked Dr. Mason.

"I am not of that opinion," replied Cassagne. "I have already looked there. There is no swelling of any kind on the back of the head, and as she is dressed in demi-toilette, it is easy to see that no injury has been inflicted to the upper part of the spinal cord."

"For what kind of wound shall we search? It must be a small one, indeed, to escape the examination of so good a surgeon as Monsieur Croizet."

"Unfortunately Monsieur Croizet," replied Cassagne, with a curious smile, "is a surgeon only. He is not a detective. He is good at generalizations; he fails in particulars. The wound we must look for, since you sound Monsieur Croizet's praises so highly, must be no larger than a pencil point. Have you never heard of the Venetian stiletto?"

"No, I cannot say that I have," answered Dr. Mason.

"It is an instrument made of toughened glass, no thicker than a knitting needle. When plunged into a victim, it can be broken short off in the flesh which closes around it, so that it is hard to tell how death supervenes. Many such deaths have undoubtedly been charged to apoplexy, and other causes."

"Is it possible?" ejaculated the physician.

"Not only possible but more than probable. Let us instantly begin our search for such a weapon. There will not be a drop of blood visible. Death generally ensues from internal hemorrhage, unless the stiletto reaches the heart, when, of course, the victim dies instantly. Turn her over on her face," said the detective. "She may have been wounded in the back."

This was done, and they carefully examined that portion of the body. For the first time Dr. Mason's blind faith in the skill of the man he had employed began to show signs of wavering. He little knew Cassagne's marvelous resources. The doctor had left the body and was standing over by the window, again examining the blood on the penknife through the magnifying glass. A slight exclamation from the bed caused him to glance in that direction.

He could hardly repress a cry of surprise. He held his breath almost, so anxiously did he await the result of an experiment that Cassagne had put in operation. With his eyes closed and with his head raised very much after the style of a blind man reading from a raised-letter book, the detective was moving his fingers, soft and delicate as a young girl's, over the cold, stiff body of the murdered woman. Dr. Mason knew in an instant that he was about to depend upon his sense of touch to find the tiny wound that his eyes had failed to detect.

For over a minute the two men remained in their relative positions. Then the voice of Cassagne was heard, breaking the silence, which had grown almost painful in its intensity:

"I am right. Madame Roupell was stabbed in the back."

CHAPTER VIII.

Dr. Mason, in his agitation, dropped the penknife and the magnifying glass and rushed to the bedside.

"Where is the wound?" he ejaculated.

M. Cassagne, cool, calm and collected, still held one tell-tale finger, which, like a living eye, had detected a slight inequality in the surface of the flesh, firmly pressed down upon a spot no larger than a pin's head.

"Take it easy, doctor," he said, smiling at the agitation of the physician, "and if the magnifying glass is still unbroken, I will trouble you for it. The penknife also, if you please, doctor. Now," after he had gently pushed back the flesh with the point of the knife, "look through the glass, and tell me what you see."

"I see a rough, glistening surface."

"Try it with the point of the penknife."

The doctor took the knife, and scraped upon the hard surface thus exposed to view.

"It is glass,' he exclaimed. "I haven't a doubt of it."

"It is the wound which caused death. You see it has penetrated the lumbar region. Death has been caused by two things. Shock and internal bleeding. Have you a small pair of pincers here? No? Well, then I must use my fingers."

M. Cassagne having enlarged the opening of the wound by dilitation, plunged his finger and thumb into the orifice and drew out, though not without much difficulty and after repeated failures, the broken piece of a small, sharpened glass stiletto. Its withdrawal from the wound was followed by a few drops of blood, which the doctor, who notwithstanding his professional experiences was greatly affected by the spectacle, was about to wipe reverently away, when he was stopped by the detective.

"Don't do that. That blood has a tale of its own to tell. I wish to examine it through the glass."

He took up some on the point of the knife, and the two men as before went to the window. Notwithtsanding that it had not been exposed to the outer air, the blood was strongly crystallized.

"One thing is proved, and almost conclusively," exclaimed Cassagne. "It is the wound which caused her death. See how the blood is crystallized. Now to discover the assassin. The prefect's theory is that Madame Roupell was sitting at her desk writing, when the crime was committed. In support of that, he points to the scattered papers and the overturned chair. Now notice which way the chair has fallen."

"It has fallen toward the desk," said Dr. Mason.

"Precisely; and that proves to me that it was the murderer, not Madame Roupell, who was engaged in the examination of the papers."

"Why?"

"Because, had Madame Roupell been surprised from behind and stabbed, as we now believe to be the case, she would have fallen forward, and the chair would have been thrown backward or away from the desk, not toward it. Madame Roupell surprised this unknown person, perhaps while he was rifling the contents of her desk; springing to his feet he overthrew the chair, drew his stiletto, and advanced toward her. She doubtless turned to flee, too frightened to scream, and he then stabbed her in the back."

"I see; and having no other weapon than the stiletto, and that having been broken off short in the body, he fired at her to make sure of his work."

(To be continued.)

Wife with a Conscience.

Billikin—What's the matter, Willikin?

Willikin—Matter enough. You know, some time ago I assigned all my property to my wife, to—to keep it out of the hands of—of people I owe, you know.

Billikin—Yes.

Willikin—Well, she's taken the money and gone off—says she won't live with me because I swindled my creditors.

Dull Season for the Hobo.

"June is me favorite month," said the poetical hobo, as he scribbled an ode on the back of a tomato can label.

"'Tain't mine," sighed Sandy Pikes, lugubriously. "I always have to go barefooted troo dat month."

"Barefooted? Why, how is that, pal?"

"Why, you see people throw all deir old shoes at de June brides."

He Made It.

"Love," said the fair maid, "is the greatest thing in the world."

"Don't you believe it," rejoined the young man in the parlor scene. "I am greater than love."

"How do you figure that out?" querled the fair party of the prelude.

"A manufacturer," explained the y. m., "is greater than the thing he manufactures—and I make love. See?"

A Fellow-Feeling.

"You were very lenient with that conductor," said the first passenger.

"O!" replied the other, "we're all liable to make mistakes."

"Ah! perhaps you were a conductor yourself once."

"No, sir; I'm a weather forecaster."—Catholic Standard and Times.

Horses and Mules.

There has been a rapid increase the last few years in the number and value of the horses and mules in the United States.

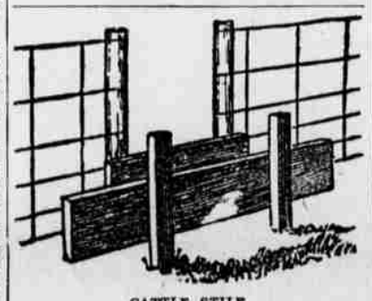
In 1900 there were 15,624,000 horses and mules in the United States. During the next five years there was an increases of 27.7 per cent, so that on January 1, 1905, the number of horses and mules had increased to 19,946,000, but the increase did not stop at that rate. On the first of January, 1907, there were no less than 23,564,000 horses and mules, showing an increase of 18 per cent during the two years subsequent to 1905.

Those who are inclined to talk overproduction at the present are confronted with the indisputable fact that during the seven years when the increase in numbers amounted to 50 per cent there was also an increase in price per head amounting to over 50 per cent. Thus on January 1, 1900, our horses and mules were valued at $715,688,000, while on January 1, 1905, they were valued at $2,274,642,000.

This is a phenomenal record and yet, notwithstanding this extraordinary increase in number and value, horses are in greater demand to-day than they have ever been before in the history of the United States.

Keeping Hogs in Bounds.

Here is an easy plan of keeping hogs from going from hog pastures to cow pastures, and at the same time allowing the cattle to go from one pasture to the other at will. As shown in the sketch, the opening in the fence may be as wide as desired. Two by twelve inch plank are nailed to the fence posts about four or six inches from the ground, and two extra posts are set out from the fence about a foot. The plank is nailed to the inside of these posts, and this plank should be about four feet longer than the one fastened to the fence so as to go by the opening at each end about two feet. The hogs



CATTLE STILE.

cannot jump the two planks, and small jump over, as they are lengthwise of hogs that go between them cannot the opening. The cattle will readily step over. The same plan may be used for sheep, only three planks may be necessary to retain them, although the writer uses only two for them also.—Farmre.

Mulching Helps.

A very intelligent and observing farmer says: The importance of a mulch to counteract a drought was presented to me in a rather forcible manner last spring. We had planted a few rows of early beans and after they had come up we had a cold spell, and in order to save the beans from the frost, they were covered with planks. After the danger from frost had passed, at one end of the rows the planks were laid between the rows and left for about two weeks, which was a dry season. At the other end the planks were moved clear away. The part where the planks were between the rows made double the growth of the others. The growth was evidently due to the moisture saved by the planks.

Loss of Manure.

An authority claims that fully one-third of the manure voided on the farms of the United States is lost. The fermentation of manure is caused by the action of two forms of organisms. One form is that which requires an abundance of oxygen and dies when exposed to it. The former thrives on the outside of the heap and the latter in the interior. The latter's office seems to break up the more complex particles and prepare them for the action of the former. If the action of the former is too rapid a great deal of the nitrrogen passes off into the air in the form of ammonia or free nitrogen, and is lost to the soil from whence it came.

The Up-to-Date Cow.

The improved cow, says the American Farmer, is the cow that continually improves in her milking qualities. She is not the only improved cow, for the producer of good beef stock and of the improved steer is an improved cow. It is not only necessary to have the improved dam, but the sire should also be improved, if the improvement is made that is necessary. Keep up the improvement lest there be a retrogression.

Merinos in Vermont.

The merino sheep industry in Vermont is again entering an era of prosperity that presages a boom. While by no means approaching the palmy days of thirty years ago, the industry is reviving and each year for a decade past has shown an increase in shipments of fancy strains of merino-breeding sheep to Africa and Australia.

Nail Wounds in Horses' Feet.

It has long been known that nail pricks and other similar injuries in the horse's hoof may lead to an infection followed by the formation of pus under the horn of the hoof, and a serious general disease of the horse, or at least the loss of the hoof.

In a bulletin of the South Dakota Station, Mr. Moore recently reported results obtained in a number of cases from applying a strict antiseptic treatment to injuries of this sort. The method consists in paring away the horn of the hoof from the affected part until the blood oozes out. The foot is then thoroughly washed in a solution of bichloride of mercury, in the proportion of one part to 500 parts of water, after which absordent cotton, saturated in a solution of the same strength, is applied to the wound, and the whole hoof is packed in cotton, surrounded by a bandage and well coated with tar. This prevents any further filth from coming in contact with the wound.

The operation must usually be done by a qualified veterinarian. Subsequent treatment, however, can be applied by the average farmer, since all that is necessary is to pour a little of the solution of bichloride of mercury upon the cotton which projects from the upper part of the bandage. The cotton will absorb enough of the solution to keep the wound moistened and hasten the healing process. If a remedy of this sort is not adopted in the case of a foot wound in the horse, the owner runs considerable risk of serious infection either of blood posioning or lockjaw.

Corn Land for the Bean Crop.

Beans may be planted late and mature before a probably frost. For several years beans have borne a good price, and if the wheat crop proves to be as short as threatened at this writing the consumption of them is likely to be larger than usual. The planting, harvesting and thrashing of beans may be done by machinery now, which removes a former serious objection to their culture; and if the crop area on a farm has been made smaller than desired, by reason of the cold spring, a field of beans might be advantageously used in extending the season's crops. Good corn land is excellent for beans, and their cultivation does not differ materially from that of corn, hence it does not require any special instructin or skill to grow them successfully.

No Nurse Crop for Alfalfa.

Some people still think alfalfa should be sown with a nurse crop. Those who have had experience with it know better. A recent publication of the Arizona Experiment Station sums up the facts as follows:

Nurse crops hinder the development of tops and roots of alfalfa, especially when by reason of a thick stand or rank growth shading effects are excessive. After the removal of the nurse crop the weakened and undeveloped alfalfa plants are poorly fitted to withstand drought and the stand may be lost. In the average instance the loss in yield of alfalfa due to a nurse crop probably more than offsets return from the nurse crop itself.

Transportation Charges.

The freight and transportation charges on a full car of strawberries from southern points are often from $200 to $300, while on a car of southern peaches the cost of refrigeration and the high priced packages that have to be used run the cost up above $500 on each car that comes into the State; $400 of this would be profit or increased income to the local grower.

The local grower can often sell direct to consumer; there are no heavy or refrigerator charges to pay, and these two items alone often eat up over one-half to two-thirds of the gross sales of fruit brought from a distance, while the local grower saves it.—J. H. Hale, Connecticut, in American Cultivator.

Fruit Picking Basket.

This basket is made from an ordinary Deleware fruit basket. A strap goes over the shoulder of the picker and leaves both hands free for gather-

BASKET FOR FRUIT PICKING.

ing the fruit. It is bad practice to shake any kind of fruit from the tree. It should always be picked by hand and carefully placed in the package in which it is sent to market. By this method injury to the extent of 10 to 25 per cent may be avoided.

Wintering Bees.

D. H. Stovall says a neighbor who makes a good living from his apiary successfully winters his bees through the cold months in a cellar provided for the purpose. He states that bees may be successfully wintered in cellars provided the cellar is given over entirely to the bees and used for no other purpose. There is always an unhealthy odor, that is as disastrous to bees as anything else, emitted from decayed fruits, vegetables and such things as are usually stored in cellars. The bee cellar should not be entered nor disturbed any more than is absolutely necessary; it should be made a quiet, unmolested home for the little honey makers.

1290—Jews expelled from England.

1492—Columbus landed on the island of Cuba....Island of Guadeloupe discovered by Columbus.

1500—Columbus arrived a prisoner at Cadiz, Spain.

1589—Paris attacked by Henry IV.

1605—The Gunpowder plot discovered.

1674—New York city evacuated by the Dutch.

1681—Algiers bombarded by the French.

1685—La Salle and his followers left the Lavaca river on the Gulf coast in search of the Mississippi.

1687—Gov. Andros of New York arrived at Hartford and demanded the surrender of Connecticut's liberal charter.

1688—Landing of William III. at Torbay.

1701—City of Philadelphia chartered by William Penn.

1715—Treaty signed by which the Low Countries were ceded to Emperor Charles VI.

1736—Earthquake destroyed Lima and the port of Calleo.

1755—Nearly 60,000 persons perished in earthquake at Lisbon.

1765—Stamp act came into force.... Governors of all the Colonies except Rhode Island took oath to execute the Stamp act.

1772—First town meeting held in Boston.

1775—St. John, N. B., captured by American force under Gen. Montgomery.

1775—Washington defeated by Gen. Howe at battle of White Plains, N. Y.

1783—Washington issued his farewell address to the army.

1785—Last session of the old Continental Congress opened in New York.

1789—Lettres de Cachet abolished by the French National assembly.

1790—Gen. St. Clair routed by the Indians on the Wabash river.

1803—Frigate Philadelphia ran on a reef and officers and crew made prisoners by the Moors.

1806—Revolutionary outbreak in San Domingo.

1810—France removed its restrictions against American trade.

1814—American force started on expedition to take Montreal.

1825—First boat reached New York City from Buffalo by way of the Erie canal....Opening of the Erie canal celebrated at Albany.

1841—Sir Alexander Burnes and twenty-three others murdered at Cabul.

1844—The Royal Exchange, London, opened by Queen Victoria.

1852—Franklin Pierce elected President of the United States.

1854—Russians attacked the British at Inkerman.

1855—Dr. Livingstone discovered the great cataract, which he named Victoria Falls.

1861—Gen. George B. McClellan appointed commander-in-chief of the United States army.

1862—Gen. Grant began his advance on Vicksburg.

1864—Nevada admitted to the Union as the thirty-sixth State.

1867—John Morrissey, pugilist, elected to Congress from New York.

1873—Second trial of "Boss" Tweed began in New York.

1875—Richard P. Bland of Missouri introduced free silver bill in the House.

1876—Many thousands of people killed by a cyclone in Bengal.

1880—United States and China concluded an emigration treaty.

1881—Denver became the permanent capital of Colorado.

1885—Canadian Pacific railway opened between Montreal and Winnipeg.

1889—North and South Dakota admitted to the Union.

1892—Monument to the Chicago anarchists who were executed for the Haymarket outrage dedicated in Waldheim cemetery, Chicago.

1893—Bill repealing the Sherman silver purchasing act passed by Congress and signed by President Cleveland.

Too Expensive.

"Kadley isn't calling on Miss Van any more."

"No, her family moved recently; they're living in Lonesomehurst now, you know."

"But that isn't very far out."

"It's 28 cents the round trip and she wouldn't pay his car fare."—Philadelphia Press.

Evened Matters Up.

Assistant—This quarter that girl gave you is bad.

The Fortune Teller—She's got nothing on me at that. The fortune I told her was bad, too.

Or a Six-Ring Circus.

Billy—Yes, mamma says the old chap Argus had a hundred eyes.

Bobby—A hundred eyes? Whew! But couldn't he enjoy a baseball game.