

# The Mystery of The Yellow Room

By GASTON LEROUX

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## CHAPTER IV.

"In the Bosom of Wild Nature."

**T**HE Chateau du Glandier is one of the oldest chateaux in the Ile de France, where so many building remains of the feudal period are still standing. Built originally in the heart of the forest in the reign of Philip le Bel, it now could be seen a few hundred yards from the road leading from the village of Sainte-Genevieve to Monthery. A mass of inharmorous structures, it is dominated by a donjon.

It was in this place, seemingly belonging entirely to the past, that Professor Stangerson and his daughter installed themselves to lay the foundations for the science of the future.

When M. Stangerson bought the estate, fifteen years before the tragedy with which we are engaged occurred, the Chateau du Glandier had for a long time been unoccupied. Another old chateau in the neighborhood, built in the fourteenth century by Jean de Belmont, was also abandoned, so that that part of the country was very little inhabited. Some small houses on the side of the road leading to Corbell, an inn, called the Auberge du Donjon, which offered passing hospitality to wagoners—these were about all to represent civilization in this out of the way part of the country, but a few leagues from the capital.

But this deserted condition of the place had been the determining reason for the choice made by M. Stangerson and his daughter. M. Stangerson was already celebrated. He had returned from America, where his works had made a great stir. The book which he had published at Philadelphia, on the "Dissociation of Matter by Electric Action," had aroused opposition throughout the whole scientific world. M. Stangerson was a Frenchman, but of American origin. Important matters relating to a legacy had kept him for several years in the United States, where he had continued the work begun by him in France, whither he had returned in possession of a large fortune.

Mlle. Stangerson was at the time when her father returned from America and bought the Glandier estate twenty years of age. She was exceedingly pretty, having at once the Parisian grace of her mother, who had died in giving her birth, and all the splendor, all the riches of the young American blood of her parental grandfather, William Stangerson. A citizen of Philadelphia, William Stangerson had been obliged to become naturalized in obedience to family exigencies at the time of his marriage with a French lady.

Twenty years of age, a charming blond, with blue eyes, milk white complexion and radiant with divine health, Mathilde Stangerson was one of the most beautiful marriageable girls in either the old or the new world. It was her father's duty, in spite of the inevitable pain which a separation from her would cause him, to think of her marriage, and he was fully prepared for it. Nevertheless he buried himself and his child at the Glandier at the moment when his friends were expecting him to bring her out into society.

Questioned by her friends, the young girl replied calmly, "Where could we work better than in this solitude?" For Mlle. Stangerson had already been to collaborate with her father in his work. It could not be at the time he imagined that her passion for science would lead her so far as to refuse all the suitors who presented themselves to her for over fifteen years. The young girl's extreme reserve did not at first discourage suitors, but at the end of a few years they tired of their quest.

One alone persisted with tender tenacity and deserved the name of "eternal fiancé," a name he accepted with melancholy resignation; that was M. Robert Darzac, Mlle. Stangerson was now no longer young, and it seemed that, having found no reason for marrying at five and thirty, she would never find one.

Suddenly some weeks before the events with which we are occupied a report—to which nobody attached any importance, so incredible did it sound—was spread about Paris that Mlle. Stangerson had at last consented to "crown" the inextinguishable flame of M. Robert Darzac! It needed that M. Robert Darzac himself should not deny this matrimonial rumor to give it an appearance of truth, so unlikely did it seem to be well founded. One day, however, M. Stangerson, as he was leaving the Academy of Science, announced that the marriage of his daughter and M. Robert Darzac would be celebrated in the privacy of the Chateau du Glandier as soon as he and his daughter had put the finishing touches to their report summing up their labors on the "Dissociation of Matter." The new household would install itself in the Glandier, and the son-in-law would lend his assistance in the work to which the father and daughter had dedicated their lives.

The scientific world had barely had time to recover from the effect of this

news when it learned of the attempted assassination of mademoiselle.

## CHAPTER V.

In Which Joseph Rouletabille Makes a Remark to M. Robert Darzac Which Produces Its Little Effect.

**R**OULETABILLE and I had been waiting for several minutes by the side of a long wall bounding the vast property of M. Stangerson and had already come within sight of the entrance gate when our attention was drawn to an individual who, half bent to the ground, seemed to be so completely absorbed in what he was doing as not to have seen us coming toward him. At one time he stooped so low as almost to touch the ground. At another he drew himself up and attentively examined the wall. Then he looked into the palm of one of his hands and walked away with rapid strides. Finally he set off running, still looking into the palm of his hand. Rouletabille had brought me to a standstill by a gesture.

"Hush! Frederic Larsen is at work! Don't let us disturb him!"

Rouletabille had a great admiration for the celebrated detective. I had never before seen him, but I knew him well by reputation. At that time, before Rouletabille had given proof of his unique talent, Larsen was reputed as the most skillful unraveler of the most mysterious and complicated crimes. His reputation was worldwide, and the police of London and even of America often called him to their aid when their own national inspectors and detectives found themselves at the end of their wits and resources.

No one was astonished, then, that the head of the Paris police had at the outset of the mystery of the yellow room telegraphed his precious subordinate in London, where he had been sent on a big case of stolen securities, to return with all haste. Frederic had made all speed, doubtless knowing by experience that if he was interrupted in what he was doing it was because his services were urgently needed in another direction, so, as Rouletabille said, he was that morning already "at work." We soon found out in what it consisted.

What he was continually looking at in the palm of his right hand was nothing but his watch, the minute hand of which he appeared to be noting intently. Then he turned back, still running, stopping only when he reached the park gate, where he again consulted his watch and then put it away in his pocket, shrugging his shoulders with a gesture of discouragement. He pushed open the park gate, reclosed and locked it, raised his head and through the bars perceived us. Rouletabille rushed after him, and I followed. Frederic Larsen waited for us.

"M. Fred," said Rouletabille, raising his hat and showing the profound respect based on admiration, which the young reporter felt for the celebrated detective, "can you tell me whether M. Robert Darzac is at the chateau at this moment? Here is one of his friends of the Paris bar, who desires to speak with him."

"I really don't know, M. Rouletabille," replied Fred, shaking hands with my friend, whom he had several times met in the course of his difficult investigations. "I have not seen him." "The concierges will be able to inform us, no doubt," said Rouletabille, pointing to the lodge, the door and windows of which were close shut.

"The concierges will not be able to give you any information, M. Rouletabille."

"Why not?"

"Because they were arrested half an hour ago."

"Arrested!" cried Rouletabille. "Then they are the murderers!"

Frederic Larsen shrugged his shoulders.

"When you can't arrest the real murderer," he said, with an air of supreme irony, "you can always indulge in the luxury of discovering accomplices."

"Did you have them arrested, M. Fred?"

"Not I! I haven't had them arrested. In the first place, I am pretty sure that they have not had anything to do with the affair and then because—"

"Because of what?" asked Rouletabille eagerly.

"Because of nothing," said Larsen, shaking his head.

"Because there were no accomplices!" said Rouletabille.

"Ah! You have an idea, then, about this matter?" said Larsen, looking at Rouletabille intently, "yet you have seen nothing, young man—you have not yet gained admission here!"

"I shall get admission."

"I doubt it. The orders are strict."

"I shall gain admission if you let me see M. Robert Darzac. Do that for me. You know we are old friends. I beg of you, M. Fred. Do you remember the article I wrote about you on the gold bar case?"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

## SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I—A mysterious attempt is made at midnight to murder Mlle. Stangerson, daughter and assistant of Prof. Stangerson, who is at work on his theory of the dissociation of matter in a pavilion near his chateau. Pistol shots and the young woman's cries for help are heard behind the locked and bolted door of her chamber, the yellow room. The cries are answered by Professor Stangerson and Daddy Jacques, an aged

servant. Aided by the concierges, Bernier and his wife, they break open the door and find Mlle. Stangerson swooning and half strangled, with a wound in her temple, but find no trace of her assailant. The only possible outlet from the yellow room is the door. The weird cry of the "bete du bon Dieu," a cat belonging to Mother Angenoux, a recluse, is heard just before Mlle. Stangerson's cries. II—Joseph Rouletabille, a reporter-detective, is introduced to the reader by M. Sainclair, the narrator of the story. Rouletabille declares the revolver was fired by Mlle. Stangerson, wounding her assailant in the hand. Sainclair is to use his friendship with M. Darzac, Mlle. Stangerson's lover, to introduce Rouletabille into the chateau. III—Rouletabille induces M. de Marquet, the examining magistrate, and M. de Malaine, his registrar, to talk about the case. The only possible point of egress from the pavilion for the murderer has been the window of the pavilion's vestibule, near which blood-stains have been found. The window, however, was found latched after the assassin's escape. A bullet hole is found in the ceiling of the yellow room.

## OUR NATIONAL CAPITAL

Interesting Events of the Week in Washington, D. C.

Washington—By a vote of 212 to 35, the house adopted resolutions reported by a special committee laying on the table the part of the President's annual message relating to the secret service and also the message of January 4 replying to the inquiries of the house on the subject. This was taken on the ground that the messages are not respectful and are, therefore, a breach of the privileges of congress.

President Roosevelt has made public details of an investigation by postoffice inspectors and secret service agents of Senator Tillman's connection with an alleged "land grab" in Oregon. The President undertakes to show:

That Mr. Tillman used his influence as a senator in an effort to force the government to compel a railroad corporation to relinquish its control of land grants from the United States in order that he and his family and his secretary, J. B. Knight, might profit through the purchase of some of the land.

That the Senator used his government franking privilege in numerous instances for the conduct of private business.

In the preparation of his speech in reply to the President's charge, Senator Tillman has failed to find a number of papers bearing upon the Oregon land case, in connection with which the present controversy arose.

The Senator does not charge that the papers have been abstracted by a government detective who may have been shadowing him, but does not say that it would be impossible for such official to gain access to his room and to his desk.

Senator Fulton has prepared and will offer an amendment to the postal savings bank bill authorizing the postmaster-general to deposit postal savings funds in other than national banks when he is satisfied with the security offered by them. Fulton says there is much demand for such an amendment, as it will permit a wider distribution of savings deposits.

Representative Hawley, of Oregon, has introduced a bill appropriating \$150,000 for operating the new dredge "Oregon," recently constructed for use in the harbors along the Oregon and Washington coast. The bill provides that the dredge shall operate at Coos Bay, Coquille, Tillamook harbor, Grays Harbor, Willapa Bay and such other points as may be designated by the secretary of war.

## Both Women Free.

Media, Pa., Jan. 10.—Mrs. M. Florence Erb, wife of Captain J. Clayton Erb, who was well known in political circles all over Pennsylvania, and her sister, Mrs. Catherine Belsel, who were charged with the sensational murder of Captain Erb on the night of October 6, 1908, walked from the Delaware county courthouse free women. After the jury had been out nearly 18 hours it brought in a verdict of not guilty in the case of each woman.

## Ackerman Opposes Plan.

Balem—Believing that the rural schools are most urgently in need of attention and strengthening at the present time, Superintendent of Public Instruction J. H. Ackerman has declined to aid in promoting legislation having for its purpose establishment of a system of inspection and uniform examinations in High Schools.

There are two movements on foot for the creation of the office of High School Inspector. One plan is that the High School Inspector shall be appointed by the State University and shall bring the High Schools of the state to such a standard of work as shall harmonize with the work of the University. The other plan is that the inspector shall be appointed by the State Board of Education and shall bring the High Schools to such a standard as the board may deem best for the students.

Never-slip horseshoes at Keltner's.

## ROOSEVELT'S HUNT AND THE NATIONAL MUSEUM



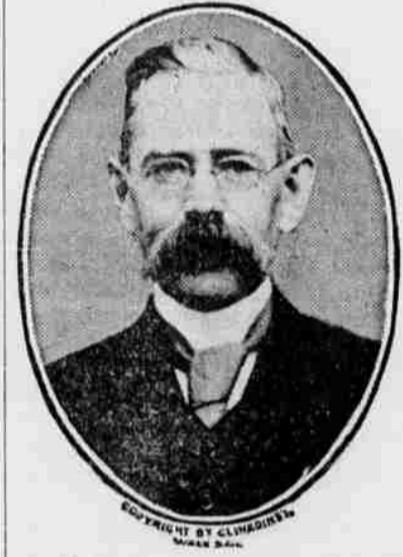
NATIONAL MUSEUM, WASHINGTON

**A**LTHOUGH the Roosevelt hunt in Africa is entirely a private affair, it takes on somewhat of an official character now that it is known that the Smithsonian Institution is to benefit from the enterprise. The Smithsonian Institution is under the direction of the United States government. It was founded under a bequest of an Englishman, James Smithson, who died in Italy in 1829. It is administered by a board at the head of which is the president of the United States, although the practical head of the institution is the secretary, who has always been a man distinguished for scientific acquirements. The first secretary was Joseph Henry, noted for his epoch making discoveries. The present secretary is Charles D. Walcott, former head of the geological survey. To most visitors to Washington that part of the Smithsonian Institution known as the National Museum proves of great interest, and its millions of specimens are viewed by thousands of persons every year. One of the important departments of the institution is a bureau of ethnology, and another is the library. The work of the institution as a whole embraces a broad field of scientific and historical effort.

Professor Walcott, who is a native of New York state, fifty-eight years of age and a graduate of Hamilton college, has made an international reputation by his achievements in geology and paleontology. Twenty years ago he made a special study of the Cam-

president will kill will be given without charge.

The youngest member of the Smithsonian representation on the trip is Edmund Heller, a graduate of Stanford university, class of 1901, a thoroughly trained naturalist, whose special work will be the preparation and preservation of specimens of large animals. Mr. Heller is about thirty years of age. His former experience, when associated with D. G. Elliot and Mr. Ackley of the Field Columbian museum in collecting big game animals



MAJOR EDGAR A. MEARNS, U. S. A., RETIRED.

in the same portions of Africa which Mr. Roosevelt will visit, will be a valuable asset to the expedition. Mr. Heller has had large experience in animal collecting in Alaska, British Columbia, the United States, Mexico, Central America and South America. In the year 1898 he made a collecting trip of eleven months to Galapagos Islands, starting from San Francisco. He is an enthusiastic collector as well as a well equipped naturalist. He is also the author of scientific papers on animals, birds, reptiles and fishes. At present he is assistant curator of the museum of vertebrate zoology of the University of California.

Another member of the delegation, J. Alden Loring, is a field naturalist whose training comprises service in the biological survey of the department of agriculture and in the Bronx zoological park, New York city, as well as on numerous collecting trips through British America, Mexico and the United States. He is about thirty-eight years old, of ardent temperament and intensely energetic. In August, September and October, 1898, he made the highest record for a traveling collector, having sent to the United States National museum 900 well prepared specimens of small mammals in the three months' journey from London, through Sweden, Germany, Switzerland and Belgium.

The other representative of the Smithsonian institution who will accompany the president is Major Edgar A. Mearns, medical corps, U. S. A., retired. Major Mearns will be the physician of the trip. He has had twenty-five years' experience as a naturalist and is well known as a naturalist and collector of natural history specimens. He is a dead shot. Major Mearns is about fifty-three years of age and is the oldest member of the party. For this reason perhaps he has the honor of having charge of the Smithsonian portion of the delegation. While each and every one of the party, including the president's son Kermit, official photographer, has special duties assigned him, all will naturally act together in many respects, and it is anticipated that the scientific results of the expedition, in view of the unusual opportunities offered, will be of much value.

## An Adventurous Explorer.

Some strange adventures have been experienced by Erwin Clark Garrett, University of Pennsylvania man, who with two native servants recently penetrated the jungles of Borneo. He was the first white man to do this.

Mr. Garrett was heavily armed, but had no occasion to use his guns, although there were times, he declared, when he had to sit up nights and be on the lookout for the treacherous Dyaks, who infest the forests of Borneo. There were times, he said, when Dutch troops went through the dense forests "armed to the teeth," but never before, he added, had a white man made the trip alone. During the Filipino insurrection Garrett served in the regular army in the Philippines and made a careful study of the habits and character of the natives.

E. C. GARRETT.

**Horrid Thing.**  
"Why do you hate Mr. Wendell so?" the sweet young mother was asked.  
"The horrid thing refused to kiss my baby because he was afraid of catching something."—Houston Post.

## The Greatest Geologist.

The royal name in geology is undoubtedly that of Charles Lyell. It was Lyell who did for geology what Copernicus did for the heavens and Darwin for the realm of biology—gave it true rendering by finding out and stating its true laws. Before Lyell's time geology was largely romance, but in "The Principles of Geology," published in 1830, the old catastrophic view of the formation of the earth and its deathknell, and from the publication of that great work we are to date the birth of real geology.—New York American.

## Hides in Its Own Feathers.

It is worthy of note that, although the prairie cock when in the lists is a strikingly conspicuous creature, he wears no adornment which cannot be concealed at a moment's notice. The sight of a passing hawk changes the grotesque, beplumed, beorauged bird into an almost invisible squatting brownish lump, so quickly can the feathers be dropped and air sack deflated. With woodland birds so great a change is unnecessary, but the prairie hen can hide only under her own feathers.—Outing Magazine.

## Wellington's Sense of Duty.

A most interesting anecdote of Wellington, illustrating the high sense of duty in all things, is told on the authority of the duke's housekeeper at Walmer castle. The huge blue book of 800 pages on the studies and discipline of the University of Oxford had been sent to him as chancellor. He was engaged on it the night before his death. He was going to bed, as it was late. He left the blue book, with his pencil in it, and said to Lord Charles Wellesley, who was with him, "I shall never get through it, Charles, but I must work on."

## What He Meant.

An old sea captain was visiting a certain exhibition and was greatly interested in the mechanical section, where a fine array of steam whistles was on show. "How far can that one be heard?" he asked, pointing to a huge "buzzer." The young man in attendance was only a deputy, but he promptly replied, "Sixteen miles." "Sixteen miles?" said the old salt incredulously. "When I say sixteen miles," elaborated the youth, "I mean eight miles this way and eight miles that way."—Dundee Advertiser.

## Public Elopements.

The Bulgarian is perhaps the most simple minded and industrious peasant in Europe, and, paradoxical as it may appear, his standard of morality is extremely high, although elopements are more numerous than in any other country. But these are generally innocent affairs, being simply the device of young couples to get married without the expense a regular Bulgarian wedding entails. In most cases not only is the consent of both parents obtained, but all friends are informed and assemble outside the bride's house to witness the elopement.

## Fairy Floral Steeds.

The airship is one of many modern inventions that were long ago anticipated by the fairy tale. For instance, if you tread on St. John's wort after sunset on St. John's eve a horse will spring out of the earth and carry you round the world among the stars all night. But you must be careful to be near earth at sunrise, for it will unhorse you then wherever you are. Another botanical fairy steed is the ragwort, now flourishing in the countryside, which is ridden by witches in England and by leprechauns, or fairy cobblers, in Ireland.—London Mail.

## Quick Coffee Cake.

Cream one-fourth cupful of butter, three-fourths cupful of sugar and one egg until very light and creamy, add one cupful of milk and two and one-half cupfuls of sifted flour in which two teaspoonfuls of baking powder have been sifted; beat smooth, then bake in two round layer cake or pie tins. When the top has begun to crust, but not brown, brush with melted butter and sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon. Bake a golden brown. Can be baked the day before. All measures must be level and one-half pint cup used.—Chicago Record-Herald.

## Women and the Old Olympic Games.

One rule of the original Olympic games could not be followed nowadays without provoking serious troubles. Women were not allowed to be present or even to be anywhere in the district when the games were being celebrated on pain of being buried from a precipitous rock. This rule is believed to have been defied only once, when the offender was pardoned in consideration of the fact that her father, brothers and son had been victors in the games. One particular priestess, however, was not only exempt from this law, but was accommodated with a special front seat on an altar of white marble, and women were allowed to enter chariots for the races, though they might not be present to see them win.

## That Date Engaged.

Some time ago a rich but ignorant woman wrote to the weather bureau in Washington saying that she was to give a lawn party on a certain day and asking the bureau to see that it was clear on that day. To make her communication more impressive she enclosed a list of the names of several prominent people she intended to invite.

"I entered into the humor of the thing," said the weather chief, "and sent her an answer to the effect that the afternoon she designated had already been bespoken by a poor washerwoman who wanted to obtain some rainwater with which to wash clothes and that on this account I could not possibly make it clear on that date."