

# The Roupell Mystery

By Austyn Granville

## CHAPTER XV.

For a period of two weeks immediately following the death of Mme. Roupell, both Harriet and Emily Weldon remained in a state of seclusion within the chateau. By the provisions of Mme. Roupell's will, in the absence of other claimants, her fortune was equally divided between her nieces.

It was a lovely June morning. The girls had received no one since the death of their aunt. Harriet, however, did not lose sight of the fact that she owed a duty to the living. It seemed selfish and wicked to pass the precious hours in mourning for one whom she could not recall, while a fate so dreadful hung over her lover's head. Emily, who readily surmised the state of her sister's feelings, was not backward in administering what comfort she could. She had written repeatedly to Dr. Paul Mason, urging him to spare neither labor nor money in his endeavors to extricate Van Lith from his terrible position.

One morning, looking out of the window, Harriet presently espied the sturdy figure of the doctor coming at a swinging gait across the park under the great trees. He had arrived in Villeneuve by the morning train, and made a short cut across the fields, instead of coming by the road through the village.

For the first time since the death of her aunt, Emily Weldon was in tolerable spirits. The cloud which had lowered so heavily over the future seemed lifting at last. According to the report of Dr. Mason, there was at least a possibility of the terrible mystery which enshrouded all their lives being cleared away—some hope that her sister's lover, whom she believed to be innocent, would be freed from the awful charge which hung over him.

As they walked along following the path which led them through the forest of Villeneuve, much of Harriet's usual gaiety and sprightliness of manner also returned. Her cheeks regained their color with the unwonted exercise; her pulse beat quickly again; the soft June breeze fanned her brow, and her dark eyes regained their luster.

Emily was similarly affected. Her spirits rose with every step they took. She even laughed when a little rabbit, startled by their approach, sat upright to look at them for a moment, and then dashed off into the underbrush. "I had to laugh," she said, apologetically, "for if ever a rabbit showed surprise, that did; why, his expression was almost human."

"It is possible he may be, according to Hans Werlow," remarked the doctor.

"And who is Hans Werlow?"

"He is a German friend of mine who has just revived a peculiar theory in regard to the soul. His idea is that the spirits of men and women who have misbehaved themselves on earth, will at death enter the bodies of animals, there to undergo a certain penance for the sins they have committed on earth. It is quite the talk of Paris, where it has become the fashion to point out an old cab horse and say 'That is Marat or Robespierre, working out his destiny.'"

Here Harriet was compelled to laugh outright.

"How I should like to meet your friend Hans Werlow! You must contrive to invite him to visit us some day."

"Perhaps I shall, when all is bright again," replied Mason, "and it shall be, if I can make it so, or rather, if Monsieur Cassagne can, for the matter is in his hands now. All I can do is to wait and hope."

"You seem to have great confidence in your friend," remarked Emily.

"Yes, I have. In times of great trouble we are apt to lean on someone. One is glad to have somebody in such a crisis who can be trusted. It is the special mission of the strong to support the weak."

"As we lean on you," said Emily, quietly, "for comfort in our hour of need."

Her arm was within his own, and her fair, white hand was temptingly near. He placed his own upon it, with a gentle, reassuring pressure. The action was eloquent of assurance that she could trust to his friendship to the last. A stranger might have done the same, yet a stranger's hand would have been cold and unfeeling. It was the momentary embarrassment, and heightened color.

"For Harriet's sake and for yours," he said gently.

Then to his surprise and delight, her fingers returned the pressure of his own. They seemed to say, "I understand you."

The sun was high in the heavens. It was very warm. They were yet some distance from Vertiers. They sat down on the mossy bank under the shade of one of the grand old trees. Taking no credit to himself, he told them what he had learned of M. Cassagne's doings; how thoroughly impressed he was with the innocence of Van Lith; how indefatigably he had worked, and what skill he had displayed in unraveling as far as he had gone the cause and motive for the crime.

"I don't see much to set around here," remarked the doctor, finally.

"No, not here, of course," said Harriet. "But there's a cottage up there by the edge of the wood, where I dare say we can get some excellent milk and perhaps some white bread. Let us go there at once. I'm perfectly ravenous."

Without giving the others time to answer, Harriet Weldon at once began to lead the way. Gathering her dainty skirts about her, she leapt lightly across a ditch which intervened between the peasant's holding and the edge of the wood, and turning around, cried gaily:

"Now, monsieur le docteur, you can start your strength and your gallantry on Emily. You'll have to carry her across. She's the worst kind at jumping a ditch in the whole of France."

"I think you'd better trust me, Miss Emily," said Mason, laughing, "I have heard that 'As you will, them,' she said, simply; and the next moment his arms were around her."

There are opportunities in our lives which come to us but once. Fortune raps upon our door, and failing to gain admission, flees, never to return. Dr. Paul Mason held in his arms the woman he

loved best on earth. Her head reclined on his shoulder. Her heart beat against his own. Her eyes looked languorously into his. It was an unadmirable liberty for a staid scientific gentleman to take. Harriet's back was turned toward them.

"I love you," he murmured.

Then he stooped and kissed her on the lips. She flushed scarlet.

"Dr. Mason—Paul!" she exclaimed.

He sprang across with her into the field. Harriet was out of sight. She had disappeared among the trees.

"Forgive me," he cried, and he took her hand before she could withhold it. "You tempted me beyond my strength. Say that you love me just a little bit."

"Why, nonsense! As if young ladies made confessions of that sort!"

She was blushing furiously. It became imperative necessary to pause a little to allow her to recover herself. They were entirely alone. For a brief minute they remained thus, looking into each other's faces.

Then they sauntered on, hand in hand across the plowed field, to where Harriet, with her mouth full of bread and cheese was impatiently awaiting them.

"What's the matter with you two?" she asked. "I thought you'd lost your way."

The train which bore Dr. Paul Mason back to Paris that night must have been conscious of the reluctance of one of its passengers, at least, to leave the neighborhood of Villeneuve, for never had a short trip seemed so long and tedious to a certain pleasant-faced, thoughtful, middle-aged gentleman, who sat and thumbed impatiently upon the window looking out upon the night.

"She has promised me," was the burden of his thoughts. "She has promised me that on the day on which Van Lith goes free, she will be my wife."

## CHAPTER XVI.

More than a week had elapsed since the departure of M. Cassagne, during which time his assistant in Paris, Charles D'Auburon, had received no word of him. One morning, however, he got a laconic message over the wire: "Rue de Provence, 2 p. m. Tuesday," by which he rightly surmised that his chief would meet him at his lodgings at the hour named. Almost on the stroke of the clock, D'Auburon heard the detective climbing the stairs leading to his apartments.

"He is pretty tired," cogitated the young Frenchman. "He comes slowly."

He was right. Alfred Cassagne had no sooner entered the room than he flung himself heavily into a chair. His face wore an expression of anxiety. His dress was disordered. He seemed dreadfully fatigued and dispirited. D'Auburon hastened to relieve him of his hat and light overcoat, and to take the hot wig from his head.

"You look worn out, old fellow," he exclaimed. "Pull off your boots and coat, and make yourself comfortable."

Thus invited, Alfred Cassagne divested himself of these articles of apparel, remarking as he pulled off his boots:

"I haven't had these off for the last forty-eight hours—and they were too tight for me anyhow."

"Anything gone wrong?"

"To be brief, all our work of the past two weeks has to be done over again."

"What?" exclaimed D'Auburon. "Do you mean to say we are on the wrong track?"

"I will tell you right now," replied M. Cassagne. "It is a peculiar story. I soon settled the question as to where Graham was."

"You have found him, then? and it is not he who committed the crime? Ah, that is bad. Our theory at once falls to the ground."

"Not so fast. Don't anticipate me. However, I may tell you that Henry Graham had no more to do with the murder of Madame Roupell than you or I had."

"It is very extraordinary."

"Not extraordinary at all. But let me begin at the beginning. I left Paris having in my possession certain facts upon which I knew I could thoroughly rely. One of them was that Graham had gone to Belliers, taking his little son with him; another that he had been in correspondence with a woman there whose first name was Helene, and whom I firmly believed to be the mother of the child."

"Yes, I recollect all that; go on, pray; what next?"

"Arrived at Belliers, I instituted every possible inquiry as to whether such persons as Graham and his son were known or had ever been known there. This search occupied the greater portion of my time. I was about to despair when I stumbled across an old priest who told me that he had known the man I was in search of."

"Are you a friend of his?" asked the priest. "I am," I replied. "Then you will be shocked when you hear what happened to him. Come with me, and I will tell you his story." I followed the priest, expecting to hear that he was the inmate of some charitable institution, or having lost his reason was confined in some private asylum. He led the way to his church, and there in the little burying ground he pointed me out a grave. At its head was a stone on which I read:

"HENRY GRAHAM, Aged 62 years."

"What!" exclaimed D'Auburon, astonished beyond measure. "Was it our Henry Graham? It can't be possible!"

"There is not the slightest doubt about it. When I saw that tombstone, you can imagine how I felt after all the time and trouble I had given this case. It was as if the bottom had dropped out of everything. The priest saw, no doubt, that I was strangely affected. He attributed my agitation to grief."

"Tell me something about my poor old friend," I said. "I have heard that he was in very bad circumstances. Did he die poor?"

"Very," replied the priest. "But he was cared for by mother church. That stone was erected by his son. Ah! he was a sad scamp, a willful fellow, who gave his poor father no end of trouble. But that was the old man's fault, partly. He did not somehow care to have the boy

with him. He lived up on the hill, himself, for years, in very good style—he had money from somewhere, though I don't know where he got it. But the child, he didn't seem to be bothered about him."

"Didn't the child live with him?" I inquired—not that I cared to know, but I wanted to keep the old man talking. I thought he might possibly drop something worth having.

"No," he went on—he was a garrulous old fellow. "No, he didn't seem to care to have the child with him. Until he was quite a big boy he remained in the care of a young couple in the village. The woman, I think, grew to be quite fond of him. But he was an unruly little rascal."

"All this is very serious. The result is that we are no further than when we started. What do you propose to do now? You're not going to give it up, are you?"

"Give it up! I wonder at your asking such a question. Certainly I shall not give it up."

"Now tell me," said the younger man, "what you propose doing? I am impatient to know."

M. Cassagne did not immediately reply. He closed his eyes like one who thinks deeply. At last he said:

"I have mapped out a plan of action. And we must either carry it out on that line, or abandon it altogether. We have adopted from the start the theory that this crime was not committed for the purpose of robbery, but in the interest of some person who in some way would profit, either directly or indirectly, by the death of Madame Roupell. If we abandon that theory we have no other to work on. After the most careful examination of all the facts and circumstances, I fall to account for the murder upon any other hypothesis. Henry Graham being dead disproves that theory so far as he is concerned; but so far only."

"Admitted; but whom have you to take his place? You must substitute someone, or your theory falls to the ground," remarked D'Auburon.

"Not necessarily," replied the detective. "We may substitute an entirely unknown person and call him X."

"Yes, that's all very well; but how to find him is the question."

"To which I certainly give you another answer. Listen attentively. I am about to begin my argument, and I want you to follow it and pick it to pieces. Commencing on the hypothesis already laid down, I shall proceed to demonstrate two things: First, the murder of Madame Roupell was committed by someone directly interested in getting her out of the way. Second, it was the work of some person who was acquainted with her affairs, either by actually having known her, or from information gathered from someone who was her intimate. You must not forget the missing will, portions of which are in my possession. You must not forget also the circumstances surrounding this mysterious crime. It was committed in the dead of night. The hour chosen by the murderer was one at which he expected to find the house entirely unprotected by the presence of men, for the butler and coachman, recollect, slept over the stables and the presence of Van Lith and Chabot in the chateau that night was a contingency totally unforeseen by him, and one he could not have been prepared for. You may be sure that if he had foreseen it, he would have postponed his visit until some other occasion, for men of that stamp, though bold and unscrupulous, always take as little risk as possible."

"Granted," acquiesced D'Auburon. "Go on."

"The temporary check that our theory has received from finding that Henry Graham died before the murder was committed, in no way convinces me that he was not in any way implicated. Let us suppose that he knew of the existence of this will, which disinherited him; that he contemplated its destruction at some time and confided his plans to an accomplice; that for a long time no opportunity occurred like the one which did occur, when Van Lith left the chateau and the woman and her niece were practically at his mercy."

"Well, I will suppose all that, if you like; but still maintain that when Graham died all motive for the commission of the crime was removed. What benefit could a third party not interested at law in the disposition of Madame Roupell's property, possibly gain by having her die intestate?"

## A Chinese Solomon.

Two Chinamen, brothers, well advanced in years, quarreled over a piece of land which they had jointly inherited from their father and went to law. The native magistrate heard the testimony on both sides and determined that both were wrong and both right, according to the different points of view. Therefore, instead of rendering a judgment in favor of either, he ordered that both be locked up in a cage with their heads fastened face to face and kept there until they settled their quarrel. The cage is a sort of one in which prisoners are placed with their necks locked into a hole in a board. It resembles somewhat the stocks which were used for the punishment of malefactors in olden times. When the brothers were placed in the cage, they were both very stubborn and indignant, but toward the end of the second day they began to weaken and on the third day reached a satisfactory settlement and were released.

## Why He Lingered.

As the clock struck 10 the diffident youth in the parlor seemed prepared to get a homeward move on himself.

"Good night," said the dear girl. "And don't forget to give my love to your sister."

"I—er—that is," stammered the young man. "It's all the same to you, I—er—should prefer to keep it myself."

And as the dear girl was willing to let it go at that he lingered another hour.

In all France there are only 1,100 persons who are millionaires in our sense of the word (in dollars). Of millionsaires in France there are about 15,000, apart from the 1,100 already counted.

## DEFENSE IS FIGHTING

### Hall and Mays Trial Making but Little Progress.

### HENEY IS MOVING WITH CAUTION

### Session Largely Given Up to Reading of Letters Said to Show Conspiracy.

Portland, Jan. 18.—The government yesterday continued laying the foundation of the case against John H. Hall and Edwin Mays.

Henev introduced some 50 letters, written from June, 1900, to September, 1902, by Hall, Mays, Loomis, Stratford and Putnam. More such letters will follow today.

Hall objected seriously to only one letter, written by Secretary Hitebeck to Special Inspector A. R. Greene, directing Greene to investigate the fences. Henev's purpose is to show that this investigation was prompted by settlers, who had appealed vainly to Hall to act against the fences. Hall objects to the letter because a copy and not the original letter has been offered and because it is irrelevant. Judge Hunt will decide the questions this morning.

Unlike Hall, Mays raised numerous objections in the course of the day. The steps in the government's evidence of conspiracy will be about as follows:

First—To prove Hall and Mays had frequent knowledge from protesting settlers of the fences as early as March, 1900.

Second—That Stelwer, Zachary and Hendricks caused various persons to file on land for their company, in order to complete the company's enclosure of public land.

Third—That Hall and Mays took no steps to prosecute the offenders, though they had full knowledge of the fencing and the conspiracy for more than three years.

At this stage, Stelwer is expected to testify about the alleged understanding by which Hall and Mays were not to prosecute him and his associates. One of the terms of this alleged agreement was Stelwer's vote for Fulton.

George Brownell is expected to testify that Hall promised him immunity from land fraud prosecution for his withdrawal from the contest for Hall's office.

### TENANTS IN RIOTS.

### Object to Paying More Than Rate They Fix Themselves

New York, Jan. 18.—Fierce resistance by tenants whom an Upper East Side landlord was trying to evict resulted yesterday in the gathering of a crowd of two thousand or more sympathizers in the neighborhood, who made so much trouble for the police that the precinct reserves were called out. During the rioting four women and a number of men were taken into custody.

The riotous demonstration began when a city marshal and about 25 assistants visited the block on the south side of East One Hundred and Fourth street, between First and Second avenues, with 80 dispossess warrants for families who had untidily demanded reductions in rents of a dollar a month and had refused to pay the landlord's collector more than the new rate they had fixed. The taking out of the furniture from the rooms of the first family visited was the signal for an attack on the marshal and his men by scores of tenants.

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## POLITICS FIGURE LARGELY.

### Henev Tells Sensational Story in His Opening Statement.

Portland, Jan. 17.—In his opening address in the Hall-Mays conspiracy trial yesterday, Francis J. Henev charged that:

Hall wanted reappointment as United States district attorney and sought election of Senators Mitchell and Fulton to that end.

He forced State Senator W. W. Steiwer to vote for Fulton in February, 1903, by threatening Steiwer and others with criminal prosecution (Hall then being United States district attorney) for illegal fencing of public lands.

Fulton was a party to this deal with Steiwer and used his influence in Steiwer's behalf to cause Hall to institute civil proceedings against Steiwer instead of criminal.

Brownell wanted to succeed Hall and had pledged support from Mitchell and Fulton. Hall forced Brownell to retire and so to notify Mitchell and Fulton, by threatening Brownell with prosecution for acknowledging forged land papers, for which Brownell later was indicted through Henev.

Hall threatened Hermann, Williamson and Mitchell with land-fraud indictment if they did not secure his reappointment.

Hall had agreement with Steiwer, Zachary and Hendricks by which he allowed them to maintain their illegal fences, this being the alleged conspiracy.

Hall says he and Mays will both take the stand in their own defense.

L. R. Webster, attorney for Hall, said that when his client first learned of the illegal fences in 1901, he notified Steiwer, et al., that they must not fence government land. Webster denied that Hall was actuated by ulterior motives, politics or other.

Witnesses Putnam and King testified that they informed Hall by letter of the fences as early as March, 1900. The fences were not removed until 1906, after Hall was ousted from office.

### INVESTIGATE HARRIMAN.

### California Will Probe Into Actions of Southern Pacific

San Francisco, Jan. 17.—After 29 years of quiet obedience, the state board of railroad commissioners flew full into the face of the Southern Pacific company today and ordered a searching investigation into the rebating privileges of the Harriman lines, the Santa Fe and the Salt Lake road. At the same time the board, with the assistance of Attorney General Webb, passed the responsibility for efficacious action to the door of Governor Gillett. It lies with the chief executive to authorize the expenditure of the money that such an investigation will cost, and Mr. Gillett has no alternative but to choose squarely between the people and the railroads.

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### SEEKS TO RETAIN TROOPS.

### Nevada Legislators Are Unanimous in Approving Policy.

Carson City, Nev., Jan. 17.—At the afternoon session of the assembly yesterday a resolution which passed the senate in the morning, petitioning the president to retain the troops temporarily, passed without a negative vote. There was no argument on either side as to the merits of the measure. Governor Sparks was at the speaker's desk, and as he came into the hall was greeted with applause.

Speaker Skaggs, who has opposed the governor in the matter of calling troops to Nevada, left the chair and Speaker Pro Tem Folsom placed the motion before the house. Skaggs failed to vote on the measure, absented himself at roll call. The governor is receiving congratulations from both parties since the passage of the bill. There was a meeting of the joint committee this afternoon in reference to taking up a measure for policing the state. It is likely that this measure will be introduced by Monday.

### To Preserve Battlefields.

Ottawa, Ont., Jan. 17.—Representatives of the Canadian clubs throughout the dominion met in conference here today to discuss Lord Grey's proposal to convert the more important parts of the battlefields of the plains of Abraham and St. Foye into a national park, and to erect thereon a monument to commemorate the reconciliation of the British and French races in Canada. It is hoped to raise a fund of \$1,000,000 by public subscription to supplement the grants of the Federal and Provisional governments.

### Opium Shipments Light.

Port Townsend, Wash., Jan. 17.—Among the interesting features of the business of the last year, transacted by officials of the Puget sound customs districts is the showing that for the entire period importations of opium reached the insignificant total of 235 pounds. The district is presumed to cover practically all of the output of British Columbia refineries which operate on a large scale. The light shipment is regarded as suspicious.

### New Express Rates.

Jefferson City, Mo., Jan. 17.—The new schedule of express rates recently agreed upon by the board of railway commissioners and the express companies doing business in Missouri, goes into effect today. In round figures the schedule provides for an average reduction of 21 per cent.

### Dany Sulphur Injures Fruit.

San Francisco, Jan. 18.—At the state convention of California fruit growers today a committee of seven was appointed to go to Washington to protest against and secure a modification of the rule covering the use of sulphur in bleaching and drying fruits. In resolutions and speeches it was stated that the use of sulphur was not deleterious to the public health and that the drying of fruits by artificial heat and evaporation was impracticable in this state.

### Warships Sail for Magdalena.

San Diego, Cal., Jan. 18.—All that was left here of the Pacific squadron remained this morning for Magdalena, to sail for six or seven weeks, indulging in target practice.

## MAKING PROGRESS

### Jury Secured in Hall Land Case in One Day.

### WILL TRY BUT TWO DEFENDANTS

### Ex-United States Attorney Hall and Edwin Mays at Bar—No Explanation is Given.

Portland, Jan. 16.—Twelve jurors, satisfactory alike to the government and to the defense, were selected yesterday to determine the guilt or innocence of John H. Hall, ex-United States attorney for Oregon, and Edwin Mays, who are jointly charged with illegally fencing public lands in Eastern Oregon. The first juror, Alfred Freerksen, a farmer of Lebanon, Linn county, was accepted at 11 o'clock and the jury was completed at 5:35 o'clock yesterday afternoon with the acceptance of Henry Freerksen, a farmer of Shedd, Linn county, and a brother of the first man selected. Both sides had exhausted their three peremptory challenges before the name of Henry Freerksen was reached, but he was subjected to a thorough questioning by Special Prosecutor Henev before being accepted.

When court convened yesterday morning Mr. Henev created a sensation by announcing that of the 12 defendants named in the indictment only Hall and Edwin Mays would be tried at this time. His failure to indicate when W. W. Steiwer, Hamilton H. Hendricks and Clarence B. Zachary would be tried, if at all, is believed to give color to the report that these three defendants have been promised immunity in return for important testimony against their co-defendants. The testimony of these defendants, it has been rumored, is considered essential to the case of the government against Hall and Mays.

### IDENTIFYING THE DEAD.

### Many Boyertown Victims Buried Past Recognition.

Boyerstown, Pa., Jan. 16.—One hundred and seventy persons perished at the Rhoades opera house fire Monday night, according to figures compiled by Coroner Straesser last night. The list of dead includes one fireman, who lost his life fighting the fire, and one man, Jacob Johnson, who died from injuries received in the blazing playhouse.

Three charred bodies were recovered from the ruins of the building yesterday, and of the 168 bodies or remains that lie in the improvised ruins of the building 114 have been officially or partially identified by sorrowing relatives or friends.

Not more than 25 of the entire number of bodies removed from the fire have heads. There are several trunks which will never be recognized, as they were strangers in the audience that witnessed the play.

### ENDORSES SPARKS' ACTION.

### Caucus of Nevada Legislators Supports Governor.

Carson, Nev., Jan. 16.—A joint caucus of the special committees of the senate and assembly of the Nevada legislature met yesterday and framed a joint resolution which will be introduced in the senate today asking the president of the United States to retain troops in Goldfield until such time as the state can provide either a police force or other means to maintain order in the camp. This is a decided victory for Governor Sparks, as the committee framing the resolution is composed of 20 members, both Republicans and Democrats, with the pro and anti labor elements both represented.

The resolution will undoubtedly pass the senate, while the general expression among the members of the lower house is that it will go through that body by a small majority, the senate being Republican and the assembly strongly Democratic.

### Wants to Fine Standard.

Chicago, Jan. 16.—District Attorney Sims, upon arriving today from Washington, where he is thought to have discussed the matter with President Roosevelt, announced that he will make an effort to bring the Standard Oil company of Indiana to trial next week on the remaining 4,000 counts in the indictments returned against the corporation. It will be possible in the event that the company should be convicted on each count of the indictment to impose fines aggregating a total of \$80,000,000.

### Range War Erewing.

Grand Junction, Colo., Jan. 16.—Appeals to the governor and to the sheriff of Mesa and Delta counties for protection, having failed and fearing a bloody battle will be participated by irate settlers through whose territory they must pass, the scene of many range wars and murders, the owners of 20,000 sheep are sending their stock from Montrose to the winter range in Utah under a guard of 200 men armed with Winchester.

### Postpone Seattle Fair.

Seattle, Jan. 16.—While the idea is not received with approval by the majority of the people, Colonel Blethen and others have recently begun a movement to postpone the Alaska-Yukon exposition until 1910. The financial condition in all parts of the country and failure to realize on certain investments cause this plan to be considered.

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