

The Trail of the Dead:

THE STRANGE EXPERIENCE
OF DR. ROBERT HARLAND

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CHAPTER V. II.—THE MYSTERY OF THE LEMSDORF HAM.

How Rudolf Marnac, the venerable savant, brought about the death of his rival and critic, Professor Von Stockmar, of Heidelberg University, I have already explained. I have, moreover, related the accident by which my cousin, Sir Henry Graden, the famous explorer and scientist, chanced to be visiting me, a student of medicine at the German university; and I have endeavored to outline the steps by which the baronet arrived at the discovery of the crime that had been committed. I have now to tell of the pursuit of Marnac, the murderer; a pursuit as strange in its outset as it was terrible in its conclusion. For this, the first adventure in the chase of this inhuman monster, it may be said that I have chosen a fanciful title. Yet "The Mystery of the Lemsdorf Ham" is too appropriate to be neglected for that reason.

At the first the Heidelberg police met our theory of Von Stockmar's death with incredulity. When they moved in earnest it was too late; all trace of Professor Marnac had been lost. It was discovered that he had taken from his rooms a small traveling valise and a considerable sum in ready money; but beyond these facts nothing was known; even his manner of leaving Heidelberg was a mystery.

For myself, the weeks that followed were in every respect intolerable. From a peaceful student I found myself transformed into a secret spy of the police, an unhappy being whose privacy was liable to be disturbed at all hours by some inquisitive official. Even worse, the authorities had detained my cousin, and those who are intimates of Sir Henry Graden will understand that I suffered at his hands. In the capture of the murderer—as we knew Marnac to be—he took a passionate interest. He was forever in my rooms, denouncing the authorities for their delay, advancing theories, or cursing his own inaction. The lieutenant in charge of the Heidelberg police went in absolute terror of the Englishman, and, indeed, refused all interviews in which he was not adequately protected by his satellites.

On a calm October morning I was sitting reading by my window, thankful of the momentary quiet I enjoyed, when the door burst open and my cousin came frolicking into the room. I admit the absurdity of the expression when applied to a middle-aged giant of sixteen stone; but frolicking describes it. Without a word of apology he seized my book, a new edition of "Digestive Organs of Molluscs," and flung it into the fireplace. It was too much.

"Henry Graden," said I, starting up indignantly, "you are my cousin, but you presume on that relationship. These school-boy antics are insupportable."

"Capital, Robert! capital!" he answered, regarding me with a comical expression. "I say! there's stuff in the boy! You'd like to punch my head, I suppose?"

I was somewhat ashamed of my outburst, and picked up the book, which was greatly damaged, before I replied. "It's all very well, Cousin Graden," I said, sulkily enough. "But between you and the police, I am worried to death."

"Good! Then you can have no objection to leaving Heidelberg this afternoon."

"Leave Heidelberg? Why should I leave Heidelberg?"

He strode over to where I stood and laid his great hand on my shoulder with a touch that implied an apology.

"A schoolboy you called me just now. That's just what I am, a schoolboy let loose on the playground. The police have raised their embargo. An address which will bring me when they have need of my evidence—that is all they ask. Now, I want a traveling companion—a man I can trust. You can guess my errand, Cousin Robert. Before a week is out I shall have my hand on him, I shall, by heaven! You will come with me? Good lad, I knew it. The train leaves at three. I'll call for you."

"But where are we going?" I shouted, running to the door; for already he was down a score of stairs.

"St. Petersburg. You have a passport?"

"Yes—but Cousin Graden, Cousin Graden, I say—"

It was no use. I heard the street door slam behind him. St. Petersburg—and the winter coming on. Eugh! I had always detested cold. But next to escaping misfortune it is best to possess a philosophic mind. I commenced to pack my bag with my warmest underwear.

At thirty-five minutes past two Graden sent up word to say that he had a cab waiting my pleasure, and in three minutes more my luggage was upon it. Half-way down the main street we chanced upon Mousel, the fat lieutenant of police. He glanced at us keenly, with, as I thought, a certain suspicion. Graden saluted him coldly, muttering maledictions upon him for a stupid ass. There was no great friendship between the two. I paid the cab while my cousin saw to the tickets. Five marks provided us with a subservient guard and an empty carriage.

"And what are your plans for this intolerable Petersburg expedition?" I asked, as the train thumped its way out of the station.

"We are not going to St. Petersburg. We are going to Lemsdorf."

"To Lemsdorf? I have never heard of the place."

"No more had I an hour ago. Allow me to discover it."

He pulled a red-bound Baedeker out of his pocket and fluttered through the pages.

"Here we have it—Lemsdorf: fourteen to fifteen hours from Berlin. Rising town in West Prussia; 12,000 inhabitants. Large dye-works. 'Prinz von Preussen,' 'Goldner Adler'—hotels well spoken of. Cab from the station, 75 pg. Little of historical interest. Excursions to Denker and the Huren, a wild and desolate district with several large lakes, on the Russian frontier. Not altogether an inviting prospect at the latter end of October, eh, Cousin Robert?"

"I did not imagine we were going there for pleasure."

"Pessimist! Do neither the 'Prinz von Preussen' nor the 'Goldner Adler,' well spoken of, as Baedeker describes these hostels, attract you? Then the dye-works, they are sure to be interesting."

"Henry Graden," cried I with determination, "you try me too far! I am as eager as yourself that this criminal should be brought to justice. For this reason alone I have every right to know the why and wherefore of an expedition which will entail upon me, as I see clearly, the most extraordinary discomforts."

"It seems a pity, my dear cousin, that Nature, which endowed you with so many admirable qualities, should have omitted the saving grace of humor," he rejoined. And then changing his tone to a greater sobriety: "You shall hear all that I know or conjecture. It will, at least, help us on our journey."

"First, as to the facts at my disposal. For myself, I had heard much of Rudolf Marnac, but only as a Heidelberg professor of distinction, whose stupendous effort, 'Science and Belief,' had set educated Europe by the ears. From you I learned of his quarrel with Von Stockmar, a quarrel originating in the latter's attack on the work in question, of which Marnac was indignantly vain. Then came the chain of facts that proved—to our mind at least—that Marnac had murdered his colleague with a diabolical ingenuity. Could such a crime be inspired by a quarrel so trifling? It was almost past belief. Further evidence was necessary; and this evidence the investigations of the police have supplied."

"When I learned that his father, Jean Marnac, had died in a Paris asylum, I began to see my way. But it was the statements of his servants that cleared up my last doubt. An eccentricity which at one time amused them had of late been changed to a violence that filled them with terror. He had presented them with copies of the book, elaborately bound. A housekeeper who had served him for twenty years was loaded with abuse and discharged because the old creature admitted that she could not follow his arguments. He was the victim of a partial mania. Such cases are not uncommon."

"Whether had this dangerous creature fled? It seemed a mystery insoluble. He was well provided with money; on all topics but one he was admirably sensible. The police admitted that he had beaten them. But only yesterday I obtained a clue. It may be valueless; but for myself I think otherwise. At least it is worth the journey I am asking you to make in my company."

"At my urgent request the police admitted me to his rooms. His papers they had already examined, without result. I found that he possessed a fine library. I am a book-lover, and my first step was to examine it. Tucked away in a corner of a shelf, yet within easy reach of his customary chair, I found a volume. It was typical of the man that it should be elegantly bound. Within were collected the hostile criticisms with which his book had been loaded. The more severe were scribbled over with the vilest epithets. Von Stockmar was personally threatened, as was also a certain Mechersky, a professor of the Imperial University at Petersburg. I abstracted the volume. You may like to examine it."

He drew it from the capacious pocket of his traveling ulster and gave it to me. The cover was of the choicest morocco; upon it, in gold, were emblazoned the arms of the university. It was a triumph of the binder's art, yet I handled it with a singular feeling of disgust.

The interior was oddly divided. The greater part consisted of clippings from papers and magazines, neatly gummed upon blank pages. But here and there were interpolated pamphlets, held in their place by elastic bands. In contrast with this orderly arrangement, scarcely a page but was defaced by penciled remarks, satirical or abusive. I ran through them hastily until I came upon the article which bore Mechersky's name, extracted apparently from some French review. Its severity seemed to have lashed Marnac to fury. It was covered with a maze of pencillings. But my attention was soon centered on a portion of the text which, being underlined in red, stood out from the page with some prominence. "The author of 'Science and Belief,'" for thus it ran, "seems to have lost touch with humanity. His deductions might be correct if men were bloodless, merciless automatons. He regards them as might some reptile—let us say, a toad scientifically inclined." Across this criticism, which seemed to me unnecessarily severe,

was written in German: "Infamous scoundrel! Would that I might crush you like a toad!"

"A curious wish," I said, pointing to the passage.

"And from Marnac a most dangerous one," he answered. "I can only hope we shall reach Lemsdorf in time."

"Lemsdorf again! And why Lemsdorf?"

"For the excellent reason, Cousin Robert, that Mechersky, who comes of land-owning Polish stock, is holiday-making at Castle Oster, a place he has in that neighborhood. And as sure as I sit here, where Mechersky is, there will be that madman, Rudolf Marnac. If he means to murder the man, he will have had nigh on a month to bring it off. Heaven grant that we're in time!"

The tone in which he spoke thrilled me with a dreadful anxiety. The danger was indefinable; but fear draws its darkest terrors from the unknown.

"One thing more," I said. "How did you discover Mechersky's whereabouts?"

"I had thought him at St. Petersburg; but a wire to a friend there gave me the information I required."

CHAPTER VI.

I have neither the necessity nor the inclination to dwell on that journey. It was very late when we rolled into the station of the good town of Leipzig, where we spent the night at a convenient hotel. Yet it was at an early hour that Graden roused me from a tired sleep to catch the Posen express. The country through which we now journeyed was of a melancholy similitude, and the broad plains, though reasonably cultivated, affected me with a mental depression which the cheery efforts of my companion could not conquer. The day was drawing to its close as we reached Posen and passed through that fortress city into a land of desolation. Gloomy pine woods, great lakes on which the dying sun threw patches of ruddy gold, forlorn heaths and swamps that, as I imagined, could scarcely be equaled for sheer dismalness of aspect, slid by us in a never-ending chain. Save for the eastern sky, glorified by the fiery sunset, the heavens were obscured by ponderous clouds of muddy grey that foretold the first snow of winter. Darkness had fallen when we changed carriages at a junction; but it was close upon midnight before my cousin, who had been sitting with a Continental Bradshaw on his knees, thrust his head out of the window and cried that the lights of Lemsdorf were in sight. Our luggage was piled upon an antiquated cab and in ten minutes more the host of the 'Goldner Adler,' a thin, handsome Pole, was bowing a stately welcome to his guests. Supper—and then to bed.

The room assigned to me was an oak-paneled apartment of considerable size, and the single candle with which I was provided seemed only to deepen the lurking shadows round the walls. The huge china stove failed to warm a place so thoroughly ventilated by draughts. At another time the cause of our journey, combined with the uneasy nature of these surroundings, might have acted on my nerves. But I was too weary, too angry with my present discomfort, to give opportunity to fanciful terrors. The bed was small, and in all probability damp. I took off my coat, rolled myself in a thick traveling rug, heaped the clothes upon me, and blowing out the candle I had placed on a table at my elbow, lay down to sleep.

How long I may have slept I cannot say, but I was awakened by a sudden flash of light that struck like a blow through the darkness. For a score of seconds, it may have been, I lay motionless. The room was in utter darkness and silence. Then I heard a foot-fall, a creaking of a door. I sprang from my bed, only to trip and fall heavily over the rug which I had carried with me. I groped for the table, found it, and lit the candle, crouching, half expectant of some attack when I should reveal myself. I looked keenly about me—the room was empty.

But I had had a visitor, for the door was still ajar. I ran to it, shading the light with my hand, peered down the passage. There was no one visible. I returned to the room, this time locking the door securely. Perhaps, after all, I reasoned, there had been no cause for my alarm. Some fellow-guest might have mistaken his chamber, retreating quickly on discovering his error. This argument heartened me, for, to be honest, I was shaken not a little. I examined the room carefully, without result; and then, after a composing cigarette, slipped back into bed, leaving the candle burning in the center of the room.

(To be continued.)

Hospitality.

"Talk about hospitality," observed the portly passenger, as he lighted an obese cigar with a red and gold life preserver around its stomach, "they certainly have it down fine in Atlanta. During a three days' sojourn there recently they wouldn't let me spend a cent."

"Must be something like Chicago," rejoined the tin-can drummer. "The last time I was there they didn't let me spend a cent, either."

"So?" queried the other, skeptically. "It is even so," continued the can man. "They held me up half a square from the depot and took every cent I had away from me."

Under Water.

"Look here," shouted the stormy individual as he rushed into the real estate office, "when you sold me that suburban lot you said it was such a beautiful place it was a fit abode for fairies and nymphs."

"And haven't you found my assertion to be correct?" asked the laud agent.

"No, sir; you should have said it was a fit abode for mermaids."



Improving Live Stock.

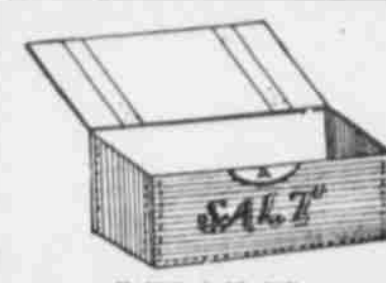
The best families of horses, whether thoroughbred runners or trotters, were produced from a few selected ancestors, breeding being largely practiced, through Hambletonian, has certainly increased the speed of our trotters, and, admitting that the instinct of trotting has been more firmly impressed, yet there is a much larger proportion of failures, compared with the success attained, if the fact is considered that the number of the whole is many times greater than that of half a century ago. The form of the trotter, as well as that of the thoroughbred, shows plainly the work of inbreeding, for while the spirit and will force have been increased, it has required an occasional infusion of new blood (not, however, altogether foreign) to retain the stamina so essential to roadsters. The thoroughbred runner of to-day is largely indebted to Diomed, Sir Archy, Gleucose and Lexington for improvement in endurance and speed.

The mutton breeds of sheep are now capable of producing specimens exceeding 400 pounds live weight, with also an increase in length of wool and weight of fleece, while the best merinos can shear over thirty pounds.

Every decade has witnessed the breaking of "records" among all classes of animals, which is the best evidence that improvement is rapid, much of the success being due to inbreeding, a system that is unsafe unless practiced by one who fully understands the selection of the choicest individuals, their adaptation to circumstances and the objects sought to be accomplished.

Handy Salt Box.

This handy salt box can be put up against the shed, and cattle can get salt at will. The salt will be out of the weather, and there will be no trouble of salting the cattle every few days. The box should be made 18 inches wide, 24 inches long, 12 inches deep in front and 16 inches in the back, so that the lid will have enough fall to shut itself when released. The lid should extend four inches over the box for a cow to get hold on. A notch should be cut four inches deep in front of the box (a), so that when a cow smells the box she will smell salt and stick her tongue in the notch (a) and lick it. By



HANDY SALT BOX.

pushing a little harder the lid will raise up and she can get enough salt, and the box will close.—Farm Progress.

Millions of Frozen Carcasses.

According to Sir E. Montague Nelson, says the Engineer of London, there are sixty large meat-freezing establishments in the colonies and Argentina; the carrying trade is represented by 174 refrigerated steamers, with a capacity calculated at no less than 10,000,000 carcasses; and in England there are 28 refrigerated stores in London and 100 in provincial towns for the storage of meat on arrival. These distribute daily on the average over 26,000 sheep and lambs and 4,000 quarters beef. The total importation of frozen meats into Great Britain during 1905 consisted of 8,277,731 carcasses mutton and lamb and 1,271,553 quarters beef.

Brief Farm Topics.

The farmer who broke his hoe handle leaning on it was leaning on the wrong thing.

One way to tell a good cow is to watch those that the dairyman does not want to sell.

A cow which will not make more than 125 pounds of butter in a year has no place in a dairy herd kept on \$50 land. She belongs to the range herd, where it may pay to let her raise a calf.

Two very good ways to market farm crops may be found in the pig skin and in the milk can.

It is not so much the number of stalks to the hill as it is the number of ears of corn one is able to gather in the fall. Two good-sized ears to each hill means sixty bushels of corn per acre. Do you expect it?

An authority on such matters claims that one-fourth of the hay crop comes from wild grass. It is a notable fact that of the wild grasses used for hay in the United States not one variety has been brought into cultivation.

F. G. Bartlett, of Socorro County, N. M., recently sold 12,000 pounds of scoured wool, the last year's clip of his own flock. He claims to have made \$1,300 off his wool.

To combat the fraud of selling sheep-skin for real kid a demonstration was recently made in Wilmington, Del., with a view to educating purchasers to buy nothing but the real article.

As a rule it requires quite a change of the program to induce a man to leave the cornfield to engage in other pursuits when there are so many weeds that need killing, but it is all right to stop to haul off a lot of hogs that have been finished for the market when prices are right.

Stacking Arrangement.

The two pole stacking arrangement here shown can be readily constructed. The poles are leaning against the two fast guy wires so the fork hangs directly over the load. As the horse pulls on the rope with pulley attached a short distance from the ground the load of hay on the fork is drawn up to the pulley and the pulling draws the poles



CONVENIENT STACKING DEVICE.

over as shown in the dotted lines so the fork hangs over the stack when the strip is thrown and the load discharged on the stack.

Insects on Grass.

Numerous inquiries have come into the office of the Rhode Island Experiment Station regarding the cause of the frothy masses on grass and other herbaceous plants and on shrubs and trees. Popularly this has been ascribed to frogs and snakes and named either frog or snake spittle, as the case might be. In fact, it is due to a small insect belonging to the Hemiptera or true bugs, which live inside the frothy mass. Commonly these insects are called spittle insects for obvious reasons, and also frog hoppers, because of their connection with the frothy mass which was formerly known as frog spittle, or because in their broad, squat appearance when mature, they resemble frogs to some extent. It is not known exactly how the frothy mass is produced, but it is supposed that the insect pumps the sap out of the plants, and in passing it through the alimentary canal mixes air with it to form small air bubbles. There are quite a number of species found at the present time, some living on grass, others on shrubs, and also on trees, both evergreen and deciduous. Most of the species have their early or nymph stage entirely within the protection of the frothy mass. When adult, however, they are found outside in the open air.

Feeding Gluten Meal.

Gluten feed is very valuable in the dairy; rich in protein and something of which the stock are very fond, it can be profitably used if handled rightly; on the other hand there is opportunity to feed it extravagantly as well as to feed so much of it that the cows will be injured. It should be invariably fed with some other grain, and if other concentrated foods are used it is better not to feed the gluten daily. If, however, bran is used to a considerable extent the gluten feed may be safely made a part of the daily ration. While gluten meal is frequently fed with ground corn and cob meal, and fed inexpensively in this way, we prefer to use it with cornmeal and bran, about three pounds of gluten meal to two pounds each of the bran and cornmeal, giving, of course, a liberal quantity of roughage. As gluten produces considerable body heat, and more when fed in conjunction with cornmeal, it is essentially a valuable winter feed, but is best cut out of the summer ration.

Bogus Clover Seed.

The clover seed business is being closely watched by agents of the Department of Agriculture. Of 521 samples of red clover obtained in the open market 116 samples were found to contain seed of the dodder, five samples were adulterated with seed of yellow trifolium, a worthless plant, of which the seed resembles the clover. In fact, cattle have been made sick by eating clover mixed with the trifolium plant, while the dodder plant is a still more serious pest.

Forage and Soiling Crops.

Of the crops grown during the three years at the Pennsylvania Station sorghum and cowpeas produced the largest yield of green substance per acre and alfalfa the greatest weight of air-dry substance. Both crops are considered very satisfactory as green forage. Corn grown as a single crop ranked second in the production of air-dry matter. Field peas and oats are also considered very satisfactory field crops. Flat peas and rape are not recommended. Cowpeas are considered preferable to soy beans.



A singular spring lately discovered in New Mexico discharges a saturated solution of sodium sulphate at a temperature of 110 degrees F. The weight of the liquid is 10.23 pounds per gallon, that of distilled water being only 8.13 pounds. The overflow from the spring has solidified into a perfectly level, snow-white bed of sodium salts, miles in extent.

In Brookside Park, Cleveland, a concrete bridge has just been opened to traffic which is said to possess some novel features. It is believed to be the flattest semicircle of concrete ever constructed without a heavy reinforcement of steel. Its elliptical form is perfect, with a major axis of 92 feet and a semiminor axis of only 9 feet. In other words, the rise of the arch is less than one-tenth of the span.

The entire stomach was first successfully removed by Schlater of Zurich in 1807. R. Vassallo, a surgeon of Argentina, reports having now performed seventeen pylorotomies and considers the gravity of these operations more apparent than real. Four months after the last complete removal of this organ the patient was in excellent health, with no inconvenience except the necessity of eating often and but little at a time.

Seasickness is proven by Dr. Charles Davison to be a common effect of earthquakes. The feeling of nausea may be produced by shocks lasting not more than eight or ten seconds, and whose vibrations have a total range of only a small fraction of an inch, and in one slight English earthquake—too small to injure any buildings—about one observer in fifty was affected. The feeling usually lasts a few minutes, though sometimes persisting an hour or more.

Prof. J. H. Poynting recently described before the Royal Society an "electric touch" measuring machine which gives results superior to any obtainable with the usual "mechanical touch" machines. The underlying principle is that electric contact is substituted for mechanical contact in determining, for instance, the thickness of a gage or plate. Readings with the new machine are taken with ease and certainty to one two-hundred-and-fifty-thousandths of an inch, and even one-quarter of this can be obtained if desired.

It may surprise many readers to learn that ores of lead and other metals may contain sufficient water to increase very materially their weight. This fact is the basis of a decision, recently rendered by the United States general appraisers, that customs officials have no right to compel import appraisers to pay duty on moisture in ores. In the case on which the decision was based, one car of lead ore, coming from British Columbia, weighed 62,050 pounds gross, but with the moisture removed, only 60,373 pounds. The figures for another car were respectively 65,100 pounds and 63,050 pounds. The local appraisers applied to the moist ore the percentage of lead found in a dried sample, and this the general appraisers decided was wrong.

An Angel.



Virginia—Do you think I will have any difficulty in learning to float, Jack? Jack (enthusiastically)—No, indeed. With a little practice, I'm sure you could fly.

Folk's Confession.

Governor Folk had just returned to the state house, after a flying trip around the Ohio Chautauqua circuit. He was dead tired and looked travel worn.

"Governor," said Secretary Woodside, "why do you accept all these chautauqua invitations? Is it the speeches?"

The Governor smiled a suave smile. "My dear boy," he said, "how innocent you are. It's the introductions."—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

Sometimes a man attempts to cover up his sins by donating a small per cent of the spoils to charity.