The Roupell Mystery

By Austyn Granville

CHAPTER XVI.—(Continued.)

"Have you ever known of a case where a man was forced to commit an act against his inclination?"

"Certainly; but I have never known of its going to the length of a murder."

"Nor I, I must confess, though that does not prove that this was not just such a case—though I don't believe it was. But you will admit perhaps that one person's hold upon another may be strong enough to compel him to enter a house for the purpose of stealing a paper."

"Certainly it might; and you would contend, I presume, that this person having so entered the chateau, was compelled to violence to escape the consequences of detection?"

"Exactly," replied Cassagne. "Now the question is, not who is the accomplice, but who is the principal? The principal is the party primarily interested, and he forces the accomplice to obey. The accomplice, the mere tool, we cannot hope to find first as we have no clue to him. But we may reason as to who his principal is, and so we may find them both. The accomplice will be found when the principal is brought to light."

"Go on," again said D'Auburon, as the detective paused.

"I can't go on," answered Cassagne. "I have just got so far and there I have stuck. I am in the position of a hound who scents a fox somewhere, but knows not in what direction to look for him."

"But it seems to me that he cannot be far off."

"Very likely. He may be right under our noses, and we not able to discover it. But our opportunities for investigation are not yet exhausted by any means. There are two people who may be said to be interested parties, sufficiently interested to be instigators of the crime, and both must be found, if possible."

"And they are?"

"Henry Graham's wife and their son, the latter of whom has long since grown to manhood. Do not forget that, under the American law, both of them would inherit if Madame Roupell died intestate. I shall now try and find them."

"Whom will you look for first?"

"The son—for reasons too many to enumerate."

"Where will you search for him?"

"In Paris."

"Why in Paris?"

"Because the priest told me the woman who brought him up went to Paris; besides he was a wild young fellow, and all wild young fellows come to Paris eventually. It is simply a question of time."

"Where shall you begin to look for him?"

"Where all young men of his stamp eventually are known. Take my word for it, we shall find some record of Henry Graham's son, Philip Graham, on the records of the police."

CHAPTER XVII.

Shortly before ten o'clock on the following morning, Cassagne and D'Auburon entered the bureau, where under the direct supervision of the commissary the records of the department of police are preserved for future reference. Cassagne was evidently well known to the officers of the bureau. In a few minutes such books and indices as he required were placed at his disposal.

D'Auburon stood by intently watching his principal as he turned to the index page of a huge volume. Reaching the letter "G" he ran his eye rapidly over the names, which were arranged in the order of their date of entry. He started in at the top of the page full of confidence; as his finger traveled down the column, however, his face grew perceptibly longer. When he reached the bottom, he gave audible expression to his disappointment by exclaiming:

"Philip Graham either was never under police surveillance at all, or he changed his name when he came to Paris."

As the detective uttered these words, an idea suddenly occurred to D'Auburon.

"Look under the name of the woman in whose charge he was placed. If he took any other name than his own, what more natural than he should take hers?"

"That's a good suggestion," said Cassagne. "Her name was Marie La Seur, as I recollect it—yes, that was it. Marie La Seur. I'll trouble you for that 'L' volume."

D'Auburon handed it to him, and the search commenced afresh. Presently Cassagne exclaimed:

"Here is Philip La Seur. I shouldn't be surprised if you were right. Page fifty-three."

"Hold on a minute. Don't be disappointed if it shouldn't prove to be the man. La Seur is a common enough name, and there are over two millions and a half of people in Paris to draw from. Here's page fifty-three; now let me see what it says."

The two men leaned over the book as they scanned the page before them. Then they read:

"Philip La Seur, placed under police surveillance by order of the commissary."

"We have him!" exclaimed D'Auburon, in a tone of triumph. "We have him now, for certain."

"Not too fast, my friend; not too fast. Let's see what this foot note is."

At the bottom of the page was written in red ink:

"Toulon, seventeen years, forgery."

An expression of intense disappointment spread itself over the face of the detective. D'Auburon, also, understood. Philip La Seur could have served out but little more than half his sentence. Consequently he could have had no hand in the commission of the crime.

For a few minutes both men were entirely nonplused. At length Cassagne, who had again been thinking deeply, exclaimed:

"I shall not be satisfied until I have examined the state papers relating to this trial, at the conclusion of which Philip La Seur was sent to Toulon."

"You will waste your time," replied D'Auburon.

"I shall not. How do you know there may not have been a commutation of sentence?"

"I must confess that did not even occur to me."

"Well, it occurred to me; and in any event it will be time well spent to look over the record of the trial. Philip La Seur may have called witnesses to testify in his own behalf—to speak, for instance, of his former good character—and who knows what we may learn from them? Go out and get a cab, while I take down the number of the case and put away these books."

"To the Palais de Justice."

As they are about to step into a cab, a newsboy approached them, crying:

"Horrible murder! A body found in the Seine!"

"Buy a paper, D'Auburon," said Cassagne, as he leaped into the vehicle.

D'Auburon did as requested, and jumping into the cab after his friend, spread the sheet just wet from the press out upon his knees.

"Ah!" he ejaculated, "this plot thickens with a vengeance. Whom do you think the murdered man is?"

"I cannot guess."

"It is Vougeot, the detective whom the prefect of police placed on the track of Jules Chabot."

* * * * * * *

It was not a voluminous document, the report of the trial and conviction of Philip La Seur. To be sure, no one from a perusal of it could have argued the identity of the prisoner in the case with the Philip Graham of Belliers. But were the facts gleaned from the evidence conclusive? Certainly not. There were points of identity, however, which were quite marked; the age of the prisoner nearly corresponded with that of the man they were looking for; he had not been all his life in Paris; he had neither father nor mother living—but beyond that there was little enough about his family history. The court had offered to appoint a lawyer to defend him, which offer the prisoner had refused and had made a not unable speech in his own behalf, which in all likelihood had been the means of sensibly influencing the court, for in pronouncing sentence, the judge had expressed his regret that the prisoner had misused his talents to commit the crime with which he stood charged. Though he examined all the papers connected with the case, Cassagne was unable to discover anything by which the identity of the two persons could be more fully established.

"We have yet the locket," he said, at length, "hich perhaps may help us."

"But it is the locket of Henry, not Philip Graham," said D'Auburon.

"I have not forgotten that," replied the detective. "But a family likeness is a strong thing sometimes. This portrait of Henry Graham is undoubtedly a good likeness. Recollect that Dr. Mason, the laundress, the janitor at Blois and the priest at Belliers have all recognized it as his portrait. It was taken when he was quite a young man. Sometimes father and son, at the same age, very closely resemble each other. If there should be a strong likeness between the portrait and Philip La Seur whom should you take the latter to be?"

"Why, Philip Graham, of course, as we have all along hoped; but what of that? We have no portrait with which to compare it."

"You forget," replied Cassagne, "the admirable collection of photographs at police headquarters."

"Which is under the strict surveillance of the prefect of police. Do you suppose he would allow us to look at them, when our success means his defeat? Not exactly; why, we could never get beyond the door."

"I will take care of that," replied M. Cassagne.

M. Cassagne, on parting with his friend, buttoned up his coat with the air of a man who prepares himself for energetic action, and passing across the river, plunged into the most intricate recesses of the Latin Quarter. Before crossing the river, however, he had stopped at a famous confectioner's and purchased a box of bon-bons. What did M. Cassagne want with such things?

Arrived at a house in the Rue Battiney, M. Cassagne stepped inside the hallway and pressed his finger on a small white button. The sound of an electric bell ringing upstairs was almost immediately followed by a voice exclaiming down the speaking tube:

"Who is there?"

"Is, that Madame Cresson?" inquired the detective, in a low but distinct voice.

"It is."

"I am Alfred Cassagne. Let me come upstairs. I want to see you about important business."

A clanging sound was heard, and a black door which had hitherto prevented ingress to the stairway, released by a spring, swung slowly back upon its hinges. The detective stepped on to the stairs, and, closing the door after him with some care, ascended to the second story.

A small, dark-complexioned woman, apparently about twenty-five years of age, opened the door of one of the apartments, and invited him to enter. The room was neatly furnished and was evidently one of a suite. At a table near one of the windows a little girl sat doing sums on a slate. She had the black hair of her mother; a beautiful, saucy, piquant mouth; eyes of a deep, scintillating blue; and a little figure that was the very perfection of childish grace. She arose on the entrance of the detective, and ran toward him, holding out both hands.

"Ah! Papa Alfred, how do you do?" she exclaimed. "Have you brought me some bon-bons?"

"A kiss first," cried the detective, lifting her in his arms.

Mlle Celeste Cresson having complied by placing both arms around his neck and putting her charming mouth to his, he set her down on the floor and bade her search for the bon-bons, in the course of which she brought to light a great many articles of Papa Cassagne's peculiar calling, all of which she placed in her apron, declaring she would never surrender them.

At length, having found her bon-bons, her playmate was at liberty to address himself to the young mother, who all this time had been standing by clapping her hands, and seemingly evincing as much delight, when a wig or a pair of handcuffs was unearthed from the depths of the detective's capacious pockets, as the child herself.

Mme. Rosa Cresson, from whose face all trace of amusement had now vanished, and who sat easily in her chair prepared to listen to the detective, was a woman with a history. Married at an early age and cruelly deserted by her husband, she had been thrown upon her own resources. There were many occupations open to her by which she could have earned a living. She could have found employment in dressmaking had she chosen, for she was an expert with her needle. She could have taught the piano, or set up as a translator of foreign documents, for she was a very fine linguist. Her personal charms and accomplishments were great enough to have induced many a theatrical manager to take her up, and probably she would have drifted on to the stage if it had not been for a slight incident which turned her from it, and presenting an opening in an entirely new field, decided her to adopt her present calling.

One day she entered the Bon Marche to do some shopping. She had made her purchases, paid for them and had reached the door when a heavy hand was laid upon her shoulder. Turning, she was confronted by one of the floorwalkers, who accused her of taking a piece of silk from the counter. Indignant at the charge, she made an impassioned appeal, on the spur of the moment, to a gentleman standing near. Her appeal was successful. The gentleman accompanied her into the office of the manager, became voucher for her honesty, and offered if given half an hour's time to produce the stolen property. The time was accorded him, and he left the office, to return with the piece of silk in question, which he had compelled a notorious female shoplifter to disgorge just as she was being bowed out by an obsequious shopman to her carriage.

"You had better strike the Marquise de Brabant from your books, monsieur," he had observed, laconically, when the manager insisted that one of his best customers had been insulted.

"That woman's real name is Bergeret. I thought everybody knew her. Now you will please pay this lady five hundred francs, and let her come with me. I can promise you she will institute no action for damages."

The manager was thunderstruck.

"Who are you?" he gasped.

"I am Alfred Cassagne; you may have heard of me. Good morning."

Then he took little Celeste Cresson in his arms and, accompanied by the grateful young mother, left the store. She was half fainting when he lifted her into a cab. He felt that it would be sheer brutality to leave her. He seated himself beside her, and bade the driver seek the address she gave him. On the way Mme. Cresson sat up and told him her sad history. She must find work soon, she confessed, for her money was nearly exhausted. Then it was that he told her how to enter a new profession.

"The proprietors of all those large stores would give you business, if I spoke to them. I also will give you employment."

That was how Mme. Cresson became a female detective, and at the time of this interview had become the most famous in her line in Paris.

(To be continued.)

Motherly Wisdom.

Anxious Mother—Mr. Willing may be a gentleman, my dear, but you can't afford to marry a man who wears plated links in his cuffs.

Pretty Daughter—But how do you know that he does, mamma?

Anxious Mother—Whenever he calls in the evening you have black streaks on your shirt waist the next morning.

Her Wish.

Tess—Yes, I wish all men were bachelors.

Jess—What! How could we get married if they were to be?

Tess—Oh! I don't mean permanently, but just long enough to learn to sew on buttons and to mend their clothes.—Philadelphia Press.

It Hurt Him.

"Gee whizz! I wish I could find the fellow who stole my umbrella——"

"Oh! cut it out! Why do you make a fuss over a little thing like that?"

"Little thing? Why, man, I actually bought that umbrella."—Philadelphia Press.

You don't have to be a carpenter to build a fortune.

Value of Co-Operation.

Sir Horace Plunkett, member of the British house of parliament, who has been in this country recently, said in an address to agricultural students that there was "not a single county, not a parish, in Ireland where the farmers are not completely revolutionizing the entire business of farming by introducing co-operative methods." And it might be added that there is scarcely a farming district in the United States where more benefits cannot be realized by a closer co-operation of the farmers. The farmers are understanding each other better each year and are coming closer together in all matters which pertain to their mutual interests, but there are still greater possibilities ahead. Describing the 900 co-operative organizations of peasants in Ireland which he was instrumental in establishing for the purpose of competition with commercial industries, forcing out middlemen, compelling railroads to provide better facilities, and dictating more favorable legislation to parliament, done: "The first thing was to introduce a system of agricultural education which extended into every branch of the industry, teaching the farmer, for instance, to purchase everything he requires, implements and machinery, of the very best quality. They combined to consign in bulk and distribute their goods in the market. They combined to raise working capital for their operations. They combined to own breeding animals. They did just what you are doing here, brought science into farming by getting it into the schools. They had the same system of instruction and experimentation supplied by your government."

New Variety of Tobacco.

A new variety of tobacco, valuable for cigar wrapping, was first raised in Connecticut from seed brought from Florida and which originally came from Sumatra. After very careful and satisfactory tests results have proved beyond a doubt the value of this variety for growing commercially, together with the fact that the seed comes true to type year after year when saved under bog. The name Uncle Sam Sumatra was given to this variety. It is a cigar wrapper variety of tobacco and adapted for growing under shade in the cigar wrapper producing regions. The plants reach an average height of about eight feet at the time of maturity, and they bear an average of about twenty-six leaves before topping. The cured leaves will average about sixteen inches in width by twenty inches in length, although the size varies according to field and cultural conditions. The yield of the crops of this variety is high, being as much as 1,600 pounds of cured tobacco to the acre under favorable conditions. The percentage of the best grades of wrapper in these crops is correspondingly high.—Exchange.

THE PLANT.

THE LEAF.

Celery Stored in Cellars.

Where celery is stored in cellars the temperature should be kept low and plenty of ventilation maintained. The warmth and dampness of the ordinary cellar have a tendency to cause the celery to decay, but these conditions can frequently be overcome. Celery will readily absorb any odor that may be present in the atmosphere of the storage place, and care should be taken to provide sanitary conditions. The plants should have most of their roots attached, and a bed of moist sand in which to set them should be provided.

Wintering Cabbage.

One of the simplest ways of keeping cabbage is to store in an orchard or some sheltered place, often alongside a fence which has been made tight by a liberal use of straw. The cabbages are stored with their stems on and are placed head down and as close together as possible. Two or three tiers are often made, the heads of the second tier being placed between stems of the lower, and so on, the piles being made of any width and length desired. The whole is covered with leaves, salt grass hay or straw and a little soil, rails, brush or litter. Small unsalable heads when stored in this way in November will continue to develop during winter and frequently sell as well as any in February. Small quantities may be stored by plowing out two or three furrows ten or twelve inches deep on a well drained site and placing the heads with their stems up as close together as possible. Some prefer to lay them but one or two thick, while others will pile them up two to two and a half feet high, bringing them to a point. The pile is then covered with straw, salt grass hay or a thin layer of straw and then several inches of soil. They are stored before freezing, and when the soil covering them is frozen it may be covered with strawy manure or any other litter to keep the soil frozen until the cabbages are needed for sale.

An Electric Incubator.

Electricity has been applied to incubation by Otto Schultz, an electrician of Strassburg, and is the result of three years of experimentation. The apparatus is made for 50, 100 or 200 eggs, and is designed to obviate the difficulties connected with the ordinary form of incubator. The manipulation of the apparatus is very simple, and its maintenance depends only upon an uninterrupted supply of electricity.

An automatic attachment keeps the temperature within one-tenth of a degree of the normal temperature of incubation. The degree of saturation of the air is kept in the same manner. Under ordinary conditions, ninety chickens can be counted on out of 100 eggs incubated. The quantity of electricity required is very small, for an incubator holding fifty eggs, ten to twenty watts being sufficient, depending upon the temperature of the outer air.

For raising the chickens after they are hatched, an electric "mother" has been devised. The upper part is devoted to the freshly hatched chickens, while the lower part is arranged so that the chicks can run around on the ground and at the same time find heat and protection when they desire. The electric incubator has already proved very successful.

Test Seeds at Home.

The Department of Agriculture in order to aid farmers to determine for themselves without much trouble the germination value of seeds has issued a short bulletin on the subject. A very simple apparatus for sprouting seeds is described. It consists of a shallow basin in which is placed a small flat of porous clay. The seeds, after having been soaked, are laid between two sheets of moist blotting paper or flannel. A pane of glass covers the dish, which should be kept in a temperature of about 70 degrees. Atmosphere of an ordinary living room is suitable if the apparatus is left near a stove at night. Several kinds of seeds may be tested at once at a trifling cost. The bulletin cautions the farmer against extremes of heat or moisture.

Farm Gleanings.

Bitter cream comes from keeping cream too long from cows that have been milked since early last spring. It is best to churn every few days, even though there is only a small churning on hand.

In setting out the new fruit trees be sure and leave plenty of space between them. You must make allowance for the growth of the years. Crowded trees interfere with one another and have their fruit bearing possibilities checked.

The potato storeroom must be dark, cool, well ventilated and dry. There should be a double floor beneath where large quantities are piled together. There should also be opportunities for ventilation at the walls, and at intervals through the pile.

Alfalfa in the orchard should have every show possible. Allow the fall growth to lie on the ground, and then, after the ground dries up in the spring, the coat of dead vines should be burned. There is no better money maker on the farm than alfalfa.

The most money is made out of horses that are well bred and free from blemishes. Why raise any other kind? As has been repeatedly said it takes just as much time and trouble and feed to raise a poor horse as a good one and see the difference in the prices for which they are sold.

A good condition powder, to be fed in limited quantities to the brood sow, is composed of a teaspoonful each of copperas, sulphur and a half cupful of oil meal. Give once each day for each sow weighing 250 pounds. It is needless to say that all tonics should be given only when the animal is out of condition.

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