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The Trail of the Dead:

THE STRANGE EXPERIENCE OF DR. ROBERT HARLAND

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CHAPTER I.

I.—THE HAIRY CATERPILLAR.

It is with no intention of delighting the curious that I put my pen to paper. Only at the urgent desire of many members of my own profession have I undertaken a task necessarily disagreeable, and do now recall the details of a case which I take to be without parallel in the records of criminology. In the mental state of the afflicted being there was, indeed, little that was abnormal. Maniac that are similar to his fill our asylums. But that laborious studies in the byways of science, rather than in her more frequented paths, had placed at the will of his disordered brain weapons of a deadly potency, transformed a personal misfortune into a great and urgent public danger.

I spent four years at Cambride, where, though my degree was a high one, I found too many distractions to make such progress as I could have wished in my profession. Yet my interest in medicine grew steadily, and on leaving the university I determined, having both the means and the time at my disposal, to seek out a spot where I could throw myself into my work without the interruptions of old friends and old associations. The reputation of Heidelberg attracted me, and hither I migrated.

Sufficient for myself. The man who was to be associated with me in my strange quest I will describe with equal brevity. My cousin, Sir Henry Graden, Kt., M.D., F.R.S., F.R.S.G., was a man of remarkable personality—a surgeon of brilliant gifts that had made for him a European reputation, yet an eccentric—or so the world held him—who lacked the steady application necessary for complete success. He would throw himself into the solution of a problem, or the prosecution of a new experiment, with the utmost zeal; yet—on achieving the desired result he would shake off the atmosphere of the hospital and laboratory and start on some wild-goose chase that might include the ascent of an unclimbable peak, the capture of a rare species of wild animal, or the study of a little-known tribe of savages. In person he was of great stature, and heavily, almost clumsily, built, with a rugged, weather-beaten face, keen yet kindly grey eyes, and brown hair, somewhat grizzled about the temples. In age he was well past the forties. In dress and deportment he might pardonably have been mistaken for a prosperous Yorkshire grazier. Indeed, he was wont to complain that he acted as a magnet to all the tricksters of London; though, from the shrewd smile with which he accompanied his protests, it was easy to see that he thoroughly enjoyed the diversion of turning the tables on his discredited opponents.

It was towards the end of my second year at Heidelberg. An autumn sun had sunk to rest in a golden haze over the wooded hills, and the night, luminous under the harvest moon, lay upon the old town. I was sitting at my table, on which a shaded lamp threw its yellow circle, arranging the notes of the lectures I had that day attended, when there came a knock at the door behind me. I cried a sulky invitation, for I feared the appearance of one of my preposterous student friends, with his jargon of the duel and the promenade. But the next moment an enormous hand had dragged me into the realization of my duties as a host by standing me on my feet amid the clatter of a falling chair.

"Why, Cousin Graden!" I cried, for indeed it was he who had thus treated me. "What cyclone has blown you here?".

"Egad! I believe it's the truth I've heard," said he, throwing himself on to a sofa that cracked again under his weight—he was a famed breaker of furniture was cousin Harry Graden. "They told me that you'd shut yourself up for nigh two years—work, work, work—as if there was no young blood in your veins, and no green world lying around you, with not a yard of it that isn't worth all the most learned dissertations ever written."

I knew his favorite doctrine. It would have been as foolish to argue with him as to attempt to uphold the necessity for the Union with an Irish Home Ruler.

"But what are you doing here?" I repeated.

"It's to Berlin that I'm bound, to read a paper before a society that is good enough to be interested in some notes I took recently on the Kaffir witch-doctors. I'd a few days in hand, so I thought I would take a peep at my dear Heidelberg and, incidentally, at my worthy cousin, Robert Harland."

He rose and stalked about the room, clucking to himself like a contented hen.

"Same old jugs and china pipes; same wainscot, a shade darker maybe; same old oak beams, a thought more smoky; same schlagers above the mantelpiece."

He took down one of the student's dueling-swords, and slipped his hand into the heavy hilt. Raising his long arm into the orthodox attitude, he swept the keen, thin blade in hissing circles.

"Do you ever tramp on the sawdust, and drum with the schlager, and bleed in the tank, Cousin Robert?"

"Not I. Though I have heard of your triumphs in the past, you man of blood."

"And who has been gossiping?"

"Professor Von Stockmar. He asked me to supper the second day I arrived, for the sole purpose, I believe, of impressing me with the fame of a certain dueling desperado of a student, one Henry Graden, who flourished in Heidelberg twenty years ago."

"What, Von Stockmar? Little Hermann? What a good fellow he was! Did you ever hear him sing a song about—but, of course, that's not possible. So little Hermann's a professor, is he? Are you under him?"

"No; I'm with Professor Marnac."

Graden walked across to the fireplace and slowly filled a huge china pipe that lay thereon. He lit it and, turning his back to the empty grate, sent forth such puffs of smoke that he spoke as from out a cloud, mistily.

"He has made himself a great name, this Marnac. How do you stand with him, Cousin Robert?"

"I don't quite know. I was a great favorite of his in my first year."

"And now? Have you quarreled?"

"Well, not exactly; it's a foolish story."

"The foolish stories are often of greater interest than the wise ones."

"Well, cousin Graden," said I, leaning back in my chair and lighting a fresh cigarette, "if you want to hear it, I'll tell it you, and as shortly as may be. It began by the publication some six months ago of Professor Marnac's celebrated book, 'Science and Religion.'

"Humph! a strong effort, full of suggestions," he grunted; "but brutal, callous, and revolutionary. It had a mixed reception, I believe."

"It had; and nowhere more so than in this university. Von Stockmar followed it by a pamphlet of unsparing criticism, which split the students into two bodies—the Marnac men and the Stockmar men. It was a pretty quarrel, and gave an excuse for a score of the inevitable duels."

"Did Marnac attempt a reprisal?"

"He did, and in the unusual form of reading aloud Von Stockmar's attack upon his theories to the class, of which I am a member. He appealed to us for sympathy. His agitation was remarkable. I declare that he snarled over his opponent's name like a dog over a bone, and a most unpleasant scene ended in a fit, from which we aroused him with difficulty."

"But this does not tell me how you came to be involved," he cried sharply, striding over to the table and plumping himself into a chair facing me.

"Have patience, my impetuous cousin. From the first I had always found a friend in Von Stockmar. I liked him and we met frequently. The second day after the scene in the lecture-room I was walking with the cheery little man when we chanced upon Marnac. He gave me an ugly look, but said nothing. That night, however, he came to these rooms and abused me roundly. He reminded me of the interest he had shown in my work, called me a traitor to his party, and in other ways behaved with a childish absurdity. Naturally, I refused to give up a valued friend."

"You did right. But surely the affair has blown over?"

"To the contrary, the antagonism—on Marnac's side, at least—has grown still more bitter. Whenever I chance to be present, he misses no opportunity of attacking 'my dear friend,' as he calls Von Stockmar, in the most cruel and vindictive fashion. My position at his lectures is, I assure you, becoming most unendurable."

"You are too sensitive, Cousin Robert. The absurdities of a vain and jealous——"

Graden checked his unfinished sentence with his nose cocked in the air like a gigantic terrier. Surprise and suspicion were in his expression and attitude. Then he rose slowly, as with an effort, and leaned forward across the table, his knuckles resting on its edge.

"We neglect our visitor," said he gravely, and at his words I turned sharply in my chair.

CHAPTER II.

In the shadows about the door, yet outlined with sufficient clearness against the black oak of the wainscot, a face stared in upon us. Around the head, crowned with a black skull-cap, fell a thick growth of white hair that was saint-like in length and beauty; the beard was of the like venerable purity. In a man of his apparent age the cheeks were curiously rosy, while the hand that held open the door was small as a woman's and delicate as old ivory. For a moment I thought that the eyes, exaggerated by the convex pebbles of great gold glasses, turned upon me with an expression of malicious satisfaction. Yet this was but an impression, for the gloom hung heavily about him where he stood, and my sight had not been unaffected by nights of study.

"Will not the gentleman step in?" Graden continued, with a reproach at my unhospitality in his voice.

Professor Rudolf Marnac—for it was he who thus honored us—slid his diminutive figure through the door and advanced, with a courteous inclination, into the lamplight.

"My dear young sir," said he, in the soft musical English with which it was his custom to address me, "I should not have intruded myself at this late hour but that I am the bearer of painful news which I felt it right to communicate to you. Your friend, Hermann Von Stockmar, died this evening of acute inflammation of the lungs."

"Died?" I cried in bewilderment. "Why, I passed him in the street at midday looking well and hearty."

"Yes, it is even so, Mr. Harland. One moment a steady flame illuminating this university with its light; the next, a sigh from the conqueror Death and it is extinguished. The active brain is still; the pen, trenchant, incisive, destructive, is laid aside for ever."

It was an impressive homily; but from so open and vindictive a foe it seemed singularly inappropriate.

"You seem surprised," he continued. "I fear that encounters in the cause of science may have led the public to believe that poor Von Stockmar and I cherished personal animosities. If that is so, I trust you will use your influence to contradict it. My sorrow is already heavy enough—without that unwarrantable suspicion."

The professor seemed deeply affected. Removing his spectacles, he pulled from his side pocket a large silk pocket-handkerchief. As he did so, a tinkle caught my ear. A square box of some white metal had fallen to the floor. It rolled into the lamplight, where the lid flew open. The professor hastily clapped on his glasses; but already Graden had retrieved the box and was presenting it to him.

"There was nothing in it, sir," said he, for the professor had stooped and was examining the carpet minutely.

"I thank you, I thank you."

"Pray do not mention it. Cousin Robert, if you and the professor will excuse me, I will step across and take a last look at poor little Hermann. Where are his rooms?"

Before I could answer, the professor was on his feet.

"Pray accept me as your guide," said he, moving towards the door. Graden bowed his thanks like a polite elephant. I followed the pair down the stairs.

It was growing late, and the narrow streets of the students' quarter were well nigh deserted. A moon, like a polished shield, hung over the old castle above us, picking out each turret and parapet in silver grey against the sleeping woods that swept upward to the sky-line. Across our path the gabled house cast broad, fantastic pools of shadow. A wind had risen with the moon, and sighed and quivered in the roofs and archways. Once, from a distant tavern, came the faint mutter of a rousing chorus, but soon it was swallowed and carried away by the midnight breezes.

We had not far to walk, and in five minutes the professor was tapping discreetly with an ugly devil-face of a knocker on Von Stockmar's door. Presently the bolt was drawn, and Hans, the grey-bearded servant of the dead man, stood in the doorway, a lamp held high above his head. He blinked upon us moodily, with eyes dimmed by old age and recent tears, till, catching sight of Graden's huge bulk, he stepped forward with a snort of surprise, flashing the light in his face as he did so.

"Ah! Goodness! but it is Heinrich der Grosse!" he stammered. "Ach! Herr Heinrich, but have you forgotten Hans of the Schlagers, servant of the honorable corps of the Saxo Borusen?"

"No, no," said Graden, shaking the veteran by the hand. "So our little Hermann took you for his servant, as he promised? This is a sad day for us both, old friend. Tell me, how did it happen?"

"Do not ask me, Herr Heinrich. My mind wanders—I, who served him nigh on twenty years and was as a father and mother to him.

The worthy fellow put down the lamp in the little hall into which he had led us, and mopped his eyes with a hand that trembled with emotion.

But Graden persisted in his quiet way and soon extracted the details. It seemed that it was the custom of the dead professor to take a nap after his midday meal. That afternoon, however, his sleep was unduly prolonged, and at four Hans, who knew he had an engagement about that hour, slipped in to wake him. His master was lying on the couch in his bedroom, where he was wont to take his siesta. But he was in a curious, huddled position and breathing stertorously. Hans failed to rouse him, became alarmed, and hurried off for a neighboring doctor. That gentleman diagnosed the case as a sudden and severe chill which had settled on the lungs, causing violent inflammation. Everything possible was done, but by eight he was dead. Beyond the remarkable violence of the seizure, the doctor had said, there was nothing in the symptoms. Overwork had doubtless undermined the constitution and rendered it vulnerable to a sudden attack.

"And while he was asleep—had he visitors?" asked Graden.

"The street door is never locked during the day."

"But would you not have heard the steps?"

"It was my custom to sleep too. Herr professor allowed it."

"So. I should like to take a last look at your poor master, friend Hans. By the way, Cousin Robert, where is our guide, the learned Marnac? I did not see him leave the house."

"Perhaps the Professor Marnac has already gone to my master's room, the second to the right on the first floor," suggested the old servant.

(To be continued.)

Fresh Air for the Hen.

Hens kept in cold quarters and fed heavily produced eggs with strong germs which hatched well, says Country Life in America. On the other hand, poultry kept in artificially warmed houses laid eggs with weak germs which hatched weak chickens. The "results were considered in favor of fresh air and plenty of it, even if it was cold."

In a study of the duration of fertilization after the removal of the male birds, records were kept of the number of eggs which hatched or which were shown to be fertile. The last trace of fertility was noticed eleven days after separation. The unfertilized eggs had superior keeping qualities, so the author recommends that as a rule male birds should not be kept with hens depended upon for market eggs. Experience showed that where there is variety in rations and care in feeding them, and sufficient floor space, there is little likelihood of egg eating or feather picking. Steamed lawn slippings were fed to the station poultry three or four times a week and eaten with evident relish. Clover leaves treated in the same way were also much liked.

Yellow Peril.

"More startling news from Shanghai," exclaimed the man with the paper, excitedly. "I tell you it is only a matter of time when the Chinese will try to do us up."

"Well," said the peaceful man in the scorched shirt, "at present we will be satisfied if they only do up our shirts and collars. I can't even get them to do that right."

In a Bad Way.

"Yes, poor papa's been shut up in the house so long. The doctor says if he could only get out to take a little exercise he would be very much better."

"Is he too weak to go out?"

"Oh, no, but there're process servers all around the house even down to the back gate."—Baltimore American.

An Off Year for Travel.

"My husband won't go to Europe this year."

"What's his excuse?"

"He says all the newspapers would wonder why."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

OREGON STATE ITEMS OF INTEREST

MILKING MACHINE TESTS.

Demonstration of Their Value To Be Given at State Fair.

Salem—Milking machines in operation will be one of the principal features of the dairy department at the State fair, which opens here September 10. Farmers and dairymen have always been interested in the subject of milking machines and their interest as become particularly strong in the last few years when dairying in this state has been hampered by the difficulty in securing milkers. Men do not like to milk and will not take work of that kind if they can get anything else at the same wages. But milking machinery has not generally been found to be successful and dairymen have been compelled to depend upon such labor as they could get.

There are some manufacturers of milking machines who think they have contrived apparatus that will extract the lacteal fluid from the patient or impatient cow, whether she be a hard milker or an easy one. Machines so simple that a boy can run them, are alleged to be ready for the farmer who doesn't like to milk and cannot hire somebody else to do it for him. Machines adjustable for tall cows or short ones, kickers and nonkickers, Jerseys, Holsteins or scrubs, await the doubting owner of the dairy herd. It's all a question of proof and the state board of agriculture proposes to give the manufacturers of milking machines the opportunity to prove by actual demonstration.

There will be plenty of cows at the fair and the owners of machines will be called upon twice a day to do the milking. If the machines work to the satisfaction of the farmers, there will be some business in milking machines. If they don't work, the cows and their owners will give the machine manufacturers the laugh.

But whether the machines work or don't work, the state board of agriculture will give the farmers a chance to see them tried, and beyond doubt there will be ranchers around the stock pens twice a day to see the demonstration, and the fun, if any of the cows object to the unaccustomed treatment.

New Hospital at Chemawa.

Chemawa—Plans and specifications have been received at the Indian school here for a new brick $15,000 hospital, for which bids will be received and the contract awarded September 13. The building is to be supplied with the latest improved methods of heating and ventilation, and will be equipped with the best sanitary appliances. It will be steam heated and electric lighted. The main building will be two stories, 80x33, and will have two wings, 31x24. In connection with the new hospital the school management will continue and extend the open air sanitarium which it has been running since spring with excellent results.

Oregon Flax Good.

Salem—George Verbeke, son of one of the wealthiest linen manufacturers of Ghent, Belgium, and a member of the firm of Morel & Verbeke, is in Salem to make a scientific investigation into the possibilities for the development of the flax and linen industries of Oregon. He said: "I have been able to arrive at only one conclusion as a result of the limited investigations which I have made during my stay here, and that is that Oregon certainly produces a very high grade of flax, equal to any that I have ever seen, and, in my judgment, it is capable of being manufactured into the choicest of linen fabrics."

Burned Trees Have Value.

Albany — Experienced lumbermen state that activity on the part of mill men will save much of the timber in the burnt district up the North Santiam river. The fire as it rushes through th green timber burns those parts of the trees which are loaded with pitch, and leaves the wood but little charred. All the limbs and foliage are devoured, and the pitchy bark is burned through, but the part that is valuable for lumber is injured but little. This charred timber may be utilized for milling purposes at any time within four years after the fire as a rule.

Nevada Capitalists Buying.

Lakeview—Dr. W. H. H. Patterson, a Reno, Nev., capitalist, and Mr. Nornardy, a Tonopah mineowner, arrived here recently and went to the Coyote Hills strike. Both gentlemen are extensive mineowners in the Tonopah mining district. They have also investigated the Pine creek mines, 15 miles from Lakeview, and it is stated on good authority that Dr. Patterson paid $10,000 for a tenth interest in a group of claims there.

Clackamas Farmers Are Pleased.

Oregon City—Gottfried Moehnke, a farmer at Shubel, reports a yield of 74 bushels per acre from a five-acre field of oats. An exceptionally good yield of wheat and oats, both in quality and quantity, is reported by Clackamas county farmers as far as the harvest has progressed. A yield of 70 bushels of oats per acre is also reported from the farm of George Laselle near New Era.

Cuts Heavy Crop of Oats.

La Grande—James Halley harvested 10 acres of oats last week, which will average 80 bushels. The straw was so heavy and thick that the binder could cut only half a swath at a time, and it took two days to cut the grain. This should not be considered bad for a "half-crop" year.

VALLEY VALUES ARE RISING.

Land Purchased Last Year Increases About 28 Per Cent.

Salem—That the big profits in Oregon real estate are not made in Portland alone, or in city property alone, is indicated by an investment made less than a year ago by A. M. La Follette, a Mission bottom farmer. La Follette bought a 90 acre farm last fall at $62.50 an acre, paying all that his neighbors thought the place worth. He bought it more for the investment than for use, for he already has all the farm land he needs. A few days ago he was offered $80 an acre for the same farm, or an increase of $17.50 an acre.

The total investment was $5,625, and the amount offered a year later was $7,200, or an increase of $1,575, or about 28 per cent. Mr. La Follette thinks it will advance still further and yield him a much larger profit, so he refused the offer. He thinks the building of electric roads through the valley will raise farm land values in the next few years.

State Will Profit.

Salem—That the sale of the Oregon Central wagon road lands to Minnesota and North Dakota investors means much to the settlement of Southeastern Oregon is the belief of W. F. Dunlap, of the state printing office, who was formerly a newspaper man in North Dakota. He bases his opinion on his knowledge of the work these men have done in North Dakota in the way of colonizing large tracts of land purchased in that state.

Physician to Indians.

Chemawa—Dr. F. E. Slater, of Salem, has been appointed physician for the Omaha and Winnebago Indians of Nebraska, and will leave for his post soon. Dr. Slater was the physician at the Chemawa Indian school for nearly a year. He became interested in the Indian work and requested a permanent appointment from the commissioner of Indian affairs. Dr. Slater gave excellent satisfaction at the Indian school here in treating the diseases incident to Indians.

Wheat Record at Westen.

Weston—Weston claims the largest crop threshed in Oregon, and perhaps in the Northwest, in proportion to the acreage seeded. J. M. Bannister had exactly 5,642 sacks from 208 acres, one mile west of town, an average of 63 bushels an acre, at 140 pounds to the sack. The wheat is Dale Glory, which has been grown to a considerable extent around Helix but has just been introduced in the Weston country.

Coquille Mills Are Busy.

Coquille—The sawmills in this vicinity are running overtime, which is practically the first time they have run even full time since the San Francisco earthquake. Many of them would run night and day if hands could be obtained. All kinds of laborers are scarce, especially carpenters.

PORTLAND MARKETS.

Wheat — Club, 67@68c; bluestem, 70@71c; valley, 71c; red, 64@66c.

Oats—No. 1 white, $22@22.50; gray, $20@21.

Barley—Feed, $20 per ton; brewing, $22 50; rolled, $23@24.

Rye—$1.30 per cwt.

Corn—Whole, $26; cracked, $27 per ton.

Hay—Valley timothy, No 1, $11@12.50 per ton; Eastern Oregon timothy, $16; clover, $7@7.50 cheat, $6.50; grain hay, $7; alfalfa, $10; vetch hay, $7@7.50.

Fruits — Apples, common, 50@75c per box; fancy, $1.25@2; apricots, $1.25@1.35; grapes, $1@1.75 per crate; peaches, $1@1.10; pears, $1.75, plums, fancy, 50@75c per box; common 50@75c; blackberries, 5@6c per pound; crab apples, 75c per box.

Melons—Cantaloupes, $1.75@2 per crate; watermelons, 1@1½c per pound.

Vegetables—Beans, 5@7c; cabbage, 1¾@2c per pound; celery, 85c@$1 per dozen; corn, 15@20c per dozen; cucumbers, 40@60c per box; egg plant, 10c per pound; lettuce, head, 25c per dozen; onions, 10@12½c per dozen; peas, 4@5c; bell peppers, 12½@15c; radishes, 10@15c; per dozen; rhubarb, 2@2½c per pound; spinach, 2@3c per pound; tomatoes, 60@90c per box; parsley, 25c; squash, $1@1.25 per crate; turnips, 90c@$1 per sack; carrots, $1@1.25 per sack; beets, $1.25@1.50 per sack.

Onions—New, 1½@1½c per pound.

Potatoes—Oregon Burbanks, 70@75c; sweet potatoes, 4@4½c per pound.

Butter—Fancy creamery, 22½@25c per pound.

Eggs — Oregon ranch, 21½@22c per dozen.

Poultry — Average old hens, 13c per pound; mixed chickens, 12½@13c; springs, 13½@14c, old roosters, 9@10c; dressed chickens, 14@15c; turkeys, live, 16@22c; turkeys, dressed, choice, 20@22½c; geese, live, 8@10c; ducks, 11@13c.

Hops — 1906 contracts, 18 @ 20c; 1905, nominal; 1904, nominal.

Wool—Eastern Oregon average best, 15@19c per pound, according to shrinkage; valley, 20@22c, according to fineness; mohair, choice, 28@30c per pound.

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Beef — Dressed bulls, 3c per pound; cows, 4½@5½c; country steers, 5@6c.

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