

agents of high persons were prowling about seeking to destroy evidence, but the other side openly suggested that the disappearance of these documents was no mystery at all.

Mrs. Robinson's solicitors had a copy of the diary, and the lady could tell the Court the contents. Her father had been a tobacco planter in Virginia, and in 1861 she came to England with her Aunt and went to school at Tunbridge Wells. She had gone to Gad's Hill to stay with Dickens, whom she alleged she knew intimately. His letters to her had unfortunately been stolen on board ship. Dickens and Druce, it appears, were great friends. She met Druce at some theatricals at Gad's Hill, and she saw a good deal of him at Baker Street afterwards. When she was eighteen Dickens took her down to Worksop, where she saw Druce without his beard, wearing blue spectacles. In 1868 she had been to Welbeck and seen Druce there, and he gave her mysterious letters to carry into the outer world. He never told her about his pretended death. She acted from time to time as his "outside correspondent."

Margaret Jane Louise Hamilton, the lady who had made affidavits in the Probate proceedings of 1898, and who was indeed the fount and origin of the whole proceedings, again repeated her early memories of the extraordinary Druce, and detailed his confession that he was going "to do away with Druce."

There were other witnesses, many of them honest worthy people, whose memory, or want of it, was very unconvincing, and then the defendant's first witness, Miss Bayley, was called, an old lady of seventy-seven, who had been with Druce since she was fifteen. She gave a full account of Thomas

Charles Druce's last illness and death, and no one who heard her but was satisfied that she was speaking the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

By this time the defence came to the conclusion that it was time for them to take active steps against the enemy. A warrant was issued against old Mr. Caldwell for perjury, but he had been too quick for his opponents and had already shipped to America. Then the public learned with much satisfaction that the relations had at last consented to end the business once and for all by allowing the grave in Highgate Cemetery to be opened.

On the last day of the old year, 1907, on a cold bleak morning, Dr. Pepper, Sir Thomas Stevenson and the photographers and undertakers' men arrived at Highgate with the necessary faculties and licences to open the grave. Tarpaulins were spread on the ground, and trestles placed below the electric light, and the coffin reverently raised to earth. The name-plate was plainly visible:

THOMAS CHARLES DRUCE,
ESQUIRE.

Died 28 December

1864

In his 71st year.

The undertakers' men cut through the outer lead shell, and pulling it away brought with it the inner wood casing. There, exposed to the eye of man and the lens of the camera, was displayed the shrouded human figure of an aged bearded man, who had walked the earth for seventy years, and passed away from it under the name and title of Thomas Charles Druce.

The mystery was at an end. The bubble had

burst. As Mr. Plowden sagely remarked, in dismissing the case against Mr. Herbert Druce, "the case is an illustration of that love of the marvellous which is so deeply ingrained in human nature, and is likely to be remembered in legal annals as affording one more striking proof of the unfathomable depths of human credulity."

There remained only the witnesses to deal with. Richard Caldwell was extradited and afterwards declared insane. Mary Ann Robinson pleaded guilty to perjury and was sentenced to four years' penal servitude. Mrs. Hamilton was tried and convicted and sentenced to eighteen months' hard labour, the length of her sentence being reduced on account of her age. She declared to the end that she was not guilty, and I have often thought that she may have deceived herself into the belief that there was substance in her story, and repeated it so often that she at last believed it to be true. Such a condition of mind is not unknown in the psychology of women mediums and other traders in the marvellous.

Indeed, the story of the Druce Mystery is not without its moral for a modern generation always seeking after some new thing and very ready to believe with Tertullian that it is true because it is impossible.

3. THE MYSTERY OF MERSTHAM TUNNEL

Readers of Edgar Allan Poe will remember his masterpiece, *The Mystery of Marie Roget*, whose sudden disappearance produced such intense excitement in Paris, and whose atrocious murder was a problem too difficult for the Parisian police to solve. Had Edgar Allan read the story of Mary Money he might have solved the mystery of her death, but

the police made nothing of it. There were various theories put forward at the time. Seven years afterwards these were reconsidered and revised. But the solution, whatever it is, will always remain a mystery. The last act of the drama will never be written. The scenes that were played out are peculiarly horrible and extraordinary. They are of the kind that lovers of the Grand Guignol revel in. There is a certain fascination in mere horror which finds its place in drama. But it would be impossible to invent stranger tales of terror and mystery than the stories of Mary Money and her brother Robert.

Mary Sophia Money was a pleasant girl of twenty-two, who was in September, 1905, working as a book-keeper for a dairyman at 245 Lavender Hill, Clapham Junction. She had been in her situation for over a year. She was in good favour with her neighbours, who one and all spoke well of her as a kindly girl of good reputation. There was a very honest young fellow near by who wrote letters to her and walked out with her, and she had other friends and acquaintances suitable to her class. No one suspected her of any social intrigue, nor had she, as far as appeared, ever absented herself from her work or been away from the household where she lived for any length of time.

On Sunday evening, about seven o'clock, she left the house, telling her fellow assistant that she would not be long and was going for a walk. Her dress contained no pocket. Round her neck was a flimsy silk scarf like a motor veil. She carried in her hand a handkerchief and a small black knitted purse with money in it. At No. 2 Station Approach, Clapham Junction, she entered a sweet shop a few minutes after seven, and bought six pennyworth of chocolates. At that time she was alone. The lady who

served her knew her well and was sure no one was waiting for her outside the shop. She mentioned that she was going to Victoria. From that moment no one, as far as the world knew, ever spoke to the poor girl again.

About five minutes to eleven o'clock on the same Sunday night a sub-inspector of the South Eastern Company was patrolling the Merstham Tunnel. There were men at work relining the brickwork. He entered the tunnel at the Coulsdon end, and before he came to the outlet he found what appeared to be a bundle of clothing lying between the down line and the tunnel side. He turned his lantern upon it and was horrified to find it was the corpse of a woman terribly mangled by the wheels of a train. The body was still warm. He ran for help to Merstham Station, and the body was removed to Merstham, and a doctor sent for, but the poor woman was beyond human aid.

The injuries were very terrible. Both thighs were fractured, the left leg only hung by a shred, a wheel had eviscerated the lower part of the body, and a portion of the fluffy scarf was pushed into the brain. The police constable reported, too, that he found about a foot of this scarf wedged into the woman's mouth, apparently gathered up from the knot under the chin and thrust down the throat. Unfortunately he pulled it out before any experts could examine it. The doctor who first saw her and examined the remains with the police constable came to the conclusion that the woman had been gagged by someone who was travelling in the carriage with her, and thrown out into the tunnel through an open door by a person of considerable strength. No money, purse or railway ticket was found.

A police description was issued on the Monday, which included the laundry mark 245, which was the number of the shop at which Mary Money was employed. It appeared that she had a brother living at Kingston Hill. He, too, was in the dairy business. By Tuesday he seems to have heard that his sister was missing. He went down to Merstham and recognised the remains.

The Press representatives who saw him describe him as a young and prosperous-looking dairy farmer. He has a sad task before him, and they are naturally sympathetic and respect his sorrow. The police take him to identify the remains, which are locked in a dark shed. They illuminate the grim scene with a flickering stable lantern. The young man bears himself bravely. There is no doubt it is his sister.

The inquest threw little light on the affair. The young fellow who had walked out with her had clearly never been in her company during that day. The evidence of railway men and others, who thought they had seen her in company with someone, was of little or no value and very vague and contradictory. There was no trustworthy evidence that anyone ever saw her after she left the sweet shop. Robert Money, her brother, was merely called as a witness to identify the body. Afterwards, it was alleged that friends noticed a strangeness in his manner, and it was asserted that he complained to some of them that the police suspected him. As a matter of fact he was not suspected, and no questions were asked of him as to his movements. Other witnesses were examined as to their movements and accounted for them satisfactorily.

There were experts who favoured the theory of suicide, but Dr. Wilcox was satisfied that the bruises

on the right arm and wrist were not due to contact with the train but were inflicted. He considered there was evidence to show that she was attacked and then jumped or was thrown out of the train whilst she was alive. If the police officer is to be believed—and there is no reason to doubt his accuracy—the poor girl was choked with the scarf, which was stuffed down her throat, and then thrown from the train into the tunnel.

Who did it and why? That is the mystery which probably will never be solved. There seemed to be no clues to follow up, and the affair was forgotten or only remembered as an unanswered problem in the history of crime. No one seems at the time to have taken any note of the demeanour of brother Robert. It is not likely that he betrayed any peculiar emotion over his sister's death, since students of criminology tell us that moral insensibility is a characteristic of the instinctive and habitual murderer.

It seems harsh to use such a phrase in relation to a blameless milkman, but we cannot but wish some eager detective had paid more intimate attention to the movements of brother Robert. After his sister's death we hear nothing of him for about a year. Then he appears to have sold his share of the milk business for £1000, which he invested in house property in Kingston, the rents from which seem to have been his sole legitimate income.

We must now occupy ourselves with a different history. About 1907, two sisters, Florence and Edith, were living with their parents at Clapham. Florence became acquainted with a fascinating young fellow named Robert Hicks Murray. He had plenty of money and had been a captain in the Gordon Highlanders. He spoke of his people as

being in Scotland and on the continent. His father was a barrister at Watford. He persuaded Florence to live with him at a house in Clapham, which he furnished for her.

He, too, had property in Kingston, so he said, and also drew money for Army work. He had a bank account, and his affairs, whatever they were, flourished. There were two children of this union, and for a year or two Captain Murray was very kind to Florence and her children. He had no regular business. He rose early, helped in the domestic duties of the house, then strolled on the Common until dinner time, after which he went to a cricket match or a boxing match, so he said, and returned to tea. He was very fond of the theatre and the music hall. He used to take Florence to the play or the halls. At first they went to the stalls and dress circle, but latterly they had been content with the upper circle or pit. Sometimes he was away on Army or other business.

During these years, although he was kind and generous, Florence was somewhat afraid of him. He was a strong muscular man and very passionate at times. She had doubts about his identity, and once he caught her searching his pockets to look at his letters and threatened to kill her. She seems to have surmised that he was not all he pretended to be; but, though she lived with him for several years, she had no knowledge of the channels from which he obtained money except what he told her about his rents from Kingston and the alleged Army business, on account of which he said he drew pay.

In the summer of 1910, Florence's sister, Edith, came to see them. The fickle Murray fell in love with her at first sight. Edith, on her part, seems to have been only too ready to meet his advances.

They were married at once, but the Captain did not wholly desert his first love. He lived at various places with his real wife, and would return to spend a few days from time to time with Florence and her children.

Towards the end of 1911, the cost of two establishments seemed to be exhausting his resources, and he told Florence that he had sold his Kingston house property. In July, 1912, he took her with her children down to Eastbourne, where they went to some rather poor lodgings and passed under the name of Stirling. Here he left her very much to herself. For at the same time he was living, unknown to Florence, in a better part of Eastbourne with his real wife, Edith, and her child, for whom he had taken a villa in the name of Charles Richard Mackie, posing as an American.

On the morning of Saturday, August 18th, the housekeeper at the villa was told that Mr. and Mrs. Mackie would not require her services for a time, as they were going away, and would send her a wire when they returned. The tradesmen were told not to call until Tuesday. Edith was last seen alive at about 6.40, when she was out shopping. There is no doubt that the husband shot his wife and child on Saturday night and locked the bodies in a room on the first floor.

On Sunday afternoon he went to fetch Florence and the children and their luggage. He told her that a brother officer named Mackie had lent him a villa and they would go there. He took their luggage to the railway station and put it in the left-luggage office, and on his way to the villa purchased two cans of petrol. He then took Florence and her children to the empty villa, explaining to her that the owner had locked the door of the first-floor

room, as he had left his silver there, and she was not to open it.

That night he shot Florence whilst she was in bed, and, believing he had killed her, went into the room where his children were lying and shot them dead. Then he poured the petrol over their bodies and set fire to the bed, and as the flames arose turned his revolver upon himself and ended his life.

Florence struggled out into the street and saved her life. The flames were put out, and the remains of Murray, Edith and the three children were taken possession of by the police. In the house was found a note signed C. K. Mackie, stating that he was absolutely ruined and had killed everyone dependent upon him.

It was the facsimile of this letter published in the Press that disclosed the identity of Murray or Mackie. A relative who saw it said at once, "That is Bob's writing," and the murderer was clearly identified as Robert Henry Money.

That this man was a typical homicide there can be no question. This does not, of course, prove that he was the murderer of his sister, but it is unfortunate that his movements on the night of her murder were never traced. What induced this dairyman to pose as an Army man with connections in Scotland and elsewhere? What were the sources of his wealth? What was the business which called him away from home? These are riddles which must always remain unanswered.

4. DR. SMETHURST

I have before me a single sheet of aged yellow note-paper. It is a letter written from Surrey County Jail on August 22nd, 1859, to my father, Serjeant Parry. The agony of the writer's mind

seems yet to be alive in the faded brown ink sputtering from the lines of the letters as if the pen was guided with difficulty by a trembling hand.

The opening phrase told of the hopeless tragedy of the writer's position :

“ My dear Sir,—What an awful state for an innocent man to be in—his days numbered and for having committed no crime.”

On the previous day, after four days' trial at the Old Bailey, Thomas Smethurst had been found guilty of a wicked and cruel murder. The judge, who was convinced of his guilt, had summed up strongly against him, and the jury had agreed upon their verdict in less than forty minutes.

The forcible eloquence of the speech for the defence was unavailing. Weighty evidence given by Dr. Tyler Smith and other experts was brushed aside by an impatient jury. The wretch was doomed. Here he was in the condemned cell in Surrey Jail obstinately protesting his innocence and waiting for the hangman.

Dr. Thomas Smethurst was a rogue, and an unpleasant rogue at that. But whether or not he murdered Isabella Bankes is a question which turns in a great measure upon expert medical testimony.

The human story of his actions, which prejudiced the jury so greatly against him, might be the theme of one of those drab domestic dramas that delight the audiences of provincial repertory theatres.

In November, 1858, Thomas Smethurst, a retired medical man of fifty-four, was living with his wife, who was twenty years his senior, at a boarding house in Rifle Terrace, Bayswater. They seem to have had private means. His medical qualifications were not of the highest—nothing more reputable, indeed,

than a licentiate apothecary who had taken out a foreign medical degree.

In his early life he had been imprisoned for obtaining money by false pretences. He no longer practised medicine and seems to have travelled and lived on his means.

To the boarding house came Isabella Bankes, a lonely spinster of forty-three, described as being a woman of delicate health. She was readily attracted by Smethurst, who posed as a man of forty-eight, and seems to have made love to her at once. The respectable landlady, Mrs. Smith, was so outraged by Miss Bankes' lightness of behaviour in carrying on with a married man, that she gave her notice to quit, and on November 29th she left.

On December 12th Smethurst followed, leaving his wife behind, and on the same date he and Miss Bankes were married—or rather committed bigamy—at Battersea Parish Church.

After this sham marriage the parties lived at Old Palace Gardens, Richmond. They seem to have been happy, though from the first Miss Bankes was in ill-health. Smethurst often went to town for the day, and on occasion visited his real wife, whom he continued to support.

He declared, before sentence, that she knew all the circumstances of his living with Miss Bankes. After the trial Mrs. Smethurst wrote to the papers to say that her husband was a man of humane character and amiable disposition, with whom she had lived in perfect happiness and content for thirty years. These were the three sides of the human triangle which was soon to be a public proposition of intricate difficulty.

Toward the end of March Miss Bankes was seriously ill. It was known after her death that she

was expecting a child, but the doctors were not aware of this. Dr. Julius was called in by Smethurst on April 3rd. In the midst of her illness she was moved by Smethurst to 10 Alma Villas, on April 15th.

Here Dr. Bird, Julius's partner, attended her, and, as she grew worse, Dr. Todd, a specialist, was called in to see her on April 28th. In spite of their remedies she grew worse, and they formed the opinion that she was being given an irritant poison which was destroying her life.

Miss Bankes received money from two sources. She was entitled to the life interest on £5000, and she had £1740 lent on mortgage. On Sunday, May 1st, a solicitor, at Smethurst's request, brought to Miss Bankes for execution a will, leaving all her property to Smethurst. This she signed in her maiden name.

On the Monday the doctors communicated their suspicions to a magistrate. Smethurst was arrested on a charge of administering poison, but was released on his own recognisances. On Tuesday, May 8th, Miss Bankes died. Smethurst was re-arrested and charged with the murder, of which he was convicted in August.

The instinct of a jury in trying a case of murder readily fastens upon the question of motive. If there is a strong motive, and the accused possesses means of carrying out the crime, a jury is apt to step lightly over the gaps in the continuity of proof. A cynic once said that in a case of murder by a husband or wife the relationship is in itself a sufficient evidence of motive, but let us hope that no jury would follow so base a line of thought.

Smethurst may have had many motives. There was the £1740, for instance, but it should be

remembered that he left it until the very last moment to secure this ; and by the woman's death he clearly lost his participation in her life interest in the £5000. Of course his relationship with Miss Bankes, the fact that he had committed bigamy, that she was expecting a child, that her relatives (she had been visited by a sister) might make inquiries as to his antecedents and prosecute him—all these things were possible motives for a wicked man to commit a murder.

When Smethurst was arrested, a letter to his real wife was found in his pocket. In it he said that he had not been able to leave town in consequence of his medical aid being required in a case of illness, that he hoped to see her soon and would be "with her about the 11th." But all this seems as consistent with the knowledge that the woman was dangerously ill and probably dying as it is with murder.

The fact that he changed his lodgings when Miss Bankes was very ill, because, as he said, the rent was raised four shillings, had an ugly look. At the first lodgings the landlady and her daughter waited on the sick lady. During the last three weeks of her life at the new lodgings Smethurst himself waited on her day and night. He refused to hire a nurse, on the ground of expense, though he had in his pocket £70 of Miss Bankes' money, the quarter's dividend of her life interest.

Although at Old Palace Gardens he had invited her sister to come to see her, he now wrote to the sister that the doctors had forbidden her visits. The doctors denied on oath that they had done so. To the solicitor to whom he went in haste to draft a will and bring it to the sick woman on Sunday he seems to have made several false statements. It was these matters, small in themselves, trifles light

as air, but showing the prisoner in the dock to be a guilty, immoral, undesirable person, that seemed to the jury strong confirmation of their suspicions, amounting indeed to absolute proof.

But for the defence there was much to be said. In the first place there was no evidence whatever that Smethurst was in want of money. He seems to have had sufficient if not ample private means, and poverty was not suggested. Then the evidence was that directly Miss Bankes had been taken ill Smethurst had treated her with kindness, that he had invited her sister to see her, and that he had called in three doctors to attend her. Further, there was no evidence that he had poison in his possession, or had purchased some at any time, nor was any found in a single medicine bottle, nor, indeed, did the prosecution prove what poison, if any, it was that killed her.

At the trial a remarkable incident occurred. Dr. Taylor, who had made an analytical examination and discovered arsenic, appears in his experiments to have used copper gauze which in itself contained arsenic. He had thus only extracted from the substance he was analysing arsenic that he himself introduced into the experiment by means of his apparatus of copper gauze. This was a matter seriously disturbing to the public mind, for the common sense of the average citizen is always wary of leaning too much upon the ready prop of expert evidence, and is uneasy about hanging a man upon the authority of a chemical formula. The body of medical evidence called by the defence, which went to show that the woman most probably died of dysentery, and was not poisoned at all, was deserving of far greater attention than it received from either judge or jury.

The testimony of a leading obstetric physician like Tyler Smith, then at the height of his professional career, more than outweighed the evidence of the three doctors who had failed to cure the woman. Their diagnosis of poison was made in ignorance of the truth of the woman's condition, which the prisoner's doctors considered so important a feature of the medical history of the deceased.

After the case was over the great physician, Richard Quain, wrote to Serjeant Parry a letter detailing a similar case which he had been called in to attend. This was published with his leave and forwarded to the authorities.

In those days a prisoner could not make a personal statement to the jury, and I have often wondered whether, if Smethurst had been allowed to give evidence, it would have enabled him to prove his innocence. Serjeant Ballantine, who prosecuted him, and Chief Baron Pollock, who tried him, and many able physicians who gave evidence in the case, continued to believe that he was guilty and that the verdict of the jury was founded on sufficient evidence.

But the public was profoundly uneasy in mind. It was perhaps a fortunate matter for the poor wretch sitting in jail awaiting the end that his trial took place in the summer holidays. The newspapers had columns to fill, and the public were in want of a topic. Smethurst, the alleged innocent man, whose date of execution was fixed for September 1st, soon became the one subject in the country's thoughts. Day by day leaders were written setting out the shortcomings of the trial. The summing up of the learned judge, who dilated on the immorality of the prisoner and his failure to call in a clergyman (which may, perhaps, have been due to

the wish of the deceased herself), and other inflammatory topics, were strongly criticised.

Forty minutes' discussion and consideration of complicated chemical and medical evidence by men who probably did not know the difference between a chlorate and a chloride seemed small measure of attention to give to the really vital issue which the jury ought to have decided before it condemned a fellow-man to the gallows.

For the question was not whether Smethurst was the undesirable sort of greedy rogue who might be expected to murder a woman living in adultery with him, but the more difficult scientific problem of whether the deceased woman died of poison or of dysentery.

The official world was hard to move. Sir George Lewis, a well-known financial expert, was a newcomer at the Home Office. Cold-blooded as a fish and totally devoid of sensibility, he was not the man to be upset by popular clamour.

But the world is seriously and deeply moved. Doctors, lawyers and citizens pour out their arguments in the columns of the Press. Unknown to the occupant of the cell in Surrey Jail, watching the hands of the clock tick off minute by minute the hours of his life, hundreds of anxious fellow-citizens are in their strange, mysterious way, by means of huge rolls of paper, movable type, whirling cylinders, and ink of a suitable consistency, forming that solid slab of overpowering force called public opinion, which impresses or destroys the densest fabric of bureaucracy.

I have a letter, dated from Rochdale, September 2nd, written to my father by John Bright. "I wrote an urgent letter," he says, "to Sir George Lewis on Sunday last in favour of Doctor Smethurst,

and I do not see how I can do more. Mr. Cobden is now at my house, and he is writing."

The Lord Chancellor, who is "not a man of mercy," he tells us, is in favour of the verdict; the Attorney-General is "wholly dissatisfied," and John Bright thinks if Lewis hangs Smethurst he will go far to ruin himself, since "I can hear of no person in this district who thinks the sentence should be carried into execution."

It was an age in which Lancashire opinion held great sway. Moreover, it was the pre-bureaucratic era, when officials deemed themselves servants of the nation, who had to justify their actions before their masters.

Whatever might be the truth of the matter, the popular instinct was sound on their view that Smethurst's guilt had not been proved. At the last moment, three days before the date of the execution, Smethurst was reprieved.

Later on, acting on the opinion of Sir Benjamin Brodie, the Home Office advised that a free pardon should be granted. Smethurst was afterwards sentenced to a year's imprisonment for bigamy. Then, with thick-skinned persistency, he returned to the courts and propounded Miss Bankeš' will before a jury, who found in his favour on issues of fraud and undue influence.

A thoroughly unpleasant creature no doubt; but was he a criminal? Was any crime committed? It remains a mystery.

5. A BABY WITHOUT A NAME

One of the most curious stories of human wickedness and deceit that ever came before a court was investigated in what was known as the Wicklow Peerage Case by the Committee of Privileges of the

House of Lords in 1869. The one bright spot in an otherwise painful story is the extreme patience and care with which the Lords heard every possible piece of testimony and weighed and considered every argument put forward for the unconscious infant who had been treated in such a callous and extraordinary manner by his mother and friends.

The way the case arose was after this fashion. Charles Francis Arnold Howard, claiming to be the rightful Earl of Wicklow, presented a Petition to their Lordships' House praying that his right to vote for the election of Irish representative peers might be admitted.

He was the fourth son of the Rev. Francis Howard, deceased, who was next brother to the late Earl of Wicklow. His three elder brothers were dead, two of them admittedly without issue. There was no controversy at all about his degree of relationship to the late Earl, and his right to succeed was apparent, but it had been bruited about that his elder brother, William George Howard, who had died on October 19th, 1864, had left a legitimate son, born before his death, and, if this was true, this child would be the rightful heir.

When the Petition came before the Lords' Committee, on Monday, June 21st, 1869, Sir Roundell Palmer informed them that another Petition had been put forward by the mother of a nameless child whom she claimed to be the son of William George Howard. It was not contested that this lady, Mrs. Ellen Howard, *née* Richardson, was the lawful wedded wife of William George Howard, but it was denied that the infant now produced was his son or that Mrs. Ellen Howard had ever had a child.

When the evidence commenced it appeared that

this child had no counsel, and a man named Finley de Bordenave claimed, as a friend of Mrs. Howard, to address the Court and cross-examine witnesses on her behalf. This was not permitted, more especially as it appeared that he might be called by either party as a witness of fact.

The case was adjourned for counsel to be instructed, and at a later stage Serjeant Ballantine appeared for the infant, with Mr. Charles Clark. At a still later date the Solicitor-General took up the Serjeant's brief, and there is no doubt that, aided by the great forbearance and consideration of the judges and the strenuous work of counsel, everything was done for the child's interest in the long investigation that took place.

The short case put forward for the infant was that he was born in wedlock, at 27 Bruton Street, Eaton Square, on 16th May, 1864. His father at that time was away in Ireland hiding from his creditors, and had ordered his mother not to let his relations know about the birth of the child. The story of William George Howard and his marriage is not a very happy one.

There is no doubt that the husband was a man of intemperate habits and had involved himself in serious pecuniary difficulties. He had been bankrupt before his marriage. Ellen Richardson, the stepdaughter of a Gloucestershire clergyman named Butterfield, was introduced to Howard by De Bordenave. This man seems to have been a foreigner of some means, and had carried on an intrigue with Ellen's sister, Jane. The marriage took place in February, 1863, at Old Kensington Church.

After the marriage the couple reside in London at the Burlington Hotel for some five or six weeks.

A Dr. Fuller is brought by De Bordenave to attend Mrs. Howard, and at this early period he is told that if a confinement should take place he would be called in as medical attendant. Mr. and Mrs. Howard then go to Ireland, but return to London in May, and are at the Buckingham Palace Hotel for a few days. In June, 1863, they go together to 27 Bruton Street, a house owned by a Mr. Bloor.

This is a small house. De Bordenave resides on the ground floor, the Howards had the first floor, and Mr. and Mrs. Bloor and Rosa Day, Mrs. Bloor's sister, the upper rooms. A girl, Louisa Jones, came in to scrub the steps, but there was no other servant. They only stay here for a month, and then husband, wife and De Bordenave go together to Ireland, where they remain until October, 1863, when there is a quarrel between them. The husband brings his wife over to Holyhead and there leaves her with De Bordenave. The two go to Chester together, and then she goes to Longney, in Gloucestershire, to her mother and stepfather. In November she is back in London. There was no room for her at Bruton Street, so De Bordenave introduces her to a Mrs. Dennis. At this time she must be expecting a child, yet we find her going to a governesses' institution and entering her name as "Miss Ellen Howard, Longney, Gloucester, age 23, daughter of a clergyman," as a person desiring a post as governess. It seems extraordinary that any young woman in her condition should at this and subsequent dates be applying for a position as a governess, describing herself as unmarried.

In December she returns to Longney, but in January she and her mother and sister, Jane Richardson, come to town and take lodgings at 32 Bruton Street, from January 1st to February 2nd. Mr.

Howard is in England for ten days early in January and, it is said, meets his wife in De Bordenave's room at No. 27 on several occasions. The reason the visits are made in this way is because Mr. Howard is in fear of being arrested for debt.

Mrs. Howard had complained that even at this period her husband's relations were putting detectives on her track, and that the discovery of this ultimately caused her such worry and anxiety that it brought about the premature birth of her child. The Earl, however, was able to prove that, though detectives were watching her, they were employed, not by his relations, but by her own husband, who seems to have been uneasy about his wife's association with De Bordenave.

Early in February she goes to No. 27, to her old rooms, and the Bloors and De Bordenave are there as before, and now the servant, Louisa Jones, comes in for the whole day. Mrs. Howard still visits the governesses' institution, as if to find a situation, and her last visit seems to have been made only a month before her confinement.

Several people seem to have seen her at that time, but no one seems to have been impressed with the idea that she was likely to have a child in the near future. About the 2nd of May, Mr. Bloor made a mysterious visit to Ireland. He stated that he was asked by Mrs. Howard to carry a letter she had written to her husband. Bloor swore that he went over and saw him secretly at Newbridge Station, and Mr. Howard suggested that his wife should be attended by Dr. Wilkins. Their Lordships seem to have rejected this story altogether and very properly treated Mr. Bloor as a romancer.

However, if he did bring back such a message, no steps are taken to call in Dr. Wilkins, and no

monthly nurse is retained, but, on the 10th May, Mrs. Howard is found getting a new dress at an establishment in North Audley Street. Miss Godden, the dressmaker, who made the dress and fitted it on twice, and took the order for another dress, and made and delivered that, must have seen the lady within a few days of the alleged birth of her seven months' child, but she noticed nothing whatever nor was anything said to her about the condition of her client.

On the 16th May, Mrs. Howard makes a sudden resolve to visit Ireland, and the story is that she goes off in a cab with her luggage about seven o'clock in the evening. Feeling herself very unwell she returns to Bruton Street. Bloor is told that she has a bilious attack, and goes off to fetch Dr. Wilkins. He does not seem to have thought there was any urgency in the matter, and when he returns home Mrs. Howard's child has arrived.

As the Lord Chancellor said, in his judgment dismissing the infant's Petition, the detailed evidence of Mrs. Bloor and her sister, Rosa Day, about the birth of the child was very remarkable. He heard them in court, and thought that "their demeanour was such as to entitle their evidence to be believed if the circumstances of the case had not been so prodigiously incredible." They gave their testimony firmly and without hesitation and in a remarkably clear and distinct manner. It is certain that false evidence is often tendered in much better style and in a more convincing manner than the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, which often comes from the memory to the lips with doubting hesitancy. A reckless or lying witness has not to recall facts thoughtfully and with care, and can be more pat and ready with the phrase.

It is only by cross-examination that such evidence can be tested and appraised.

But, as the Chancellor says, the story is unbelievable, and the more you hear of it the more impossible it becomes. The little boy is said to be a sick, weakly baby, but no doctor is called in. It is not registered and it is not vaccinated, it is not baptised. Born on the 16th May, so strictly is the father's injunction to conceal the birth carried out that no one sees the child until the end of July except the Bloors and the excellent De Bordenave.

But on Saturday night, thirteen days after its birth, the mother leaves her baby boy with good Mrs. Bloor and goes down to Longney to see her mother, Mrs. Butterfield.

Even she is not taken into the secret, though she says to her daughter: "Nelly, you look as if you had been confined," to which her daughter replies: "Mamma, you must not ask me questions," and the subject drops.

Ill as the poor lady must have been, we find her jolting seven miles into Gloucester in a carrier's cart to get a letter at the post office.

And while the mother is wandering abroad, her ailing first-born, heir to an earldom, is left in the hands of the Bloors. It is indeed a mysterious baby. Louisa Jones, the servant, who came in daily, was never allowed to see it. A Mr. Lewis, a clergyman, and his wife, who were there from the 4th to the 11th of July, never saw the child. And what is even more remarkable, no one ever heard it. So that for two months we have to imagine a baby that never uttered a cry or a sound of any kind that could attract the attention of Louisa Jones or the lodgers. Mr. Fuller, the doctor, was in and out of the house attending Mr. Bloor and

Rosa Day. He, too, never saw the child until the end of July or the beginning of August.

The first outside person who sees the child is Mr. Nassau Clark, a Cambridge student and friend of William George Howard. He calls at Bruton Street at the end of July and sees Mrs. Howard nursing a child. He is, he says, "not much judge of babies," but he thinks that the baby looked about a couple of months old.

He was introduced to the infant by De Bordenave, with whom he was very friendly, and appeared to have often visited Mrs. Howard and De Bordenave, who were living at the same house during the hearing of the Petition.

The man, De Bordenave, who, as the Lord Chancellor rightly said, "appears to have been the organ of mischief in everything that concerns Mrs. Howard and her family," never gave any evidence in the case. He was living at the time with Mrs. Howard, and buzzing in and out of the court during the long hearing, but, when they sought to put him into the box, it was found that he had softly and suddenly vanished away.

The inquiry had apparently come to an end in August, 1869, but on March 1st, 1870, an unexpected position arose. Sir Roundell Palmer said he would prove where the baby came from. The story revealed a practice of baby traffic scarcely credible in modern times.

The evidence was that Mrs. Howard had, on August 22nd, 1864, gone to the Liverpool Workhouse and had there selected and afterwards taken away a male child of a pauper named Mary Best. The woman was called, and so were two nurses of the lying-in ward. It appeared to be a common practice for anyone to go to the workhouse and

choose a baby and take it away if its mother did not want it, just as you may go to a dogs' home and purchase a pet there. All the witnesses swore to Mrs. Howard coming on the 22nd and stating her requirements, which were a "male child with fair hair and blue eyes." Mary Best reluctantly gave up her baby, and the nurses carried it off to Mrs. Howard on August 24th.

Of course, if this was true, then the mystery was solved, but Mrs. Best appeared to have left the workhouse a few days afterwards with a child of her own which afterwards died. Her account was that she was fretting over the loss of her own baby, which Mrs. Howard had taken away from her, and someone considerately gave her another to keep and take home.

Mrs. Howard refused to be examined on this subject, and there seems to have been a good deal of evidence that she could not have been at Liverpool in August, and the mysterious purchase of a baby at Liverpool was considered by their Lordships as not proven against Mrs. Howard.

The Petition was dismissed by the unanimous decision of their Lordships. The infant, let us hope, never recognised the part it had been made to play in this drama of fraud and falsehood, but if it could have understood what transpired, however disappointed it might have been with the result, it would, I am sure, have gratefully acknowledged the learning and patience and care with which its rights had been investigated.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

CONCERNING SUPERNATURAL PLAYS

1. DUNCAN TERIG.
2. THE BURY MURDER.
3. ANNE TURNER

THAT incorrigible joker, Samuel Foote, had the temerity to make a farce about ghosts, though all sound playwrights know that your ghost only walks in tragedy, where he has special uses in warning heroes and heroines of former crimes or future woes. Foote went so far as to indict Fanny the Phantom for that contrary to the King's peace she did annoy, assault, etc., divers persons residing in Cock Lane. There is some coarse fun about her plea to be tried by a jury of ghosts, the difficulty of ghosts taking a corporal oath, and what will happen at the end of the trial if Fanny's condition requires a jury of ghostly matrons.

Philosophers tell us that the whole spirit—and witch—world meant something quite different to our forefathers from what it means to us. But I take leave to doubt it, and can see no great difference between Saul visiting the Witch of Endor and my neighbour Jones who affects the latest lady medium of Mayfair. The cult of the Bogey Man has always attracted the children of this world, and it is a very pleasant plaything if it is not insisted upon too earnestly and is treated in a nursery spirit of make-believe.

Shakespeare made excellent use of his ghosts, witches, and magic, and fairies, so that some have gone so far as to think he may have believed in the existence of such things. Not that it matters much what a playwright believes as long as he makes an attractive play of the material he uses.

Whatever your belief may be about bogeys in general, you must admit, if you read the records of the courts, that they are uncommonly shy of appearing to answer to subpoenas or other legal invitations. Daniel Dunglas Home, still regarded as a prophet by the faithful, could not get a single spirit to make an affidavit for him in his Chancery suit, whereby he lost £60,000. Not a rap would they utter for him, and he lost a fortune by their neglect, yet these tricky familiars of his would come at his call at any time to a darkened drawing-room to play concertinas or tilt tables. They are unworldly fellows, these spirits.

The few occasions on which the supernatural has played a part or exercised an influence in legal dramas are the more worthy of recollection because of their scarcity. Duncan Terig is as sound a ghost story as most, and poor Mrs. Turner's tragedy is saturated with witchcraft and magic. How far the story of the Bury murder is more than the working of natural human instinct one cannot say, but at all events it is a true story.

I. DUNCAN TERIG

The most extraordinary story that is recorded of ghostly intervention in the interests of justice comes very properly from the Highlands, where second sight, witchcraft and magic have continued to flourish long after they have subsided from low-lying lands. Sergeant Arthur Davis was quartered

with a small military party in a wild part of the Highlands near the country of the Farquharsons. Sir Walter Scott, who edited the record of the trial of Duncan Terig, tells us that a more waste tract of mountains and bog, rocks and ravines, extending from Dubrack to Glenclunie, without habitation of any kind until you reach Glenclunie, is scarce to be met with in Scotland.

It was after '45. Culloden was a four years' memory. The horrible cruelties of Cumberland, the destruction of castles, cottages, cattle and grain, the aftermath of the rebellion, were fresh in the memories of the people. But the rebels were crushed, and there remained for the English soldiery only a few odd jobs to be done under the Act relating to disarmament and the prohibition of the Highland dress. Sergeant Davis and his men were there to police a wide district. Their duties were to disarm the Highlanders and prevent them wearing their national dress, and as Davis was an active energetic fellow it is not unlikely that he made enemies among the natives. At the same time there were traits in the character of the sergeant that made him respected if not beloved by the people of the country. He was a keen sportsman and used to go a-shooting or fishing every day. Moreover, he was a fearless man, and when he went along with a patrol party would send his men home whilst he stayed up in the hills alone and followed his sport. To his credit, too, he was known as a good manager and a sober man. He had saved money, some fifteen guineas and a half, and these he banked in a green silk purse with his loose silver which he always carried with him for safety.

He had other property of value besides the gold. There was a stout silver watch in his pocket and two

gold rings on his finger, one of which Jean Ghent, his wife, had presented to him, a plain gold ring, with the letters D.H. on the inside, and the posy: "When this you see remember me." The letters D.H. referred to Daniel Holland, Jean's first husband, but the jolly sergeant, when he took the widow to himself, had no false modesty about sporting the late Daniel's finery. For he not only went abroad with his ring, but also wore a pair of silver buckles, marked D.H., and a double-breasted vest made of striped lutestring, with two dozen silver buttons on it, that had once graced the figure of Jean's first husband. All this wealth must have dazzled the eyes of the poor Highlanders, and the sergeant seems to have loved to display his glories to the admiring neighbourhood, and, being a cheery swaggering jovial sort of fellow, would take out his silk purse of gold and jangle it in the babies' faces to amuse the little ones and bemuse their parents. Duncan Terig was a friend and neighbour of his, and knew all about the sergeant and his belongings, but so did all the countryside for that matter.

It should perhaps be added in justice to the sergeant's memory that he and Jean who had been married less than a twelvemonth were notably a happy pair, and that he was under no temptation to desert, since he was esteemed and beloved by his officers, was regarded as a civil and obliging fellow by his comrades, and was waiting advancement to the rank of sergeant-major at the next vacancy.

This was the condition of things on the morning of Monday, September 28th, 1749, when Sergeant Davis and his four men set out from Dubrack to march over the hills to meet the next patrol from Glenshye. At the place of meeting the corporal from Glenshye arrived to time. The two did their

business, and about four in the afternoon the sergeant's men returned to Mrs. Davis and informed her that they had left the sergeant shooting on the hills. It appears that the corporal had warned him of the danger of going about alone, but to no purpose. The gallant sergeant told him to mind his own business, and that as long as he had arms and ammunition he feared no one.

That night the sergeant did not return home. Poor Jean was anxious and distressed. He had never before remained away overnight. The next morning her anxiety increased. Search parties went out. She herself persuaded his particular friend, Duncan Terig, to set out and look for him. He was a man who knew the country well. It was all to no purpose, Sergeant Davis had disappeared—vanished off the face of the earth. Jean Ghent was left a widow, and yet no widow. The tongues of malice whispered that, as no body had ever been found, it was more than possible he had deserted, but Jean knew better. A Highland rumour was that he had been murdered by his own men, but no one believed that. Jean herself knew that his men were fond of him, and she was absolutely certain of his own faith and honesty. She had no doubt in her own mind that he had been murdered by some of the wild men that still hid in the fastnesses of the mountains. This indeed was the prevalent belief in the neighbourhood, and maybe friend Duncan Terig encouraged the widow in the belief.

The search for the sergeant's body continued from day to day without success, and at length the poor widow was persuaded to return to the garrison at Braemar. The ten days' wonder became a memory and then was forgotten. Nor indeed is there any reason to suppose the veil of the mystery would ever

have been lifted had it not been for the extraordinary adventure of Alexander M'Pherson of Inverey.

Alexander was a single man of twenty-six, and there seems no evidence that he himself had any guilty knowledge of the sergeant's death, nor is there any suggestion made that he had any grudge against the men who were afterwards accused and tried for the murder of Sergeant Davis. His story was simply and graphically told in the witness-box, and either he was under some strange illusion or it seems reasonably proved that the ghost of Arthur Davis appeared to him and charged his murderers with the crime.

M'Pherson, in his evidence, said that in June, 1750, when he was in bed, a vision appeared to him as of a man clad in blue—the sergeant always wore a blue surtout—who told him: "I am Sergeant Davis." Alexander rose from his bed and followed the ghost to the door, and there he repeated that he was Sergeant Davis, who had been murdered on the hill of Christy about a year before, and he desired that M'Pherson would go to Donald Farquharson and take his assistance to the burying of him.

M'Pherson did not do anything upon this first visitation, and on a second occasion "the vision again appeared naked and minded him to bury the body." On the first occasion the vision had refused to say who murdered him, but on the second appearance he charged his friends, Duncan Terig and Alexander Macdonald, with the crime.

Isobel M'Hardie of Inverey also gave evidence of the apparition. M'Pherson was in her service at the time. She was lying at one end of the shealing and he at the other the second night the ghost appeared. She saw something naked come in at the door "in a bowing posture," which frightened

her so much that she drew the clothes over her head, so that unfortunately she never heard its conversation. Still she swore to the appearance. Donald Farquharson testified that Alexander came to him with the ghost story and was in great distress about it and asked his advice. M'Pherson said he had found the bones of the sergeant on the hill-side of Christy, and asked Farquharson to go with him and bury them, and this the deponent did.

There on the peat moors between Glenchristy and Glenconie, half a mile from the patrol road, lay the remains of the unfortunate sergeant. The flesh was mostly consumed from the bones, the head separated from the body, and the mouse-coloured hair was lying by itself apart from the head. Underneath the skeleton were a few tattered rags of blue cloth, and a pair of brogues were found with the buckles cut away, and no trace, of course, of gold rings or silver buttons.

It was not until four years afterwards that Duncan Terig and Alexander Bain Macdonald were brought to trial. There was a great deal of very damning evidence against them. A man named Angus Cameron appeared and said he was on the side of the hill of Galcharn on the 28th September and saw Duncan Terig and a man he did not know strike at a man in blue, who clapped his hand on the place struck and turned and went away, and he saw Duncan and the other man follow him up, each with a gun, and they fired at him and he fell. If this was true it was conclusive as to Duncan Terig, and there was other evidence of Duncan having been seen with the sergeant's property, and moreover his wife had been seen wearing two gold rings like the sergeant's.

The prisoners were very ably defended by Mr.

Robert M'Intosh, a well-known Scots advocate, from whom Sir Walter Scott had the whole story. M'Pherson, who had been a servant of Duncan Terig, gave a great deal of evidence against him as to his possession of the sergeant's valuables, and these were identified by marks and description. If this witness were disbelieved it was obvious that the case to go to the jury would be greatly weakened. M'Intosh got from Alexander M'Pherson an admission that the conversation between himself and the vision was in the Irish language. "Pretty well," scoffed Mr. M'Intosh, "for the ghost of an English sergeant." The ridicule with which the able counsel enveloped the ghost story clouded the whole of M'Pherson's evidence and dimmed with vague suspicion the testimony of all the witnesses.

The Edinburgh tradesmen could swallow the ghost, but they could not stomach his talking Gaelic, a ridiculous scruple, since there is nothing more unreasonable in a ghost speaking a language he did not understand in the body than in his appearing at all.

The ghost was a good ghost, but, alas, he received little consideration or encouragement from the legal authorities. If, indeed and in truth, it was the poor ghost of Sergeant Arthur Davies, yearning for revenge upon his earthly enemies, he had better have kept off the boards. For his intervention through the medium of Alexander M'Pherson was the chief cause of the acquittal of the men he charged with the crime, and against one of them, Duncan Terig, there seemed a lot of black and convincing mundane testimony.

The affair remained a mystery. Locally it must have been well known by whom the murder was committed, but the truth was never brought to

light. The jurists of Edinburgh favoured the view that M'Pherson had invented the ghost, whose commands he must of course obey, to spare himself the obloquy that would attach to a man who bore true witness against his neighbour. But for my part I take no sides in the matter, I remain agnostic about the business. Alexander M'Pherson gave his evidence "purged of malice and partial council," like an honest Scot, and as he solemnly swears that he saw the sergeant's ghost on two occasions, and conversed with it in Irish, there seems no reason why anyone should not believe him if they think right.

2. THE BURY MURDER

Novelists and writers of romance are often taunted by men of affairs with stretching unduly what is called the long arm of coincidence. But in real life things happen which no novelist dare invent, and to many reasonable men it seems as if the long arm of coincidence may be visibly seen supporting the hand of Providence. We cannot interpret the working of these things any more than we can really comprehend the deep-sown space of the stars, but we can map out and report what we have seen and leave the interpretation to wise philosophers.

An actual instance of these mysterious happenings was unfolded before my own eyes, many years ago, in the prosaic round hand of a heavy manuscript Treasury brief. The indorsement upon it was "*Regina v. Dukes*, with you Mr. Blair," and on it was indorsed a fee worthy of the occasion, since we were to prosecute Mr. Dukes for murder.

Now the really stupendous facts of the capture of Dukes were but lightly touched upon in the solicitor's

history of the case, the reason being perhaps that the story was in no way flattering to the intelligence of the police. Nor was it necessary to the prosecution to emphasise what had happened. Indeed, I am not clear that I was at the time wholly aware of the strange nature of the events that led up to Dukes' arrest. It was enough for me that he was in the dock and the evidence was sufficient to convict him. It seemed certain, however, from the witnesses' story, that if the murder had been committed at any other period of the year but the end of September it might have remained a mystery to this day.

To understand this it is necessary to know that, among the Jews, Rosh-ha-Shanah, the first of the month of Tishri, or New Year's Day, is a most solemn anniversary. On this day all the inhabitants of the world pass before the Creator, the books of account are opened, and the fate of each and all is recorded. Naturally and rightly, therefore, on that day every Jew is found in his place at the synagogue. The New Year's Eve is kept as a social family feast. The tables are spread with grapes and other fruits and honey, and after the benediction the bread is dipped in the honey and a prayer is offered to renew for each and all of the family a good and sweet New Year. At this feast all the members of the family attend unless they are hindered by some urgent business, but on New Year's Day no calls of business will keep a man from his place in the synagogue. In 1891 Rosh-ha-Shanah, or New Year's Day, fell on Wednesday, September 25th.

Dukes was the manager of a small furniture shop in Central Street, which is one of the main streets of Bury. It was a mean little shop, about a hundred yards from the Bolton Street Station, consisting of two stories and a cellar. This shop belonged to the

Gordon Furnishing Company, which owned a series of furniture shops in Manchester and the neighbourhood. The central shop was in Strangeways, Manchester, opposite the Law Courts. The whole business belonged to an elderly Jewish trader named Gordon, and he was assisted in the management by his two sons, Meyer and George.

George Gordon used to visit the Bury shop every Tuesday, but for about a month before Tuesday, September 24th, he had not made his usual visits. Letters and telegrams had arrived from Dukes about business affairs asking him to postpone his coming as Dukes was called away. On this Tuesday, however, he makes up his mind that he will go to Bury, and he sets off the first thing in the morning. When he arrives at Bury, Dukes is not there. He examines the books, has some talk with the shop boy, and waits about for Dukes, who does not appear. He then returns to Manchester. He finds that Dukes had called in at the Strangeways shop and returned to Bury with a message from the elder Gordon. He seems to have told the old man that he had been in Manchester on business, and hurried away to try and meet George Gordon at Bury. When George Gordon hears of this visit he returns to Bury, and arrives at the shop about half-past two in the afternoon. He finds Dukes there. Dukes sends the shop boy off with a handcart to deliver some furniture, and the two are left together in the little shop.

The boy hears them talking as he leaves the shop. He goes on his errand, discovers that the address Dukes has given him is that of an empty house, and when he returns George Gordon has gone away. The boy was the last person who saw him alive. That evening a telegram comes from George to his

father to say that he had gone to Liverpool and would not be back that night. The Gordons had business interests in Liverpool, but the old man is puzzled. Was not this New Year's Eve, and the feast spread on the table? Why should his son George go away to Liverpool on New Year's Eve? The old man brooded over the affair in sorrow and refused to be comforted.

Wednesday, the 25th September, the New Year's Day, saw the whole family at the synagogue except the missing George. The old father was more miserable than ever and full of foreboding. Even Meyer, the elder son, was very anxious. Word was sent to the Manchester police that George Gordon was missing, and they put themselves into communication with the Bury authorities. A sergeant was sent down to interview Dukes, and came back fully satisfied that all was well. From a police point of view the disappearance of George Gordon presented no difficulty at all, nor need we wonder at it. So many young people are reported to them as missing, and then turn up after a day or two somewhat ashamed of themselves, that a sane police officer does not hurry to melodramatic conclusions.

Here was a young fellow who had collected his father's money, had sent a wire to say he was going on business to Liverpool, and was probably now enjoying himself at Blackpool or Southport or even the Isle of Man. The case was no new one to them. Indeed, it was as old as the Prodigal Son. The flaw in their reasoning was that they knew nothing about Rosh-ha-Shanah. Bury reported the facts to Manchester with a tolerant chuckle, and Manchester gravely told the Gordons that there was nothing suspicious in the matter, and no doubt young Gordon would turn up at the week-end.

But his father was not to be comforted. He knew in his own mind that his son George, if he were alive, would not stay away from his family and his synagogue on the great day. He shook his head sadly at the police message and said to his children: "We will wait until nightfall. If George is alive he will be with us, and if he be not here then we shall know he is dead."

The next morning came and brought no news of George. The old man and Meyer, his son, went to the Manchester police, who referred them to Bury. At Bury they insisted that George was dead, and the father expressed his belief that his body was in the shop in Central Street. He seemed from the first to have been convinced that he had been murdered and that his body remained in the shop. This was the more perverse of him inasmuch as the sergeant told him that he had made a thorough search of the house from top to bottom and found nothing suspicious there.

However, to placate the old gentleman in his distress, and perhaps a little impressed by his persistence, Sergeant Ross and two constables, with old Gordon and Meyer, went down the street to the shop. When they arrived a cart was standing at the door, which Dukes informed them he had hired to take a wardrobe to Rochdale. A thorough search of the house was now made again, and the sergeant discovered that a flag in the cellar had been recently tampered with. When the sergeant went down to the cellar Dukes attempted an exit by the side entry, but was brought back by the officer who had been stationed outside to see that no one left or entered the shop whilst they were making their investigations.

Sergeant Ross now, for the first time, began to take a serious interest in the case. Leaving Dukes

with the second constable, he ransacked the house with the Gordons from top to bottom, but not a clue of any kind was to be found. They returned to the shop and all stood round the wardrobe which was lying on the floor waiting to be loaded into the cart. It looked as though the business of the police was over.

“What is this wardrobe lying here for?” asked old Gordon.

“It’s going out to Rochdale; the cart is waiting outside for it now,” replied Dukes.

“Open it!” demanded the old man.

“I cannot. A lady bought it. She packed some things in it, and locked it and took the key.”

“Then burst it open! It’s mine! Burst it open!”

The old man was in a frenzy. There seemed no doubt in anyone’s mind what he expected to see. A police officer prised open the door. It flew readily upward, disclosing its horrid huddled contents. Meyer flew at Dukes’ throat crying: “You have murdered my brother!” The police pulled him away and saved Dukes for the law.

Thus did the hand of Providence guide the father to the corpse of his son.

The reconstruction of the crime was easy enough. Dukes had killed his victim the moment the shop boy had left them together on Tuesday afternoon, and put the body in the wardrobe. His accounts were wrong, and George Gordon had probably discovered this. The next day he bought a pick and had made an attempt to dig a grave in the cellar, but found cement under the flags. He then went out and hired a cart for Thursday morning. He apparently intended to throw the body out behind some stone wall or dispose of it in some

lonely spot. Then he could have burned the wardrobe or cleaned it up and put it into stock again. If it had not been that he killed George Gordon on New Year's Eve, and that his father, aghast at his non-appearance at Rosh-ha-Shanah, instinctively recognised that a crime had been committed, there seems no doubt that the body of George Gordon would not have been discovered for some length of time, and it would have been a matter of grave difficulty to prove that Dukes was the murderer.

As it was, the story was pieced together without difficulty. Dukes set up a defence that he had been attacked by young Gordon and had killed him in self-defence. Even Cottingham's eloquence could not persuade the jury to consider it seriously.

Dukes killed his victim on New Year's Eve, and he himself was hanged in Strangeways Jail on Christmas Eve.

Was it all the long arm of coincidence or the hand of Providence?

3. ANNE TURNER

I confess that I have a feeling of pity for Sweet Anne Turner. She joined the company as a soubrette, or, as the old managers used to say, a "singing chambermaid." A dainty, delicate, small-part lady playing up to her beautiful mistress, the Countess of Essex, with touching devotion. Having her own little love affairs, too, in the wanton Court of James I, and poets to proclaim her cherry lips, the golden threads that aureoled her brow and

"that breast of more than lily white

Which sometimes was the lodge of sweet delight."

She must have known, you will say, that her mistress was the worst woman in Europe. One

can scarcely acquit her of being a minor actor in a foul conspiracy, possibly an accessory before the fact to murder, or at least the intent to murder, though the poor wretch never confessed to it.

Perhaps her worst offence, in the eyes of a censorious world, was that her nimble brain and clever fingers invented that fantastic ruff with yellow starch which the countess made so fashionable.

At her fall it became the badge of foul lust and disgrace, and they say old Coke decreed that poor Anne should wear her yellow ruff on the gallows, which, indeed, she did, and the fashion of yellow starch died with her.

For, though only an understudy, she was called upon at the end of the fifth act to play the leading lady's part. The countess, her dear mistress, deserted her, pleaded guilty, and threw herself, not without guarantee, I think, on the mercy of King James, receiving a royal pardon. Poor tender Anne was left to go on alone in the Tyburn scene, literally left in the cart in which she makes her entrance, stumbles over a dying speech of her own words, and expiates her sins.

I do not want to scare beginners, but there is a lot of risk about being an understudy. This is more true about crime than any of the lesser arts, since, as Richard Weston said, who played the first murderer in this drama of ours: "The law makes a net to catch the little birds and let the great ones go."

The Overbury murder, if it was a murder, is one of the big mysteries in legal history. Frances Howard, that sweet, bewitching Moabitish woman, daughter of the Earl of Suffolk, is married in 1606, at the age of thirteen, to the Earl of Essex, the young son of Elizabeth's unhappy friend. Later on,

Frances, but yet a girl, falls in love with the beautiful Robert Carr, King's favourite and soon to be Earl of Somerset. Essex carries the poor woman off to his country house at Chartley, where she shuts herself in her chamber and refuses to be visited.

But she had left in London her dear friend, Anne Turner, the young widow of a physician, a wise woman in touch with Dr. Forman, the astrologer of Lambeth, and other curious figures of London's underworld. We see Anne on dark nights taking a wherry across the river, stealing secretly to Forman's house, closeted with him for hours in his laboratory, to the discontent of Mrs. Forman, who has her revenge on poor Anne from the witness-box later on.

It was Anne's part to obtain love philtres and drugs. The former to keep the Earl of Somerset faithful and ardent, the latter to weaken and debilitate the lady's husband. Conjunction by obscene wax figures and other strange incantations were practised by the grave Forman for adequate reward.

At length James I, Defender of the Faith, affectionately slobbering over his pale, unhappy favourite, the Earl of Somerset, asks him what boon or gift will bring back happiness to him and cure his melancholy. He wishes to marry Frances. She is pining for him. She is ready to assert that the Earl of Essex is incapable as a husband. She claims a divorce on that ground.

The pedant King is delighted with the idea. He calls together lawyers and bishops and doctors, and enters into theological, physiological and prurient details with much zest and learning. A jury of matrons is called in. Frances persuades a young

companion, heavily veiled, to personate her, and the examination is passed with honours.

Grave, reverend and pious bishops, with their worldly thoughts perhaps fixed on archbishoprics, listen to the scholarly discourses of the King, and, bowing to the wishes of the Defender of their Faith, pronounce a nullity and divorce.

The marriage of the lady and her glorious paramour takes place on the day after Christmas Day, 1613, amidst splendid rejoicing, the beautiful shameless girl standing before the altar with her hair down, the symbol of her virginity, sweet Anne Turner, in her yellow ruff, smiling at their triumph.

But throughout all these negotiations and conspiracies, which lasted for two years, one friend of Robert Carr's warned him against this woman and prophesied his ruin. Sir Thomas Overbury, a gentleman of the Court and a writer of no mean repute, had expressed too openly his opinion of this proposed divorce and the measure by which it was promoted.

The King is offended with him. He is thrown into the Tower. Through Somerset's influence a new lieutenant is placed in command. Weston, a creature of Somerset's, attends him. The countess sends him tarts and jellies flavoured with arsenic and other sibber spices obtained from the excellent Forman.

Overbury and his relations appeal to the King in vain. Double-faced Somerset sympathises. The charming countess sends more confections. Had Forman really given her arsenic? Did Overbury eat these things? We shall never know. The King sends Sir Theodore Mayerne, his foreign physician, to see him. A foreign apothecary doses him. They were the last to be with him. Did

they do him good or harm? Their evidence is, curiously enough, never obtained by Sir Edward Coke when he holds his Great Oyer of Poisoning.

Whatever be the truth, poor Overbury is now reduced by poison or disease or decay to a wretched condition. He dies on Wednesday, September 15th, 1613, and is hustled into his grave in the choir of the church in the Tower by three o'clock of the same afternoon. His secrets, whatever they were, are buried with him. His Majesty expresses no contrition or discontent. Somerset is well satisfied, and Frances and Sweet Anne Turner kiss each other with smiles of victory.

For two years the guilty couple lived a riotous life of extravagance and feasting and tinsel glory. Masques were made in their honour, gifts were showered upon them, and the King gloried in the shameful pleasures of his dear ones. Sweet Anne Turner, happy with her own love affairs and love children, is meanwhile living a dainty life, flitting round her beautiful popular mistress and basking with her yellow starch butterfly ruffs in the sunshine of prosperity.

There is an old wives' saying that murder will out, and a popular belief, worth maintaining, perhaps, that truth will prevail.

Certainly the strange story of the Overbury murder, if, as I have said, it was a murder, goes far to sanction these simple beliefs. Yet one could have wished that the investigation had been conducted with greater courage and honesty of purpose, and had not been hindered by the desire to shield the great ones of the earth.

I have often wondered whether the gossip and whispers about Overbury's fate would ever have been uttered aloud but for the fact that James tired

of his favourite, and had made up his mind to depose him and install Villiers in his place.

It is at this moment that a story told by an apothecary's lad in the Low Countries gets sent over and becomes after-dinner talk and reaches the ears of the Court. Then Forman dies. He had foretold his death to a day, and the day arriving his dear wife twits him with his want of success. The doctor smiles knowingly. Later in the day he takes a pair of oars to go down the river, and in the middle of the stream he falls down in the boat and dies, whereupon, it is related, a most sad storm of wind followed.

Strange stories are told of what is found in his books. There is an entry certified by himself to be written by the devil with his own hand and, what is worse, there are ledger accounts for philtres, potions and what-not supplied to the highest in the land.

The King permits the Lord Chief Justice Coke to investigate these strange matters and to inquire, but not too closely, into the rumours concerning Overbury's death. Not a word is whispered to his favourite. Coke has the hardihood to send for him. His messenger arrives at Royston. He finds Somerset with the King sitting beside him, lolling with his arms round his neck. Somerset laughs at Coke's summons as an affront to an English peer.

"Nay, man," says our constitutional monarch. "If Coke sends for me, I must go."

The royal Judas kisses him farewell and watches him ride away to his doom.

"Now the de'il go wi' thee," says the King. "For I will see thy face no more."

It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidences in princes.

Among the smaller fry that are swept into the net is pretty Mistress Turner. She is lodged with an alderman. The Earl of Somerset, who is not yet under arrest, sends her a present and a promise of liberty. Her dear countess sends her a diamond ring and a jewelled cross. The alderman is very kind to the pretty little woman. She herself, fearing no evil, actually petitions grim old Coke for a speedy trial. The old man is in no hurry. He has to hang Weston first and spread his net for many others. But on November 7th, 1615, she comes before him dressed in a bewitching hat that has cost her much thought.

This the old man rules out of order. "You are not in church now, madam, and must be uncovered."

She hears Sir Laurence Hyde, the Queen's Attorney, opening the case. She learns that Weston is caught and killed. She listens to the story of all her visits to Forman and sees produced his foul, indecent charms and strange draperies which have been discovered in her house. She listens to the countess's letters to her "Sweet Turner" and "Sweet Father Forman," begging them to help her to gain Carr's love by means of enchantments. She hears jealous Mrs. Forman detailing her visits to the old wizard, and notes the fear and disgust on the faces of the stolid jury as they handle the strange parchments with blasphemous signs upon them which are the chief evidence of her guilt.

She has no counsel to help her. Slowly her silly brain grasps the meaning of the drama of which she is the centre-piece. Her speedy trial is racing along its course to its appointed end. She hears the coarse voice of the judge shouting at her, in the face of the jury, that she has the seven deadly sins.

The jurymen nod their heads in unison at the

judicial description of the victim, and when she is formally called upon for her defence the poor wretch can do nothing but weep for her sins and her fate.

The butterfly is broken on the wheel. Judge and jury and public are gloriously self-satisfied that so foul a creature should have been allowed so honourable a trial. Whether it was justice or not, there was no mercy in it for poor Anne.

Next Wednesday morning, a week after her trial, the road to Tyburn is thronged with people making their way to the place of her execution. Ladies and gentlemen of fashion in coaches and on horse, and a mob of the groundlings on foot.

A sigh of pity goes up as the little woman, kneeling in the cart, is seen coming along the Oxford Road on her last journey, wearing for the last time her yellow bands. She played her part of repentant Magdalene very prettily, with many sighs and tears and proper confessions, seconded by the official prompter, the Rev. Dr. Whitinge, who was State father-confessor to these wretches and a clever producer of last-act repentances.

The mob was greatly pleased and properly edified by her pious conduct, and many tears were shed and prayers murmured for the poor soul as they pulled the black veil over her face, put the noose round her neck and drew the cart away from under the gibbet.

CHAPTER TWELVE

CONCERNING A GREAT TRICK ARTIST

JACK SHEPPARD

THERE is a solid catholicity about the appeal of the trick artist to the human soul in search of entertainment. To begin with, he acts in a universal language understood of all peoples. The babe and the bearded philosopher can follow his actions with equal intelligence and enjoy his efforts with similar glee.

To have memories of Blondin and Houdin is to have treasure that no one can steal from you. One can never forget, too, the performances of that great trick artist the late George Conquest, who enacted a man spider and sprang from rope to rope of the huge web stretched across the stage, flew on invisible wires and was shot into the air from dozens of traps set in the most unlikely places in the scene, so that you found your head whirling from side to side lest you should miss an entrance or an exit.

In a more modern day how truly great was Cinquevalli, a real wonder of the world as a trick artist, a man of superhuman strength with the delicate touch of a pianist, the timing and control of a fiddler, and footwork that was worthy of a boxer or a batsman at best. How pleasant to see him using a real cannon ball as his plaything. He

catches it on a plate, takes it between his heels, and throwing it behind him catches it in one hand, or lets it run as if enchanted from one outstretched hand across his chest or shoulders to the other. And when you think it cannot surely be a real cannon ball he whirls it at lightning pace round and round his head, and you feel certain it is some rubber toy he is playing with, until he slows his movements and with a graceful bow drops the cannon ball on to the boards with a convincing thud that reproves your momentary disbelief. If there was ever in my day greater juggling than his I did not see it, nor would I readily own to it if I did see it, for there was a charm of manner and modesty of achievement about this great artist that left his audiences friends and followers for life.

And it is the same with me about Jack Sheppard. There is a fascination about him and his career that I cannot account for. The rascal seems to have "given me medicines to make me love him." I often wonder if the name of Jack Sheppard exercises the same spell over the schoolboy of to-day that it did in the 'sixties. Every small boy read Harrison Ainsworth's great romance of my day. Chiefly, no doubt, because it was forbidden. If the schoolmaster had the sense to put the works of Euclid on his *index expurgatorius* every adventurous schoolboy would wrestle with his cubist pictures in a glorious search after the hidden improprieties of eternal triangles. When the Bible was a forbidden book in England it was perhaps better read and respected than it is to-day.

But why, you ask, was *Jack Sheppard* forbidden? There you are up against the problem of the unfathomable density of schoolmasters. I fancy the dim pedagogues of the past that I suffered under,

if they had ever studied the history of Jack Sheppard at all, merely saw in him a young scapegrace unduly belauded for constantly outwitting the turnkey. The schoolmaster profession of the Victorian era, having more in common with jailers and executioners than with artists and builders, probably felt that Jack was a dangerous ideal to set before their own captives.

The Jack Sheppard of real life was indeed a pathetic little figure, more sinned against than sinning, a product of the barbarous social age in which he lived. But this was not the fascination of the hero in the eyes of his young admirers. It was the dramatic genius of the fellow that inspired our enthusiasm. He was the great trick artist in the Drama of the Law. Victorian boys pictured to themselves his wonderful exploits as they curled up in secret places devouring the thumbed and forbidden pages, dwelling on every word and movement of the great Jack Sheppard escaping from Newgate, and gasped in excited enthusiasm at the marvels of his exploits.

As a prison breaker Jack Sheppard was beyond doubt the greatest artist we have ever produced. Not only his achievements, but the dramatic circumstances of them, made him famous in his own day and earned him an immortal name. We have long forgotten his foolish tawdry crimes. All we remember is his perseverance, his daring, his lion-hearted courage, his success. One would have thought that a sense of sportsmanship in jail architects would have led them to petition for his reprieve, that they might have tried to build a prison cage that would contain Jack and so prove their superiority.

But bureaucracy is the enemy of genius. Artists like Thornhill and Hogarth waited upon him to

paint his portrait, literary men like the poet Gay conversed with him in the condemned cell, and the throng that sought to visit him had to be rationed in their enthusiasm.

But to the official jailers and judges he was merely a malefactor. He annoyed them by proving that their jails and handcuffs and sentences were things of naught to a lad of his mettle. Nothing is more dangerous and undesirable in youth than to hint at the indiscretions of pastors and masters, but to prove in the eyes of the world that they are fools who do not understand their business—that is akin to blasphemy. Poor Jack did not suffer for his timid larcenies but for his brilliant exposé of the incompetence of official Newgate.

I confess that to-day I love the Sheppard of Defoe's pamphlet and the contemporary news sheets of Mr. Mist and Mr. Applebee rather than the romantic hero of Harrison Ainsworth and the penny dreadfuls. If Jonathan Wild did plot against him, which is more than doubtful, it does not add a span to the height of his genius as a prison breaker. If he loved his mother as devotedly as Ainsworth believes, I am glad to hear of it, but many quite ordinary boys love their mothers without fascinating the world at large.

Jack Sheppard does not need these legendary adornments—though in my time I have devoured them greedily. To-day I prefer the plain story of the Newgate Calendar. It has a keener and more bracing drama about it. For, to tell Jack Sheppard's story on the stage, the first acts should be written by a dour playwright of the Manchester school, and the great scenes left to the genius of Jack and the stage carpenter who built Newgate, with the excited hum of muted pantomime music

stirring the audience to haunting fears of failure and ending in exultant trumpet strains of conquest and success.

Jack's biography is but a commonplace story. Born in 1702, the son of a Spitalfields weaver, Jack was himself apprenticed as a carpenter. His father died when he was young. There was another brother, Thomas, also a thief, and ultimately transported. His apprenticeship ended, Jack took to evil ways. He worked with his two ladies, Edgeworth Bess and Poll Maggot. They stole tankards and dress pieces, and were, it must be confessed, little better than sneak thieves. Later on he did higher-class work with Blueskin, but as a thief he seems to have been a very ordinary utility man. It was not until he was within the four walls of a jail that his genius showed itself.

His first recorded escape was from St. Giles's Round House, to which he had been remanded for the night by Justice Parry. The simple magistrate never saw him again. With half a razor and a broken chair he cut through the roof of the Round House from his cell on the second floor, and tying a sheet to a blanket dropped into the churchyard below and was away.

But not for long. The jail to poor Jack was the candle calling for the moth. As if he felt that prison walls were the only medium in which, to use the modern art slang, he could express his true personality, he no sooner tumbled out of the jail than he fell into the arms of the police. His next prison was the New Prison, where he and Edgeworth Bess were detained over Whit-Sunday. This time he was fettered, but about 2 a.m. on Monday he had sawn off his handcuffs, cut off an iron bar in the window, dropped Bess out, without her gown and

petticoat, by means of the usual sheet and blanket, followed himself, scaled a 20-foot wall by the aid of a gimlet and some pincers that his friends had smuggled in to him, and so was away again with his lady, ripe for fresh adventure.

August finds him at the Old Bailey, where, with the assistance of Jonathan Wild, he is convicted and sentenced to death, and placed in the condemned cell at Newgate. On August 30th, 1724, a warrant reaches the prison for the execution next day. That evening Poll and Bess come to say farewell to him. He is allowed to come to a grating to speak to them. They are standing in a passage which is in view of the jailers who sit at the end of it at a table. Jack has already sawn off one of the barrels at the end of his links, and while he and Bess are talking, and the women, poor things, weeping under cover of the noise of it, with a saw dipped in oil he saws through one of the bars of the grating. Head first he drags his little slender body through the opening, the women lifting him down gently. Then they throw a nightgown over him and he passes out between them. They slip down to Black Friars Stairs, take a wherry to Westminster, and again Jack is free.

Here he has to leave his dear Bess, who, the next day, is apprehended by Jonathan Wild. Sheppard makes for Clare Market, and there meets a pal, by name William Page, a butcher's apprentice. He provides Jack with the blue frock and woollen apron of a butcher's apprentice, and the two ramble off to Northampton, where a relation of Page entertains them for a while.

But the call of the London streets and Newgate is too strong for him, and he is back again in the danger zone within ten days of his escape. He is heard of

at Smithfield, and does a clever little piece of house-breaking at Mr. Martin's, the watchmaker's, over against St. Bride's Church, stealing three watches, one of which he pawns. Then he goes north and is marked down by police spies as being at "the town of Finchley near Highgate in company with one William Page." Here, on September 12th, a posse surprise the pair. Page surrenders meekly. Jack takes to the hedges, but is hunted down and strikes his flag to the threat of a pistol. Mr. Martin's two other watches are still upon him.

There is great rejoicing at Newgate over his return. The wicked and suspicious world had openly suggested that Sheppard could not have escaped without official assistance. Defoe, who examined into the matter, is satisfied there is no ground for the suggestion. Newgate indeed, to a lad of Jack's genius, is but a trap to catch a sun-beam. But for the future they are taking no chances. He is lodged in the Castle, in the body of the jail, where he is chained down to two large iron staples in the floor. Many curious folk visit him, and friends try to conceal files and thin saws in Bibles and other gifts, but the jailers are not to be tricked again and he is carefully watched.

The public expected that Jack would now be turned off without delay, but that is not the way of the law. This being vacation time, the Recorder and his deputy are down at Bath taking the waters, so Jack's business has to wait a while. For all things must be done decently and in order, and the public learn, not perhaps without satisfaction, that it must be proved in a regular and judicial way that the man they have caught is the same Jack Sheppard who was ordered for execution, and this can only be done at the next October sittings.

Even though he was padlocked to the floor of the Castle, Jack was at his tricks again before long, and one morning his keepers coming in with his breakfast found him at liberty wandering round the cell. He would have been out of it, up the chimney, but for the iron bars he found in his way. They searched him head to foot, but found nothing, so contented themselves with chaining him down again, grumbling and begging him to tell them how it was done.

Jack has the soul of an artist. The dear lad has no other audience to act to but these soulless knaves. The temptation of applause, the delight in making even these groundlings gape in amazement, is too strong a lure for his actor spirit. He produces a nail from nowhere, "and with that and no other Instrument unlocked himself again before their Faces." One would have thought even the heart of a turnkey would have been touched, and decent gratitude for a free show drawn from them some act of kindness. But no! We read: "He is now again Handcuffed and more effectually chained." It was this incident that gave modern bureaucracy the first idea of the entertainment tax.

But Sheppard never bore malice against his jailers. One of them, finding that he had been tampering with his irons, screwed them up again, and by way of courteous explanation said to his prisoner: "Young man, I see what you have been doing, but the Affair betwixt us stands thus: It is your business to make your Escape if possible and mine to take care you shall not."

Sheppard answered coolly: "Then let's both mind our own business."

What a wealth of philosophy lies in his answer, the more to be admired in that it was backed by

practical action and good example. Jack knew his business and minded it. That is where he was superior to his masters.

On Thursday, October 15th, the opportunity came for Jack's great adventure. Austin, his jailer, visited him with some official guests who came for a sight of the hero, and in their presence his irons and handcuffs were carefully examined. It was about two in the afternoon, and Austin explained that he could not visit him again until next morning, as the Sessions would be sitting until late that night, and he had to be in attendance at the Old Bailey.

Jack had found and secreted an old nail. It was his only weapon. He had already learned to use it as a key to his handcuffs. His hands free, he now by mere force broke the chains between his feet-locks and twisted a small iron link into a further useful tool. He then released his fetters from the staples in the floor. That done, he drew up his chains and fastened them to his body with his garters to prevent their shackling.

His first task was to make a hole in the chimney of the Castle, about three foot wide and six foot high from the floor, and here he finds his way barred by an iron bar cemented in the chimney walls. With the broken links of his chain he digs this out and makes a clear way for himself and gains another useful implement for his work. Through the chimney he climbs to the Red Room above his prison, where some years back the Preston rebels had been kept, but it is now in disuse.

It is seven years since the ponderous lock of the Red Room had been turned, but Sheppard with his nail goes to work at the nut of the lock and has it open in seven minutes. He is now in the passage leading to the chapel. The door at the other end

is bolted on the opposite side. A shrewd check this. The iron bar comes into play with good effect. The wall is broken away until he can get an arm through and dislodge the bolt. Thus not without noise and fear of interruption is the chapel gained.

He climbs over the spiked railings in the chapel and breaks off one of the spikes to add to his bag of tools. There is another bad door to tackle between the chapel and the tower leads. The spike comes in handy at this stage, but, the leads gained, an even more stubborn door blocks his way. It was full dark now and the work in front of him seems hopeless. For half an hour with spike and bar he works at this obstacle in grim despair. At length he wrenches the fillet from the main part of the door, carrying away the box and staples, and so over a wall and on to the upper leads.

St. Sepulchre's clock chimes eight. He sniffs the free air. Below him are the lighted shops, and he hears the hum of the City traffic. He surveys the terrain with the skill of a general and sees that the only possible descent is on to the roof of a turner's house, but that requires further equipment.

And now his courage has to be screwed up to the sticking-point. Step by step he retraces his way through the chapel and down the chimney, and gropes round in the darkness till he finds his stockings and a blanket. Having retrieved these in safety he is back once again on the upper leads, fixes his blanket with spike and stocking into Newgate wall, and drops lightly on to the leads of the turner's house.

The garret door in the leads was open, and he stole softly down two pairs of stairs, but found that the turner was having a party. As he peeped into

the room his irons clinked. A lady of the party cried out: "Lord, what noise is that?" A superior male person laughed at her and diagnosed the harmless necessary cat. Jack crept back to his garret. Here he rested for two hours until the party broke up at midnight, when he slipped downstairs through the entry and into the street a free man.

Of his further adventures, and the hue and cry that was raised, and the wild excitement of the town, it is needless to write. Freed from his irons and back among his old companions he ceases to interest the judicious. Housebreaking and burglary supply his wants and those of the ruffian men and women who surround him. On the 31st of October, betrayed doubtless by one of his pals, he is taken in a brandy shop. It is a squalid tawdry ending. There is the wretched lad in a handsome suit of clothes, a diamond ring and a cornelian ring blazing on his fingers, a light tie periwig across his brow, the pockets of his purple coat stuffed with gold rings, tortoise-shell snuff-boxes and golden guineas, and holding two loaded pistols which, fortunately, he was too drunk to handle. A furtive ale-house boy beckons in the watch, who drive away his foul crowd of companions and carry off their slumbering prisoner in a hackney coach back to his last home in Newgate.

He was placed in the Middle Stone Room adjoining the Castle and loaded with 300 pounds weight of iron. The vanity of the poor lad was sorely tried in these last days. "Noblemen and persons of Distinction" flocked to Newgate to visit him, and even His Gracious Majesty "was pleased to send for the two prints of Sheppard shewing the manner of his being chained to the floor," and it was

now that Sir James Thornhill, "the King's history painter, took a draught of his face."

On the 14th of November he makes a triumphant visit to Westminster Hall. There had not been seen such crowds in London within the memory of man. The Attorney-General himself moves for an order for his execution. Jack makes a moving speech, and Mr. Justice Powis sentences him to death with "admonitions suitable to his sad circumstances."

It is said that he made some shrewd further plans of final escape on the road to Tyburn, but these were frustrated, and on the 16th of November, 1724, in the twenty-third year of his age, the law wreaked its vengeance on the boy and he was hanged. But the legends of his daring and skill have passed into history and romance, and will be read for ever.

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