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THE DIAMOND CROSS.

BY FRANK H. ANGER.

The most experienced and sagacious of detectives are not always successful. We of the force are, like other men, fallible, and even the best laid and most carefully followed plans, sometimes wholly fail to achieve their purpose. I have been many years in the business, and although I have aided in bringing a large number of noted criminals to justice, there have been several instances in which my better judgment has been blinded and my most elaborate traps eluded by the rascals of whom I was in search. It is a terrible aggravation to a detective to find his labor thus set at naught, but of all my failures I never had one that so filled me with chagrin and mortification as one that I once made in New York. It made me appear the more ridiculous because the case was a very simple one, and the chief actor in it was a woman. To be taken in by a male sharper is bad enough, but to have yourself and your profession laughed at by a woman, is too much for a detective, proud of his sagacity, to bear with equanimity. I don't often care to speak of it, but as I am not likely to be caught in a similar trap again, I don't mind telling you the story in confidence.

The present fashionable generation may not remember the firm of Stephens & Martley, jewelers; who formerly transacted a large business on Broadway, not far from Duane Street. Their store was one day entered by a very beautiful and richly dressed lady, who had left her carriage waiting at the door, and who asked to be shown some diamond crosses. The salesman exhibited a tray containing a large number of very valuable trinkets of that description, studded with gems of exceeding richness and purity. After considerable hesitation she finally chose one, and inquired the price.

"It is worth thirteen hundred dollars," replied the salesman.

"I will take it," said the lady. "Be good enough to do it up nicely."

"Just we send it?" asked the salesman.

"No, thank you. I will take it with me." She tendered in payment two crisp new bills, one of a thousand dollars and one of five hundred. The salesman took them to the cashier, who examined them to see that they were genuine, and opened his drawer to return the necessary change. To his annoyance, he found himself short of small bills, and rather than pay out all his change, he sent the two bills back to the customer to ask if she had not the exact amount. The lady examined her portemonnaie, but was unable to find anything but three bills of five hundred each. These would not help the matter, and the cashier paid out his change with reluctance, dashed the two new bills into his drawer, and slammed it to in no very good humor. The lady took the diamonds, swept gracefully out of the store, entered her carriage, and was driven rapidly away. In fifteen minutes afterward the cashier, having occasion to open his drawer, was attracted by a peculiar line on the thousand dollar note. He examined it closely, and at once pronounced both bills to be counterfeit. The lady had cleverly changed the notes when they had been returned to her.

It was then too late to trace the fair swindler. I was sent for by the firm, and an inquiry into the facts of the case did not permit me to offer any strong hope of recovering the diamonds or the two hundred dollars. The salesman was sure that he would know the face again, and he remembered that the lady was dressed in blue silk with a lace shawl. He could recollect nothing more, except that he thought the carriage had wheels with gilded hubs and spokes. This was slight material, but I made the necessary notes in my memorandum book, and left the store.

For several days after that I kept a sharp lookout in the street for a carriage with gold wheels. I visited all the livery stables and hackney coach stands that I could think of, but my search was in vain. At last, passing one day through Bleeker Street, I met a carriage driving rapidly toward Broadway. Its description answered very well to that which Stephens & Martley's salesman had given me, but a glance inside showed me that it was empty. I stopped it, however, and cross-questioned the driver. The carriage was a public one, and the driver remembered taking a lady in blue silk, four or five days previously, to Stephens & Martley's. So far I was on the right track, but the trail was soon lost again. In answer to my questioning the man said that the lady had taken his carriage at Union Square, where it was then standing and after visiting the jewelry store, had been driven to a dry goods store on Chatham Square, where

she dismissed him. He did not notice whether she entered the store or not, and he had never seen her since.

I took the man's number, and looked well at his carriage and horses. Having thus mentally photographed his establishment, I gave him a quarter and let him go. There was nothing more to be done for the present except to telegraph a general description of the woman and the diamond cross, to the principal cities of the country, and to keep an eye on the outward bound steamers for Europe and elsewhere. This I managed to do without much difficulty while attending to other business. More important cases soon engrossed my attention, and the affair of the cross gradually fell into the background, when, after the lapse of several months, I received a telegram from a detective in Boston, stating that a note gambler called "Jumping Johnny," who had twice been seen in that city lately in suspiciously intimate relations with a woman residing in Columbus Avenue, who answered in some respects to the description of our heroine. The house in Columbus Avenue and the appearance of the woman were altogether too respectable for such close connection with Jumping Johnny, without mischief being in the wind.

I had not the pleasure of Jumping Johnny's acquaintance, but I started that same night for Boston to look at the woman, taking Stephens & Martley's salesman with me to identify her. I procured a couple of officers from the Boston force, and proceeded to the house in Columbus Avenue. It was a large handsome structure of brown stone, and I noticed that the curtains to all except the lower story were closely drawn. I suspected from this that the upper rooms were all unfurnished, and that the lower and basement floors only were occupied by the inmates, who had doubtless their own reasons for choosing an innocent-looking dwelling in a fashionable quarter, for carrying on a business that might not bear the scrutiny it would be subjected to in a more public locality. But this, of course, was all guess-work.

I posted an officer on the curbstone before the house, and another in the rear alley, with instructions to keep his eye on the back gate and the roof.

"I don't want Jumping Johnny," I explained to these sentinels. "I am after the woman who stole our diamonds. If you see a woman come out, detain her."

I did not care to trouble Jumping Johnny because, firstly, I had no evidence whatever that he was implicated in the diamond swindle, and secondly, because I was employed to recover Stephens & Martley's property, and to find the party who stole it, and it was not my business to ferret out counterfeiters. I reserved that part of the affair for a separate job.

The name on the doorplate was simply "D'Orsay." I rang the bell, and after some delay, during which I detected a pair of eyes scrutinizing us from behind the basement blinds, the door was partly opened by a very angular servant with a shock of fiery-red hair, who placed her anatomy in the aperture and demanded our business.

"I would like to see Madame D'Orsay, if you please. Is she at home?"

"I don't know."

"Be good enough to find out, if you please. Our business is very important."

"What is it?"

I placed my finger on my lips mysteriously. "It wouldn't do to tell it here in the street," I said. "I saw a cop on the sidewalk out here."

The girl looked wise and returned my wink. "Oh! you belong to them, do you?" she observed.

"Well, walk in."

She ushered us into a large parlor, handsomely furnished, and left us alone. In a few moments, we saw through the open door an elegantly dressed lady descending the stairs.

"By heavens!" exclaimed the salesman, starting. "That's the woman who bought the cross."

I was on the right track then, at last. She entered the room with a queenly step and stood still, looking at us inquiringly. She was certainly the most beautiful woman I ever saw, before or since. She evidently had no remembrance of my companion, or if she did, she concealed her recognition of him admirably.

"This gentleman," I said, rising and pointing to my companion, "is from the firm of Stephens & Martley of New York."

She turned very pale and grasped the back of a chair for support.

"If, madam," I continued, "I am an officer of the detective police. We have called in relation to a certain diamond cross purchased by you from Stephens & Martley several months ago, which was paid for in counterfeit notes."

She sank into a chair, pale as death, and trembling in every limb.

"What is the penalty?" she asked.

"We will talk of that afterwards," I said. "Is the cross still in your possession?"

"It is," she said. "Will you let me go, if I return the cross and the money? O sir, please let me go. You only want the property back, surely. I will pay that and more too, if you will not take me away."

It was hard to resist this sort of talk. She sat there wringing her hands, and with her beautiful eyes suffused with tears—a picture to melt a heart of stone.

"You don't know what it is," she said, "to be forced to lead a life like mine. You don't know what it is to be compelled to it by one who owns your body and soul, as mine is owned. God knows I would be better if I could."

"Is Jumping Johnny your husband?"

She looked around her a little fearfully, and answered, "No."

"On object," I said, "is principally to recover our property, but I don't purpose to make any promise beforehand. Return the cross and the two hundred dollars, and we will consider your case afterward."

She arose to leave the room, and for the first time it struck me how short she was, even for a woman. Her proud queenly carriage had something to do, perhaps, with my first impression, for I had taken her for a tall woman. I now saw that she was of quite petite figure, hardly larger than a girl of twelve.

She passed into a room immediately back of the parlor, and closed the door. I told my companion to step into the hall and keep his eye on the other door, while I remained in the parlor. I had no fear of the bird's escape, for I had a pretty accurate mental plan of the house in my head, and I knew she could not leave it without being seen by my men outside. She was absent a very long time, during which I heard an animated discussion going on in the adjoining room, in which the shrill tones of a child's voice could be plainly distinguished. The words, however, were inaudible.

I had become thoroughly tired of waiting, and was on the point of making a disturbance when the door opened and a hideously deformed boy appeared, limping on a crutch. He was humped, and a dreadful scrofulous mark disfigured one half of his ugly face. As he opened and closed the door, I caught a glimpse of Madame D'Orsay seated in an armchair, with a large handkerchief to her eyes, evidently weeping.

"Mother told me to give this to you," said the dwarf, in the same shrill cracked voice which I had lately overheard. "She will come out herself in a moment. You won't arrest her, will you, sir?"

"I don't know," I answered shortly, taking the diamond cross and putting it in my pocket. "Where are the two hundred dollars?"

"I'm going out to get this changed," said the boy, holding up a five hundred dollar bill. "If you wait a minute I'll bring back the money."

I let him go, and he limped out the front door and down the street, dragging his club-foot painfully after him. I was glad to have the hideous little monster out of my sight.

I waited some fifteen or twenty minutes after that, but neither Madame D'Orsay nor the boy put in an appearance. At last my patience became exhausted, and I tried the door leading into the inner room. It opened readily, but there was no one in the apartment except Madame herself, who still sat in the armchair before the dressing-table, with her face buried in her handkerchief.

"Come, come," I said, "this won't do. You've had time enough to cry in. Put on your things and follow me. I've some friends outside who are waiting for you."

A loud coarse laugh greeted his speech, and I tapped the woman gently on the shoulder. The handkerchief fell, and disclosed the features of the bony servant girl who had admitted us to the house. Her lovely person was dressed in her mistress's clothes, and her fiery shock of hair was concealed by a blonde wig, the exact counterpart of the madam's own hair, which was a wig itself, for all I know.

"You thought it was the lady of the house, did you?" exclaimed this interesting female, jumping up. "Well, go see it isn't. Thanks to your politeness in waiting so long, the madam has got well out of your reach by this time, if her crutch and that beautiful club-foot don't interfere with her speed."

"Ten thousand thanks!" exclaimed I, seizing her roughly by the arm and shaking her, "do you mean to say—"

"Yes, I do," she replied, with a broad grin. "You couldn't bring yourself to believe that pretty ladyship could make herself so ugly, could you? Mister Policeman, you're nicely sold."

I dropped her arm, and seizing the salesman as he ran through the hall, dragged him out of the house.

"The bird has escaped us," I said, as soon as we reached the sidewalk, and I could recover my breath. "Madame D'Orsay has given us the slip, but we have recovered the cross at all events."

I took the jewel from my pocket, and handed it to him. He took it, and turned it over and over in the sunlight.

"It's a beautiful thing," I remarked, looking over his shoulder.

"Yes," he said, "it is a beautiful thing. These diamonds are of unusual brilliancy—for taste! In fact they are the best imitation I ever saw."

"Isn't that your cross?" I exclaimed, in tones of triumph.

"The setting is ours," he said. "The diamonds are probably of Jumping Johnny's own manufacture."

It could not be helped. The clever woman had walked. The clever woman had walked off under my very nose, with her sealings in her pocket. We went back to New York that night, and I gave up all further attempts to trace her. From information that I afterwards received from Jumping Johnny, I suspected that the couple had gone to Europe. Perhaps Madame D'Orsay has ere this found her match among my brother detectives across the water.

The principal points which the Prince of Wales will visit, during his tour in the East, will be duly noticed. In the present issue we give a brief sketch of

BENGAL.

The British settlements in Bengal, were commenced subsequently to those on the coast of Coromandel, and in western India. In 1698, the English purchased a few small villages on the Hooghly, where Calcutta now is, and there established a factory. Changes often took place in the ruling princes, and complaints of unjust demands and unreasonable exactions were sometimes made, but the trade, here and at some other places in Bengal, was carried on with little interruption for more than 50 years.

On the death of Alivardi Khan in 1756, Saraj Dowlah, his grandson became Nabob. This prince was ignorant and licentious, cruel and avaricious. Previous to the death of Alivardi Khan, on several occasions he manifested much dislike of the English. As Calcutta was exposed to be attacked and plundered by the French, the English began to erect or repair some fortifications around it. Saraj Dowlah was greatly offended at their doing this, saying it showed a distrust of his power to protect them, or an intention to rebel against him. He began his march with a large force from Rajmahal towards Calcutta. On his way he made the English agents at Cossimbazar prisoners, and plundered the factory.

The English in Calcutta, on hearing that Saraj Dowlah was on the way with a large army and plundered Cossimbazar, resolved to defend the place. He arrived sooner than he was expected, and commenced a furious attack upon them. It was soon apparent that the fort could not be defended. The women and children and some of the men (among whom were the Governor and two members of the council), found safety on board the ships, which went down the river.

There appears to have been indiscretion, indecision, and mismanagement among those who went away in the ships, or those who remained behind, indeed among all parties, the Saraj Dowlah soon obtained possession of the place, and exposed great indignation that they should attempt to defend it against him, the ruler of the country. The number of the men who became prisoners was 146. The confinement and sufferings of these persons is a remarkable portion of the history of the English in India. It occurred in June, the hottest part of the year in Calcutta, and the weather was unusually hot and sultry for the season.

The Black Hole.

The following is the most particular account of this horrid affair which I have seen: "The place fixed on for their confinement, was the common prison of the fort, called the black hole. It consisted of a space 15 feet square, with only two small windows, barred with iron, opening into the close veranda, and scarcely admitting a breath of air. Into this narrow receptacle, the whole of the officers and soldiers, 146 in number, were compelled to enter, among that number was Mr. Holwell the governor, and on their venturing to remonstrate, the commander ordered every one who should hesitate to be instantly cut down. Thus were they forcibly thrust into this fearful dungeon, into which the whole number could with difficulty be squeezed, and the door was fastened from without. Their first impression on finding themselves thus immured

was the utter impossibility of surviving one night, and the necessity of extorting themselves at whatever cost. The form-lars or Indian guards, were walking before the window, and Mr. Holwell, seeing one who bore on his face a more than usual expression of humanity, adjured him to procure for them a room in which they could breathe, assuring him in the morning 1,000 rupees. The man went away, but returned saying it was impossible. Thinking the offer made too low, the prisoners without waiting to ask questions (estimated 2,000 rupees). The man again went and returned, saying the Nabob was asleep and no one dared awake him; the lives of 146 men being nothing in comparison to disturbing for a moment the slumbers of a tyrant.

Mr. Holwell has described in detail the horrors of that dreadful night, which are scarcely paralleled in the annals of human misery. Every moment added to their distress. All attempts to obtain relief by a change of posture, from the painful pressure to which it gave rise, only aggravated their sufferings. The air soon became pestilential, producing at every moment a feeling of suffocation, and while the perspiration flowed in streams, they were tormented with the most burning thirst. Unfortunately, as the stations near the windows were decidedly the best, the most dreadful struggles were made to reach them. Many of the prisoners being foreign soldiers, and now released from all subordination, made the most frightful efforts, and the sufferers as they grew weaker, were in some instances squeezed or actually trampled to death. Loud cries for water being raised the humane janaceer pushed through the bars several skins filled with that liquid, but this produced only an increase of calamity, owing to the very violent endeavors made to obtain it. The Sepoys without, found only a savage sport in witnessing these contests, and even brought lights to the window in order to view them at greater advantage. About 11 o'clock the prisoners began to die, sixty-four of Mr. Holwell's intimate friends sank at his feet, and were trodden upon by the survivors. Of those still alive, a great portion were raving or delirious. Some uttered the most incoherent prayers, and others the most frightful blasphemies. They also endeavored by furious invectives to induce the guards to fire into the prison and to end their misery but without effect. When day dawned, the few who had not expired were most of them, either raving or insensible. In this last state was the Governor himself, when about 6 o'clock, Saraj awoke and inquired for him. On learning the events of the night, he merely sent to ascertain if the English chief still lived, and being informed there were appearances as if he might recover, gave orders to open the fatal door. At that time of the 146 who had been inclosed, 68 breathed only 23.—[Murray.]

A man of Fort Street going home at a late hour in the night, saw that the occupants of a house standing flush with the street had left a window up, and he decided to warn them and prevent a burglary. Putting his head into the window he called out, "Hello! poor—"

A wailing ball full of water struck him in the face, and as he staggered back a woman shrieked out, "Didn't I tell you what you'd get if you wasn't home by nine o'clock?"

MARRIAGE OF MR. IN FISKE.—Miss Marion Fiske, daughter of M. W. Fiske, the comedian, was recently married to T. J. Martin, an actor, who was playing in the same company with her at Sim's Park Theatre, Brooklyn, N. Y. The affair," says a Boston paper, "has been kept very shady."

A NOVA SCOTIAN ABROAD.—The Halifax Chronicle is sorry to learn that Clements, the Toronto ex-Albany, arrested for procuring the abortion in the case of the unfortunate girl, Gilmour, is a Nova Scotian, and that he is a native of that province.

A Eloquent Speaker is like a river—grates at the mouth.

Why is a surgeon, since the discovery of ether, like a swindler?—Because he cuts off without paying (pain).

What is that which a person likes to have and to get rid of as soon as possible?—A good appetite.

Why does a butcher stick up signs of meat in his meat?—To show it for his customers.

A Rosting.—When is a tired man like a thief?—When he needs arresting.

White bait—Widow's caps.