

Famous Criminal Societies

That dreaded criminal organization known as the Camorra, which the Italian authorities are now trying to suppress, dates back more than four centuries. It originated in the Neapolitan prisons, where a tax, ostensibly for the maintenance of a lamp placed before a prison shrine, was levied on all new-comers. The system of blackmail for it was nothing else—soon spread, and tradesmen, keepers of gambling houses, and others were placed under contribution which they dared not refuse. The society itself maintained among its members the sternest discipline. Before an aspirant to membership could enjoy full rights he had to undergo a Spartan novitiate. He was required to assassinate anyone whom his superiors should point out, or even to engage in deadly conflict with knives with some fellow-probationer. Or, again, he might be required to pick up from a table a piece of money which members standing round protected with drawn knives. When he had given sufficient proof of his courage the candidate was admitted to membership, and received full share of the spoil accruing from the society's nefarious transactions.

The Mafia, a secret organization akin to the Camorra, originated in Sicily, whence it has spread far and wide, until it is as potent and dreaded in the cities of the Southern States of America as it is in those of Southern Italy. The society used to consist of three classes—the chiefs, who always appeared well dressed and held a certain position among their fellow-men; the "knifers" who were chosen from the lower middle classes; and the habitual criminals and scoundrels of the jails. Its rules are very similar to those governing the Camorra, and its object is plunder, obtained by robbery, smuggling and blackmail. Those who have read Mrs. Gaskell's thrilling story, "The Grey Woman," can form an accurate conception of the terror in which the "chaffeurs" were held in France at the time of the Revolution. They were an organized society of desperadoes who received their sobriquet from their method of treating their victims, the soles of whose feet they exposed to a blazing fire until the pain should

force them to confess where their valuables were concealed. The members were recruited from every class—from the petty noble to the tramps, beggars and gipsies—and their depredations were so daring that they spread dismay in the very capital itself.

Through the exertions of a sergeant of gendarmes, named Vasseur, the association was at length broken up. The prisons of Charters—the neighborhood of which was the headquarters of the bandits—were full to overflowing, and over 200 were awaiting their trial at one time. Their chief, however, known as "Le beau Francois," contrived to escape, to organize later on another criminal society, which was finally dispersed by the celebrated Fouché, including the leader, were executed.

For over 30 years the district of a part of France was terrorized by a band of ruffians composed almost entirely of two families, the Chretiens and the Jaures, and their descendants. Their baleful presence was first felt in 1821, when a series of robberies and murders spread consternation throughout the countryside. Then there was an interval of comparative quiet, but in 1832 the epidemic of crime again broke out, which culminated in the retributive murder of old Chretien by his grandchildren, the Villets, for the sake of his hoarded belongings.

In 1872 occurred the third and worst outbreak of crime, which for three years continued unchecked. None knew where the blow might fall, for apparently harmless artisans and peasants might be members of this dreaded band, over whom ruled Hippolyte Villet and Ferdinand Lemaire, the former the chief, the latter the lieutenant and "executioner" of the organization. While the crafty brain of Villet planned all the robberies, the muscular arm of Lemaire was always at hand ready to strike down the victim should he dare to show any resistance. Although, after a while, those leaders became known, none dared, for over three years, denounce them to the authorities, who, however, at last made a determined move, which resulted in the villains paying the penalty of their crimes in the presence of an enormous and rejoicing crowd.

possible to walk from one end of the street to another. Confetti, "tiddlers," and grease-bags abound in hundreds, and a very boisterous night is made.

The first two and the last two days of Passover are kept as holy days. The synagogues are well frequented, and during the evenings of the first two nights feasts are made in every Jewish family. It is customary for the youngest son of the house to ask four standard questions, which are answered in the course of the evening by the master of the house. Non-intoxicating wines are drunk in great quantities, and two very enjoyable nights are passed away.

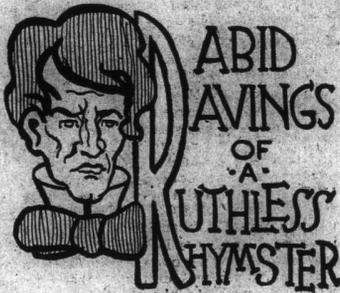
THERE WERE OTHERS

An eminent Nonconformist divine, who is addicted to the unpopular habit of snuff-taking, had been lecturing to the literary society of one of the churches of the denomination he adorns. The delivery of the lecture was accompanied throughout by the insertion of copious quantities of "the sneeshin" in the olfactory organ.

At the conclusion of the lecture a somewhat important, elderly gentleman came forward to offer his congratulations, which were, however, modified by the closing remarks:

"But don't you think, sir, that in the presence of so many young people it's a pity to take snuff so freely? It only makes your nose red!"

Gravely and at once came the reply: "Sir, some people may make their noses red by taking snuff; some make their noses red by taking drink; there are others who make their noses red by poking them into other people's business!"



THE SWALLOWS

(By C. L. A.)

Two little swallows are building a nest
Under the eaves of my house.
Nibs and I creep to the window and watch
Standing as still as a mouse.
Wee Daddy Swallow comes first with some string,
Mamma Bird, breathless, brings hay.
Chirping, chattering, cheerily chirks,
They're busily building all day.

Mamma Bird labors without pause or stop;
Wee Daddy Swallow will bring
A small wisp of straw for the frame of the nest,
And then declare recess to sing.
He swells out his chest with its bosom of white,
Until Nibs and I fear it will burst;
But whether he's praising his wife or himself
We know not. We hope 'tis the first.

WILD LILIES

(By Ernest McGaffey.)

What time the earlier steps of Spring
Have reached and passed the slopes unseen,
While sun and shade alternate cling
To ancient rock and mosses green:
Deep housed in cloistered thickets dense
The frail wild lilies dreaming stand,
Held, for a space, in rapt suspense
Like foam on some deserted strand.

What time the flicker's chattering cry
Sends a shrill challenge through the trees,
And from the blue and distant sky
Drifts down the wash of cloud-rimmed seas:
The slim, wild lilies haunt the dale
Amid the maze of grass and vine,
Seen dimly clear, and passing pale,
Like to a ghost of dead moonshine.

What time the winds of morning sow
Their seeds of light with lavish palm,
And wakening signals come and go
Through sun-drenched vaults of utter calm:
The pure wild lilies, pensive, sweet,
By wooded shrines of shadowy lawn,
Bend reverent heads to greet
The silent Angelus of the Dawn.

A sereet urchin went into a grocer's shop
and asked for a quarter of a pound of tea.
"Black or green?" enquired the grocer.
"It doesn't matter, mister; it's for a woman
who's blind."

"I shall be awfully stupid now," exclaimed
a wife who had returned from a visit to her
dentist.

"Why so, my dear?" queried her husband.
"Because I have had all my wisdom teeth
pulled out," replied the lady.
"Oh my love, the idea that wisdom teeth
have anything to do with wisdom is a fool-
ish one! If you were to have every tooth in
your head drawn it couldn't make you any
stupider, you know!"
Curtain!

Maxim's First Success

I had been seeking him for some weeks before at last I succeeded in running him to earth. "Good morning, young man," said the great inventor. "What can I do for you?" "I want you to talk," I replied. "About anything and everything. About your successes and failures; about flying machines and their possibilities; about—"

"Just a minute, my friend. Let us start at the beginning. "How did I start inventing? Well, it was just natural, you know. My first success? Well, I was twenty-four years old, and had just recovered from both measles and mumps when I arrived in Boston. That was in the spring of 1864. Money was decidedly scarce with me, and I had not a single friend in the whole of the town. Walking along Washington street, I came to a shop where there were some beautiful machines exhibited in the window, with the sign, 'The Automatic Gas Company. Drake's Patent.' I went in and saw Mr. Drake, and asked him if he could give me a job. Of course, he asked me what I could do, and I informed him that I could use any sort of tools and was a brass finisher. He replied that he had no vacancy for either, but wanted a draughtsman. 'I am a draughtsman too,' I replied, and after some further talk it was arranged that I should start with him the next day on trial.

"After a time I became an expert in gas engines, so when the notorious Bill Tweed and his friends built the large American Club House in Connecticut, where there was no gas-light, I was sent to provide them with a gas engine. I designed a large one of about 500

lights for them, and the general result was that the machine became suitable for lighting places outside the reach of coal gas. This machine had an air-pump like the Drake machines, but I followed this up by another that had no pump, and this latter I installed into nearly all the mills of A. T. Stewart, who was at that time the richest man in America. The largest I made was put up at Saratoga Springs, where I lighted the Grand Union, the St. James, and Windsor Hotels, all the property of A. T. Stewart. The saving effected by my machine in the gas bills of these three hotels was about \$130 a day. This, I think, was my first success, and," he added, somewhat pathetically, or so it seemed to me, "it remained my first success until the electric light came along and knocked it out completely.

"I did a lot of work for Messrs. T. A. Stewart & Co. one way and another. I remember on one occasion I received a telegram from them which read: 'Can you make us a magic-lantern large enough to project pictures in the clouds at night? If so, make one at once for the Grand Union Hotel, and have it in operation inside a week.' I at once went forth and purchased the largest lens I could find in New York, and succeeded in completing the lantern and installing it within the specified time. The apparatus, however, was not altogether successful, since suitable clouds were not always available; so the pictures were projected on to the fine spray of the fountains in the grounds. This attracted an enormous amount of attention, and led to my making a special apparatus for illuminating fountains—an idea that was soon copied all over Europe and America."

ARRESTED AFTER THIRTY-FIVE YEARS IN THE CRIMINAL APPEAL COURT

A week or two ago a man gave himself up and confessed that he was responsible for the Cafe Royal murder in 1854. It will be remembered that an old watchman was shot by a man unknown. Though this confession proved, like many others, to be untrue, it recalls the fact that many a crime has been brought home to the guilty party when many more than sixteen years have gone by.

Just over a year ago one of the richest and most respected of the business men of the city of Vienna was arrested on a charge of having embezzled a sum of eight pounds from his employer 35 years ago! It transpired that this merchant began his career as a commercial traveler in cheap prints, which he sold in towns and villages. One day he failed to turn up, and, owing to the difficulty of proving the defalcations, the case was not proceeded with. His solicitor, when he was charged after this long interval, procured his release by arranging that the eight pounds that his client had embezzled, together with compound interest for the 35 years, should be deposited in the court.

Another case that runs the above very close also proves the truth of the old saying, "Murder will out." There lived in Rome, nearly 40 years ago, a woman named Marie Bonelli, with her husband and three children. She had a lover named Giacomini, and, becoming tired of her husband and children, deliberately poisoned them. The guilty pair fled, and finally settled down together in Naples. Thirty years afterwards, during a violent quarrel, Giacomini threatened his mistress that he would inform the police of the crime she had committed. A passerby who overheard the threat denounced the pair, and, just 31 years after the dastardly murder, Marie Bonelli was brought to trial and convicted.

Oddingly, a little village in Worcestershire was the scene of a ghastly crime that remained unsolved for a quarter of a century. The rector was found murdered one day, and shortly afterwards a man named Hemmings, the local village carpenter, disappeared. That he was the murderer there was little doubt, but, though there was a great hue and cry at the time, he was not discovered. Twenty-five years later some workmen who were digging up the foundations of a barn discovered the skeleton of the carpenter. This discovery frightened a man into confessing that he had murdered Hemmings. It came out that he had urged the carpenter to kill the rector, and then, frightened that he would be found out, he had in his turn killed Hemmings.

Only as recently as last February the real author of a crime was discovered after fifteen years had passed and six people had been unjustly sentenced for it. Fifteen years ago last August six miners were condemned at Essen for perjury. The chief witness against them was a policeman named Munter, and, though witnesses were brought to prove that his evidence was false, a policeman's word in Germany at that time was considered to be above any combined evidence. Not till last February was the innocence of these six deeply-wronged miners proved and a formal verdict of acquittal entered against them. But under German laws they are totally unable to get any compensation!

"So you think you can stand the arduous duties of a sketch artist? You know in our play we find occasion to throw you down a 30-foot flight of stairs into a barrel of rain-water?"

"I think I can stand it," said the hungry man. "I was a collector in a hire-purchase furniture firm for three years."

It used to be the case that when a man was sentenced to death for murder he finally disappeared from the public gaze as he quitted the dock in charge of the prison warders. Thenceforward until the sentence was carried out he was seen only by his nearest relatives, and by the few persons who were admitted to witness the last awful scene. Even the latter grew fewer in number as time went on, for it is rarely, if ever, now that representatives of the press are allowed to be present at executions.

A great change has come about by the passing of the Criminal Appeal Act. Under the provisions of the act even a man convicted of murder may appeal, and several have done so in recent years. These appeals are conducted in open court, and as the convicted person has a right to be present, and almost invariably elects to take advantage of the privilege, the public have once more an opportunity of looking upon him.

Naturally on these occasions there is keen desire to witness the proceedings, and it may be that the unhappy prisoner is faced by a far larger number of sightseers than that which confronted him when on his trial. But the whole situation is, pictorially, very different to that which marked the trial. The atmosphere, the environment of the law court is freer, less gruesome, than that of a criminal court; and, however atrocious may have been the nature of the crime under investigation, it somehow does not here create that effect of strained horror which made the incident of the trial memorable.

Instead of occupying a dock placed conspicuously, often in the very middle of the court, the prisoner stands in a small enclosure, erected in an elevated position against a side wall, and should he choose to use the chair provided for him he is hardly visible.

Crippen used this chair almost throughout the hearing of his appeal, merely standing to hear judgment pronounced, and little more than the top of his head was clearly seen by the majority of those in court.

Although the opportunities of seeing convicted murderers in this position have so far been very few, one singular feature has been noted on each occasion—the calmness (not unconcern) of the prisoner. This may in part be due to the absence of that depression of the environment already remarked, but it is also an evidence of the resignation which overtakes most men, even those least suspected of liability to it in the earlier stages of a murder case, when the strain of the actual trial is over, and days have been spent in the silent seclusion of the prison cell. Although the face usually pales when the last chance has disappeared, absolute resignation—hopelessness, if you will—is its dominating expression.

Somehow it is always difficult to associate men in this position, clean-faced, decently-dressed, quiet and restrained, with the terrible acts of which they have been convicted. Even if the innocence of the convict is not established by his last effort, his guilt is certainly not emphasized by the spectacular effect of his final appearance before this tribunal, so humanely and decorously are the proceedings conducted.

Cabby (to street loafer, who has been holding his bony-looking animal for over half an hour)—"Thanks, old sport; here's a penny for your trouble."

Seedy-Looking Loafer—"Old 'ard, gawd! —I want a tanner."

Cabby—"What! Sixpence? I shouldn't dream of such a thing. Keep the horse."

AN OLD LONDON LEGEND

The church in Woburn square, London, is said to occupy the site of the "Field of Forty Footsteps," to which a tragic legend attaches. The story dates from the days of Monmouth's rebellion. According to the version given to Mr. J. S. Ogilvy's "Relics and Memorials of London Town," two brothers fell in love with a woman who, either from callous vanity or fearing reprisals from the unsuccessful suitor, would not say which was to be the favored swain, suggesting that they should fight a duel and to the victor she would give her charms. They came from the town to this suburban field. The woman calmly sat down to await events. She had not long to wait, judging from the number of footprints, when one of the brothers fell dead, and as the victor approached she held out her arms to greet him, when, with a sudden revulsion of feeling for his brother's death, he slew her as she stood, and, turning the weapon, he drove it through his own heart. So they were found stiff in death with the footprints stamped in the wet clay, where they remained indelible through summer heat and winter frost; no green thing would grow, nor any man build himself a dwelling there. Streets were erected all round, but it was not until the nineteenth century that men took heart of grace and built a church there, when the consecration of the ground rolled back the curse and the memory of the legend grew faint and faded away.

KNEW THE DOG'S POINTS

Mr. Smith was a nervous man, and when, at 8 o'clock, Mrs. Smith had not come home, he telephoned to the police to inform them that she was missing. She returned safely enough a little later, having been detained by a slight taxi-cab accident, and her husband scrutinized her carefully. His reason for doing so may be inferred from the account of the telephone conversation between Mr. Smith and the police department.

"What's her description?" asked the official at the telephone. "Her height? Weight?"

"Er—er—about average, I guess," stammered the husband.

"Color of eyes?"

"A confused burring sound came back over the wire.

"Blue or brown?" prompted the official.

"I—I don't know!"

"How was she dressed?"

"I think she wore her coat and hat—she took the dog with her."

"What kind of a dog?"

"Brindle bull-terrier, weight 14 pounds and a half, four dark blotches on his body, shading from grey into white; a round blackish spot over the left eye; white stub of a tail, three white legs, and the right front leg nicely brindled all but the toes; a small nick in his left ear, gold filling in his upper right molar, a silver link collar with—"

"That'll do!" gasped the official. "We'll find the dog!"

"Won't you please give me an order?" pleaded the persistent commercial traveler.

"Certainly," replied the crusty proprietor. "Get out!"

TRAINING SEALS IS EASY

According to an old trainer, it is a very simple thing to teach seals the tricks they do in the ring.

"The cardinal principle in training animals," says he, "is not to attempt to make an animal do anything contrary to the nature of its particular species. To be successful, a trainer must know enough about the habits of the animals he has under training to fit the tricks he would teach them to their natural bent.

The seal is very easily taught. To begin with one seal, some small pieces of fish, and a string. You let the seal sit on his pedestal, sometimes he likes to do by nature; then you throw him one of the pieces of fish, and he naturally and easily catches it. Next you tie a piece of fish on the end of your string and swing it toward the seal; he catches this, too, and you keep moving away from him and swinging the fish to him from an increasing distance. Now you are ready to begin with the hat or cornucopia. You put a piece of fish in the bottom of it and toss it to the seal. The seal is dexterous by nature, and his nose, quickly detecting the fish in the tip of the cone, seeks it out. The cone catches on his snout and he bites out the fish and tosses the cone aside. Before long he comes to associate the cone with fish, and he will catch any number of similar ones and toss them aside when he fails to find what he wants.

"Balancing the big rubber ball is based on the same principle. The ball is soaked in fishy brine and thrown to the seal. He gets the odor and tries his best to get into the ball and find what he is after. This results in his balancing the ball on his nose, a feat to which his supple neck and his natural feeding habits are all adapted, and then he gets his piece of fish as a prize."

THE FEAST OF PASSOVER

As everybody knows, the Feast of Passover is kept to commemorate the deliverance of the Jews out of Egypt.

During this feast all bread and everything that is leavened is burnt, and all utensils that have been used previous to Passover are put away until after the feast, and an entire change of diet is made, the chief food being a form of biscuit called Matzo.

Previous to this feast there is great commotion in the "Lane." New utensils are bought and sold in large quantities, and the cry of "Hagada, one penny!" may be heard everywhere.

Passover Eve is alive with small boys carrying fires made up in pails. They knock at every door in the street, and when it is opened they cry "Chomatz!" which means leavened bread. It is the custom to give the boy what bread there is to burn, and a halfpenny for burning it. (This custom seems to be dying out amongst the English Jews, who, instead of burning the bread, give it to the poor beggars who abound in the East of London.) In this way the bread is destroyed and a small amount of money made up by the boy.

Middlesex street is a blaze of light on this night. It is so crowded that it is almost im-

WITH THE

All students of knowledge of this complete without a this famous philoso democracies owe s their governments, new nation was in Montesquieu's "Spi political guide boo named book was h author has been c those ancient law-g "Persian Letters" is and witty philosop lightful reading eve far from scientific Montesquieu touche ever new in their n

For instance, s following the prog (however we may c will read with amus posed to be written Paris to his friend i modern times the o political economist r "Whether it is b then; liberty or t question among me there are good rea practice. If the Eu a want of generosi sons, miserable who answer that it is me the empire which na "women." If they a of women, shut up, ply that ten wome troublesome than on

Another question whether the law of men to the men. N pher to me the othe tated such a law. T them is real tyrann us to assume becau nature than we, and manity and reason. ought to have give we acted reasonably, if because we ha But it is true that men is only tyrannia have over us a natu —which nothing ca tends not to all cou is universal. Where this privilege? Is strongest? But this employ every kind of spirits. Their abilit ours, if their educat examine them in thos has not enfeeble, an as great. It must b is contrary to our most polite peopl had the authority ove established among th Isis, and among the Semiramis. It is sa commanded all nation I say nothing of th in perfect slavery to barbarous to be broug seem, my dear Ibbem the fashion of this of fond of defending ext reducing everything pphet has determine the rights of each s must honor their hus wives; but the husba gree of honor more."

He writes as foll beauty of the women e deploring the confinm lives, and dulls thei "The women of Pe of France, but those d tier. It is difficult n not to be pleased w more delicate and m more gay and airy. the blood so pure is men observe; they n late, they drink no w themselves to the oped that the seraglio health than for pleasu kind of life, where eve ject and duty; in grave, and their pasti seldom taste them, b authority and depende

ON RE

From the "Sp The different religi give to those who p tives of attachment; th the manner in which th of thought and percept are extremely indict have no great inclin idolaters; we are not ideas, and yet are most ions, which teach us t. This proceeds from find in ourselves as hav