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HAND AND RING

By A. K. GREEN.

CHAPTER I.

A STARTLING COINCIDENCE.

The town clock of Sibley has just struck 12. Court had adjourned, and Judge Evans with one or two of the leading lawyers of the county, stood in the door-way of the court house discussing the eccentricities of criminals. Mr. Lord had just ventured the assertion that crime as a fine art was happily confined to France; to which District Attorney Ferris had replied:

"And why? Because atheism has not yet acquired such a hold upon our upper classes that gentlemen think it possible to meddle with such matters. It is only when a student, a doctor, a lawyer, determines to put aside from his path the secret stumbling block of his desires or his ambition that the true intellectual crime is developed. That brute whom you see slouching along over the way is the type of the average criminal of the day."

And he indicated with a nod a sturdy, ill-favored man, who, with pack on his back, was just emerging from a grassy lane opposite the court house.

"Such men are often seen in the dock," remarked Mr. Orcutt, of more than local reputation as a city criminal lawyer. "And often escape the penalty of their crimes," he added, watching, with a curious glance, the lowering brow and furtive look of the man who, upon perceiving the attention he had attracted, increased his pace till he almost broke into a run.

"Looks as if he had been up to mischief," observed Judge Evans.

"Rather as if he had heard the sentence which was passed upon the last tramp who paid his respects to this town," corrected Mr. Lord.

"Revenons a nos moutons," resumed the District Attorney. Crime, as an investment, does not pay in this country. The regular burglar leads a dog's life of it; and when you come to the murderer, how few escape capital if they do the gallows. I do not know of a case where a murder for money has been really successful in this region."

"Then you must have some pretty cute detective work going on here," remarked a young man who had not before spoken.

"No, no—nothing to brag of. But the brutes are so clumsy. They don't know how to cover up their tracks."

"The smart ones don't make tracks," interposed a rough voice near them, and a large, red-haired, slightly hump-backed man, who, from the looks of those about, was evidently a stranger in the place, shuffled forward from the pillar against which he had been leaning, and took up the thread of conversation.

"I tell you," he continued, in a gruff tone somewhat out of keeping with the studied abstraction of his keen, gray eye, "that half the criminals are caught because they do make tracks and then resort to such extraordinary means to cover them up. The true secret of success in this line lies in striking your blow with a weapon picked up on the spot, and in choosing for the scene of your tragedy thoroughfare where, in the natural course of events, other men will come and go and unconsciously tread out traces, provided you have made any. This disjutes suspicion or starts it in so many directions that justice is at once confounded, if not ultimately baffled. Look at that house yonder," the stranger pursued, pointing to a plain dwelling on the opposite corner. "While we have been standing here several persons of one kind or another, and among them a pretty rough-looking tramp, have gone into the side gate and so around to the kitchen door and back. I don't know who lives there, but say it is a solitary old woman above keeping help, and that an hour from now some one, not finding her in the house, searches through the garden and comes upon her lying dead behind the wood-pile, struck down by her own axe. On whom are you going to lay your hand in suspicion? On the stranger, of course—the rough-looking tramp that everybody thinks is ready for bloodshed at the least provocation. But suspicion is not conviction, and I would dare wager that no court, in face of a persistent denial on his part that he even saw the old woman when he went to her door, would bring in a verdict of murder against him, even though silver from her private drawer were found concealed upon his person. The chance that he spoke the truth, and that she was not in the house when he entered, and that his crime had been merely one of burglary or theft, would be enough to save him from the hangman."

"That is true," assented Mr. Lord, "unless all the other persons who had been seen to go into the yard were not only reputable men, but were willing to testify to having seen the woman alive up to the time he invaded her premises."

But the hump-backed stranger had already lounged away.

"What do you think about this, Mr. Byrd?" inquired the District Attorney, turning to the young man before alluded to. "You are an expert in these matters, or ought to be. What would you give for the tramp's chances if the detectives took him in hand?"

"I, sir?" was the response. "I am so comparatively young and inexperienced in such affairs, that I scarcely dare presume to express an opinion. But I have heard it said by Mr. Gryce, who you know stands foremost among the detectives of New York, that the only case of murder in which he utterly failed to get any clue to work upon, was that of a Jew who was knocked down in his own shop in broad daylight. But this will not appear so strange when you learn the full particulars. The store was situated between two alley-ways in Harlem. It had an entrance back and an entrance from a side street in constant use. The man was found behind his counter, having evidently been hit on the head by a slung-shot while reaching for a box of hosiery. But through a succession of people were constantly passing by both doors, there was for that very reason no one to tell which of all the men who were observed to enter the shop, came out again with blood upon his conscience. Nor were the circumstances of the Jew's life such as to assist justice. The most careful investigation failed to disclose the existence of any enemy, nor was he found to possess in this country, at least, any relative who could have hoped to be benefited by the few dollars he had saved from a late bankruptcy. The only conclusion to be drawn is, that the man was secretly in the way of some one and was as secretly put out of it, but for what purpose, or by whose hand, time has never disclosed."

Mr. Orcutt looked at his watch.

"I must go to dinner," he announced, withdrawing, with a slight nod, across the street.

The rest stood for a few minutes abstractedly contemplating his retreating figure, as he passed down the little street that opened opposite to where they stood, and entered the unpretending cottage of a widow lady, with whom he was in the habit of taking his mid-day meal whenever he had a case before the court.

A lull was over the whole village, and the few remaining persons on the Court House steps were about to separate when Mr. Lord uttered an exclamation and pointed to the cottage into which they had just seen Mr. Orcutt disappear. Immediately all eyes looked that way and saw the lawyer standing on the stoop, having evidently issued with the utmost precipitation from the house.

"He is making signs," cried Mr. Lord to Mr. Ferris, and both gentlemen crossed toe way and hurried down the street toward their friend, who ran forward to meet them.

"A murder!" he excitedly exclaimed.

"A strange and startling coincidence. Mrs. Clemmens has been struck on the head, and is lying covered with blood at the foot of her dining-room table."

Mr. Lord and the District Attorney stared at each other in surprise and horror, and then they rushed forward.

"Wait a moment," the latter suddenly cried, stopping short and looking back. "Where is the fellow who talked so learnedly of murder and the best way of making a success of it. He must be found at once. I don't believe in coincidences." And he beckoned to the person they had called Byrd, who was hurrying their way. "Go find Hunt, the constable," he cried; "tell him to stop and retain the humpback. A woman here has been found murdered, and that fellow must have known something about it."

The young man stared, flushed with sudden intelligence, and darted off. Mr. Ferris turned, found Mr. Orcutt still at his side and drew him forward to rejoin Mr. Lord, who by this time was at the door of the cottage.

They all went in together, Mr. Ferris, who was of an adventurous disposition leading the way. The room into which they first stepped was empty. It was the widow's sitting-room, and was in perfect order, with the exception of Mr. Orcutt's hat, which lay on the centre-table where he had laid it on entering. Neat, without being prim, the entire aspect of the place was one of comfort, ease and modest luxury. For, though the Widow Clemmens lived alone and without help, she was by no means an indigent person. The door leading into the farther room was open and toward this they hastened, led by the glitter of the fine old china service which loaded the dining-table.

"She is there," said Mr. Orcutt, pointing to the other side of the room.

They immediately passed behind the table and there, sure enough, lay the prostrate figure of the widow, her head bleeding, her arms extended, one hand grasping her watch, which she had loosened from her belt, the other stretched towards a stick of firewood, that, from the mark of blood upon its side, had evidently been used to fell her to the floor. She was motionless as stone, and was, to all appearance dead.

"Sickening, sickening!—horrible!" exclaimed Mr. Lord. "What motive could any one have for killing such an inoffensive woman? The devilry of man is beyond belief!"

"And after what we have heard, inexplicable," asserted Mr. Ferris. "To be told of a supposable case of murder one minute and then to see it exemplified in this dreadful way the next is an experience of no common order. I own I am overcome by it." And he flung open a door that communicated with the lane and let the outside air sweep in.

"That door was unlocked," remarked Mr. Lord, glancing at Mr. Orcutt, who stood with severe, set face, looking down at the outstretched form.

With a start the latter looked up. "What did you say? The door unlocked? There is nothing strange in that. She never locked her doors, though she was very deaf I often advised her to." And he allowed his eyes to run over the low, uncultivated ground before him, that, in the opinion of many persons, was such a decided blot upon the town. "There is no one in sight," he reluctantly admitted.

"No," responded the other. "The ground is unfavorable for escape. It is marshy and covered with snake grass. A man could make his way, however, between the hillocks into those woods yonder, if he were driven by fear or understood the path well. What is the matter Orcutt?"

"Nothing," affirmed the latter,—"nothing, I thought I heard a groan."

"You heard me make an exclamation," spoke up Mr. Ferris, who by this time had sufficiently overcome his emotion to lift the head of the prostrate woman and look in her face. "This woman is not dead."

"What?" they both cried, bounding forward.

"See, she breathes," continued the former, pointing to her slowly laboring chest. "The villain, whoever he was, did not do his work well; she may be able to tell us something yet."

"I do not think so," murmured Mr. Orcutt. "Such a blow as that must have destroyed her faculties, if not her life. It was of cruel force."

"However that may be, she ought to be taken care of now," cried Mr. Ferris. "I wish Dr. Tredwell was here."

"I will go for him," signified the other.

But it was not necessary. Scarcely had the lawyer turned to execute this mission when a sudden murmur was heard at the door and a dozen or so citizens burst into the house, among them the very person named. Being coroner as well as physician, he at once assumed authority. The widow was carried into her room, which was on the same floor, and a brother practitioner sent for, who took his place at her head and waited for any sign of returning consciousness. The crowd, remanded to the yard, spent their time alternately in furtive questioning of each other's countenances, and in eager lookout for the expected return of the strange young man who had been sent after the incomprehensible humpback of whom all had heard. The coroner, closeted with the district attorney in the dining-room, busied himself in noting certain evident facts.

"I am, perhaps, forestalling my duties in interfering before the woman is dead," intimated the former. "But it is only a matter of a few hours and any facts we can glean in the interim must be of value to a proper conduct of the inquiry I shall be called upon to hold. I shall therefore make the same note of the position of affairs as I would do if she were dead; and, to begin with, I wish you to observe that she was his when setting the clock. She had not even finished her task, for the clock is still 10 minutes slow, while her watch is just right, as you will see by comparing it with your own. She was attacked from behind, and to all appearances unexpectedly. Had she turned, her forehead would have been struck, while, as all can see, it is the back of her head that has suffered, and that from a right-hand blow. Her deafness was undoubtedly the cause of her imbecility under the approach of such an assailant. She did not hear his step and, being so busily engaged, saw nothing of the cruel hand uplifted to destroy her. I doubt if she even knew what happened. The mystery is that any one could have sufficiently desired her death to engage in such a cold-blooded butchery. If plunder were wanted, why was not her watch taken from her? And see, here is a pile of small change lying beside her plate on the table—a thing a tramp would make for at once."

"It was not a thief that struck her."

"Well, well, we don't know. I have my own theory," admitted the coroner; "but, of course, it will not do for me to mention it here. The stick was taken from that pile laid ready on the hearth, odd, significantly odd, that in all its essential details this affair should tally so completely with the supposable case of crime given a moment before by the deformed wretch you tell me about."

"Not if that man was a madman and the assailant," suggested the District Attorney.

"True, but I do not think he was mad—not from what you have told me. But let us see what the commotion is."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Prominent Public Men
are not slow to give expression to their opinion where genuine merit is concerned. D. Derbyshire, president of the Ontario Creamery Association, says: Nasal Balm beats the world for catarrh and cold in the head. In my own case it effected relief from the first application.

James Farrell, Indian agent was at Andover the week contracting for extensive repairs on the Catholic chapel at Indian Point.

Shiloh's Vitalizer is what you need for Constipation, Loss of Appetite, Dizziness and all symptoms of Dyspepsia. Price 10 and 75 cents per bottle.

Dr. T. T. Beveridge, of Appleton, Wis., and Benj Beveridge, of Minneapolis, arrived at Andover on a visit a few days ago.

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Our new book "Successful Home Dyeing" giving full directions for all uses of Diamond Dyes, sent free on application. Diamond Dyes are sold everywhere, or any color mailed on receipt of price, 10 cents Wells, Richardson & Co., Montreal, Que.

WAKEMAN'S WANDERINGS.

HE SEES PALERMO IN ALL ITS ASPECTS.

Its Tombs, Crypts and Sarcophagi, and With a Feeling of Relief, Steams Away to Naples.

NAPLES, Italy, April 4, 1890.

Palermo, the ancient Panoramus of the Phoenicians, with its quarter million population of to-day, seems to my eyes to be one of the brightest and most beautiful cities of Europe. One gets away from lava and scoriae in Palermo. If hundreds of brigands are harbored in the heights of Misilmeri, only eight miles away, such barbarous dangers are shut from the consciousness by the gaiety and splendor of the Sicilian capital. And here one is even partially relieved of the presence of the eternal stone monuments and dead-age remains which almost have the power to in time render the European traveler possessing a student's mind a maundering sentimentalist, a driveling idiot, or worse, a classic pedant and cynic.

Beautiful as is the winsome city itself, its site is far more lovely and enchanting. At the northeastern extremity of Sicily, huge precipices throw protecting arms nearly around Palermo on the north. These almost mountainous heights to the right and to the left descend to the sea in delicate lines and with tints of rarest tone. Between the headlands lies the deep and dreamful harbor. Then, the city on a gently-rising plain. Behind this, encircled by a vast mountain-capped loop, shaped almost precisely like the horse-shoe arch of the Moors, stretches far and far away that most famous of all Italian valleys, Conda d' Oro, or the Valley of the Golden Shell. It is a vast and marvelously fertile plain, a glorious and never-failing garden, massed with the roblest orange-groves of the Mediterranean, with olive plantations world-famons for their yield, with orchards of palm, almonds, fig-trees, even of dates, of locust-trees, and of the strange nespole or medlars, whose fruit is only eaten in a state of decay, and like one vast Persian carpet of bloom—indiscribable roses, flowers, Judas trees, and ravishing flora in endless variety—until, from March to December, every zephyr floating across it bears to remotest nook and cranny of the charmed and charming city languorous perfumes in endless pulsings of odorous change.

Palermo itself is bright, dainty, splendid, in architecture, in promenade and garden, in balcony, gallery, monument and fountain, and in all the lightsomeness of figure, habit and expression which distinguish the more southern of the Latin peoples, especially when wedded with the exuberance and elation which prompt every joyful and careless ness in surroundings always entail. Intersecting the city at right angles are two magnificent thoroughfares, the Corso Vittorio Emanuele, a perfectly straight northeast and southwest street; and the Strada Macqueda, running from the northwest to the southeast in a straight line. The northeast terminal of the Corso touches the splendid bay; and at the intersection of the two, the business, social and geographic center of the city, is a spacious octagonal, circus-shaped space known as the Quattro Cantoni. The facade of this comprises a magnificent series of piazzas adorned with massive colossal statues and superb statues. No glass stand at the four terminals of the Corso and the Strada Macqueda, as well as those of many other important thoroughfares within the four very nearly equal quarters thus formed, from any portion of which divisions, the main arteries of the city are easily reached.

So, mountains encircle and protect in the rear a vast and fruitful valley of bloom and perfume stretches from the city's gates; then the bright and beautiful city descends gently to a table land, bor side; and, as if to perfect the loveliness of the entire scene, art in the splendid Marina the most gigantic and massive sea drive and promenade possessed by any European city—to the right, and nature in the precipitous cliffs called Monte Pellegrino, to the left, join in forming at once the most beautiful and glorious harbor-entrance to be found on any European shores. No wonder the Palermitans are proud of their Marina, or that Sicily, the birthplace of poetry, would forget the mountain-sides, valleys, streams, herds and shepherds, in singing songs to this most beautiful and delirously dangerous spot for lovers in all Italy. It is divided into the upper and lower Marina, and extends from the Corso, which, in turn has come in a straight line from the royal palace and citadel at the edge of the Valley of the Golden Shell, to the magnificent Botanical Gardens and the Battery beyond, nearly a mile in length. The upper Marina is bordered by magnificent houses, with exquisitely tile-paved courts, separated by delicate iron and bronze railings from the promenade. The latter is a broad, massively walled esplanade, broken here and there by splendid flights of steps descending to the lower Marina, where there are, first, rows of tremendous shade-trees from 200 to 300 years old, then a drive of immense width and perfect paving, then massive protecting walls with frequent semicircular projecting explanades, and, at last, along the sea-side, a paved and lighted walk by way of the greatest natural and artificial beauty. By night the Marina is a scene of most extravagant luxury in dress and equipage. By day it is a place for languorous, lazy siesta and dreams. Then the quainly habited fishermen of the bay and idle stragglers are its only occupants. Seaward, hundreds of picturesque sails speck the sapphire waves; and across the rippling bay looms Pellegrino, another Gibraltar in contour and loftiness, sacred to Santa Rosilla, the adored patron Saint of Palmero.

The legend of Santa Rosalie is very dear to the Palermitans. Descended from Charlemagne, she was born here, and though reared in the utmost refinement and luxury, she fled from her father's house to the neighboring mountains at the age of twelve to begin a life of devotion and penance. At last she sought a cavern in Monte Pellegrino where she died unknown and alone. During the terrible Sicilian plague of 1624 when all efforts to diminish its ravages had proved unavailing, a certain lowly Palermitan, a soapmaker named Boneli, in desperate distraction and to escape the horrors of disease and death around him, and especially to bemoan the loss of his own wife, wandered out upon the mountains. The vision of a beautiful virgin appeared to him. Leading him to a cavern the virgin told him it was her grotto, and that she was the devotee, Rosalia. The blunt and honest soapmaker followed Rosalia to paradise on the fourth day after having seen the glorious vision; a magnificent yearly festival celebrating the deliverance is annually held between the 11th and 15th of July, when an effigy of Rosalia is drawn through the principal streets on a triumphal car, 100 feet long, 20 wide and 50 to 75 feet high, by from 80 to 100 caparisoned mules, the effigy being in silver upon a dome supported by colossal figures of apostles and saints, below which are masses of roses and trees of artificial coral; and the grotto thus miraculously discovered, which has become a famous Sicilian shrine, is adorned by a statue of the adored saint by the sculptor Gregorio Ledeschi, clothed with a robe of solid gold, and another gigantic statue in marble stands near the grotto on the brink of a mighty precipice. To this figure of Santa Rosalia the devout mariner and fisherman alway turn for protection against the dread evils of the mighty sea.

The architecture as well as the dialect of Sicily is a mixture of Greek, Arabic, Norman and Spanish. Nowhere else is this more noticable than in Palermo, whose streets disclose most curious composite of structures, though the effect is always extremely bright and interesting, if never aristically wholly satisfying; while with the people who are seen upon them there are striking gaiety and jauntiness as universal characteristics of the lowly, blended with astonishing elegance on the part of the possessors of wealth and the nobility in general. The latter class form a monstrous, undue proportion of the population; and, as in the gay Cuban capital where the Spanish saying, "The father a grocer; the son a gentleman; the grandson a beggar," so tersely express the rapid changes of condition, on account of the wild extravagances of metropolitan life, the entire nobility and aristocracy of Sicily, rich or beggared, seemed housed within Palermo's walls. While the shops and cafes are very beautiful, the street facades above present a grotesque commingling of sunken galleries like cloisters, colonnaded fronts of the most classic severity and projecting balconies as graceful and delicate as may any where be found in Southern Spain. At all hours of the day the streets which for the most part are exceedingly narrow, swarm with priests, officers, nobles and picturesque mountaineers, with every manner of the lowly city folk of the south while carpenters, tailors, coopers, cobblers, locksmiths, and the various petty artisans, unconcerned for the comfort of pedestrians, pursue their several vocations with delightful conscious importance entirely outside their shop-doors, gossiping, whistling adding much to the picturesque confusion of the thoroughfares. Indeed in no other part of the world have I come upon such melodious activities. Everybody hums, whistles or sings as he labors; and not infrequently is the passer halted and enthralled by the delicious abandon with which some laborer, unconscious of his own melodic powers, pours forth untrained but perfect notes rising as clear and loud above the distracting sounds of the street as the lark's song above the chirpings about farmhouse and meadow.

Unlike the custom in Spain and some Italian provinces where women are treated as persons requiring never ending vigilance, in Sicily, and particularly in Palermo, no hateful restrictions of this nature seem to be required. Women are seen in the streets, shops and cafes as free from any restraint, and universally treated with as much respect and consideration, as in America. Indeed if there is a difference it is in favor of the Sicilian man, whose courtesy and chivalry are astounding and endless. This gives the traveller most gratifying opportunity for the study of Italian women in Sicily; and I must unhesitatingly pronounce these of Palermo more vivacious than French women; more beautiful than the best examples of Spanish female loveliness; and more graceful and altogether sparkling and charming than any I have elsewhere seen. My own observation disclosed a singular condition of contrasts. It would seem that the aristocratic women of Palermo possess all the beauty to be found among the women of the city; the females among the lowly being a sad lot of mournful-faced, slow-paced, idle scrags. The reverse is usually true, as the painters will tell you, in Mediterranean countries. On the other hand, the male members of the nobility and aristocracy, and even the clergy, who as a class are usually men of fine stature and bearing, are a singularly significant lot of swarthy skin-and-bone fellows, "chicken-breasted" or humped, with cadaverous faces, claw-like hands, and limbs that would discourage the anatomical department of a well-ordered anatomical museum. A singular contrast to these are the men among the lowly—excepting the fishermen, who seem to be as skinny a set as the nobility—whose forms and bearing illustrate the real aristocracy in which nature often molds her least favored creations. They are perfect in form, straight, lithe, beaming with good nature, and in all but dress and environment, seem prototypes of the real cavaliers that romance and chivalry picture to us as having existed "in days of old when knights were bold, and barons held their sway."

But if the scenery days in Palermo are full of light, beauty and picturesqueness, the nights bring with them the real splendor and luxuriousness of this metropolis of the south. There is music everywhere. In a thousand half-lighted balconies are groups of men and women chattering in low, musical tones or listening to the sweet notes of mandolin or guitar; in countless entradas backed by courts filled with rich lights, plants, flowers and quaint corridors in an almost oriental perspective, are families with friends seated half out upon the street, and among them somewhere is music of voice or instrument; and here, there and everywhere, upon the housetops, in luxurious gardens, are merry crowds singing, playing, dancing. Melody in words, laugh and song, and from musical instrument of every kind—nothing loud and sonorous, but everything soft and dreamful—pulses in harmonious chords above and over and through the soundful streets. You may be alone and not of it, but it is all-compassing and it possesses you. You know not, yet it has the loving familiarity of the universal voice of mirth and music. It is in a strange tongue, yet it is plain to you as the untaught joy of blessed childhood. Yet from the half seen wholly felt scenes of melodious mirth, look upon the splendid nightly carnival pouring out of the Corso into the glorious Marina. Fully 10,000 equipages, filled with richly attired and merry occupants, may be seen. Three times that number of pedestrians look down from the upper Marina. Military bands discourse the sensuous airs of Italy. In this concourse of perhaps 50,000 souls rudeness and clamor are unknown. Every frequenter of the Marina only intensifies the everywhere manifest chivalrous courtesy and consideration so distinguishing this great out-door reception room of a great city. It is not until after midnight that the crowds seem to diminish; for it is made a sort of social obligation upon every gentleman and lady of the city to be present at some time during the evening. Then from midnight on, by an unwritten law another sort of life has the right of way. I is an intense life, only that the Italians have few agonized philosophies: but it is as much a part of this southern life and clime as that strange brown flower of the south, which only exhales odor from its drooping foliage by starlight, is an enchanting and sensuous type of a clime and nature that in no hour cease their warm and glowing activities.

Of the hundreds of religious edifices of great age and exceeding interest in and about Palermo, the stranger will linger longest at the church and Monastery of San to Spirito, famous as the scene of the sad tragedy of the Sicilian Vespers, on March 30, 1282, and its Campo Santo for the lowly dead, where there are 365 stone pits, covered with stone slabs, into one of which the dead of a single day of the year are cast with consuming quicklime, to remain undisturbed until the same day of the succeeding year; the huge convent of San Martino and cathedral of Monreale, built by William II, to outrival the greatest religious edifices of northern Europe; the Royal Chapel, with its marvelous mosaics, finished in 1132; the interesting Saracenic relics of La Cuba and La Zisa; and the magnificent cathedral (Il Duomo) with its mighty sarcophagi where repose the ashes of the royal Normans, King Roger I, his daughter, Constantia, and Emperor Frederick II.; but the most weird and unearthly fascination will be felt in the crypts of the convent of the Cappuccini, where over 8,000 bodies are disposed in the eternal sleep in a manner which ought to bring eternal sleeplessness to the living. These bodies are practically embalmed, or mummified, and many, habited in the clothing of their mortal days, are stood, or fastened, or hung, in niches, in upright postures, in which they sway, seeming to writhe in horrible facial contortions, for the entertainment of the on-looker. Every possible age, every manner of dress, every conceivable posture, is discernable. The theory upon which this ghastly show-house is conducted is that it is a good thing for the living to commune with the dead. Perhaps it is not a bad idea, but it would take a healthy American some time to get used to it; and as our steamer sped toward Naples, I was glad that the brightness and beauty of Palermo, "la felice", were rich enough in memories of delight to hide the Capuchin Catacombs as gladsomely as a sweet June day will efface a hateful dream.

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