

place for the prisoner. The events of the last half-hour had been so sudden and inexplicable that he felt quite dazed himself. What did it all mean? It was certain that his old friend from boyhood had attempted to murder him, and had nearly succeeded. Was Von Schlegel then the murderer of Professor von Hopstein, and of the Bohemian Jew? Strauss felt that it was impossible, for the Jew was not even known to him and the professor had been his especial favorite. He followed mechanically to the police station, lost in grief and amazement.

Inspector Baumgarten, one of the most energetic and best known of the police officials, was on duty in the absence of the commissary. He was a wiry little active man, quiet and retiring in his habits, but possessed of great sagacity and a vigilance which never relaxed. Now, though he had had a six hours' vigil, he sat as erect as ever, with his pen behind his ear, at his official desk, while his friend, Sub-inspector Winkel, snored in a chair at the side of the stove. Even the inspector's usually immovable features betrayed surprise, however, when the door was flung open and Von Schlegel was dragged in with pale face and disordered clothes, the silver hatchet still grasped firmly in his hand. Still more surprised was he when Strauss, and the gentlemen gave their account, which was duly entered in the official register.

"Young man, young man," said Inspector Baumgarten, laying down his pen, and fixing his eyes sternly upon the prisoner, "this is pretty poor for Christmas morning; why have you done this thing?"

"God knows!" cried Von Schlegel, covering his face with his hands and dropping the hatchet. A change had come over him, his fury and excitement were gone, and he seemed utterly prostrated with grief.

"You have rendered yourself liable to a strong suspicion of having committed the other murders which have disgraced our city."

"No, no, indeed!" said Von Schlegel earnestly. "God forbid!"

"At least, you are guilty of attempting the life of Herr Leopold Strauss."

"The dearest friend I have in the world," groaned the student. "O, how could I! How could I!"

"His being your friend makes your crime ten times more heinous," said the inspector severely. "Remove him for the remainder of the night to the— But steady! Who comes here?"

The door was thrown open, and a man came into the room, so haggard and care-worn that he looked more like a ghost than a human being. He tottered as he walked, and had to clutch at the backs of the chairs as he approached the inspector's desk. It was hard to recognize in this miserable-looking object the once cheerful and rubicund sub-ordinator of the museum and private agent of chemistry, Herr Wilhelm Schlessinger. The practiced eye of Baumgarten, however, was not to be baffled by any change.

"Good morning, mein herr," he said, "you are up early. No doubt the reason is that you have heard that one of your students, Von Schlegel, is arrested for attempting the life of Leopold Strauss."

"No, I have come for myself," said Schlessinger, huskily, and putting his hand up to his throat. "I have come to ease my soul of the weight of a great sin, though, God knows, an unmediated one. It was I who— But, merciful heavens! there it is—the horrid thing! O that I had never seen it!"

He shrank back in a palsy of terror, glaring at the silver hatchet where it lay upon the floor, and pointing at it with his emaciated hand.

"There it lies!" he yelled. "Look at it! It has come to condemn me. See that brown rust on it! Do you know what that is? That is the blood of my dearest, best friend, Professor von Hopstein. I saw it gush over the very handle as I drove the blade through his brain. Mein Gott, I see it now!"

"Sub-inspector Winkel," said Baumgarten, endeavoring to preserve his official austerity, "you will arrest this man, charged on his own confession with the murder of the late professor. I also deliver into your hands, Von Schlegel here, charged with a murderous assault upon Herr Strauss. You will also keep this hatchet—here he picked it from the floor—which has apparently been used for both crimes."

Wilhelm Schlessinger had been leaning against the table with a face of ashy paleness. As the inspector ceased speaking, he looked up excitedly.

"What did you say?" he cried. "You Schlegel attack Strauss! The two dearest friends in the college! I slay my old master! It is magic, I say; it is a charm! There is a spell upon us! It is— Ah, I have it! It is that hatchet—that thrice accursed hatchet!" and he pointed convulsively at the weapon which Inspector Baumgarten still held in his hand.

The inspector smiled contentiously, "Restrain yourself, mein herr," he said. "You do but make your case worse by such wild excuses for the wicked deed you confess to. Magic and charm are not known in the legal vocabulary, as my friend Winkel will assure you."

"I know not," remarked his sub-inspector, shrugging his broad shoulders. "There are many strange things in the world. Who knows but that—"

"What!" roared Inspector Baumgarten furiously. "You would undertake to contradict me! You would set up your opinion! You would be

the champion of these accursed murderers. Fool, miserable fool, your hour has come!" and, rushing at the astounded Winkel, he dealt a blow at him with the silver hatchet which would certainly have justified his last assertion had it not been that, in his fury, he overlooked the lowness of the rafters above his head. The blade of the hatchet struck one of these, and remained there quivering, while the handle was splintered into a thousand pieces.

"What have I done?" gasped Baumgarten, falling back into his chair. "What have I done?"

"You have proved Herr Schlessinger's words to be correct, said Von Schlegel, stepping forward, for the astonished policemen had let go their grasp of him. "That is what you have done." Against reason, science, and everything else, though it be, there is a charm at work. There must be! Strauss, old boy, you know I would not, in my right senses, hurt one hair of your head. And you, Schlessinger, we both know you loved the old man who is dead. And you, Inspector Baumgarten, you would not willingly have struck your friend the sub-inspector?"

"Not for the whole world," groaned the inspector, covering his face with his hands.

"Then is it not clear? But now, thank Heaven, the accursed thing is broken, and can never do harm again. But, see, what is that?"

Right in the centre of the room was lying a thin brown cylinder of parchment. One glance at the fragments of the handle of the weapon showed that it had been hollow. This roll of paper had apparently been hidden away inside the metal case thus formed, having been introduced through a small hole, which had been afterward soldered up. Von Schlegel opened the document. The writing upon it was almost illegible from age, but as far as they could make out it stood thus, in mediæval German:

"Diese Waffe benutzte Max von Erlichingen um Joanna Bodeck zu ermorden, deshalb beschuldige ich, Johann Bodeck, mittelst der macht welche mir als mitglied des Concils des rothen Kreuzes verliehen wurde, dieselbe mit dieser unthat. Mag sie anderen denselben schmerz verursachen den sie mir verursacht hat. May Jede hand die sie ergreift mit dem blut eines freundes getoetet sein."

"Immer obel—niemals gut. Geröthet mit des freundes blut."

Which may be roughly translated:

"This weapon was used by Max von Erlichingen for the murder of Joanna Bodeck. Therefore do I, Johann Bodeck, accuse it by the power which has been bequeathed to me as one of the Council of the Red Cross. May it deal to others the grief which it has dealt to me! May every hand that grasps it be reddened in the blood of a friend!"

"Ever evil, never good. Reddened with a loved one's blood."

There was a dead silence in the room when Von Schlegel had finished spelling out this strange document. As he put it down Strauss laid his hand affectionately upon his arm.

"No such proof is needed by me, old friend," he said. "At the very moment that you struck at me I forgave you in my heart. I well know that if the poor professor were in the room he would say as much to Herr Wilhelm Schlessinger."

"Gentlemen," remarked the inspector, standing up and resuming his official tones, "this affair, strange as it is, must be treated according to rule and precedent. Sub-inspector Winkel, as your superior officer, I command you to arrest me upon a charge of murderously assaulting you. You will commit me to prison for the night, together with Herr von Schlegel and Herr Wilhelm Schlessinger. We shall take our trial at the coming sitting of the judges. In the meantime take care of that piece of evidence," pointing to the piece of parchment, "and while I am away, devote your time and energy to utilizing the clue you have obtained in discovering who it was who slew Herr Schiffer, the Bohemian Jew."

The one missing link in the chain of evidence was soon supplied. On the twenty-eighth of December the wife of Reinmann, the janitor, coming into the bedroom after a short absence, found her husband hanging lifeless from a hook in the wall. He had tied a long bolster case round his neck and stood upon a chair in order to commit the fatal deed. On the table was a note in which he confessed to the murder of Schiffer, the Jew, adding that the deceased had been his oldest friend and that he had slain him without premeditation, in obedience to some uncontrollable impulse. Remorse and grief, he said, had driven him to self destruction; and he wound up his confession by commending his soul to the mercy of heaven.

The trial which ensued was one of the strangest which ever occurred in the whole history of jurisprudence. It was in vain that the prosecuting counsel urged the improbability of the explanation offered by the prisoners, and deprecated the introduction of such an element as magic into a nineteenth century law court. The chain of facts was too strong, and the prisoners were unanimously acquitted. "This silver hatchet," remarked the judge in his summing up, "has hung untouched upon the wall in the mansion of the Graf von Schulling for nearly two hundred years. The shocking manner in which he met his death at the hands of his favorite house steward is still fresh in your recollection. It has come out in evidence that, a few days before the murder, the steward had overhauled the old weapons and cleaned them.

In doing this he must have touched the handle of this hatchet. Immediately afterward he slew his master, whom he had served faithfully for twenty years. The weapon then came, in conformity with the count's will, to Buda-Pesth, where, at the station, Herr Wilhelm Schlessinger grasped it, and, within two hours, used it against the person of the deceased professor. The next man whom we find touching it is the janitor Reinmann, who helped to remove the weapons from the cart to the storeroom. At the first opportunity he buried it in the body of his friend Schaffer. We then have the attempted murder of Strauss by Schlegel, and of Winkel by Inspector Baumgarten, all immediately following the taking of the hatchet into the hand. Lastly comes the providential discovery of the extraordinary document which had been read to you by the clerk of the court. I invite your most careful consideration, gentlemen of the jury, to this chain of facts, knowing that you will find a verdict according to your consciences without fear and without favor."

Perhaps the most interesting piece of evidence to the English reader, though it found few supporters among the Hungarian audience, was that of Dr. Langemann, the eminent medico-jurist, who has written text books upon metallurgy and toxicology. He said:

"I am not sure, gentlemen, that there is need to fall back upon necromancy or the black art for an explanation of what has occurred. What I say is merely a hypothesis, without proof of any sort, but in a case so extraordinary every suggestion may be of value. The Rosierucians, to whom allusion is made in this paper, were the most profound chemists of the early middle ages, and included the principal alchemists, whose names have descended to us. Much as chemistry has advanced, there are some points in which the ancients were ahead of us, and in none more so than in the manufacture of poisons of subtle and deadly action. This man, Bodeck, as one of the elders of the Rosierucians, possessed, no doubt, the recipe of many such mixtures, some of which, like the aqua toana of the Medicis, would poison by penetrating through the pores of the skin. It is conceivable that the handle of this silver hatchet has been anointed by some preparation which is a diffusible poison, having the effect upon the human body of bringing on sudden and acute attacks of homicidal mania. In such attacks it is well known that the madman's rage is turned against those whom he loved best when sane. I have, as I remarked before, no proof to support me in my theory, and simply put it forward for what it is worth."

With this extract from the speech of the learned and ingenious professor, we may close the account of this famous trial.

The broken pieces of the silver hatchet were thrown into a deep pond, a clever poodle being employed to carry them in his mouth, as no one would touch them for fear some of the infection might still hang about them. The piece of parchment was preserved in the museum of the university. As to Strauss and Schlegel, Winkel and Baumgarten, they continued the best of friends, and are so still for all I know to the contrary. Schlessinger became surgeon of a cavalry regiment, and was shot at the battle of Sedowa, five years later, while rescuing the wounded under a heavy fire. By his last injunctions his little patrimony was to be sold to erect a marble obelisk over the grave of Professor von Hopstein.

A. CONAN DOYLE.

VARIETIES.

CHARLES NIEHAUS, the successful competitor for the statue of President Garfield, to be placed in the Capitol at Washington, has also been commissioned to execute a bronze statue of the late President of Cincinnati. The model for the statue for the Capitol is now in Italy, whither Mr. Niehaus will soon go to put it in marble; and the work of modelling the monument for Cincinnati will probably be done there, though the casting will be done in this country, which can now turn out as fine bronze work as is executed in Munich.

It seems that M. de Lesseps had, after all, only a second-hand idea when he propounded the cutting of the Suez Canal; the first Napoleon, according to history, is credited with the plan, and the fact is recorded in these words, written in 1797:—"In the course of the next decade I shall sail to the canal which is now cutting across the Isthmus of Suez. The Polytechnic School and corps of geographical engineers are employed in devising means for conveying my heavy artillery across the great desert. Soon shall India hail us her deliverers, and those proud islanders, the tyrants of Calcutta, shall fall before the heroes of Arcola."

There has recently been developed in Paris an idea for the use of glass instead of boards as flooring. The whole of the ground floor of the headquarters of the Credit Lyonnais, on the Boulevard des Italiens, has been paneled with large squares of glass about eighteen inches square by one and a half inches thick, embedded in iron framework, and a similar floor has been laid in the centre hall of the offices of the Comptoir d'Escompte. The glass is of a bluish tinge, but this we are told is agreeable, rather than otherwise, to the clerks who work beneath it, and who can transact their business, even on dull days, without the use of gas.

HAVING CAREFULLY examined, says a writer in the London Daily News, an original miniature

of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, beautifully painted on copper, I am in a position to state that we have now a new likeness of the immortal dramatist at a period of his life when his earlier plays were produced and before his popularity at the English court rendered him of European interest. It is full face, age about thirty-five years, bearing the well-known, deep-eyed, pensive expression of countenance, massive high forehead and falling collar so familiar to us, but with the additional attraction of exact portraiture from the life itself by evidently a first-rate artist, when Shakespeare was in his prime as regards physical appearance and intellectual vigor.

DUFF HOUSE, where the Prince of Wales has been recently entertained by the Earl of Fife, was built one hundred and forty years ago by William, Lord Braco, after a design by William Adam, the first of the celebrated architects of that name. The cost was about seventy thousand pounds. Duff House, as is well known, contains a valuable collection of paintings, embracing fine specimens of the works of Vandyke, Velasquez, Murillo, Rubens, Domenichino, Correggio, Quintin Matsys, Holbein, Sir Godfrey Kneller, Sir Peter Lely, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Jameson, Raeburn, Sir Francis Grant, Sir John Watson Gordon and others. The house stands in a magnificent park, which contains many fine old trees. It is intersected by the river Deveron, here a broad stream, which about two miles from the house is spanned, at a point where the river bed narrows between two cliffs, by a romantic bridge. The park is traversed by spacious drives extending many miles.

It is at last announced that the exhibition at Nice will be officially opened December 24. On the occasion will be performed a new cantata composed by Leo Delibes, words by Philippe Gilles. There will be no theatre or theatrical performances in the exhibition building, but two concerts will be given every week, on Friday and Sunday evenings. The concerts on Fridays will be given by the Municipal Band and the orchestra of the Italian Opera, and there will be a charge for admission to the atrium, where the concerts take place; the concerts on Sunday will be given by the bands of the Conservatoire and St. Roch, and will be free to the public. The greatest activity is shown at the Exhibition building, nearly a thousand laborers being employed. At night electric lamps are placed in various parts of the palace and grounds, and the work is continued without interruption. At the cascade the masons have constructed large troughs which will be filled with aloes, Barbary figs and other plants, which will make a mass of foliage. A hundred tall bamboos are expected to arrive. Twenty of these canes, each nearly fifty feet high, will be planted on the right and left of the cascade. The internal decorations are progressing rapidly.

The festival of St. Hubert—patron of sport—was celebrated in grand style at Chantilly last month, when the three G and Dukes of Russia, brothers of the Czar, Wladimir, Paul and Alexis, were the guests of the Duc d'Aumale. At four o'clock in the morning St. Hubert's mass was celebrated at the Chantilly Church, the eighty stagbonds, held in leash by piqueurs and valets wearing the blue and silver livery of Orleans, being mustered in front of the church, whence the priest, in accordance with custom, blessed the whole throng, man and beast combined. The next was at the Stone Table, in the heart of the noble forest of Chantilly, and the scene was picturesque in the extreme. There were fully a couple of hundred carriages, including the Princess Radzivil's calèche, drawn by four superb roans harnessed à la Daumont, and with postillions wearing gorgeous yellow and silver liveries, while on horseback appeared the Orleans princes, the Russian Grand Dukes, and fully three hundred noble cavaliers and ladies. The Grand Duchess Wladimir was in a short, black riding habit, cut like those which the Empress Elizabeth of Austria usually wears. The Duchess de Chartres and her daughters and the Princess de Joinville were in russet hued habits, harmonizing and blending, so to say, with the prevalent shades of the surrounding foliage. Their horses' trappings were adorned with the traditional silver medals of St. Hubert, in accordance with past century custom. The Viscountess de Chézelles and the Countess de Clinchamps wore the blue and silver uniform of the hunt, and Madame Renard was in a scarlet corsage with a black skirt. Mourning bands of black crape were worn by nobles and ladies alike on the right arm—in honor, of course, of the Comte de Chambord's memory. The stag (à dix cors), being found near the Stone Table, started for the lakes by way of the Butte-aux-Gendarmes, and, after a capital run through the forest, was finally brought to bay at St. Sulpice, and killed in proper style by M. Quiclet, captain of the hunt. The right forefoot was then presented by him to the Grand Duchess Wladimir, who smilingly accepted the honors of the day. The imperial party afterward partook of a collation at the Chantilly chateau, the Prince of Joinville doing the duties of entertainer in the unavoidable absence of the Duc d'Aumale, unfortunately laid up with gout.

How to GET SICK.—Expose yourself day and night, eat too much without exercise, work too hard without rest, doctor all the time, take all the vile nostrums advertised, and then you will want to know

How to GET WELL.—Which is answered in three words—Take Hop Bitters!