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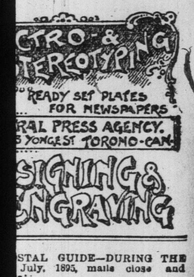

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THE PITEZEL MYSTERY SOLVED.

Bodies of the Two Children Found Buried in a St. Vincent-street Cellar.

The Gruesome Discovery Made by Detectives Yesterday--Holmes, the Philadelphia Insurance Fiend, Was an Imitator of Burke and Hare, the Glasgow Murderers--Rented a House, Smothered the Babes Between a Mattress and Pillow, Dug Their Graves Beneath the Kitchen Floor and Buried Them--He Had Previously Killed the Father of the Children and a Brother in Detroit and Cremated the Latter in a Furnace--A Series of Crimes Unparalleled on the Continent Brought to Light.

BY the discovery of the bodies of two murdered children in the cellar of a house at 16 St. Vincent-street yesterday afternoon the first definite facts were unearthed in a crime so startling in its nature that it forms a chapter unequalled in the criminal history of the world. The story of the "Babes in the Wood," related in the old Second Reader, bears some resemblance to it, but the wicked uncle in the tragedy so vividly related by Campbell removed but the two children, whereas in the present case the man who so ruthlessly slaughtered these babes is known to have previously killed at least four persons, and during his short life of 34 years has been guilty of every variety of swindling, body raising and decapitation, burials in trunks and misusage of bodies procured from morgues and medical colleges.

The perpetrator of the murders, a man named H. H. Holmes, is at present an inmate of the Philadelphia jail, awaiting sentence on a charge of fraud. The case against him there will, however, doubtless now be abandoned and an attempt will be made in October to convict him of the murder of Pitezel. In the event of his discharge for this murder, and there is no evidence against him, he will be turned over to the Toronto authorities for trial.

A GRUESOME FIND.

Awful Discovery in the Cellar of a St. Vincent-street Residence.

On Wednesday last The World published a lengthy article detailing the arrival here of Frank Geyer, a detective connected with the Philadelphia police force, in search of a clue as to the whereabouts of two children named Etta Annie Pitezel, aged 13, and Nellie Pitezel, aged 11, the daughters of Benjamin Pitezel of Philadelphia. Detective Geyer, who had just arrived from Detroit, was sanguine that the two children had been brutally murdered and their bodies concealed in this city by a man named H. H. Holmes, who is awaiting trial in Philadelphia on the self-confessed crime of defrauding the Fidelity Mutual Insurance Company of the Quaker City out of $10,000 by substituting the body of a medical college "subject" for that of Benjamin F. Pitezel, the father of the two children, who were believed to have been done to death in Toronto. The World published the pictures of the two children and full details of the multifarious crimes alleged to have been committed by Holmes, who for 10 years past has been earning a livelihood by swindling insurance companies.

As the result of the publication of these facts in The World, the bodies of the two children were yesterday discovered buried in the cellar of a house at 16 St. Vincent-st., rented by Holmes in October last. The discovery of the bodies confirms the belief entertained by the Philadelphia authorities, that Holmes not only murdered the two children, but also cremated in a house in Detroit the body of their brother, Howard Pitezel, aged 9, and also killed Benjamin F. Pitezel, the father of the three children, and Annie and Minnie Williams, two women with whom he lived in Chicago. Mr. T. W. Ryves, who resides at No. 18 St. Vincent-street, saw the pictures of the two young girls and of Holmes in The World, and, as a result, on Saturday morning communicated with the detective department.

He stated that a man with two children, answering the description of Holmes and of the Pitezel children, resided for a week last October at No. 16 St. Vincent-street, the house immediately adjoining his premises.

Acting upon the information communicated by Mr. Ryves, Detectives Geyer and Cuddy yesterday morning paid a visit to the house, which is at present occupied by Mr. J. Armbrust, and is owned by Mrs. Nudel, wife of Mr. Frank M. Nudel, senior clerk of the education department, Normal School.

The house is a quaint little two-story cottage, of an old and simple style of architecture. It stands back a few feet from the sidewalk, the narrow plot of lawn being enclosed with a wire-net fence, 5 feet high, and beautified with a few blossoming flowers. A verandah tastefully decorated with a clinging clematis adds much to the quaint, homelike appearance of the place. The front doorway opens into a hallway, which divides the house in half and continues to the kitchen. The cottage contains 6 medium-sized rooms below, including a kitchen and a pantry, 3 on either side of the hall, and four small rooms above. A single, miniature gabled window looks from the upper story to the street. At each end of the house are three windows, none of them much larger than that looking into the street. The back yard is also smaller than ordinary, and is reached from the kitchen by a short set of steps.

Under the kitchen is an excavation which serves for a cellar, about 10 feet square and not more than 5 feet in depth. A set of steps, almost perendicular, lead to it from an old-fashioned trapdoor in the middle of the kitchen floor.

An Awful Sight.

The detectives did not expect to find anything. They had already dug up two or three cellars in Bloor and other streets in search of the bodies, and thought that this would likewise be a wild goose chase. They decided, however, to proceed with the investigation. They observed a spot where the sandy floor looked as if it had been disturbed, and set to work with a shovel in the southwest end of the cellar.

They toiled in silence, delving carefully and throwing up heap after heap of the earth.

"One can see that the earth has been disturbed here," said Detective Cuddy, as he lifted a spadeful of earth.

"Yes, yes, one sees it," returned Geyer. And Cuddy shoveled up the sand with renewed vigor.

For a minute or two Cuddy continued to dig; then came a pause.

"Heavens," exclaimed Cuddy, "I touched something!"

In a moment more that something was laid bare. A dead, white human hand and wrist—white, wan and bloodless, more like the model of a hand exquisitely moulded in pure wax than a real hand—suddenly showed itself three feet below the surface among the sand.

"Oh! oh!" exclaimed Cuddy, dropping his spade and wiping the clammy moisture from his brow. "They lie here, then, for certain."

And he dropped his spade and looked paler than even Geyer. The sight of the dead, white hand was too much for them, and they stopped digging and communicated with Inspector Stark.

The Bodies Exhumed.

The inspector instructed them to secure an undertaker and B. D. Humphrey of Yonge-street was called. In the presence of the detectives he continued the work of unearthing the remains and speedily unearthed the bodies of the two children. The search of Geyer was over. The cellar had given up its dead. The attitude was that of repose rather than that of death. The features—that is, such of them as were visible—were calm and the soil had probably assisted to a certain extent in arresting the course of decay, although both bodies were badly putrified.

There could be no doubt from the circumstances that the grave was dug by murderous hands red from the recent deed.

"Lift them gently and steadily, poor things," said one of the officers.

No need to tell the men to be gentle. If these poor babes had been their own children dead or dying they could not have raised the helpless forms from the earth more tenderly or borne them more reverently and slowly to the undertaker's wagon. There was no trace of violence. But for the suspicious signs of the secret interment, which of course denotes guilt, there was nothing to mark the case as one of assassination. How the children were killed will probably be developed as the result of the post-mortem which has been ordered by Coroner A. J. Johnson.

The hole in which the bodies were discovered was about four feet square and three and a half feet deep, allowing a little over one-half a foot for the space they occupied. The younger, child, Nellie, lay in a crippled position with its head to the northwest and its little legs pointing almost north, while the elder child had evidently been carelessly thrown in on top of the other, and its head pointing to the southeast and the legs parted.

Both bodies were in a terribly decomposed state, the faces being almost unrecognizable. When a World reporter visited the cellar his eyes met a most ghastly sight. There in a yawning hole in a corner of the cellar, right at the foot of the seven small steps on which he stood, lay the bodies of the two innocent little lambs who were slain by a fiend incarnate. The larger child was lying face downward, her matted hair hanging over the right shoulder. The smaller child was lying on her right side and her plaited hair, which had fallen from her head, while the earth around her was being dug away, lay in a little heap a few inches from her face. A hand lamp carried by Detective Cuddy cast a weird light over the horrible scene. The dreadful stench arising from the bodies was indescribable.

THE RENTAL OF THE HOUSE.

Holmes' Actions at the Time Excited Suspicion Among Neighbors.

The owner of the premises in which the bodies were found is Mrs. F. Nudel, who resides at 54 Henry-street. She stated that she rented the house some time in October last to a man who gave his name as Howard at $10 per month. Howard came round some time in the middle of October, one Saturday afternoon, and he agreed to take the house at $10 a month for six months, and wished to pay the rent for the six months in advance. Mrs. Nudel refused to take the rent for more than one month in advance, to which Howard laughingly acquiesced, paying the $10 for the one month's rent. When sundry necessary repairs were mentioned to him Howard said that they didn't matter, as he would have them attended to himself. He stated that he was renting the place for a widowed sister, who was at that time living in Hamilton with her mother-in-law, and that she would be down to Toronto in a few days and in the meantime he wished to get the coal put in and have other small matters attended to. He made a special request that Mrs. Nudel or her daughter would not call on his sister for some days after her arrival, as she would not be settled.

Only a Pillow and Mattress in the House.

The only things in the way of furniture that Holmes appears to have had taken to the house were a bedstead and mattress, by means of which he is supposed to have smothered the children. It was getting toward the latter end of October when an expressman delivered these goods, which were second hand and in a very poor condition. As the door at No. 16 was locked he went to Mr. Burns' house, No. 20, and also to Mr. Ryves, No. 18, and stated that the bed and mattress had been purchased at the corner of Elizabeth and Agnes-streets, that day, to be delivered to 16 St. Vincent-street. The neighbors could not advise him what to do with his cargo, and as he had probably been paid he left them on the verandah at No. 16, where they remained for two or three days, causing considerable comment from the neighbors. A World reporter went to the second-hand store at Elizabeth and Agnes-street, which is kept by Mrs. McQuaig, last night. She said that she may possibly have sold the goods to Holmes, but that she could not remember having done so. As she does a strictly cash trade, buying and selling, she keeps no books. Her husband, who resides at the same place, is an expressman. He was also seen, but could not remember having delivered the bed and mattrass to that place, although he states that he may have done so.

The first intimation Mrs. Nudel had that Howard had not moved into the house was nearly two weeks after the time she rented it, when a party came to her wishing to lease the house. Mrs. Nudel explained to her would-be tenant that the house had been rented for two weeks and received a reply to the effect that it could not be so as no furniture was in the place and that it was to all appearances vacant. It was about the end of the month when the landlady received a key of the house from Mr. Ryves, who said that Howard had left it with him, saying that he was leaving the house. Mrs. Nudel had given two keys to Howard and could not understand why he had kept the other one. The house was rented a couple of months afterwards to Mrs. Macdonald, whom Mrs. Nudel only allowed to stay in it a month, as she says the people were very poor and had not enough money to keep them in fuel. The cottage afterwards remained vacant until Mr. I. Armbrust rented it. When Mrs. Macdonald took possession of the cottage she found in one of the rooms a mattress and pillow. It was with these that Pitezel smothered the children.

The Present Occupant of the Cottage.

Mr. Armbrust is local manager of the St. Thomas Provincial Provident Institution, with offices at Church and Adelaide-streets. He has occupied the house since April 1. His lease is for one year, with the privilege of extending it to three years. "The place was very homelike and comfortable, and I spent a great deal of time in fixing it up and bringing it to its present appearance," said Mr. Armbrust, "and I don't like to leave it now. We came here in April but we did not notice anything until the warm weather set in. Then, as the days became hotter, we could detect a slight smell in the kitchen when we came down in the mornings. For some weeks past we have found it necessary every morning to open out the windows and the doors to get the fresh air into the house. We wondered at the cause of the disagreeable odor, and finally thought it must be in the hole under the kitchen. We had never used it for a cellar, but thought we would clean it out. We did so, but beyond a few boards there was not much there. We did remark that these boards, or planks, of which there were three or four, had evidently been taken from the floor of the stall in the horse stable. They were laid east and west in the corner of the cellar where the bodies of the children were buried. We noticed that they were not very clean, having been taken from the stable, and thought possibly they were the cause of the smell. But we soon learned we were wrong, as after we removed the boards the smell became worse day by day. We had read of the Pitezel case in The World, but never had a thought that our cellar contained the solution of the mystery, and the first intimation we had of it was when Detectives Geyer and Cuddy came to our house about 11 o'clock to-day."

After Mr. Armbrust had been in the house a short time he decided to have a fireplace erected in the front room, and the work was gone on with forthwith. After the erection of the grate it was discovered that the chimney did not draw well, and on investigating Mr. Armbrust found that it was stuffed with partly burned straw and clothing of a print and woolen material. He did not think much of the occurrence, as he had found other signs of clothing having been burned around the house and thought that his predecessors had simply burned the clothes as a convenient way of getting rid of them. Of course the charred apparel that Mr. Armbrust found was the clothing of the murdered children.

Mr. Ryves' Story.

The house of Mr. T. W. Ryves, who gave the information which led to the discovery, is a two-story cottage, built on the plan of the Nudel cottage, from which it stands about three feet distant. The cottage fronts are both shaded from the morning sun by neat little verandahs. A fence runs between the cottages from the edge of the St. Vincent-street boulevard to the sheds in the rear. This fence is about 5 feet high, but a person of ordinary height standing on the steps leading to the kitchen of either house could conveniently see into the back yard of the other.

In conversation with a World reporter yesterday Mr. Ryves said that in October last he saw Holmes about the Nudel cottage on at least three different days. He could not remember the dates or the days of the week, as no incident occurred to impress anything particularly upon his mind. On two out of the three occasions the Pitezel girls were with him. Mr. Ryves talked with Holmes, who became so strangely communicative that the former's suspicions were aroused that his coming neighbor was not just what he ought to be. "I told my wife that there was something about him I did not like, and that feeling weighed on me until he had gone away," said Mr. Ryves. "The first day he came the children were with him. He was doing something about the house, and the children played about on the front verandah. He told me then that he was renting the house for a sister in Hamilton, who would move down in a few days. There was something peculiar about the man, but I did not think anything about it at that conversation. I think I saw him around the house a week or so before the first time we spoke, the time when the children were with him, but I am somewhat confused and could not be sure on that point. The second time I saw the children they were in the back yard playing around." At Mr. Ryves' request he was shown a cut of the girl, published in The World of Saturday last, and said: "I positively identified that as the picture of Etta Alice the other day by the odd manner in which her hair was combed down over the centre of her brow." There was no striking characteristic apparent in the child Nellie, and he could not be sure as to her photo. "I saw an express wagon drive up one day," continued Mr. Ryves, "and leave a large trunk and bedstead. The trunk was taken into the house, but I think the bedstead stood on the verandah for a day or so. The bedstead was never removed, but the trunk was taken away soon after it came by one of C.S. Herbert's wagons. I don't know the name of the expressman, as I did not take much notice of his wagon.

The Borrowing of the Spade.

One evening about 4 or 5 o'clock Holmes came to me and asked for the loan of my spade, as he said he wanted to fix up the cellar preparatory to putting in some potatoes. He kept the spade over night and returned it some time during the next day. I think it was when he returned the spade that he told me his sister's mother-in-law had taken sick, his sister was compelled to stay and attend her and he thought he would have to give up the house. "What made you connect the incidents of last fall with the Pitezel case, Mr. Ryves?" was asked.

"Well, the feeling of mistrust had never entirely left me, and when I read in the papers about the Pitezel case, and the search for the children, I said to my wife that I half believed our strange neighbors of last fall were the persons who were wanted. On July 12, I met Inspector Hall over at the park and told him my story. He told it to the detectives and this is what came of it." "By the way," said Mr. Ryves, "have you heard anything about a reward? I am told there is a big reward standing, and if there is, I think I should have a share of it."

Mrs. Erskine's Story.

Mrs. John Erskine, who lives at 14 St. Vincent-street, remembers the time that the cottage was rented in October, and thought it strange that no furniture was moved in. She saw a mattress on the verandah in front of No. 16 for a couple of days, but does not remember the exact date. She thinks it was about the middle of October, and spoke to Mr. Ryves some days afterwards, remarking that it was rather peculiar that no one seemed to be about the house. Mr. Ryves told her he had seen a man and a couple of children there, and that the man borrowed his shovel to make a place in the cellar to keep potatoes in. Mrs. Erskine expressed regret that such a trouble should come to Mr. Armbrust and his family, who, she said, had been the best neighbors they had had in the 19 years she had lived at No. 14.

AN IMITATOR OF BURKE AND HARE.

Smothered the Children Between a Pillow and a Mattress.

From developments as to the movements of Holmes during the few days he was here, the date of the murder can be definitely fixed. He arrived in the city and registered at the Palmer House on Oct. 18. The following day Mrs. Pitezel arrived, and his thought and time for that day were devoted to lulling the suspicions which had been arising in her mind as to her husband's safety, and getting her quietly settled in the Union Hotel. This done he began to look about him for a place suited to the carrying out of his plans.

An advertisement in a newspaper of a house to let caught his eye, and on

Holmes, the Murderer of Babies.

the following monring, Oct. 20, he called on Mrs. Nudel at 54 Henry-street and engaged the house. To her he told the old story of a widowed sister which had done service when the house in which the boy Howard is thought to have been cremated was engaged in Forest-avenue, Detroit. The preliminaries were not long drawn, the questions were few, and when the one month's rent of $10 had been paid and Holmes, or Howard, as he called himself to Mrs. Nudel, had possession of the keys, his only request was that, as his sister would be some time in getting settled, he did not wish any person to call at the house for some time. With a precaution for every detail he calculated that his deed would thus be accomplished and a thousand miles or more separate him from the bodies of his victims before a suspicion would arise.

Satisfied that the house met his requirements, Holmes that evening left the city with his wife, and spent Sunday at Niagara Falls, where he reviewed in his mind the scheme which he was about to put into execution. He returned to Toronto again on the following day and visited the house in St. Vincent-street, accompanied by his intended victims, whom he took away from the Albion Hotel. On Tuesday and Wednesday he also spent there, and while his attention was turned to completing the details of his scheme the two young girls played round, and filled with childish laughter the house so soon to become the scene of their tragic end and ghastly burial. The bedstead and mattress came and were left for a day or two on the verandah to convey to the neighbors the impression that some one was moving in. None dreamed of the hidden plans, and to the children they had a wider and happier meaning. They had not seen their mother, their sister or Dessa, or the baby since Alice looked through the hole in the newspaper which covered the face of her murdered father in the Philadelphia graveyard and identified his body by his teeth, and they played and laughed and lived in the confidence that mamma was coming, and was going to bring Dessa and baby with her. Mr. Howell, as Holmes called himself, had told them so, and said the bed was the first of the furniture which was to make this cottage so much like their own home where they had last seen papa alive.

Borrowing the Spade.

On the afternoon of the 24th, Holmes borrowed the spade from Mr. Ryves. That same evening, when he returned to his room at the Albion Hotel, his wife remarked to him that his clothing was very dirty. Holmes' explanation was that he had met some friends who were connected with the British America Assurance Company and had spent the day fishing with them. This story has been investigated by Detectives Geyer and Cuddy and proven to be a fabrication. The true explanation, had the man chosen to have told it, was that with the borrowed spade he had been digging the graves of the young innocents.

The following morning he called, as was his custom, at the Albion Hotel for the children, taking them away soon after breakfast. What took place between the time of entering the house on that morning with the two children and the time of handing back the spade to Mr. Ryves is known only to Holmes, and can only be surmised. Unless Holmes when confronted with the evidence of murder which Detective Geyer has accumulated against him in his cell during the past few weeks realizes the hopelessness of his position and tells the true story of the crime, the exact method he pursued in accomplishing the death of the children will never be definitely known.

An Imitator of Burke and Hare.

While in Detroit Holmes borrowed a large trunk from Mrs. Pitezel, under the pretext that her husband's alleged presence in the city had become known to the detectives, and that it was necessary to ship him to Toronto in a trunk. This trunk Mrs. Pitezel did not see again until she had left this city and gone to the house in Burlington, Vt., which Holmes had furnished for her. It fell into the hands of the detectives of the city of Philadelphia, who discovered that one of the bands had been raised and a hole bored beneath it. Upon this discovery Detective Geyer based his theory that a house had been rented in this city, the children induced to get into the trunk, when they were asphyxiated. The fact that there is no gas in the Nudel cottage renders this theory untenable. Unless they were put into the trunk and chloroformed to death, the only rational theory appears to be that they were smothered with the mattrass and pillow after the manner of the celebrated Burke and Hare murder.

To render identification almost impossible should the bodies be discovered, the fiend stripped the bodies of every vestige of clothing before he rolled them into the hole which was to be their temporary grave. The clothing was then burned, but the bed and mattrass were left intact. When Mrs. Armbrust was cleaning up the house before moving in in April, she found remnants of the clothing of the children in the fireplace, under the sink in the kitchen and in the wood box. Mrs. Armbrust paid little attention to the half burnt shreds and threw them into the lane. One thing she does remember, and it bears out the statement of Mr. Ryves, that the children were dressed in dark clothes, and that is, that the material was dark.

The Family to Remove.

Under the supervision of Undertaker Humphrey three men were working until early this morning taking away the poisonous earth from the cellar and filling in the vacuum with ashes. Every effort is being exercised to disinfect the premises to prevent the neighbors from danger of disease.

The news of the finding of the bodies spread quickly throughout the city, and last night hundreds of the more curious passed and repassed the scene of the tragedy. Dr. Sheard, Medical Health Officer, visited the premises and had them fumigated, at the same time issuing orders to the effect that Mr. Armbrust and his family vacate them at once, which they did, and are now staying with friends in Yonge-street.

THE STORY OF THE CRIME.

A Tragedy Without Parallel in the History of This Continent.

The finding of the corpses of the two children of Pitezel proves conclusively what has long been suspected, that Holmes is a multifarious murderer, and leaves no doubt that in addition to the cold-blooded murder of these two children, that he has also killed Howard Pitezel, the young brother of the two victims; their father, B. F. Pitezel; Annie Williams and Minnie Williams, six in all. But for The World and the visit of Detective Geyer of Philadelphia to this city, it is probable that the crime of murder would never have been brought home to Holmes. The World published on Wednesday last a synopsis of the crime alleged to have been committed by this man, but the full details go to make up one of the most remarkable stories in the criminal annals of the world. Here are the details of the crimes which Holmes is now known to have committed:

CHAPTER I.

This is the story of a man whose thirst for knowledge made him a criminal. It is the story of Herman W. Mudgett, alias H. H. Howard, alias H. H. Holmes. Until the Philadelphia detective came to Toronto and enlisted the services of The World, the shrewdest detectives of the United States had been unable to fasten the crime of murder on the suave, self-contained man, who promptly on his arrest pleaded guilty to defrauding insurance companies, with a hope that he would be immediately sentenced for that crime and the officers would drop inquiry as to the mysterious disappearance of numerous people who had crossed his path during the past 10 or 15 years.

When counted by the marks of crime, it is a long road back to the days when Holmes, or Mudgett, was a ruddy-faced farmer boy up in the New Hampshire hills. He was born a short distance from London, N.H., and grew up into a strong, active lad, rather wild, but with a thirst for knowledge that was surprising in one so young. Notwithstanding the fact that he was something of a black sheep, he studied day and night, and soon outgrew the small country schoolmaster who gave him his lessons. At the age of 16 he left the old farmhouse and began to teach school at Gilmartin. A mere boy himself, he had 30 boys under his control.

He was rather saving in those days. Possibly even then he was dreaming of great achievements in the world. He was not satisfied. He must have education, but first he must have money. He began to save. Dollar by dollar he hoarded away enough money to attend the medical school at Burlington, Vt. Just about this time, however, he met a rosy-cheeked country girl, fell into a transitory infatuation, and was married. This put his projects back somewhat, but he did not for a moment relinquish them. A year after his marriage he completed his studies in Burlington. Then chance threw in his way a prospectus of the University of Michigan, at Ann Arbor. He determined at once to go west and complete his studies.

At Ann Arbor.

He was in Ann Arbor a month later, and had registered in the University under his real name, Mudgett. He had barely enough money to carry him through the term. He was well-liked among the students, although he was regarded as rather wild. He soon found a companion in a young student who was also working his way through the college. The two became inseparable. This friend afterward became Holmes' accomplice in several swindles, but subsequently reformed, and is now practising medicine in New York. Holmes' first idea of crime is said to have originated with this man.

After the college term was over the two young men were left without funds. They hustled around and secured work on a farm. Here, in the long days when they toiled behind the plow or the scythe, they talked of the future. It was their ambition to educate themselves first and get rich afterward. The money was coming in slowly, too slowly by far to achieve the object they had in view.

Mudgett's friend read one day something in a newspaper about a swindle that had been perpetrated upon an insurance company by the substitution of a dead body for that of a living policy-holder. The scheme looked feasible. It was only swindling, after all. "Let us do it?" said one. "All right," said the other. They found, however, that it required money to pay the premium on such an insurance. Therefore they worked a while longer, hoarding their money as carefully as misers. Then one day the two young conspirators went to Chicago, where Holmes' friend was insured for $12,500. They let the college scale for that year, and worked about the country in different places. Finally, when they judged the time to be ripe, they met in Chicago. Holmes' friend procured a dead body in that city, and it was taken to Connecticut, where it was "planted," "found," and in due time identified by Holmes as that of his friend. There was very little question about it. Holmes went back to Chicago and collected the money, and the two young men went back to the university with something like $6000 apiece. It was all so easy and so plausible that the success of the scheme transformed Mudgett the scapegrace into Holmes the criminal.

CHAPTER II.

With the seeds of successful crime planted in his nature, Mudgett continued his studies with his companion. They never spoke of the conspiracy except in extenuation. They needed money so badly. The companies were so rich, and they were hungry for knowledge. Thus they begged pardon of themselves and of each other. There came a time, however, when Holmes at least begged pardon of no man for crimes committed. With him successful crime became its own apology.

In due time both men graduated from the university with honors, and then separated. Here the friend of Holmes is lost sight of for a period of years, until the next swindle was perpetrated. Holmes' first venture outside the university after graduation was in the insane asylum at Norristown, where he had charge of a department. He remained here for about six months, when he went to Philadelphia and secured employment as clerk in a drug store, near Eleventh and Columbia streets. During this period, the brilliant success of that first crime never left his mind. All the money resulting from it had been spent, and he was drudging along for a mere pittance. What was the use of it? Could he not commit the same crime over again? It was not so easy as he had dreamed to get rich by honest methods.

One day he gave up his job and went back to Chicago, where he again met his young medical friend. He went under the name of Howard. His wife, who had followed him to Ann Arbor, had long since returned to Gilmartin, N.H., and with her boy baby was practically forgotten. The two young men soon conceived and executed another coup on the insurance company for something like $10,000. Then Holmes went into the drug business. In a year or so he met another woman, whom he married, and by whom he had a son.

With the money he had received from the insurance company he entered into various nefarious schemes that brought big money in return. He was now a full-fledged criminal, and was uniformly successful. He seemed to feel a strange joy in it. Finally, with something like $30,000 to his credit, he closed out and went out to California, where for a year he was practically lost sight of. He left a hundred or more complainants in Chicago, but none of them could prove anything against him. He added a few thousands to his income while on the coast, and then finding that affairs had quieted down nicely in Chicago, he returned to that city with his eyes open for any criminal operation that might turn up.

Back in Chicago.

He had in a few weeks organized the Yates-Campbell Company, which advertised to sell or buy anything. In the preliminaries necessary for the formation of this company, Holmes, or Howard, as he was then known, had formed the acquaintanec of a pretty girl stenographer named Minnie R. Williams. He learned that she and her sister had inherited $50,000 from an uncle in Fort Worth, Texas. The other other sister, Annie, was then in Midlothian, Texas, teaching school. To several persons he spoke of her as a "prize."

It has been asserted that Holmes was both the "Yates" and the "Campbell" of this new concern. It is positively known that he was the latter. Miss Williams was also named as one of the corporation.

At this time Holmes was a rather good looking, easy-spoken young man, with ruddy cheeks, sandy, coarse mustache, inclined to be kinky and heavy. His hair was also brown and kinky, and he was rather bald above the forehead. He has since brought out a new growth, he says, by the use of some kind of tea. He had a pair of gray eyes, which evidently made a great impression on Miss Williams. At any rate the two went to housekeeping at No. 701 Sixty-third-street, Chicago, without the usual formalities.

It was apparent at this period that Holmes had no other ambition in life beyond making money by the successful commission of crime. The Yates-Campbell Company soon broke up for want of business, and then Holmes turned his attention to the fire insurance companies. In one of these he insured his flat for the excessive sum of $60,000, alleging that it held immensely valuable papers.

The flat was burned one day. After due investigation the insurance company refused to pay the policy held by Holmes, alleging that the fire was of an incendiary nature. Some time afterward Miss Williams acknowledged that "somebody" had set fire to the flat, and surrendered the papers. After this failure Holmes apparently began to scheme to get possession of Miss Williams' property. The first move made was to send to Texas for the other sister, Anna Williams. In the letter which brought Anna to Chicago, Minnie said that she was to be married, and would shortly leave for Europe. Right here the first suspicion of murderous intent is found against Holmes. Who else was there to inherit the Texas fortune but the two sisters? Minnie, the elder sister, with whom Holmes lived, was notoriously credulous and easy to sway in any direction. If everything was right, why was it necessary for Minnie to write to her sister telling her to come to Chicago, that she was to be married and was going to Europe? It is evident from subsequent events that Holmes had no intention of marrying her. What master mind was behind that deluding letter, and what was its purpose?

CHAPTER III.

At this time the schemes in Holmes' mind, if one may judge by developments, were many and complex. He certainly had the Williams property in Fort Worth thoroughly in mind. The egg of the Philadelphia insurance crime was in progress of incubation. He had picked out his man. This man was a jailbird, and was taken out of jail for the purpose.

Anna Williams came to Chicago in a few weeks, and took up her residence with her sister Minnie and Holmes. The explanation of the marriage story made by the worthy couple is not known. Annie had been living with them about a month when she suddenly disappeared. Holmes is probably the only man on earth who knows what became of her. His explanation is cold-blooded and characteristic of the man.

"Minnie got jealous of her for some reason," he said last week. "One day the two of them had some words, and Minnie picked up a stool and hit Annie on the head with it. The blow killed her. I got a trunk, put the body in it, and sunk it in the lake."

This matter of trunks seems to run right through Holmes' life, as will be seen later on. There are very few persons among those who know Holmes who believe the sunken trunk story. His old-time partner in crime was a practising physician in Chicago then. What was to prevent him giving his friend Holmes a certificate of death from natural causes, and in that case what would prevent a quiet funeral? Was murder done by other means than the stool, and was Holmes equally implicated with Minnie? It is not likely that Holmes would "sink" the body when he could procure a burial.

Shortly after this occurrence Holmes and Miss Minnie Williams went to the Plaza Hotel, Chicago, where they lived under assumed names. In one of many excursions through the state, in his Don Quixote-like searches for some crime to commit, Holmes had visited the jail in Terre Haute, Ind., where he formed the acquaintance of B. F. Pite-

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