

JULIUS VERNON.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE JULLABAD TRAGEDY."

[NOW FIRST PUBLISHED.]

Published by arrangement with the publishers from advanced sheets of Chambers's Journal.

CHAPTER IX.

Holmes had at first no intention of doing anything in regard to the draft which Mr. Clayton had handed to him. He saw that Faune had appropriated the money to himself—a weakness he would have been prone to with five thousand pounds in question—forging his (Holmes's) name to satisfy the banker that the debt had been duly paid. It was not likely Mr. Clayton would ever speak of it again, and it would soon pass out of his mind. But on his way westward from the City, Holmes began to feel curious as to the disposal of the proceeds. What had become of the money, that Faune should have been found in those wretched lodgings at the docks, moneyless? He might have been robbed, it was true; or the amount might be lying to his credit in the Anglo-Canadian Bank. And then, if Faune left London on the Sunday, when or how did he pay the cheque into the bank?

The result of these reflections was that Holmes decided to make some inquiries for himself concerning that cheque.

Delaying for some time on the way in the Fleet Street neighborhood, it was late in the afternoon when Holmes was passing up the Strand. Here he went up to an office on a first floor, and inquiring for a Mr. Vizard, found that gentleman, to whom he was evidently known.

"This cheque," said Holmes, producing the document, "was cleared through the Anglo-Canadian Bank at Charing Cross. I want you to find out for me by whom the cheque was paid in to that bank, and when, and every other particular about it.—The cheque is genuine," he added, seeing the detective closely and suspiciously examining it.

"Both signatures on the back, however, were written by the same hand."

"That is so. Follow the matter up as soon as you can, and let me know the result."

Mr. Vizard glanced at his watch, and promised to do so. Then Holmes went on to his lodgings, where he found the officer waiting for him.

"After all, Mr. Holmes," he said, "the discovery you made this morning leads so far to nothing. The paper which it appeared in never entered the house in Grosvenor Square either above or below stairs. It must refer to something else, some other appointment made by Faune."

Holmes drew a breath of intense relief. This news lifted a load off his mind. Without waiting to hear more, he wrote a telegram to Mr. Clayton requesting him not to speak of the advertisement to his daughter, as it had been found to have no reference to the murder.

Furthermore, Faune's departure from Cadogan Place so early that night could now be accounted for by this engagement.

"If we could find out who it was he met, everything might look very different for Faune," he remarked with lively interest. "Perhaps—and I am not sure—we have a darker puzzle than this to deal with, however."

"What is it?"

"I have discovered the message which the Park that

the Park that

the Park that

the Park that

the Park that

the Park that

the Park that

the Park that

the Park that

the Park that

the Park that

the Park that

the Park that

the Park that

the Park that

the Park that

the Park that

the Park that

the Park that

house that night. The appointment was for half-past nine. I shall put this information into Cradie's hands."

"Very well," said Cradie. "But did Faune make any excuse, when leaving Mr. Clayton's, about having an appointment to keep? If so, we have not heard of it. And is it not probable he has already told his solicitor? Cradie, we know, has as yet said nothing about it—which looks suspicious. But tell him all about it, and see what he will say."

"You still hold to the belief that Faune was the murderer?"

"I have not the smallest doubt about it. Only, there will be some vital points to clear up. He sent the fatal message to Margaret Neale; she found it awaiting her when she returned to the house after the concert that Saturday afternoon. What do you say to that?"

The solemn emphasis with which the officer made his statement—the apparent certainty of his facts—made a deep impression on Holmes.

"It was your own idea, Mr. Holmes, of the vehicle of communication used in the case which led me to what I discovered. I felt so convinced, when I left you in Mount Street, that I had then the all-important clue in my hand, that I only went to Grosvenor Square to be satisfied that the *Intelligence* was one of the morning papers taken in—for this would be an important corroborative fact. To my great disappointment, I learned that the paper was never taken in, or among the servants. I confess I was a bit staggered, although the presumption still remained that she might have seen it elsewhere. I was on the point of leaving, when it occurred to me to ask to see the room which Miss Neale had occupied. It had been kept locked since the murder, by Lady Southport's orders, and the butler carried the key in his pocket. It was evident the orders were strictly obeyed, for I noted the position of certain articles to be exactly as they were when I was last in the room. I don't know exactly what I was looking for, but I have sometimes found that in examining things in this aimless way, the you stumble by chance upon evidence of the greatest value. This happened to me in Samerly's case; you remember how—"

"Yes, yes!—Never mind now, Cradie. Well!"

"Well—opening and closing, in an abstracted way—for I was busily thinking what was best to do in the matter of the advertisement—one after another of a chest of drawers, my interest was arrested by a loosely-folded newspaper lying in one of the top drawers. From the form of the folded other marks, it had evidently come through the post-office. You could perceive as much without moving it. But I found along with the paper the wrapper in which it had been posted; a fragment adhered to the paper, and exactly corresponded with the remainder. An old newspaper is generally not an object of suspicion in such a place, and I must have seen it when I was there before; but after what took place this morning, Mr. Holmes, I made a point of examining it. Now, note this, in connection with what I shall tell you presently: the wrapper was addressed, in a fine feminine hand, to 'Miss Neale, care of Countess Southport, Grosvenor Square, London'—and here the W.C. post-mark of the 10th of June. Opening out the paper (it was the *Standard* of the 9th of June), a heavy blue-pencil mark all against a notice at the top of the second column at once caught my eye. Here, said the officer, handing Holmes a slip of the paper, is a copy of the notice."

"Frank Holmes, literally holding his breath, read the following: 'I have come back, through a long journey, to London. I will wait this evening, Sunday, Monday, at the Fountain from 8 to 10 o'clock, for a woman, who will give me the answer to my question.'"

"And this advertisement," said Holmes abstractedly—for there was one expression in it which struck him, and which the officer did not appear to notice—"appeared in the *Standard* of the 9th of June, the day preceding the murder?"

"In the *Standard* of the 9th of June. The newspaper was posted the morning of the 10th of June. Margaret Neale had not come to the place of appointment on the night of the 9th, and therefore had certainly not seen the advertisement. The paper was consequently posted to her on Saturday morning, and in all probability she found it on the hall table on her return from the concert at Grosvenor House. Does not this seem clear enough? She picked it off the table as she came in, and took it with her up to her room. The rest is obvious enough; the poor girl would be careful to keep her business a secret from the household."

"But if Faune—assuming him the author of the message—knew her address, why did he not send his message to her direct at once?"

"Of course, to avoid detection."

"Margaret Neale, again, might have been struck by the fact of the paper being sent to her."

"Yes—if the poor thing had ought to suspect, or to fear. The probabilities are a thousand to one that when she opened the paper and read the husband's message she became oblivious to all else—so absorbed in the thought of meeting him again that she forgot all about the odd way the message came to her. Under such circumstances, Holmes, the excited and innocent wife would have no memory for anything, no consciousness of anything but seeing her husband once more."

"I believe that it is all true, Cradie," said Holmes with a sigh. "Poor girl!—He was thinking of the exquisite sweetness of her singing that fatal day in Grosvenor House, and the surprise of her modest eyes and gentle face at the applause. How pathetic and pitiful the recollection was now!"

"And now comes the perplexing part of the affair," continued the officer, with a look of vexation. "I lost no time in obtaining the original copy of the advertisement. What do you think? It was handed in by a lady (about whom the clerk who took it remembers nothing except that she was well dressed like any other lady), and is in the same feminine hand as the address on the wrapper. Of course the name and address with which the copy purported to be authenticated turn out to have been fictitious—there is no doubt on that head."

"Which leaves only two theories," observed Holmes: "Either the murder was the act of some other person, or the lady was Faune's agent. I think you have a case to work up still, Cradie."

"I'm afraid so. The question is—who was the agent?"

"It might be as well to keep your mind open both ways," said Holmes. "Keep your information out of the newspapers; there are a thousand well-dressed women who would act as agents in a business so seemingly harmless for a trifling remuneration. But it is just possible, Cradie, that you are prejudiced by the strong presumption against the prisoner, and by continuing to you are shutting out the light on one side of you."

Cradie soon afterwards went away. Then Frank Holmes began to pace up and down the room, getting a clear grasp of his position in relation to this case. It was a painful position, from any point of view. His personal feeling towards Faune was one of intense abhorrence. The man had shown himself so utterly destitute of principle as to shoot his former friend's belief in human nature. Holmes had found a sediment of go—even in the lowest strata; but there seemed to be none—none at all—in this unhappy creature. So far for personal feeling. Then there was his promise to Miss Clayton. Had ever man such a cruel task imposed upon him before? Faune had worked his spells upon her before she was driven to despise him; but the spell was upon her still, a cruel bondage, and the cry that she made to Holmes for his help to save the unworthy woman from a disgraceful fate went into his heart like a dagger. He could not refuse her—he loved her too passionately. If Mary Clayton were ready to take to her pure bosom the shamed head of the acquitted felon, the task undertaken by Frank Holmes could scarce have been harder.

But now that he had put his hand to it, he

looked at it without flinching. There was a point, of course, beyond which he could not go—beyond which Miss Clayton would expect him to go. The moment it became clear to his conscience that Faune was guilty of the cruel murder of that poor girl, that moment Holmes would abandon the man's cause. It had not come yet, though it seemed to be drawing very near. But it had not come; and until it did, he would keep his promise.

When reading the fatal message that had lured Margaret Neale to her fate, Holmes noted the date; it was Friday the 9th of June. She was invited to meet her murderer that night—and had not done so. The murderer would certainly have been at the Fountain, waiting for her. Now, if Faune had spent that evening as usual at Cadogan Place, could he have made the appointment in the Park?

(TO BE CONTINUED)

A Famous French Regiment.

A Paris correspondent of the *Courrier des Etats Unis* gives an interesting account of the Fifth Hussars, in the French army. In all probability this regiment will be at the head of the French forces on the first engagement in the coming war with Germany. It was first named the Beauvoisine Hussars, and fought in the seven years' war. Later on it became the Colonel-General Hussars, and at the outbreak of the revolution it received its present name. It took an active part in the battles of Valmy, Jemmapes, Wattignies, and in other engagements in Holland, Germany, Spain, and Russia. It had a hand in all the great military affairs, and several times gained the eulogies of the first Napoleon. In January, 1792, it performed the strangest feat that was ever accomplished by any cavalry regiment since the world began, namely, the capture of an entire fleet. At that time the Dutch war vessels got fast in the ice of the Texel. A cavalry charge was about the last thing the Admiral expected; but that is just what he received, and the loss of all his vessels was the consequence. At the battle of Hohenlinden, in 1800, the Fifth Hussars decided the contest by repeated charges and the capture of eighty guns. In 1806, after Iena, it formed a part of the famous "infernal brigade" of Gen. Lasalle, and was captured the fortress of Stettin. It was this extraordinary exploit that brought out Napoleon's letter to Murat: "Since your hussars can take fortresses, I may as well dismiss my corps of engineers and have my heavy artillery melted."

During the Franco-Prussian war this regiment did some of the hardest fighting. At the battle of Rezonville it saved several guns that were on the point of being taken by the Prussians, and at Bitch it contributed to the splendid defence of the place and came out with all the honors of war along with the rest of the garrison, which held out until after the treaty of peace.

The Fifth Hussars is at present commanded by Col. Riez, a daring soldier, whose value is well known in military circles. It is stationed at Pont-a-Mousson, and forms the extreme advance guard of the French army, within sight of the city of Metz.

Wishing.

There's lots of time that people spend
Wishing.

In seeking some desired end
By wishing.

They seem to think, without doubt,
That anything they've figured out
Can in some way be brought about
By wishing.

They plant themselves upon a chair
Wishing.

The hour for working finds them there
Wishing.

They find that labor gall and irk,
They have no love for any work,
And so they sit around and shirk,
Wishing.

If you've a wish you would fulfill
Wishing.

Just bear in mind you never will
Wishing.

To make the highest wish come true
You've got a lot of work to do,
You'll never be successful through
Wishing.

There are cases where moderate gum-chew is positively healthful, taking one's food in the besting natural weakness. Chew Adam's Tutti Frutti after each meal.